

# Sustainable Fisheries Programme

## ISSUES PAPER

### Environmental Management

AUGUST 2004



# **Sustainable Fisheries Programme Issues Paper: Environmental Management**

August 2004

## **Introduction**

The fishing industries are an important part of the UK economy and the lifeblood of many coastal communities. But, over recent years, there has been tremendous concern about the future. To address these concerns, the Prime Minister's strategy Unit in March published "Net Benefits", which makes thirty three recommendations to enhance the long-term profitability and sustainability of this vital industry.

The challenge we now face is turning these recommendations into detailed and practical proposals. To do this we need your help. The attached discussion document has been prepared to help shape a debate between the fisheries departments, stakeholder organisations and interested individuals.

This document is not a policy statement. It takes a group of recommendations in the report, puts them in context and then asks a series of questions. Ideas and questions will have been missed in this paper. Please challenge them, add questions, and propose new solutions. Without your active participation no realistic solutions can be reached.

Over the next four weeks we will welcome any feedback, written, electronic or face-to-face. Contact details are included in this paper. At the end of that period the departments will consolidate your ideas and present them to four specially formed stakeholder working groups. Their role will be to ensure that tangible and realistic solutions are being advanced.

You will have a number of further opportunities to comment on evolving documents throughout October, November and December. In addition to this written exercise we will be organising a number of discussion groups, seminars and face-to-face meetings throughout the UK.

The process of active dialogue is not fixed, broad timelines have been agreed but our greater concern must be to ensure tangible benefits. Any suggestions you may have to enhance this dialogue will be welcomed.

The first key deadline, for this initial stage is 24<sup>th</sup> September 2004, with a second document being produced, for your comments, in November 2004.

My colleagues and I look forward to speaking to you throughout this process and would urge you to actively participate in shaping this vital strategy.

## **Chris Ryder**

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**IMPORTANT NOTE**

In line with policies of openness, at the end of the discussion period copies of the responses we receive may be made publicly available.

The information they contain may also be published in a summary of responses. If you do not consent to this, you must clearly request that your response be treated confidentially.

Any confidentiality disclaimer generated by your IT system in e-mail responses will not be treated as such a request. You should also be aware, that there may be circumstances in which we will be required to communicate information to third parties on request, in order to comply with obligations under the Freedom of Information Act 2000, and the Environmental Information Regulations. The Sustainable Fisheries Programme Management Office will supply copies of consultation responses to personal callers or in response to telephone or e-mail requests (tel: 020 7270 8137, e-mail: [sus.fish@defra.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:sus.fish@defra.gsi.gov.uk)).

An administrative charge will be made to cover photocopying and postage costs.

## **Sustainable Fisheries Programme Issues Paper: Environmental Management**

### **1. Summary**

<b>Issue Paper:</b>	Environmental Management
<b>Recommendations:</b>	33
<b>Policy lead:</b>	
Defra:	Keith Porter – 020 7270 8134
DARD NI:	Eileen Sung – 02890 522 385
SEERAD:	Lachlan Stuart - 0131 244 6432
WAG:	Glyn Perryman – 029 2082 3591
<b>Responses to:</b>	Email: sus.fish@defra.gsi.gov.uk
<b>Please respond by:</b>	Friday, 24 September 2004

### **2. Recommendation 33 in full**

Recommendation 33 In the medium to long term, the UK Government and devolved administrations should consider integrating fisheries management tasks inside a marine environment agency responsible for broader management tasks, if such bodies are established under other legislation (eg possible Marine Acts being considered in different parts of the UK).

a) Consideration should be given for establishing a system where all economic users of the marine environment contribute to funding basic understanding and mapping of ecosystems, both to improve marine management and reduce duplication of research and assessment.

### **3. The Strategy Unit rationale for Recommendation 33**

The SU Report says that commercial fishing is only one use of the marine environment and pressures, especially in coastal areas, are increasing. In order to maximise the benefits of all uses of UK marine resources environmental issues should be better integrated into fisheries management as in other fishing nations; the fishing industry should have the same rights and responsibilities to the marine environment faced by others.

In the medium to long term, the UK Government and devolved administrations should consider integrating fisheries management tasks inside a marine environment agency responsible for broader management tasks, if such bodies are established under other legislation (e.g. possible Marine Acts being considered in different parts of the UK)

### **4. Issues relating to Recommendation 33**

The UK Government and the devolved administrations published their first Marine Stewardship Report, *Safeguarding our Seas*, in May 2002. It set out a strategy for the conservation and sustainable development of the marine environment based on a vision of clean, healthy, safe, productive and biologically diverse oceans and seas. It was followed by a consultation exercise, *Seas of Change*, in November 2002, which asked stakeholders for their views on how the principles outlined in *Safeguarding our Seas* could be applied and

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what the strategic goals for the marine environment should be. The UK Government and the devolved administration's response was published in March 2004.

More recently Defra has issued for consultation the Review of Marine Fisheries and the Marine Environment in England and Wales – the “Bradley report”. This recommends that a single marine management agency should be pursued, linked to the follow up to the SU Report, but makes no specific recommendations on organisational, legal or financial structures. It acknowledges that the scope of such an agency would need a good deal of further work in the light of the work still to be done in developing environmental requirements, particularly through the also recently published Review of Marine Nature Conservation (RMNC) and links with the Review of Marine Consents. Among the measures being suggested by the RMNC are strategic and spatial planning, management of sectoral activities, marine protected areas and habitats and species protection. The Government is also considering the possibility of a Marine Bill which could give effect to recommendations arising from the SU Report and RMNC.

