

CONSULTATION QUESTIONS

1. Do you support the development of an MPA network in Scotland's Seas?

Yes No

SEPA's responses to this question fall into four categories:

Support of development and selection process:

- i. SEPA has participated in the stakeholder engagement process and supports the approach that has been undertaken for the selection of the proposed Marine Protected Areas.
- ii. SEPA agrees with the Priority Marine Features (PMFs) which were used in the search for locations of the proposed MPAs, and recognises that many of these features were previously listed under international, national and Scottish legislation as features requiring protection.
- iii. SEPA supports and recognises the purpose of the MPAs and the level of protection for the features in the sites.
- iv. SEPA recognises that currently 17 of the inshore MPAs lie adjacent to, or are wholly enclosed within, coastal or transitional WFD waterbodies. SEPA also notes the search areas for the remaining inshore sites also lie within WFD coastal waters.
- v. SEPA recognises that this overlap will lead to an interaction between the management of Marine Protected Areas and WFD water-bodies and it will be important to resolve issues that arise from this.

Science:

- i. SEPA supports the use of OSPAR protocol criteria for the selection of MPAs, as this will ensure consistency between current and future management objectives for the marine environment at Scottish and European levels.
- ii. SEPA recognises that the sites were selected using the best available current information, and the list will be the subject of reviews in 2014 and 2018. These reviews will utilise any new information that has become available in the interim.
- iii. SEPA understands that further information will be shared as it becomes available and will be used to support management of the MPAs through tools such as National Marine Plan interactive (NMPi) and Feature Activity Sensitivity Tool (FEAST).

Management of MPAs:

- i. SEPA recognises that the MPAs are part of the 3-pillar approach described within the Marine (Scotland) Act 2011. Through this we will see the integration of site based protection for habitats and species, alongside measures which will support protection for the wider marine environment.
- ii. SEPA supports and recognises the purpose of the MPAs and the level of protection for the features within them, and recognises our own role in maintaining the quality and functions of the water environment that supports the site features.
- iii. SEPA recognises its responsibility as a public authority under the Marine (Scotland) Act 2011 and notes the guidance related to this role as set out in section 8 of the (Draft) MPA Management Manual.
- iv. SEPA notes that current licences will stand, and that any reviews or

modifications to them or new licence applications will be administered in accordance with the process outlined in the (Draft) Management Manual. Any reviews of existing licences will be undertaken in accordance with the timescales outlined in the current legislation.

- v. SEPA agrees that, where appropriate, common goals between the WFD and the MPA management objectives should be met through partnership work. In areas where there are transitional and coastal waters containing protected sites this can be achieved through stakeholder engagement within WFD Area Advisory Groups.
- vi. SEPA supports the adaptive approach to management – particularly with regards to the adoption of an ecosystem services approach and wider measures for sites within WFD catchment plans.
- vii. SEPA supports a risk-based approach to the management of MPAs.

Protection:

- i. SEPA notes that the MPAs have had policy protection since the beginning of this consultation and this is being recognised in SEPA's current work. Any management objectives required to protect the features within the sites will be included in the next set of River Basin Management Plans which are under current development. These sites have already been listed in the WFD register of protected areas.
- ii. SEPA supports the aim of preserving and enhancing the ecosystem services associated with these MPAs in the context of the wider aspects of river basin management planning.

Individual possible Nature Conservation MPAs

2. Do you have any comments on the case for designation, management options and socioeconomic assessment for the *Clyde Sea Sill* possible Nature Conservation MPA?

Designation: Yes No

Management Options: Yes No

Socioeconomic Assessment: Yes No

All of the above: Yes No

SEPA agrees with this proposed designation and protection of its features will be supported through our regulatory processes and delivery of the wider River Basin

Management Plan (RBMP) objectives outlined in the Clyde sub-basin plan.

3. Do you have any comments on the case for designation, management options and socioeconomic assessment for the *East Caithness Cliffs* possible Nature Conservation MPA?

Designation: Yes No

Management Options: Yes No

Socioeconomic Assessment: Yes No

All of the above: Yes No

SEPA agrees with this proposed designation and protection of its features will be supports through our regulatory processes and delivery of the wider RBMP objectives outlined in the North Highlands (North East Scotland) sub-basin plan.

4. Do you have any comments on the case for designation, management options and socioeconomic assessment for the *East of Gannet and Montrose Fields* possible Nature Conservation MPA?

Designation: Yes No

This MPA is located offshore and is outwith SEPA's remit.

Management Options: Yes No

Socioeconomic Assessment: Yes No

All of the above: Yes No

5. Do you have any comments on the case for designation, management options and socioeconomic assessment for the *Faroe-Shetland sponge belt* possible Nature Conservation MPA?

Designation: Yes No

This MPA is located offshore and is outwith SEPA's remit.

