



SEAS THE OPPORTUNITY

**A STRATEGY FOR THE LONG
TERM SUSTAINABILITY OF
SCOTLAND'S COASTS AND SEAS**

COVER PHOTOGRAPH:

Aerial view of North Uist looking towards South Harris. © P&A Macdonald / SNH

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A STRATEGY FOR THE LONG TERM SUSTAINABILITY OF SCOTLAND'S COASTS AND SEAS

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Scarista Beach, Isle of Harris. © Lorne Gill / SNH

MINISTERIAL FOREWORD



We should be truly proud of Scotland's coastal and marine environments. They are not only unique in their beauty and in the diversity of their natural and cultural resources, but are also vital to the people of Scotland as a source of social and economic prosperity. Many of our rural communities have long and strong links with the sea, and many industries depend on the sustainable use of marine natural resources to thrive and to create jobs. Managing the many inter-dependencies that flow from that is central to the Scottish Executive's top priority of Growing Scotland's Economy. Many marine based activities, in particular in tourism and renewable energy development, will also contribute to

our Green Jobs Strategy.

Over the summer of 2004 we consulted widely on developing a strategy for Scotland's coasts and seas. The outcome of that confirmed my view that we need to ensure the fundamental principles of sustainable development are applied to marine-related activities in a way that matches the unique circumstances of our coastal areas and territorial waters. We do a lot already to integrate socio-economic and environmental factors into decision making processes, often on a sector by sector basis. But the time is right to take a wider view, to get better at co-ordinating activity and at measuring and tackling cumulative impacts on our seas. We also need to manage more positively the potential tensions between sectors and between environmental and socio-economic objectives.

This document sets out the way in which I intend to put that into practice. It draws heavily on last year's consultation and also on the considerable work of the Scottish Coastal Forum and the Scottish Biodiversity Forum, for which I am grateful. It does not purport to give everything to everyone, but it does set out a clear vision for our coasts and seas, underpinned by high level objectives and specific action-focused targets. I want it to be a living, long-term strategy, which will evolve and develop over time with benefits for a generation to come. I intend to take forward the delivery of the objectives initially through a new group on to which I will invite stakeholder representatives to play an active part.

Applying sustainable development in a marine and coastal context is a real opportunity to shape the way we behave today to secure benefits not just for now but for years to come. Those benefits must, of course, be in part environmental. But if we squander natural marine and coastal resources, and do not protect them for the future, we jeopardise our economic prosperity as well. Sustainable development is about ensuring that does not happen. I hope that, together, all of us with an interest in our coasts and seas will grasp the opportunity for change.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Ross Finnie".

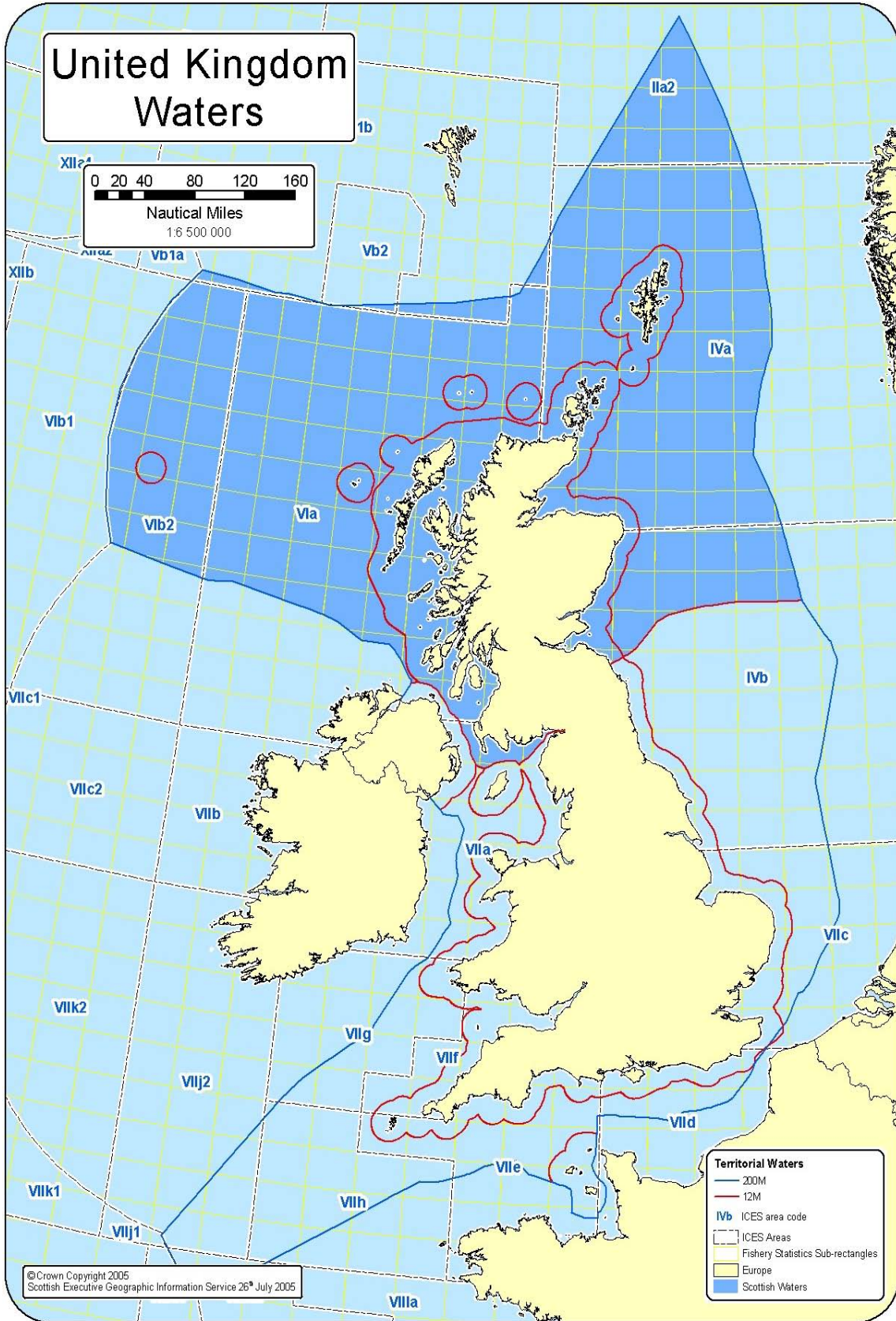
ROSS FINNIE
Minister for Environment and Rural Development

GLOSSARY OF TERMS IN THIS DOCUMENT

Biodiversity	the variety (within and between species) of living things from all sources (terrestrial, marine, aquatic)
CFP	Common Fisheries Policy
DCMS	Department for Culture Media and Sport
Defra	Department for Environment Food and Rural Affairs
Devolved/ reserved mix	the spilt between those rights and responsibilities which, by way of Schedule 5 of the Scotland Act 1998, reserved to the UK Government/Parliament and those which are devolved to the Scottish Executive/Parliament
Ecosystem	structure, process, functions and interaction among organisms, including humans, and their environment
Ecosystem - Based Approach	the integrated management of human activities based on knowledge of ecosystem dynamics to achieve sustainable use of ecosystem goods and services and maintenance of ecosystem integrity
Eutrophication	excessive nutrients causing accelerated growth of algae and an undesirable disturbance in the balance of organisms normally present
FEPA	part II of the Food and Environment Protection Act 1985 (deposits in the sea)
ICES	International Council for the Exploration of the Sea
ICZM	Integrated Coastal Zone Management - a process for bringing together all those involved in the development, management and use of the coast to achieve sustainable development at local level
Marine spatial planning	a system for establishing strategic plans to regulate activity in, and protect, the marine environment
Natura sites	EU-wide network of nature conservation sites (SAC and SPA) to be established under the EC Habitats and Birds Directives
NGOs	Non Governmental Organisations
ODPM	Office of the Deputy Prime Minister in the UK Government
Polluter pays principle	principle under which the polluter should pay for any environmental damage created

Precautionary principle	principle under which, where there are threats of serious or irreversible damage, lack of full scientific certainty shall not be used as a reason for postponing cost effective measures to prevent environmental degradation
Priority species	species identified for priority conservation action as part of the UK Biodiversity Action Plan
SAC	Special Areas for Conservation under EC Directive 79/409/EEC on the Conservation of Wild Birds
Scottish Biodiversity Forum	a broad-based Scottish partnership of Government, its agencies, local authorities, voluntary bodies and others working for the future of biodiversity in Scotland
Scottish Coastal Forum	a national group set up to provide a focus for discussion of coastal issues in Scotland and to offer advice to Government
SEA	strategic environmental assessment
SEPA	Scottish Environment Protection Agency
SNH	Scottish Natural Heritage
SPA	Special Protection Areas under EC Directive 92/43/EEC on the Conservation of Natural Habitats and of Wild Flora and Fauna
SSMEI	Scottish Sustainable Marine Environment Initiative – a Scottish Executive initiative aimed at piloting new ways of managing the use of coastal and marine resources
Sustainable Development	development which meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. The concept embraces all economic activity, including the use of natural resources
WFD	the EC Water Framework Directive

Map A



SUMMARY OF KEY ELEMENTS OF THE STRATEGY

Founded on: the five guiding principles of sustainable development -

- Living within environmental limits
- Ensuring a strong, healthy and just society
- Achieving a sustainable economy
- Promoting good governance
- Using sound science responsibly ...

