

CONSULTATION QUESTIONS

Q1. Do you agree with the recommended list of Priority Marine Features as the basis for targeting future marine conservation action in Scotland's seas?

If your response includes a suggestion to amend the list, please indicate the specific species and habitats that your comments apply to and, where possible, provide or reference any evidence or data sources which have influenced your comments.

Yes No

No comment.

General

Q2. Are there other issues that have not been highlighted in this consultation that you would like to mention?

Yes No

Having a single list is welcome.

It is stated that 'The list will be used to support advice on marine biodiversity, guide future research priorities and help deliver marine planning and licensing systems set out in the Marine (Scotland) Act which delivered new powers to protect other habitats and species of national and international importance.'

Clarification of what this means in practice and what degree of protection is afforded to those on the list would be welcomed.

Some of the PMFs may already be adequately protected (part of the discussion during the MPA process considered this – for example, seagrass beds were considered to be adequately protected under Natura 2000 designations). Some are so rare at a European level that all occurrences are likely to be designated. However, others are more widespread.

Is it expected that if one of the PMFs occurs in an area for which a Marine Licence is being sought, then that by itself would prevent consent being given unless it could be demonstrated that the activity would do no damage to the feature (the HRA test). Conversely, what is the status of biotopes and species that are not on the list?