The Scottish Executive announced on 23 October 2003 its intention to develop a strategic framework for Scotland's marine environment, in order to establish a clear vision for the sustainable management of Scotland's coastal seas, to bring greater coherence to the full range of Scottish marine initiatives and to ensure more effective governance of Scotland's marine and coastal environments. Much of the pre-consultation work was developed through the Scottish coastal forum. Four pieces of development consent legislation on matters devolved to the Scottish Parliament are under specific consideration, including coastal navigational safety, port development, offshore electricity generation and deposits. The options of Scottish national coastline parks and marine national parks are also highlighted in the Executive's consultation documents.

The UK Government and the devolved administrations have adopted a number of strategic goals for the marine environment on the basis of work undertaken by the Review of Marine Nature Conservation and the views put forward in response to the Seas of Change Consultation exercise. These are reflected in the draft goals set out in the SU Report. These are:

- (i) to conserve and enhance the overall quality of our sea;
- (ii) to use marine resources in a sustainable and ecologically sensitive manner;
- (iii) to develop proposals for an integrated and ecosystem-based approach to marine management;
- (iv) to sustain economic benefits and growth in the marine environment by enabling and encouraging environmentally sustainable employment;
- (v) to increase our understanding of the marine environment; and
- (vi) to promote public awareness, understanding and appreciation of the marine environment and seek active public participation in the development of new policies

### **5. Questions relating to Recommendation 33**

- i. How could an Agency best balance competing interests of fishing and other users of marine resources?
- ii. How would a single cross border Agency effectively integrate devolved competence for fisheries management and the coastal marine environment?

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- iii. What scientific and technical input would such an Agency need to carry out its functions?

### **6. Possible ways forward for Environmental Management**

These issues are already under consideration in the light of the Reviews that have already been undertaken to which stakeholders' and Government's response is awaited. The consultation period for the Bradley report ends on 29 September. The consultation period for the Scottish framework ended on July 30, with the aim of analysing and publishing the responses by 30 September. Many Stakeholders will be feeding comments in directly in response to those reviews. In order to avoid duplication of effort members of the Group might like to consider the extent to which further work on this subject needs to be conducted in this forum.

### **7. Questions summary**

- i. How could an Agency best balance competing interests of fishing and other users of marine resources?
- ii. How would a single cross border Agency effectively integrate devolved competence for fisheries management and the coastal marine environment?
- iii. What scientific and technical input would such an Agency need to carry out its functions?

### **8. Distribution list**

Alliance Party

ANIFPO - Anglo-North Irish Fish Producers Organisation

Ards Borough Council

ASFC - Association of Sea Fisheries Committees

Cardigan Bay Fishermen's Association Ltd

CCW - Countryside Council for Wales

Cefas - Centre for ecology, fishing and aquaculture science

Coleraine Borough Council

Council for Nature Conservation and Countryside

DCMS - Department of Culture, Media and Sport

Democratic Unionist Party (DUP)

EHS - Environment and Heritage Service, Northern Ireland

English Nature

Environment Agency

Environment Agency Wales

FAL - Fishermen's Association Ltd

## **Sustainable Fisheries Programme Issues Paper: Environmental Management**

FCILC - Foyle Carlingford and Irish Lights Commission  
Friends of the Earth  
FRS - Fisheries Research Service (Marine Laboratory)  
Greenpeace  
JNCC - Joint Nature Conservation Committee  
Larne Borough Council  
Llyn Fishermen's Association  
Mallaig & North-West Fishermen's Association  
MCA - Marine and Coastguard Agency  
Moyle District Council  
National Trust - Northern Ireland  
Newry & Mourne District Council  
NFFO - National Federation of Fishermen's Organisations  
NFSA - National Federation of Sea Anglers  
NIFHA - Northern Ireland Fishery Harbour Authority  
NIFPO - Northern Ireland Fish Producer Organisation  
NIS - Northern Ireland Seafood  
North Coast Lobster Fishermen's Association  
North Down District Council  
North East Coast Lobster Fishermen's Association  
Northern Ireland Fish Conservation Assoc  
Northern Ireland Fish Salesmen Association  
Northern Ireland Scallop Fishermen's Association  
Royal Commission on Environmental Pollution  
RSPB - Northern Ireland  
RSPB - Royal Society for the Protection of Birds  
SACN - Sea Angling Conservation Network  
SAGB - Shellfish Association of Great Britain  
Scottish Environment Link  
SFF - Scottish Fishermen's Federation  
SFIA - Seafish Industry Authority  
SFPA - Scottish Fisheries Protection Agency  
SNH - Scottish Natural Heritage  
Socialist Democratic Labour Party (SDLP)

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South & West Wales Fishing Communities Ltd

Strangford Lough Management Committee

Ulster Shellfish Association

Ulster Unionist Party (UUP)

Wales & West Coast Producer Organisation

Welsh Federation of Sea Anglers

Welsh Recreational Strategy

WWF - Northern Ireland

WWF - World Wildlife Fund

Welsh Federation of Sea Anglers