

30/10/2013

MPA 10077

25 October, 2013

MPA Network,
Scottish Government,
Marine Planning,
Area 1-A South,
Victoria Quay,
EDINBURGH.

Dear Sir,
This is an individual response to the Planning Scotland's Seas MPA Consultation.

I am delighted that the Government is proposing 33 Marine Protected Areas to protect some of our marine wildlife. But I cannot understand why the needs of Scotland's seabirds are ignored. The Scottish government is legally required to create an "ecologically coherent" network of MPAs, but the network is not coherent unless we include protected areas for seabird feeding "hotspots".

Q2 Clyde Sea Stack; Q3 East Caithness Cliffs; Q6 Fetlar - Haroldswick; Q13 Monach Isles; Q19 Papa Westray; Q21 Small Isles. All of these sites should be designated to protect black guillemot. Other seabirds must also be protected in these sites. Q28 & Q29 Firth of Forth Banks Complex MPA must be designated and it is vital that Sandeels should be protected. Sandeels are an important food source for seabirds, especially puffins. I have seen puffins, beaks loaded with sandeels, return to their burrows to feed the solitary chick. Only one chick is produced each season. This makes help for puffins extremely urgent.

Q35. Is the proposed network complete? Without protection for seabirds, it cannot be considered complete. The Government has committed to creating an ecologically coherent network which is representative of nationally important species and "particularly important for highly mobile species, such as certain birds". MPAs are required to complement Special Protection Areas and offer seabirds the level of protection required.

(per pair of puffins)

Required to help stem the drastic and continued declines in their numbers. I understand that in view of this terrible decline in many seabird populations over the last 10 years, scientists predict that we could see seabirds go extinct from some parts of the country within the next 10 years. We need MPAs that protect areas of national importance for our precious seabirds, not just areas of European importance, as at present.

I love and admire our seabirds and can enjoy them regularly, living as I do very near the coast. I hope with all my heart that you will give serious attention to their plight.

Yours sincerely,

