



GREENPEACE



Marine Conservation Society



February 2009

Parliamentary Briefing

Marine and Coastal Access Bill Amendment

Membership of IFC Authorities (Clause 147)

The organisations listed above are all members of Wildlife and Countryside Link's Marine Task Force¹, which has been campaigning for several years for improvements in marine conservation and better management of the marine area. We have been closely engaged in the Marine & Coastal Access Bill process from the outset.

Background

Link considers it very important for the new IFCAs to be distinct in *composition and culture* from the existing SFCs. To ensure this requires the composition of the authorities to be spelt out in the Act more clearly than at present, specifically with a requirement for representation from EA and NE and an equal balance of the two main special interests – fishing and conservation.

This suggestion will not lead to an “overbalancing” in favour of conservation because clause 147 (1)(a) provides that as well as the kinds of members referred to above there must also be representatives of each relevant local authority. We recognise that IFCAs must have representation from local authorities, as they are funding bodies, and to ensure local participation and buy-in to decisions. However, experience with the current Sea Fisheries Committee system demonstrates that due to their make-up, SFCs have often favoured fishing concerns over conservation necessities. We therefore believe that there should be a requirement in clause 147 to balance numbers of people with fishing and conservation interests.

For further information please contact Danny Stone, Parliamentary Officer, RSPB, on 07989 502004 or danny.stone@rspb.org.uk, Eva Groeneveld, Public Affairs Officer, WWF-UK on 07766 150944 or egroeneveld@wwf.org.uk, or Hazel Phillips, Head of Public Affairs, The Wildlife Trusts on 020 7803 4293 or hphillips@wildlifetrusts.org, or Melissa Moore, Senior Policy Officer, Marine Conservation Society on 07793 118386 or melissa.moore@mcsuk.org

¹ Wildlife and Countryside Link is a coalition of the UK's major environmental organisations working together for the conservation and protection of wildlife, the countryside and the marine environment.

Annex – Amendments

Marine & Coastal Access Bill

House of Lords Committee Stage, February 2009

Clause	Clause 147 Membership and proceedings of IFC authorities
Amendment	Page 89, line 3: Leave out '(c) other persons' and insert: '(c) a person representing Natural England, (d) a person representing the Environment Agency, and (e) other persons.' Page 89, line 5: Insert at end of line 'in equal numbers'