... to secure a vision of:

clean, healthy, safe, productive and biologically diverse marine and coastal environments, managed to meet the long term needs of nature and people

... through:

Governance objectives	Environment objectives	Community objectives	Industry objectives	Sound Science
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... achieved by:

co-ordination of **sectoral strategies**, time limited **outputs and outcomes** building on the 2004 consultation, the Scottish Biodiversity Strategy, the work of the Scottish Coastal Forum, SSMEI pilots and other reviews

... delivered through:

A Ministerially chaired **stakeholder group to:**

Develop the strategy further, including assessment of impacts and conflicts; and conflict resolution	Review objectives	Set performance indicators and identify science and research needs	Input to the assessment of options for a coastal and marine national park	Develop the concept of marine spatial planning	Consider what legislative change might be needed for Scotland
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1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 This document sets out a new Scottish marine and coastal strategy, to be taken forward through stakeholder participation and is, in turn, the Scottish Executive's formal response to the outcome of the 2004 consultation on "Developing a Strategic Framework for Scotland's Marine Environment" (March 2004, Paper 2004/6). The marine and coastal strategy will take into account the advice offered to Scottish Ministers in the Scottish Coastal Forum's "Strategy for Scotland's Coast and Inshore Waters". The Executive will continue to look to the Forum to offer guidance on the implementation of ICZM in Scotland.

Background

1.2 The marine and coastal waters around Scotland are vitally important to the sustainable future of the country. Our coasts and seas provide food from fisheries, energy and mineral resources, routes and harbours for shipping, tourism and recreational opportunities and sites of cultural and historic interest, which meet many of our economic and social needs particularly in remote rural areas. At the same time they contain distinctive and

Aerial View of Forth Bridges and Port Edgar. © P.A. Macdonald / SNH



important habitats and support a diverse range of species which we need to protect, conserve and enhance. Integrating socio-economic and environmental/ecological factors is crucial to our long-term sustainability and already features in several sectoral strategies of relevance to our coasts and seas. A wider marine and coastal strategy will in part provide a better bond between those sectoral approaches, helping us to grow Scotland's economy and create jobs.

Sea View

Scottish Executive strategies relevant to marine and coastal sustainability include

- A Sustainable Framework for Scottish Sea Fisheries
- A Strategic Framework for Inshore Fisheries in Scotland
- A Strategic Framework for Scottish Aquaculture
- The Scottish Biodiversity Strategy
- Scotland's Bathing Waters: a Strategy for Improvement
- A Framework Strategy for Scottish Agriculture
- Enterprise Strategy: a Smart Successful Scotland
- Going for Green Growth – a Green Jobs Strategy for Scotland

2004 consultation

1.3 From April to July 2004 the Scottish Executive consulted widely on developing a Strategic Framework for Scotland's Marine Environment [<http://www.scotland.gov.uk/consultations/environment/dsfsme-00.asp>]. That consultation took forward a Partnership Agreement commitment to:

consult on the best Strategy for protecting and enhancing all of Scotland's coastline, building on existing policies and including the options of establishing a national coastline park and marine national parks

and, sought views on:

- How best to bring greater coherence to the range of marine related initiatives across the Scottish Executive
- A vision for the sustainability of Scotland's coasts and seas:

a clean, healthy, safe, productive and biologically diverse marine environment which, through sustainable management, will continue to support the interests of nature and people

- Any perceived gaps in current activity/policy, and how to plug them
- Objectives for our coasts and seas and how they should be measured
- How to provide better, more effective governance of the coastal and marine environments – including how the development of the strategy should be taken forward
- The potential for marine spatial planning

1.4 The consultation also sought views on 4 pieces of development consent legislation for which the Scottish Executive has varying degrees of devolved responsibility, namely:

- Section 34 of the Coast Protection Act 1949 (Navigational Safety)
- Harbours Orders under Sections 14-18 of the Harbours Act 1964
- Section 36 of the Electricity Act 1989
- Part II of the Food and Environment Protection Act 1985

1.5 A summary of responses to the consultation was published in October [<http://www.scotland.gov.uk/library5/environment/dsfsmeresponses.pdf>]. There were 104 substantive replies and 730 postcards and e-mails inspired by a WWF campaign supporting the vision and calling for a Marine Act.

Other reviews

1.6 Parallel to the 2004 consultation, several other initiatives and reviews relating to the coastal and marine environments were underway, in particular:

- The Scottish Biodiversity Forum's Biodiversity Strategy, including a marine implementation plan [<http://www.scotland.gov.uk/library5/environment/sbiiyh-00.asp>]
- The Scottish Coastal Forum's Strategy for Scotland's Coast and Inshore Waters [<http://www.scotland.gov.uk/library5/environment/ssciw-00.asp>]
- The development of new proposals for the management of inshore fisheries in Scotland as set out in the Strategic Framework for Inshore Fisheries in Scotland [www.scotland.gov.uk/library5/fisheries/sfifs-00.asp]
- A No. 10 Strategy Unit report on the UK fishing industry ("Net Benefits") [<http://www.strategy.gov.uk/downloads/su/fish/index.htm>]
- A report from the Royal Commission on Environmental Pollution into the impacts of fishing activity on the marine environment [<http://www.rcep.org.uk/fishreport.htm>]
- A Defra-led review of marine nature conservation (RMNC) [<http://www.defra.gov.uk/wildlife-countryside/ewd/rmnc/>]
- An ODPM-led review of coastal & marine development consents in England & Wales
- A UK-wide consultation on Protecting our Marine Historic Environment: Making the System Work Better, led by the DCMS [<http://www.scotland.gov.uk/consultations/culture/pmhe.pdf>]

Emerging themes

1.7 Taken together, the responses to the 2004 consultation and these other reviews and initiatives suggested in broad terms that a strategy for the long-term sustainability of Scotland's coasts and seas should comprise:

- A clear **vision**, broadly as proposed in the 2004 consultation
- The identification of **pressures** on our coasts and seas, as described in the 2004 consultation
- Clear, achievable **objectives** and time limited **outputs** and **outcomes**, building on existing objectives outlined in the 2004 consultation
- **Indicators** of performance against the vision and objectives
- A new means of **delivering** the above

1.8 On the means of delivery, emerging themes were:

- A senior level **policy body**
- The establishment of Scotland's first **coastal and marine national park**
- A system of **marine spatial planning**
- The provision of **marine protected areas**
- The creation of a **marine agency**
- A **Marine Bill** to give effect to the above

1.9 The 2004 consultation provided little evidence to suggest that, in Scotland, the current development consent regimes (the 4 regimes at paragraph 1.4 above) were causing a difficulty on the same scale as perceived in England and Wales, although some users of the system would prefer to see some simplification of processes.

1.10 Scottish Ministers remain open minded about the need for new delivery mechanisms and new legislation applicable to those areas for which they have devolved responsibility. Ministers wish to give that further consideration, with stakeholder involvement, as the Scottish marine and coastal strategy develops and as the scope of Defra's Marine Bill clarifies.

The structure of the rest of this document

1.11 This document is the Scottish Executive's response to those emerging themes. Section 2 re-iterates the importance of our marine and coastal areas, with key statistics and links to supporting material. Section 3 sets the context for and concept of a marine and coastal strategy, including the vision to which the Scottish Executive is now committed. Section 4 describes top level objectives, with Section 5 setting out the outputs and outcomes towards which we will now work. Section 6 describes how Scottish Ministers intend to take forward the further development of the strategy. Section 7 outlines the devolution context within which a Scottish strategy will operate. Section 8 sets out the broad timetable for action. Section 9 summarises those proposals made in response to the 2004 consultation that Scottish Ministers have decided not to pursue at this stage. Throughout the document there are illustrative examples ("sea views") of current activity.



