



1 Pennington Street
London E98 1TA
Facsimile **020-7782 5046**
E-mail **letters@thetimes.co.uk**

Our seas in peril

Sir, The decision not to include a full marine Bill in the Queen's Speech is extremely disappointing and could jeopardise the Government's manifesto promise of a marine Act before the next election.

Our organisations have been campaigning for many years for comprehensive new legislation to ensure effective protection of our marine environment. We are pleased that a marine Bill has not been totally ignored, but with several consultations already completed, more than 300,000 public pledges of support this year and cross-party political support, the omission of a full Bill is unhelpful and the delay is very damaging.

About half of the UK's wildlife is found in or depends upon the sea, yet less than 0.001 per cent of our seabed is fully protected. We need marine legislation with marine planning at its heart, and which provides much stronger protection for marine wildlife.

The Government must ensure that a full marine Bill comes before Parliament soon. Our seas cannot afford any further delay.

LIZ SANDEMAN

Director of Operations, Marine Connection

SAM FANSHAW

Director, Marine Conservation Society

GRAHAM WYNNE

Chief Executive, RSPB

STEPHANIE HILBORNE

Chief Executive, The Wildlife Trusts

MARK SIMMONDS

Director of Science, Whale and Dolphin Conservation Society

SIMON WALMSLEY

Head of Marine, WWF UK