

Subject: MARINE LITTER STRATEGY

"I am writing to respond to the Scottish Government's consultation on a draft Scottish marine litter strategy. I wish to see a marine litter strategy introduced in Scotland as I believe that it is an important step in reducing pollution in our seas.

I have participated in a number of beach cleans at Blackness & Queensferry with the MCS and am appalled at the level of litter on our beaches, including sanitary items such as sanitary towels, cotton buds & nappy liners originating from sewer overflow. If more members of the public were aware of what is on their beaches there would be an outcry.

The general litter issue is also important, not only aesthetically, but on health grounds and of course, as it provides a direct threat to marine life.

Question 26: I agree with the Marine Conservation Society's proposal that Option 3 would best deliver a marine litter strategy. If a strategy is to make a real difference to this problem the Scottish Government must accept that money will have to be spent. Option 4 focuses on delivering some elements of the strategy using the resources that already exist. If the problem has not been tackled sufficiently already with resources / funding / staff that currently exist (and these are mostly within the charity sector), it is unlikely that simply grouping these resources together under a strategy will make a significant difference to future progress. Funding, staff and resources will have to be provided to make the strategy work effectively, and this will only be done through Option 3.

I believe that essential elements for Option 3 should include: a lead authority identified and funding provided for a dedicated policy officer; funding for high profile campaigns that would have a direct impact on reducing litter from source, e.g. Bag it and Bin it; Scotland-wide co-ordinated campaigns, rather than the many and varied localised campaigns that exist at the moment; baseline data will be essential to monitoring future progress of the strategy, and a Government-led data collection strategy would be required. Successfully tackling our marine litter problem through a strategy would demonstrate best practise and show what was possible to the UK and other EU countries, and influence further action.

Questions 7-9: I further believe that the marine litter strategy and the national litter strategy must link together to ensure a comprehensive approach to tackling the litter problem, on land and at sea, and the two strategies together must ensure there are no gaps in responsibility or action.

Questions 10-13: I understand that MCS has identified a possible error in the consultation document with regard to Strategic Direction 2. I agree with MCS' assertion that all the Existing Actions listed under Strategic Direction 2 (p17) should in fact be listed under Possible Actions. When such a correction has been made, the actions should then be considered important enough to be put in place.

Questions 14-17: Similarly, I agree that under Strategic Direction 3, points 2 and 3 in the list of Existing Actions (p18) should also in fact be listed under Possible Actions. Again, when such a correction has been made, these actions should then be considered important enough to be put in place.

Margaret Harrison