Ecotourism: Common Seals and Seal watching Boat, Skye and Lochalsh. © Lorne Gill/SNH

2. THE IMPORTANCE OF SCOTLAND'S MARINE AND COASTAL AREAS

2.1 Scotland's territorial waters (out to 12 nautical miles and including internal waters) cover a greater surface area than its territorial land mass. We have over 11,000 km of coastline, representing one of the largest inshore areas of any EU country. 20% of our population live within 1km of the coast and about 70% within 10kms. A quarter of Scottish businesses, accounting for 10% of Scottish turnover and 20% employment, are within 1km of the coast. There are 130 inhabited islands. Our coastal and marine areas are of outstanding scenic, historic and cultural value boosting Scotland's image at home and abroad. The coast is one of our most popular tourist destinations.

Salmon Cages, Loch Eriboll, Lochaber. © Lorne Gill / SNH

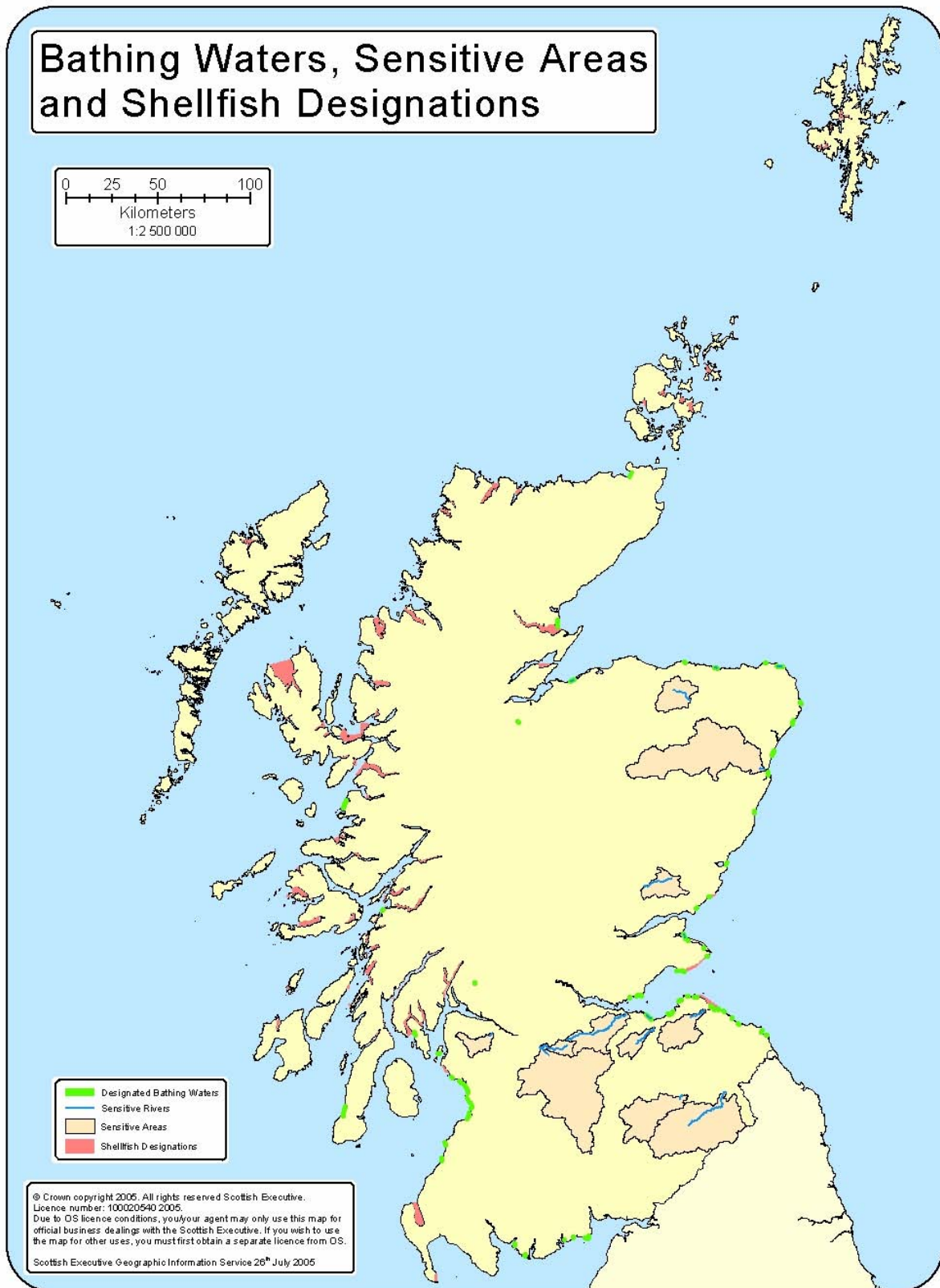


2.2 The seas around Scotland are some of the most productive in the world. This is reflected in the economic importance of fishing and aquaculture to Scotland's rural and island communities. Our marine and coastal areas support 16,000 fishing and aquaculture related jobs. Over 60% of the UK catch, with a landings value of £300m, comes from Scottish vessels. We account for 90% of the UK's farmed fish, with a farm gate value of £300m.

Sea View

The newly created **EU Regional Advisory Councils (RACs)** have the potential to improve significantly the governance of the fisheries of interest to Scotland. The RACs are stakeholder-led bodies, comprising both fishing and other interests including environmental NGOs, consumer groups and scientists. Their role is to provide advice and recommendations to the European Commission and Member States on fisheries management and marine environment issues within the sea areas that they cover. The North Sea RAC was the first to become operational in November 2004 and the other two RACs of interest to Scotland, the North Western Waters RAC and the Pelagic species RAC will be established during 2005.

Map B



2.3 Other key industries drawing on marine and coastal resources around our shores include oil and gas, shipping, tourism and recreation. We contribute to the £23bn of UK oil and gas production, supporting Scottish jobs and bringing income to Scottish communities. Offshore renewable energy developments will become increasingly important, with the potential to support between 6,000 and 8,000 direct jobs in the UK by 2020. There are 5.5m passenger and 90m tonnes of freight movements through Scottish ports. Marine wildlife tourism supports over 2,500 jobs and earns £57m of revenue.



Sea View

European Marine Energy Test Centre, Orkney

The European Marine Energy Centre (EMEC) off Billa Croo on the Orkney mainland, the first test centre of its kind in the world, was formally opened in August 2004 with the assistance of £5m funding provided by the Scottish Executive, Highlands and Islands Enterprise (HIE), Scottish Enterprise, Orkney Islands Council, the Department of Trade and Industry and the Carbon Trust. It currently provides four test berths 2 kilometres offshore in a water depth of 50 metres and operates under a seabed lease from the Crown Estate, a consent to locate under section 34 of the Coast Protection Act 1949 and a licence to make deposits in the sea under Part II of the Food and Environment Protection Act 1985. The funding partners announced in spring 2005 that EMEC would be extended to include facilities for testing tidal devices. The additional facility will be at the Falls of Warness off the island of Eday, Orkney and is expected to be operational by spring 2006.

2.4 Scotland is also rich in coastal and marine sites of cultural and historical significance. About 25% of the Scottish coast has been surveyed as part of Historic Scotland's Coastal



Zone Assessment programme. Extrapolation from that suggests about 34,000 monuments spanning 9,000 years of human activity lie close to our coasts, with 12,400 likely to be vulnerable to coastal erosion. 600 of those sites are estimated to be highly significant monuments, of which, 300 could rate as of international significance. The 14 staffed coastal and island properties in Historic Scotland's care attracted over 370,000 visitors and generated on-site income of £1.7m in 2004/5, with indirect employment and income benefits to the local communities. Recreational diving at shipwreck sites is estimated to attract more than 4,500 visitors each year to the Sound of Mull, generating revenue in excess of £1.5m, and accounts for about 14% of visitors to Scapa Flow, Orkney, worth about £3m to the local economy.

Broch of Mousa, Shetland. © Lorne Gill / SNH

Sea View

Skara Brae is the most complete Neolithic village in N W Europe, and forms part of the Heart of Neolithic Orkney World Heritage Site, dating from the 3rd millennium BC. It was discovered in the 19th century through coastal erosion, and successive excavations have revealed a site which is now in State care and attracts well over 60,000 visitors per year. Continued coastal change has required progressive extension of the site's coastal defences, but the situation has now reached a critical point where major scale engineering will be required to give the site a chance of survival beyond the middle of the 21st century.



Windsurfing, © Andi Robertson/SNH. Birdwatching © Lorne Gill / SNH. Diving © SNH

2.5 Our marine and coastal environment also contains many special and some unique landscapes of national and international renown. We have some distinctive natural habitats, such as sea lochs and maerl beds. Scottish waters are among the most diverse in the world, supporting over 8,000 complex and over 36,000 single cell species of plants and animals. Some species, like basking shark and leatherback turtle, are of international significance.

