

SCOTLAND'S NATIONAL MARINE PLAN:

A SINGLE FRAMEWORK FOR MANAGING OUR SEAS

Our vision for the marine environment is:

Clean, healthy, safe, productive and diverse seas; managed to meet the long-term needs of nature and people.

Introduction

The National Marine Plan (NMP) is a single framework, enabling the sustainable development of Scotland's marine area in a way which will protect and enhance the marine environment whilst ensuring the sustainable growth of both existing and emerging marine industries. The NMP is being developed in accordance with the Marine (Scotland) Act and the Marine and Coastal Access Act and provides a comprehensive planning framework for all activity both inshore and offshore, devolved and reserved, at a national and regional level.

Scotland's National Marine Plan will:

- Provide a structure which embeds environmental protection in decision making, improving consistency of decision making and providing greater certainty for developers and users of the sea.
- Ensure that public authorities who make authorisation or enforcement decisions, or any other decision that affects the marine environment, do so in accordance with the NMP.
- Provide a framework for the future development of regional marine plans.

An Overarching Framework: Strategic Objectives and General Policies

The Strategic Objectives and General Policies of the National Marine Plan (NMP) set the context for developing Scotland's marine area and seek to ensure that the development and use of the marine environment is undertaken sustainably.

Chapter 3 (Vision, Objectives and Approach to Policies) sets out the vision for the marine environment, which is underpinned by a series of Strategic Objectives. This includes the 11 descriptors of Good Environmental Status (GES) and the High Level Marine Objectives. These Strategic Objectives seek to bring together both the ecosystem approach and the guiding principles of sustainable development to deliver a robust approach managing human impact on Scotland's seas.

Chapter 4 (General Policies) applies to all development and use of the marine environment. The General Policies represent the parameters against which all sustainable development and use is considered to ensure this is undertaken in a manner which is sensitive to the protection and enhancement of the environment, the needs of other users and the long term health of the sea.

As sustainability is an overarching principle, all environmental, social and economic General Policies are intended to be complementary.

The presumption in favour of sustainable development and use is presented as an overarching general planning principle.

The General Policies cover:

- Sustainable development and use
- Economic and social benefits
- Co-existence
- Climate Change
- Historic Environment
- Landscape/Seascape
- Coastal process and flooding
- Natural heritage
- Invasive non-native species
- Marine Litter
- Water quality and resource
- Noise
- Air Quality
- Planning alignment of marine plans and terrestrial or other plans
- Fairness
- Engagement
- Sound evidence
- Adaptive management
- Cumulative impacts

Sector Chapters: Objectives and Policies

In addition to the Strategic Objectives, each sector chapter of the NMP contains a number of Objectives specific to that sector. These Objectives focus mainly on the promotion of the sustainable economic growth of that sector and whilst not all Objectives can necessarily be achieved directly by marine planning, they are an important context for planning and decision making.

National Marine Plan Sector Chapters:

- Chapter 6 Sea Fisheries
- Chapter 7 Aquaculture
- Chapter 8 Wild Salmon and Diadromous Fish
- Chapter 9 Oil and Gas
- Chapter 10 Carbon Capture and Storage (CCS)
- Chapter 11 Offshore Wind and Marine Renewable Energy
- Chapter 12 Recreation and Tourism
- Chapter 13 Shipping, Ports, Harbours and Ferries
- Chapter 14 Submarine Cables
- Chapter 15 Defence
- Chapter 16 Aggregates

Sectoral Policies supplement the General Policies. The Sectoral Policies, where appropriate, provide additional direction by considering key issues for each sector including: *supporting economically productive activities; interactions with other users; living with environmental limits; and climate change.*

Regional Policies within the NMP also set out considerations for regional marine planners.

The Sector Objectives and Sectoral Policies are subject to the Strategic Objectives and the General Policies.

National marine plan interactive (NMPi)

Where policies provide spatial direction, the spatial data and maps within the National Marine Plan are available on NMPi. NMPi is updated with relevant spatial data as it becomes available. <http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Topics/marine/seamanagement/nmpihome/nmpi>

Marine planning next steps

Monitoring and Review: The NMP will be subject to on-going monitoring and review to learn lessons from the process to date, assess the impact of the NMP and consider emerging issues which may need to be picked up in more detail. Aspects of the NMP covering inshore waters must be reported on every five years and aspects covering offshore waters and reserved activity must be reported on every three years.

Regional Marine Planning: Regional Marine Plans (extending out to 12nm) will be developed by Marine Planning Partnerships within Scottish Marine Regions, allowing more local ownership and decision making about specific issues. The first Partnerships to begin planning will be for the Clyde and Shetland Isles Marine Regions. They will be formally established in 2015 to begin planning once the National Marine Plan is adopted.

