

Subject: Marine Litter Strategy - Consultation

Dear Nikki Milne,

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.

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.

Kind regards,

Ewan McCowen