Sea View

Visitscotland has created *SeaScotland 2005* to celebrate our maritime heritage and our affinity with our coastline and inland waterways. The SeaScotland web site details water based events from boat festivals to maritime exhibitions and from surf competitions to seafood festivals.
www.visitscotland.com

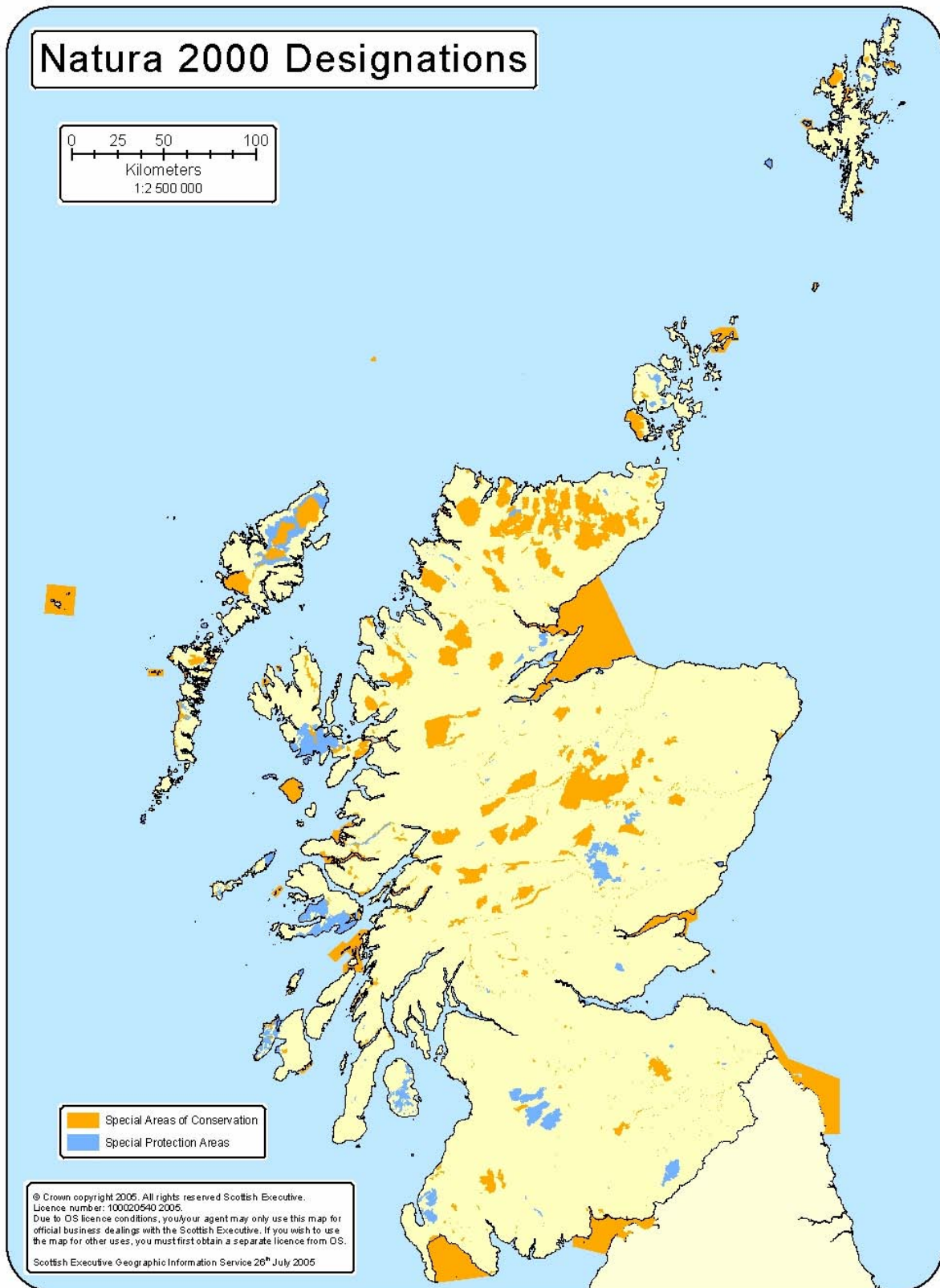


**Serpulid Reefs (*Serpula vermicularis*),
Loch Creran © Sue Scott / SNH**

2.6 Our marine and coastal areas are therefore hugely important in economic, social, environmental and ecological terms. It is crucial that coastal and marine based activity is managed in a way that integrates the consideration of each of these factors into decision making processes. Existing sectoral strategies recognise and promote that integration by focusing on sustainable development and the sustainable use of resources as key factors of profitability and good management. Those strategies sit within a framework of environmental regulation, which often provides for specific protection of designated areas of the coast and sea.

2.7 Further detail on the value of our coasts and seas is available from A Sustainable Framework for Scottish Sea Fisheries [<http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Publications/2005/07/07105456/54577>]; the Scottish Coastal Socio-economic Scoping Study (Scottish Executive Social Research 2002, ISBN 0755934733, [<http://www.scotland.gov.uk/library5/environment/scse-00.asp>]; the Scottish Coastal Forum's Strategy for Scotland's Coast and Inshore Waters [<http://www.scotland.gov.uk/library5/environment/ssciw-00.asp>]; the Scottish Biodiversity Forum's Scottish Biodiversity Strategy [<http://www.scotland.gov.uk/library5/environment/sbiyh-00.asp>]; and the Strategic Framework for Inshore Fisheries in Scotland [www.scotland.gov.uk/library5/fisheries/sfifs-00.asp].

Map C





Tide swept kelp, North Sanday, Orkney. © MMCR / SNH

3. CONTEXT, CONCEPT AND VISION

Context

The pressures

3.1 It is clear that human activities, and other natural processes, have the potential for significant impacts on the natural resources of our marine and coastal environments. These impacts can be driven by:

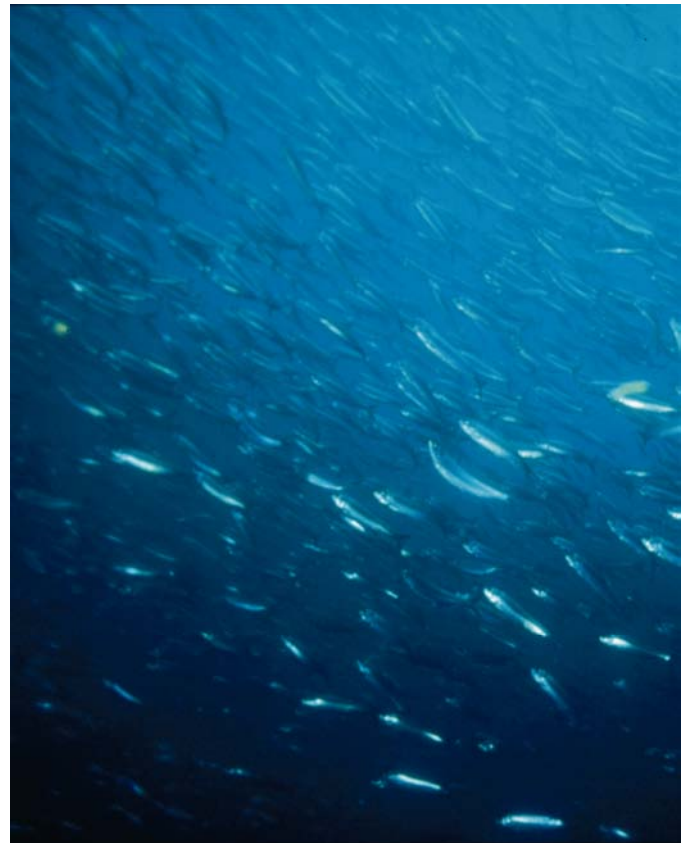
- climate change
- harnessing renewable energy
- protection of biodiversity
- industrial/agricultural production
- commercial fisheries/aquaculture
- exploration for, and exploitation of, mineral and hydrocarbon resources
- marine archaeology
- coastal/marine development
- marine biotechnology development
- waste disposal and marine litter
- tourism and recreation

3.2 Some of those drivers may have positive impacts, whether in terms of helping deliver thriving marine and coastal environments or communities. It will be important to find ways to maximise these positive impacts through sustainable development. Other drivers put pressure on the marine and coastal environments through:

- ecosystem change
- loss of biodiversity
- degradation/destruction of habitats
- discharge of pollutants to water
- deposits in the sea
- eutrophication through excess nutrients
- coastal erosion/inundation
- introduction of non-native species

3.3 These pressures are explored in more depth in “Charting Progress – An Integrated Assessment of the State of UK Seas” (Defra, ref PB9911 <http://www.defra.gov.uk/environment/water/marine/uk/stateofsea/>).

