



January 2009

Parliamentary Briefing

Marine and Coastal Access Bill Amendment

Eligible Bodies

The organisations listed above are closely engaged in the Marine and Coastal Access Bill. We are also members of Wildlife and Countryside Link's Marine Task Force¹, which has been campaigning for several years for improvements in marine conservation.

Background

This purpose of this amendment is to ensure that, when delegating functions to the eligible bodies listed in Clause 16, the Secretary of State is required to ensure that this body has the appropriate skills, experience or knowledge to carry out the functions delegated to it.

The organisations listed above believe that, in performing functions on behalf of the Marine Management Organisation, these eligible bodies must have sufficient marine representation, skills and knowledge, for example, in marine science and conservation. This amendment places a duty on the MMO to satisfy itself that any eligible body has the appropriate skills and experience to ensure the functions are carried out properly. We acknowledge that this amendment may also need to include reference to a range of skills related to other marine functions.

This addition to Clause 16(3) is particularly important if the Secretary of State decides to exert the power conferred in Clause 16(2) to add any other body to the list of eligible bodies at a later stage.

Similar quality controls are also needed in Clause 53 regarding the delegation of marine planning functions to unspecified public bodies.

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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, January 2009

Clause	Clause 16 Eligible bodies
Amendment	Page 10, line 1: Leave out subsection (3) insert “(3) The Secretary of State may not exercise the power conferred by subsection (2)(a) unless satisfied that: (a) at least one of the purposes or functions of the body, or bodies of the description, to be added to the list is, or is related to or connected with, a marine function; (b) the body, or bodies of the description to be added to the list has the necessary skills and experience to perform a relevant marine function.