



January 2009

Parliamentary Briefing

Marine and Coastal Access Bill Amendment

A requirement to produce Marine Plans covering the whole of UK waters

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

A requirement to produce Marine Plans covering the whole of the UK marine area

Currently, there is no obligation to produce marine plans or to ensure that marine plans cover the whole UK marine area (clause 49). In the view of the organisations listed above, where an MPS governs marine planning, i.e. has been prepared, adopted and published by the relevant policy authority i.e. Secretary of State and the Devolved Ministers, there should be an obligation (not discretion as at present) on the marine plan authority to bring into effect a marine plan(s).

This requirement should deliver full planning coverage of the entire UK marine area. We believe that if it is discretionary to produce marine plans, that there is the possibility that no plans will be produced or plans may not be produced where they are needed. In reality, without a commitment to full coverage of the UK marine area, it is possible that the result will be limited to a few marine plans, e.g. close to the coast in busy areas. Coastal areas urgently need proper planning, but that does not mean that many other parts of the UK marine area should be left without a plan. We would like to see the ecosystem approach implemented through planning at the regional sea scale. To achieve this, we believe that there should be comprehensive plan coverage for the whole of the UK marine area.

The scale and level of detail of individual plans should adopt a proportionate and flexible approach and reflect the amount, nature and complexity of marine activities, likely conflicts and the knowledge base for the area in question. There should be a commitment to full coverage by marine plans which facilitates varying degrees of detail and effort. Our vision would be for large scale regional seas plans, with more detailed 'nested' plans in busy coastal areas.

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.

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Annex – Amendments

Marine & Coastal Access Bill House of Lords Committee Stage, January 2009

A requirement to produce Marine Plans

Clause	Clause 49 Marine plans for marine plan areas
Amendment	page 24, line 29: Leave out “may” and insert “must” page 24, line 30: at end insert “A marine authority must create a marine plan or plans for the whole of its marine planning region where an MPS governs marine planning for the region.”