3.4 In Scotland's coastal and marine areas, water borne pollution remains a potential risk, and there is evidence of declining stocks of some fish species, seabed disturbance, habitat loss and disturbance to sea life. For several of these, action is already in hand. For example, damaging inputs from land and sea are now largely under control through regulation and investment in preventative and remedial measures. Plans are in place for handling emergency pollution incidents from shipping and other offshore activities. Action is in hand to put the fisheries in Scotland's waters on a more sustainable footing and to tackle the environmental impacts of fishing through the implementation of the Sustainable Framework for Scotland's Sea Fisheries. Nevertheless, such impacts are important in their own right and because any disturbance to marine ecosystems can also have longer term consequences for those economic and social activities that rely on the continued availability of marine and coastal natural resources. Sustainable use of resources and profitability are inextricably linked. Handling the balance between using natural resources today in a way that allows them to renew for future use requires a strategic approach to the sustainable management of the marine and coastal environments.



Sea View

There are seven top commercial fish species of major interest to Scotland. In recent decades, few of them have been maintained consistently within safe biological limits. But prospects are now better and the most recent assessments show that the **current** state of many of our most important commercial fisheries is positive

- Herring and haddock are both healthy fish stocks, which are being safely harvested by current standards;
- *Nephrops* (prawns), also appear – for now - to be healthy and safely harvested, but the biological situation is not completely understood and there are some scientific uncertainties in establishing what level of fishing activity is sustainable in the longer term;
- Scallop stocks are at safe levels and, at current levels of effort, are being fished sustainably, though this situation needs to be kept under review;
- Monkfish appear to be more abundant than in the recent past, but the many biological uncertainties suggest that the stocks may be at risk of over-exploitation;
- Mackerel is in better health than it has been but is still at risk of over-exploitation. Actions are now being taken to reduce fishing effort;
- Cod is seriously depleted and is subject to a long-term recovery plan.

3.5 In the long-term, climate change will have an increasing impact on coastal and marine environments. Changes in sea temperatures, salinity, ocean current, sea-level rise and increased storm surges could have huge consequences for both sea and surface habitats. It is important that we continue to improve our understanding of how climate change might impact on the coastal and marine environments so that we can plan and adapt accordingly.



Machair flowers, Isle of Lewis © Lorne Gill / SNH

Sea View

Rothesay on the Isle of Bute has a history of flooding from the sea. The financial cost of that reached a peak in 1991, when a tidal surge caused substantial damage, in the region of £3 to £4 million, to commercial and residential properties in the town centre. Argyll and Bute Council decided to implement a Flood Prevention Scheme for Rothesay under the Flood Prevention (Scotland) Act 1961. The scheme was confirmed by Ministers in November 2002, and was officially opened in January 2005. A key feature was the construction of flood protection walls along part of the esplanade, combined with associated drainage works and alterations to walls along the Lade burn. It will reduce the annual flood risk in Rothesay to below 1% over the life of the scheme taking account of climate change. This will help to protect 50 to 60 properties in the area that have been affected by major flooding incidents in the past.

The Executive fully supported the Council's efforts to fund this scheme by providing resources and grant aid at 50% of the eligible costs. Since the Rothesay scheme was confirmed, Ministers have announced a substantial increase in the resources available to local authorities for flood prevention and coast protection measures to £89 million over the next three years, coupled with an increase in grant rate to 80%.

The remedy

3.6 Our current approach to coastal and marine management is based largely on sector based strategies and by regulation based processes. These help us work towards some specific outputs and outcomes (see tables 1 and 2) but the current approach also has some drawbacks:

- A sectoral approach can overlook cumulative effects of individual sectors on wider coastal and marine ecosystems and on other users of the coasts and seas. It can also overlook the specific impacts of one sector on another and the potential tension/conflict between disparate sectoral objectives. This oversight can have ecosystem/environmental and social-economic dis-benefits.
- Regulation based processes can create their own tensions between social-economic and environmental/ecological objectives (for example, SACs/SPAs are established solely for conservation purposes, and although management plans can take account of socio-economic effects tensions can exist; wastewater treatment is largely driven by mandatory performance standards). Those tensions need better management.
- Some of our current outcomes are, rightly, focussed on reducing inputs to the environment rather than on measures to improve coastal and ecosystem health and the quality of the natural environment. This is partly due to a lack of consolidated baseline data from which to measure progress on ecological/environmental targets (although “Charting Progress” has now begun to address that).
- Broad level changes, like those induced by climate change, will impact on all sectors but individual responses might not be as effective as one co-ordinated across all sectors.

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© Sue Scott /MNCR/SNH





© SNH

Sea View

The Executive aims to develop a suite of sectoral outcomes for the **sea fisheries industry** together with the Advisory Group that will be established to take forward the Sustainable Framework for Sea Fisheries. These are likely to fall into the following categories:

Sustainable – nurturing the marine resources on which it depends by playing its part to safeguard the marine ecosystem so those resources can benefit future generations as part of a thriving and biologically diverse marine environment leading to:

- More stocks are within safe biological limits;
- There is progress towards sustainability of individual stocks;
- Improved understanding and acceptance of scientific information in the industry and more science/industry collaborative projects; and
- Positive trends in wider marine environment indicators.

Profitable – efficient, market focussed, entrepreneurial - maximising the return from every fish by delivering a safe, quality and globally competitive product, leading to

- Improved economic returns for fishermen;
- Improvement in global competitiveness with a higher quality, more value added product commanding higher prices in target markets;
- More export success and more success in developing premium UK markets for Scotland's seafood industry; and
- Continued contribution from the sea fishing industry to the economies of remote and fragile communities in Scotland.

Well-managed – socially responsible, playing by the rules, influenced and influencing and regulated effectively with the full involvement of the industry, leading to

- Improved satisfaction with fisheries science and the governance and regulatory framework in Scotland and the EU; and
- Improved compliance with quota and other fisheries management controls.

An Advisory group is being convened to firm up the actions that will be needed to achieve these outcomes, including a timetable and devise performance indicators to measure success.

3.7 A marine and coastal Strategy, clearly founded on the principles of sustainable development and taking further forward the concept of integrated coastal zone management (ICZM) will aim to address those weaknesses without supplanting existing sectoral strategies and objectives. Through the Scottish Sustainable Marine Environment Initiative (SSMEI) we are already working on pilot projects in Shetland, Clyde and the St Abbs area to test new approaches to marine and coastal management (see paragraph 5.2). In addition, SNH have already been asked to begin an assessment of the role and responsibilities of a coastal and marine national park authority, and to identify potential candidate sites for Scotland's first coastal and marine national park. This will encourage access to, and use of the park area, in line with sustainable development principles and contributing to local community development.



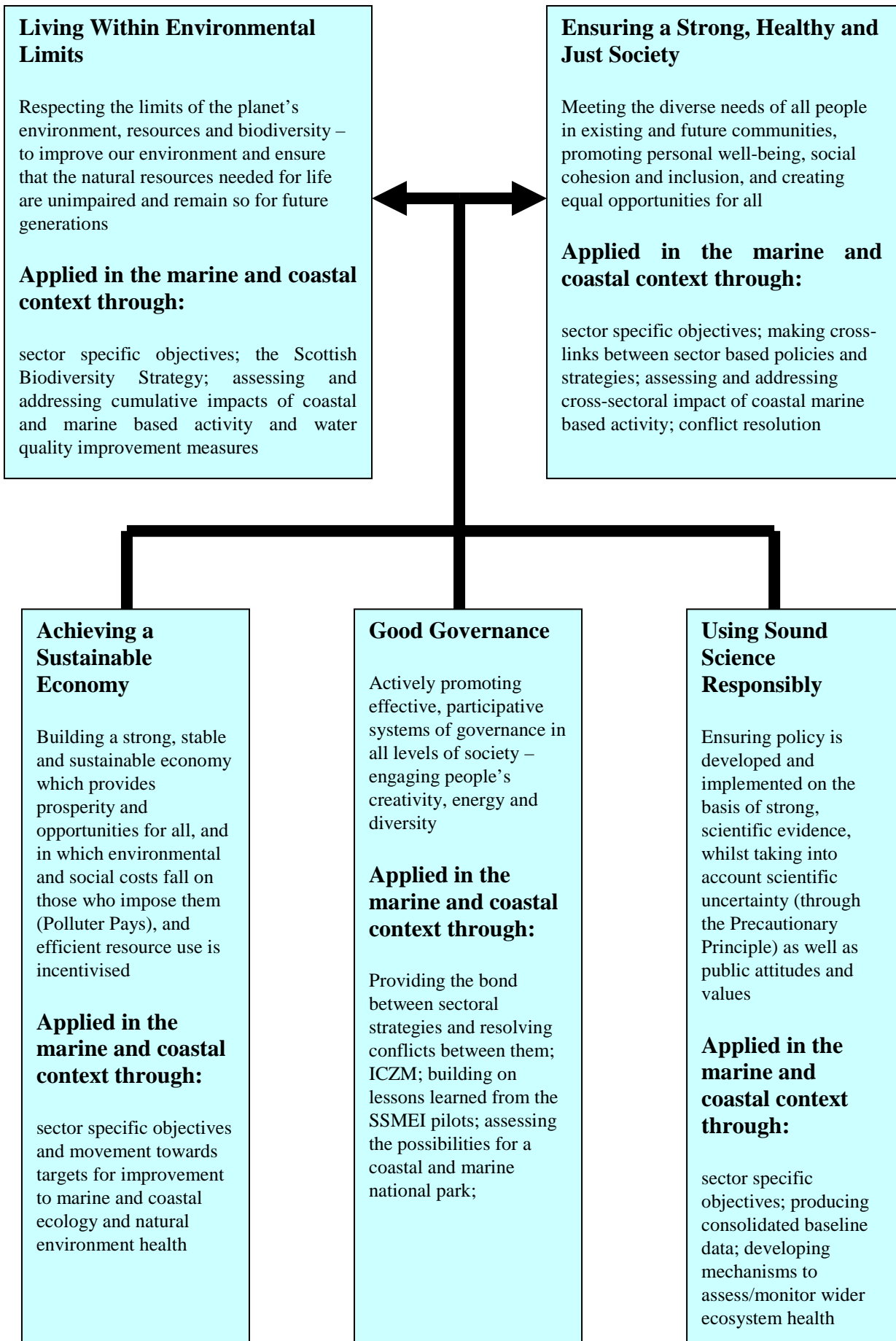
Common Seals (*Phoca vitulina*) in water © Lorne Gill/SNH

