



**Isle of Man
Government**

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Dear Sir/Madam

Nature Conservation Marine Protected Areas Consultation

Thank you for consulting us on the proposed Scottish MPA network and we appreciate the extension of time to respond (from Anna Donald). I am responding on behalf of the Marine Spatial Planning Committee as well as DEFA.

We note that there is currently no plan to designate any marine protected areas in the immediate vicinity of our territorial waters, in the Irish Sea.

However we understand that some areas have yet to be assessed fully against the Scottish MPA Selection Guidelines and these include assessments of areas for mobile species. Some of these species are of particular interest to the Isle of Man, including minke whale, Risso's dolphin and basking shark. Other OSPAR listed species (for example the Ocean quahog) occur in the Irish Sea and in the interests of having an Irish Sea -wide network of appropriately designated MPAs there is scope to work together in protecting key species, especially when areas of their habitat cross our borders.

The Isle of Man and Scotland share responsibility for migratory species such as basking sharks and other marine animals (cetaceans and seabirds). There is a history of collaboration with adjacent jurisdictions at the NGO and local level which has scope to be further reflected at national level.

As you may be aware, The Isle of Man Government has been pursuing its own MPA network programme over recent years, with the twin objectives of biodiversity and fisheries conservation.

We continue to believe that this approach has significant merit and would welcome the strengthening of discussion and collaborations with the relevant Scottish Government and NGO organisations. The shared biodiversity and fisheries resources in the Irish Sea would make this approach mutually beneficial.

Compatibility of conservation measures with other activities in adjacent sea areas across administrative boundaries requires sensitivity and communication. We look forward to working together in various forums, including the Celtic Seas Partnership and the Irish Sea maritime Forum.

It is our intention to consult reciprocally with Scotland on our own marine plans and MPAs.

Yours sincerely

Liz

Elizabeth Charter

Chairman of the Isle of Man's Marine Planning Officer Group.

Principal Biodiversity Officer (strategy and advocacy)