

Sea Fish Industry Authority
18 Logie Mill
Logie Green Road
Edinburgh
EH7 4HS

Marine Scotland
Victoria Quay
Edinburgh
EH6 6QQ

13 November 2013

Dear Sirs

National Marine Plan consultation

The Sea Fish Industry Authority is a non-departmental public body established by Parliament. Its remit is to assist all sectors of the UK seafood industry to achieve a sustainable and profitable future.

The representative bodies of the fishery and aquaculture sectors will be submitting their own detailed responses to the chapters in the consultation and we support those that seek to further the responsible and sustainable use of Scotland's national resources.

The National Marine Plan must seek to safeguard the economic viability of the fishery and aquaculture sectors of the Scottish economy. They are important national industries that contribute significantly to incomes in economically fragile, remote rural areas as well as more populated regions. There is reassurance that this has been recognised within the document, but it has to be implemented practically.

The lack of a cohesive planning system for the marine and associated shore-based developments has hampered business start-up and development. The desire to ensure a more integrated planning environment is to be welcomed. However, detailed guidance should be offered to local planning authorities to ensure a consistent nationwide application of the policies. The Plan should also seek to minimise the cost to industry of seeking such planning consents and the unduly long delays that can arise throughout the application process.

In general, the aspirations and policies set out for the fishery and aquaculture sectors within the National Marine Plan appear reasonable, however the proof of this favourable intent will be in their implementation and application at the local level.

The needs of these strategically important sectors should not be held secondary to those of other maritime industry users or conservation interests.

The National Marine Plan should seek to support the strategic development plans drawn up by fishery and aquaculture bodies as part of other government processes. Any conflicts or contradictions have to be resolved at this early stage and due attention should be given to any highlighted by industry representatives.

We hope this is of assistance with the consultation process and welcome any opportunity for further dialogue in the future.

Yours faithfully

C A Burton

Inshore Manager