Sea View

Since 1995, Historic Scotland has grant-aided diver training by the Nautical Archaeology Society Training (Scotland) (NAS). The training, based in the Sound of Mull, is undertaken in conjunction with the 'Diving with a Purpose' initiative, which encourages good stewardship and recording of Scotland's underwater heritage. In addition to helping improve standards of recording in maritime archaeology, the NAS Diver Training raises the public profile for maritime archaeology and promotes best practice, with training, support and advice for licensees working in Scotland on historic wreck sites.

Concept

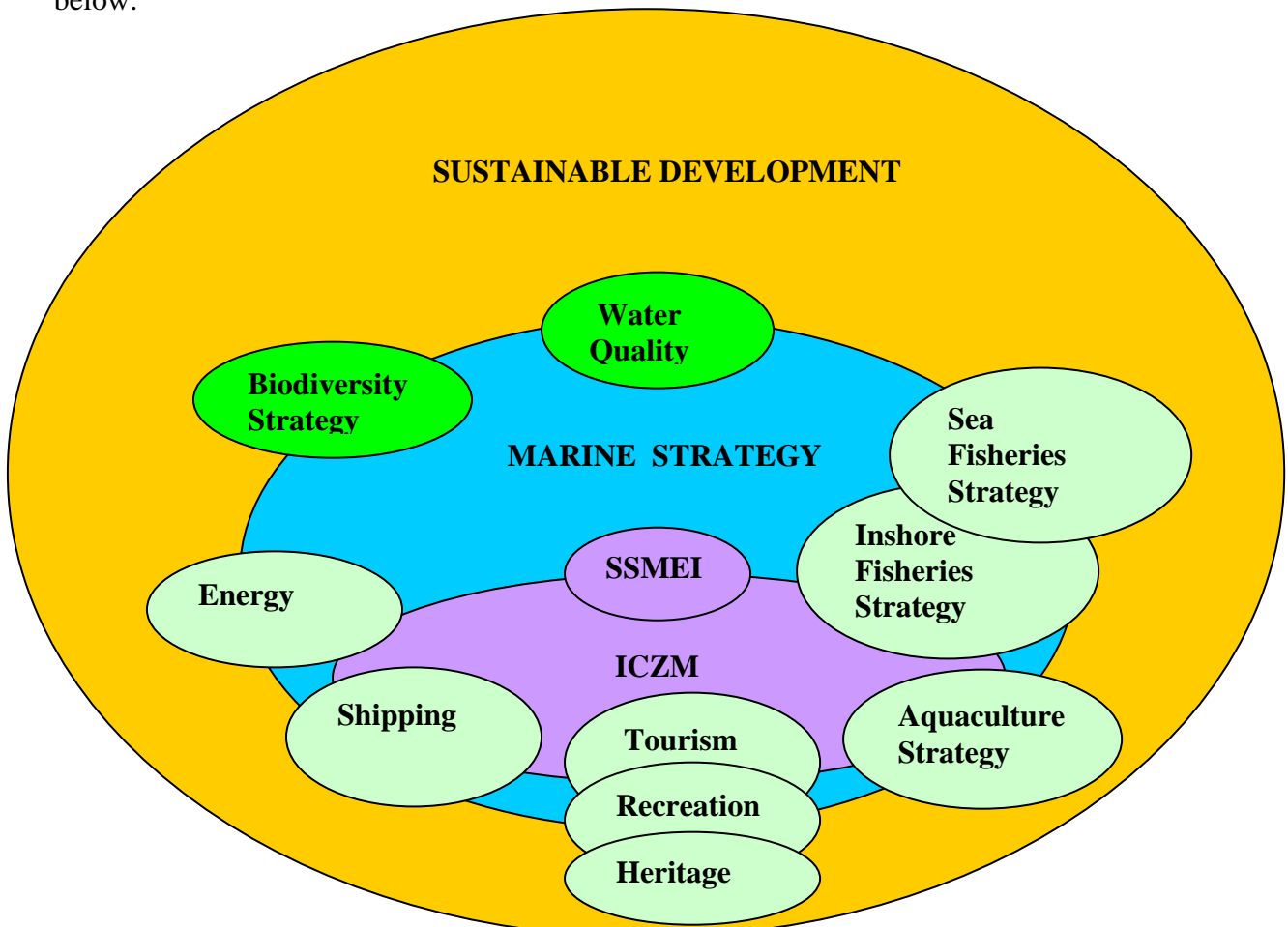
3.8 Building on the work of the Scottish Coastal Forum, the Scottish Biodiversity Forum and the SSMEI, and taking into account responses to the 2004 consultation, we will seek to apply the 5 inter-related guiding principles of sustainable development in the following way:



3.9 This will address the issues outlined at paragraph 3.6 by:

- Providing a more sophisticated approach to understanding the impact of inter-related activity in the marine and coastal environments (allowing us to understand better the cumulative impacts on natural resources on which more than one sector depends, and the cross-sectoral impacts of one activity area on others)
- Providing a basis for action through a governing framework to manage those inter relationships, bringing greater coherence and co-ordination to the range of policies and activities relevant to our coasts and seas
- Providing a more holistic, ecosystems-based approach to sustainable marine and coastal resource management and use
- Forming a bond between sector specific strategies to ensure that cumulative and cross-sectoral impacts are better understood and managed and that objectives on ecosystem/environmental health are met
- Moving the debate away from polarisation between socio-economic and environmental considerations by providing a mechanism for resolving conflicts between the two.

3.10 The relationship between sustainable development, the marine and coastal strategy, sectoral strategies, ICZM, biodiversity and water quality measures is shown graphically below:



Vision

3.11 The principles of sustainable development already apply to all activity in the marine and coastal areas. The value of a specific marine and coastal strategy therefore lies primarily in its wider management and conflict resolution function, and in its assessment of cumulative and cross-sectoral effects. Within that, there will be 3 distinct deliverables:

- To set and measure, against an identified scientific baseline, clear objectives for improving coastal and marine ecology health and the quality of the natural environment and the socio-economic health of coastal communities. Specific sector based objectives would contribute to that
- To provide a mechanism for determining the scale of any conflict between specific sector based objectives and the extent to which such objectives are hindered or exacerbated by climate change
- To provide a suite of measures for dealing with conflict resolution and at the appropriate scale.

