



Dave Bench  
Head of Marine Legislation Division  
Marine Legislation Division  
Defra  
Area 2E  
3-8 Whitehall Place  
London  
SW1A 2HH

Your Ref:

Our Ref: PRO/FOR/CLY/CON/MBWP

08 June 2007

Dear Mr Bench

### **MARINE BILL WHITE PAPER; A SEA CHANGE**

The Firth of Clyde Forum welcomes the opportunity to respond to Defra's consultation on a Marine Bill White Paper.

#### **The Firth of Clyde Forum**

The Firth of Clyde Forum (FoCF) is a voluntary partnership of local authorities, organisations, businesses, communities and individuals committed to working towards integrated, sustainable management of the Clyde's environmental, economic and community resources. As a voluntary partnership we work within our agreed guiding principles, contained in a document entitled "Integrated Management Strategy and Action Plan for the Firth of Clyde" published in 2000 and founded on the principles of Integrated Coastal Zone Management (ICZM). Further information on the FoCF can be found on the Forum's website at [www.clydeforum.org](http://www.clydeforum.org).

#### **The Scottish Sustainable Marine Environment Initiative Clyde Pilot**

The FoCF works closely with the Scottish Executive's Scottish Sustainable Marine Environment Initiative (SSMEI) Clyde Pilot. The SSMEI Clyde Pilot, one of four pilot projects across Scotland, is tasked with the development and delivery of more integrated and sustainable management of the marine and coastal areas of the Firth of Clyde through an effective and integrated stakeholder-regulator partnership. It aims to achieve this through the creation of a Local Marine Spatial Plan (LMSP) together with improved decision support mechanisms and integrated decision-making.

The FoCF and the Clyde Pilot work closely together and the FoCF is a good example of a local on the ground body delivering national policy objectives through its work, for example, implementing ICZM and work through the Scottish Minister's Advisory Group for the Marine and Coastal Strategy (AGMACS).

#### **General comments**

The FoCF welcomes a UK Marine Bill and a new approach to the management of activities in the marine area to maximise benefits from the seas and coasts whilst preserving their integrity for the future. The area covered by the FoCF is outwith the area covered by a UK Marine Bill, however the FoCF would like to comment briefly on a number of issues in light of possible future changes to marine legislation in Scotland.

With regard to Local Coastal Partnerships (LCPs), such as the FoCF, we would like to draw your attention to specific recommendations of the Scottish Minister's Advisory Group for the Marine and Coastal Strategy (AGMACS) and the Scottish Parliament's Environment and Rural Development Committee (ERDC) Report on Inquiry into the Marine Environment.

## **AGMACS**

AGMACS recommendation 4.6.5 states:

*'ICZM and MSP policy at local level should be based on planning or policy statements. Consideration should be given to a delivery model consisting of Regional Policy Statements being prepared within Regional Policy Areas, possibly by the existing Local Coastal Partnerships or local authorities'.*

The FoCF believes that LCPs are excellent examples of existing bodies that could prepare and deliver local MSPs. With increased resources, including a commitment to continued funding, LCPs could be developed into a fit for purpose, cost effective local delivery mechanism. The FoCF urges the Scottish Executive to consider the use of properly resourced LCPs for preparation and delivery of local MSPs.

AGMACS recommendation 4.6.6 states:

*'the issue of funding for Local Coastal Partnerships should be revisited'.*

Funding for LCPs is a long standing issue that needs to be addressed if these useful fora are to deliver ICZM and LMSP adequately. Security of future funding would free up Project Officer's time and ensure greater value for money from staff.

## **ERDC**

The ERDC recommendation VII states:

*'a statutory system of marine spatial planning should be established in Scotland. This should be done in a way which addresses the need for local stakeholder input, but also recognises different strategic levels that require to be integrated with UK, EU and international objectives and deal with cross-boundary complexities. The Committee has already noted the need for management of the marine environment to be based on clear and ambitious objectives that encompass ecosystem, biodiversity, social and economic elements. The Committee recommends that the Executive must consider how the marine spatial planning system and structures can be subject to democratic input and be accountable to the Parliament'.*

The ERDC recommendation IX states:

*'while it considers that marine spatial planning requires a statutory framework, the Committee wishes to emphasise the value of voluntary partnerships in achieving consensus and buy-in from stakeholders. The Committee considers that the funding of local coastal partnerships must be adequate and secure. The Committee recommends that the Executive should consider the future structure and funding of the partnerships and take this forward as quickly as possible. The Committee also recommends that the Executive should examine how the existing network of partnerships can be developed to cover the whole of the Scottish coastline adequately'.*

It is widely recognised that LCPs provide effective mechanisms for delivering ICZM locally, guided by agreed national policy. One of the main strengths of these partnerships is their long established, well-recognised networks of a wide range of local coastal and marine stakeholder contacts. LCPs are well placed and experienced in conducting community consultations, promoting a participative approach to coastal zone management, conflict resolution and project support and implementation in a cost effective manner. The use of LCPs for local MSP delivery will therefore follow the ERDC

recommendations, ensure wide local stakeholder input and transparency as well as promoting ecosystem, biodiversity, social and economic objectives.

The close linkages of the FoCF and the SSMEI pilot in the Clyde provide an example that as a tool of ICZM, it would be appropriate for well-resourced LCPs to deliver MSP in a local context. The implementation of MSP by established LCPs removes the need to create new fora and utilises the experience and knowledge of currently existing groups.

If you would like further information on any of these points, please do not hesitate to contact us.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink on a light blue rectangular background. The signature reads "Isabel Glasgow" in a cursive, slightly slanted script.

Isabel Glasgow  
Firth of Clyde Forum Chair

A handwritten signature in black ink. The signature reads "Claire Pescod" in a cursive, slightly slanted script.

Claire Pescod  
Firth of Clyde Forum Project Officer