

**Flapper skate conservation – Interim protection measures  
Meeting with SEPA**

**Teleconference  
01 February 2021 11:45**

**Attendees**

- Marine Scotland
- SEPA

Meeting notes

- Marine Scotland thank SEPA for taking the time to meet at short notice.
- Marine Scotland checked that SEPA had received the background document. SEPA replied they have but there are ongoing IT issues meant they could not circulate the document.
- Marine Scotland went on to outline the background paper in detail to provide context for the meeting.
- Marine Scotland described the advice provided by NatureScot.
- Marine Scotland informed SEPA that an urgent MPA with MCO is under consideration subject to Ministerial approval.
- Marine Scotland stated that they were keen to hear SEPA's views on this proposal.
- SEPA confirmed that there are no current or historical applications for aquaculture in this area.
- Marine Scotland said that they were aware of the finfish farm near to the proposed site but did not see any issues with this.
- Marine Scotland mentioned that a number of other regulators felt that an MCO would be helpful in respect of future planning applications.
- SEPA said that they agreed with that assessment in relation to the MCO.
- SEPA suggested that the main risks to an MPA from aquaculture were sedimentation and carbon deposition.
- SEPA mentioned that their approach to aquaculture applications near PMFs was to assess the sensitivity of local PMFs and evaluate the pressures a site is likely to exert, their approach is always precautionary.
- SEPA stated that every aquaculture application is considered on its own merits.
- SEPA reported that the only foreseeable complication would be an aquaculture application on the edge of the site. Then careful consideration would need to be given to potential impacts of an aquaculture site on the MPA.
- Marine Scotland thank SEPA for their participation in this meeting.