3.12 These deliverables would aim to secure the long-term mutual sustainability of:

- The **environment** - from biologically diverse species and habitats to sites of historic and cultural value
- **Communities** – from coastal villages to conurbations which rely on and/or value the natural resources of our coastal and marine environments for whatever reason
- **Industries** – from fisheries, aquaculture and energy to transport, tourism and recreation

3.13 The Scottish Executive's ultimate vision, amended slightly from the proposal in the 2004 consultation in order to reflect the framework of guiding principles of sustainable development into which the strategy is now set, is to secure:

Clean, healthy, safe, productive and biologically diverse marine and coastal environments, managed to meet the long-term interests of nature and people

Sea View

Building Buchan New Beginnings is a 3 year action plan to address the economic challenges facing North Aberdeenshire. Under the plan, £1.3m is being invested to develop the 18th century Banff Harbour as a marina offering around 100 berths. Economic forecasts suggest the marina will generate around £500,000 of spend locally when full, supporting the local community. A further investment of around £56m over 8 years will support the regeneration of Kinnaird Head in Fraserburgh, resulting in new housing and open space areas. Core partners in the action plan are Scottish Enterprise Grampian, Aberdeenshire Council and Communities Scotland
[www.buildingbuchan.co.uk]

4. OBJECTIVES

4.1 The top-level objectives are principally those described in the 5 guiding principles of sustainable development (paragraph 3.8) and in the vision (paragraph 3.13). Beneath those, and taking forward proposals made in response to the 2004 consultation and other reviews, we intend to pursue the following strategic level objectives in 5 key areas:

National Level Governance

- To provide effective, strategic and adequately resourced leadership
- To ensure better co-ordination of policy and supporting activities
- To promote wider public awareness, understanding and appreciation of the value of the marine and coastal environments and the pressures on them

Sustainable Environment

- To enhance and conserve the overall quality of our coasts and seas, their natural processes and their biodiversity
- To integrate environmental and biodiversity considerations into the management of marine related activities

Sustainable Communities

- To maintain strong, prosperous and growing coastal communities
- To support integrated marine and coastal management at local level
- To identify means of working with natural processes to protect against coastal flooding and to maintain inter-tidal and coastal habitats of importance for biodiversity

Sustainable Industries

- To improve capacity for planning the growth of coastal and offshore developments
- To promote sustainable, profitable and well managed marine related industries

Sound Science

- To develop better integrated, relevant scientific data on the marine environment and the effects of the pressures on it
- To increase our understanding of natural processes and ways of working with them
- To understand the cumulative effects of activities in the marine and coastal areas

5. Outputs and Outcomes

5.1 The 2004 consultation, and other reviews, produced several suggestions for process orientated **outputs** (summarised in section 1 above) but little in the way of specific measurable **outcomes** to add to those, often derived from UK-wide, EU or International obligations, that were set out in the 2004 consultation. Scottish Ministers will pursue the outputs and outcomes in tables 1 and 2 as the key elements in helping to secure the long term sustainability of our coasts and seas.

Table 1: Outputs

Date	Expected Output
2006	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ICZM strategy reported to EU Commission • Application of SEA to all strategies, programmes and plans becomes mandatory in Scotland • Part II of FEPA amended to comply with WFD requirements on coastal engineering and building works • Indicators of marine ecosystem health developed • Environmental assessment of west coast of Scotland completed (wave and tidal power developments) • SNH report on coastal and marine national park • Development of an action plan for the implementation of the Sea Fisheries Sustainable Framework • Establishment of the first tranche of Inshore Fisheries Groups under the Strategic Framework for Sea Fisheries in Scotland.
2007	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Concept of marine spatial planning further developed • Guidance on coastal and marine users' rights and responsibilities published
2008	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SSMEI pilots completed, with an assessment of the scope for following similar or adapted approaches elsewhere in Scotland • Designation of Scotland's first coastal and marine national park • Network of Natura sites extended into the marine environment
2010	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Network of marine protected areas established
2012	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Control regimes for WFD operational
2015	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development of sustainability strategies for Scotland's key fish stocks under the Sea Fisheries Sustainable Framework.
2030	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Where decline in priority species and habitats continues, reasons should be understood and measures in place to minimise losses



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Table 2: Outcomes

Date	Expected Outcome
2008	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improved management of the coastal and marine environments in the SSMEI pilot areas with additional benefits to coastal communities • Increased number and proportion of habitats and species protected under the Natura network • Flooding risks reduced to no greater than 1% annual risk for 4,950 properties
2010	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 18% of electricity generated from renewable sources • 20% reduction in carbon dioxide emissions below 1990 levels (UK target to which Scotland will contribute) • Biodiversity decline halted • Instances of eutrophication under control • WFD water quality targets met
2015	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • WFD requirement for good ecological status achieved for coastal waters met • Depleted fish stocks restored to maximum sustainable yields where possible
2020	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 40% electricity generated from renewable sources • Discharges, emissions and losses of hazardous substances reduced to close to zero for man made synthetics • Discharges, emissions and losses of radioactive substances caused by human activity reduced so that concentrations in the marine environment are near background levels for naturally occurring substances and close to zero for artificial substances
2030	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Loss of priority species' habitats halted • Many priority species and habitats increasing • More people feel a sense of responsibility for, and stewardship of, biodiversity and understand and enjoy the social, economic and environmental benefits of a biologically diverse coastal and marine environment



Fulmar, Shetland © Lorne Gill / SNH

Marine spatial planning

5.2 The potential for marine spatial planning, and other means of managing coastal and marine activity, will be explored through pilot projects under the SSMEI in Shetland, the Clyde and the St Abbs area. More detail on each of these pilots is below. A fourth pilot, in the Sound of Mull is also under consideration.

SHETLAND PILOT SUMMARY

Shetland is unique in Scotland having the 1974 Zetland County Council (ZCC) Act. The Shetlands Islands Council (SIC) has authority over most marine management issues out to 12 nautical miles and issues work licences for most marine developments through the Act. The Islands Council has promoted more integrated marine management through the appointment of a coastal zone management officer, and through the work of the Council's Marine Development Sub-committee. The Council has also begun the process of developing management plans for the marine environment but this has so far focussed on aquaculture. An opportunity now exists to bring together, strengthen and build on efforts so far in order to create a more integrated and robust framework for marine management in Shetland, which might serve as a model for improved marine management elsewhere in Scotland. The project will offer added capacity and value to the work already undertaken by existing stakeholder bodies in the pilot area.

Objectives

- To integrate and co-ordinate sectoral management initiatives (marine biodiversity; inshore fisheries; aquaculture; oil etc) into a marine spatial plan;
- To provide enhanced decision support to the Council and all other stakeholders on the distribution, use and value of marine resources;
- To assess the strengths and weaknesses of the ZCC Act and associated mechanisms in delivering the objectives of the SSMEI in Shetland and its potential to inform wider approaches in Scotland;
- To collate information to develop marine management plans and underpin more informed and strategic decision making;
- To ensure that communities understand and participate more effectively in marine management and decision making;
- To accommodate the views and knowledge of other stakeholders and the wider community at the earliest possible stage of any development proposal resulting in reduced conflict and enhanced siting, design and management.

Key Elements

- Establish the adequate level of information needed to underpin decision making;
- Assessment of existing activities, and opportunities for the future. It will encompass strategic environmental assessment of the evolving plan. This analysis should both inform and be informed by consultation, and will draw heavily on the information presented in a marine Geographic Information System (GIS) for Shetland;
- Stakeholder and community participation to draw on marine knowledge and additional studies to fill knowledge gaps;
- Strategy development and spatial planning will draw together the information, analysis and stakeholder perspectives in order to develop and agree an effective strategy for sustainable marine management. The strategy will include spatial planning and building on the GIS to guide future development and work licence decisions;
- Development of a Marine Management Plan for Shetland as a whole, and local area plans identifying where marine systems are subject to current development pressures and likely future pressures.

Deliverables

- a comprehensive overarching marine spatial plan for Shetland supported by a marine GIS;
- a set of three or more detailed local plans will be produced relating to marine systems where competition for resources exists;
- an improved decision support system for marine stakeholders and the local community;
- strategic analysis of existing marine activities and provision of a better understanding of environmental capacity, spatial planning issues, current pressures and how the marine environment can be managed in the future.

FIRTH OF CLYDE PILOT SUMMARY

The Clyde pilot aims at the development and delivery of more integrated and sustainable management of the marine and coastal areas of the Firth of Clyde through:

- Developing an agreed marine spatial plan for natural resource use, development control and management of the marine and coastal areas of the Firth of Clyde;
- Providing decision support mechanisms;
- Delivering more integrated decision making.

The project will offer added capacity and value to the work and profile of the Clyde Forum. Initially at least, the same geographical boundaries on the Firth of Clyde as those adopted by the Forum are proposed, but marine rather than upstream issues will be the focus of activity. The precise coverage of the pilot project will however be agreed by those involved and informed by work considering the application of the ecosystem approach.

Objectives

- To deliver the ideals of ecosystem based management and sustainable development by developing an effective and integrated stakeholder-regulator partnership for the marine and coastal areas of the Firth of Clyde;
- To develop a long-term marine spatial plan for the Clyde marine area;
- To develop coastal and inshore marine local sector plans which take full account of the interests of stakeholders and wider ecosystem issues;
- To integrate and make accessible natural resource 'ecosystem' level management information;
- To test new 'integrated management' structures in advance of Water Framework Directive (WFD) requirements.

Key Elements

- Establish the Clyde Marine Advisory Group (C-MAG) agreeing its objectives and actions;
- Provision of development guidance and consultation;
- Investigate information requirements, especially opportunities for improvement in decision support to marine regulators;
- Develop decision support mechanisms identifying inadequacies and consider changes;
- Produce sectoral forward plans that integrate with the ecosystem based management plan for the Firth of Clyde;
- Develop and implement a marine spatial plan that combines and augments the sectoral plans in a coherent system;
- Develop a common information resource;
- Promotion & fund-raising.

Deliverables

- a structure to facilitate marine spatial planning and investigate and test new decision-making processes in the marine environment;
- integrated plans for key sectors such as recreation, offshore energy, shipping, industry and aquaculture to achieve greater awareness between sectors & regulators and to encourage sustainable development in the sectors;
- a marine spatial plan that connects the sectoral plans developed with the Glasgow and Clyde Valley Structure Plan; addresses SEPA's responsibilities under River Basin Management Planning and takes account of Scotland's obligations under international marine initiatives;
- a review of the implementation of the marine spatial plan by partners and others in the Clyde including lessons learned and recommendations for increasing uptake of the plan in the years following the pilot;
- consideration of how information is disseminated to all stakeholders within the local partnership model, where possible simplifying and clarifying the process for stakeholders;
- commissioning of other targeted research where necessary;
- raising awareness of the sustainable development goals of the project;
- an extensive web-based resource of information relating to the Clyde and its marine environment that will contribute to awareness-raising.

ST ABBS AREA PILOT SUMMARY

Background

The Berwickshire coast has a long history of marine resource use, with the main communities of St Abbs, Coldingham and Eyemouth traditionally relying upon fishing as the main source of employment. Socio-economic dependencies on the marine environment are diversifying into service sectors such as recreation and tourism. Achieving a balance between old and new marine resource users presents a particular challenge for management. The marine environment of Berwickshire is rich, with a number of voluntary, national and international nature conservation designations. In addition, outstanding coastal scenery and rich cultural and historic interests, combine to make the Berwickshire Coast attractive to a range of users for recreation and tourism, as well as traditional uses such as fishing. The pilot will identify ways in which the communities can work towards sustainable management of the marine environment, building upon the valuable work already undertaken by stakeholders in the area. It will offer added capacity and value to the work already undertaken by existing stakeholder bodies in St. Abbs & Eyemouth.

Objectives

- Help local communities to adapt to changing environmental, social and economic circumstances through targeted initiatives related to sustainable marine resource use;
- Encourage community stewardship of the marine environment by illustrating the socio-economic benefits of sustainable management.

Key Elements

- Investigate the socio-economic benefits from current marine resource use;
- Develop a “vision for the Berwickshire coast”, which identifies the aspirations of community and users and identifies how the pilot can advance them;
- Establish a series of initiatives in the pilot area to demonstrate the socio-economic benefits of sustainable management;
- Develop community support for sustainable development and encourage broader buy in for a culture of stewardship for the marine environment;
- Establish a Steering Group for the pilot;
- Collate and publish marine stewardship information and forward looking plan.

Deliverables

- Identification of the socio-economic benefits of sustainable management;
- An ongoing engagement mechanism for better communication between regulators and stakeholders within the pilot area;
- Completion of initiatives showing the socio-economic benefits of sustainable development which can be replicated in other Scottish coastal communities;
- A report showing current marine stewardship information and the potential for future sustainable development.

6. DELIVERY

6.1 Responses to the 2004 consultation focussed on the need for **better policy leadership** and **good governance**. Good governance, involving participation from stakeholders, is also one of the central principles of sustainable development. The 2004 consultation was deliberately not prescriptive – it sought views on what a strategy might contain rather than on any specific Scottish Executive proposals for a strategy.

6.2 We intend to continue to engage with stakeholders in the further development of a marine and coastal strategy, building on the outputs and outcomes at tables 1 and 2 which take forward some proposals made in response to the consultation and from the Scottish Biodiversity Strategy and the Scottish Coastal Forum.



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6.3 To do this, and to oversee the coordination across sectoral strategies, the Minister for Environment and Rural Development will personally chair a high level group to:

- Review objectives, outputs and outcomes
- Consider the potential for marine spatial planning and how such a system might operate in practice
- Identify indicators of progress towards objectives, including identifying new research and science needs
- Input to the early stage assessment, by SNH, of potential candidate sites for the first coastal and marine national park
- Identify the scale of any conflicts between sector-based objectives
- Develop a suite of measures for conflict resolution, at various scales
- Identify whether any of the elements of the strategy might require underpinning by new legislation or new delivery mechanisms

6.4 Stakeholder representatives, including the chairs of existing groups/committees with a coastal and marine remit, will be invited to join the new group. We would expect the group to conclude its work in about a year.

7. THE DEVOLUTION CONTEXT

Snapshot

7.1 The devolved/reserved mix is complex in the coastal and marine environment. Scotland has full competence for nature conservation out to 12nm and, within the framework of the CFP, for fisheries management out to 200nm. With the exception of oil and gas and shipping related deposits, we also have full competence for licensing deposits in the sea beyond 12nm. Defence related activity is fully reserved. Shipping and oil and gas issues are largely reserved, although we have executive devolution for renewable energy consents (currently out to 12nm but to be extended beyond that by the Energy Act 2004); and, with the exception of oil and gas related development, legislative competence for navigational safety under section 34 of the Coast Protection Act 1949.

Scope of the Strategy

7.2 Under the current devolution settlement the scope of the Scottish marine and coastal strategy is therefore largely limited to the extent of the Scottish sector of UK territorial waters, but will reach beyond that in respect of those matters for which Scotland has devolved powers outside 12nm.

New Legislation

7.3 The UK Government has announced its intention to produce a draft Marine Bill for public consultation during the current session of the UK Parliament. Although Scottish Ministers have not yet committed to new Scottish legislation that option remains under active consideration as both UK and Scottish policy on a range of marine and coastal related issues develops further. Scottish Ministers expect discussion in the stakeholder group (paragraph 6.3 above) to determine what legislative changes might be needed to give effect to Scotland's marine and coastal strategy.

8. TIMETABLE FOR NEXT STEPS

8.1 Target dates for specific outputs and outcomes are given in Table 1. Key milestones for taking forward the further development of Scotland's marine and coastal strategy are:

by September 2005	establish new stakeholder group and hold its first meeting
by January 2006	stakeholder group input to SNH assessment of possibilities for Scotland's first coastal and marine national park
in March 2006	SNH reports to Ministers on possibilities for Scotland's first coastal and marine national park
by April 2006	stakeholder group has reviewed objectives; established performance indicators; identified dispute settlement needs and mechanisms;
by December 2006	Public consultation on SNH's report Elements of any new Scottish legislation identified Stakeholder group likely to disband
during 2007	Decision on Scotland's first coastal and marine national park
after 2007 Scottish Elections	possible Scottish legislation, if considered necessary
during 2008	Designation of Scotland's first coastal and marine national park

9. PROPOSALS MADE IN RESPONSE TO THE 2004 CONSULTATION THAT WILL NOT BE PURSUED AT THIS STAGE

9.1 Many of the proposals made in response to the 2004 consultation will be incorporated into the strategy described in this document as it is taken forward. Most suggestions for additions to the identified drivers of change in paragraph 3.1 have been incorporated into that list. Comments on the concept of a national coastline park and a marine national park were taken into account and helped to shape Scottish Ministers' decision to ask SNH to undertake work towards the designation of Scotland's first coastal and marine national park.

9.2 The vision (at paragraph 3.13) has been amended to reflect the framework of sustainable development in which the marine and coastal strategy sits. Scottish Ministers have decided not to incorporate into the vision some detailed points made in the response to the consultation (for example, to refer to the "maritime" environment; to include reference to attractiveness and cultural heritage; and to refer to the role of voluntary management groups). Those concepts are embedded into the strategy but Ministers want to keep the overarching vision as simple as possible.

9.3 Most of the suggested additions to the outputs and outcomes summarised in the consultation paper have been incorporated into the strategy. The suggested inclusion of a review of shipping routes to protect Marine Environment High Risk Areas (MEHRAs) has not been incorporated because this is a reserved matter already under consideration by the UK Government.

9.4 The suggested creation of a Marine Agency to provide for better co-ordination of coastal and marine management has not been incorporated into the strategy at this stage. Scottish Ministers wish to keep options open on that as objectives, outputs, outcomes and other delivery mechanisms are worked up by the proposed stakeholder group to be chaired by the Minister for Environment and Rural Development.

9.5 Scottish Ministers have decided that as the 2004 consultation did not indicate a general difficulty with the development consents regimes listed at paragraph 1.4 above, no changes should be made to those regimes at this stage. Part II of the Food and Environment Protection Act 1985 will, however, be reviewed and if necessary amended to conform to the requirements of the Water Framework Directive in respect of coastal building and engineering works.

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