Management Options: Yes No

Socioeconomic Assessment: Yes No

All of the above: Yes No

6. Do you have any comments on the case for designation, management options and socioeconomic assessment for the *Fetlar to Haroldswick* possible Nature Conservation MPA?

Designation: Yes No

Management Options: Yes No

Socioeconomic Assessment: Yes No

All of the above: Yes No

SEPA agrees with this proposed designation and protection of its features will be supported through our regulatory processes and delivery of the wider RBMP objectives outlined in the Orkney and Shetland sub-basin plan.

7. Do you have any comments on the case for designation, management options and socioeconomic assessment for the *Hatton-Rockall Basin* possible Nature Conservation MPA?

Designation: Yes No

This MPA is located offshore and is outwith SEPA's remit.

Management Options:

Yes No

Socioeconomic Assessment:

Yes No

All of the above:

Yes No

8. Do you have any comments on the case for designation, management options and socioeconomic assessment for the *Loch Creran* possible Nature Conservation MPA?

Designation:

Yes No

SEPA notes the proposed additional feature to this pre-existing SAC.

Management Options:

Yes No

Socioeconomic Assessment:

Yes No

All of the above:

Yes No

SEPA agrees with this proposed designation and protection of its features will be supported through our regulatory processes and delivery of the wider RBMP objectives outlined in the Argyll sub-basin plan.

9. Do you have any comments on the case for designation, management options and socioeconomic assessment for the *Loch Sunart* possible Nature Conservation MPA?

Designation:

Yes No

SEPA notes the proposed additional feature to this pre-existing SAC.

Management Options:

Yes No

Socioeconomic Assessment:

Yes No

All of the above:

Yes No

SEPA agrees with this proposed designation and protection of its features will be supported through our regulatory processes and delivery of the wider RBMP objectives outlined in the Argyll sub-basin plan.

10. Do you have any comments on the case for designation, management options and socioeconomic assessment for the *Loch Sunart to the Sound of Jura* possible Nature Conservation MPA?

Designation:

Yes No

Management Options:

Yes No

Socioeconomic Assessment:

Yes No

All of the above:

Yes No

SEPA agrees with this proposed designation and protection of its features will be supported through our regulatory processes and delivery of the wider RBMP objectives outlined in the Argyll sub-basin plan.

11. Do you have any comments on the case for designation, management options and socioeconomic assessment for the *Loch Sween* possible Nature Conservation MPA?

Designation:

Yes No

Management Options:

Yes No

Socioeconomic Assessment:

Yes No

All of the above:

Yes No

SEPA agrees with this proposed designation and protection of its features will be supported through our regulatory processes and delivery of the wider RBMP objectives outlined in the Argyll sub-basin plan.

12. Do you have any comments on the case for designation, management options and socioeconomic assessment for the *Lochs Duich, Long and Alsh* possible Nature Conservation MPA?

Designation:

Yes No

SEPA notes the proposed additional feature to this pre-existing SAC.

Management Options:

Yes No

Socioeconomic Assessment:

Yes No

All of the above:

Yes No

SEPA agrees with this proposed designation and protection of its features will be supported through our regulatory processes and delivery of the wider RBMP objectives outlined in the West Highland sub-basin plan.

13. Do you have any comments on the case for designation, management options and socioeconomic assessment for the *Monach Isles* possible Nature Conservation MPA?

Designation:

Yes No

SEPA notes the boundary change and the proposed additional feature to this pre-existing SAC.

Management Options:

Yes No

Socioeconomic Assessment:

Yes No

All of the above:

Yes No

SEPA agrees with this proposed designation and protection of its features will be supported through our regulatory processes and delivery of the wider RBMP objectives outlined in the West Highland (Outer Hebrides) sub-basin plan.

14. Do you have any comments on the case for designation, management options and socioeconomic assessment for the *Mousa to Boddam* possible Nature Conservation MPA?

Designation: Yes No

SEPA notes the boundary change and the proposed additional feature to this pre-existing SAC.

Management Options: Yes No

Socioeconomic Assessment: Yes No

All of the above: Yes No

SEPA agrees with this proposed designation and protection of its features will be supported through our regulatory processes and delivery of the wider RBMP objectives outlined in the Orkney and Shetland sub-basin plan.

15. Do you have any comments on the case for designation, management options and socioeconomic assessment for the *North-east Faroe Shetland Channel* possible Nature Conservation MPA?

Designation: Yes No

This MPA is located offshore and is outwith SEPA's remit.

Management Options: Yes No

Socioeconomic Assessment: Yes No

All of the above: Yes No

16. Do you have any comments on the case for designation, management options and socioeconomic assessment for the *North-west Orkney* possible Nature Conservation MPA?

Designation: Yes No

This MPA is located offshore and is outwith SEPA's remit.

Management Options: Yes No

Socioeconomic Assessment: Yes No

All of the above: Yes No

17. Do you have any comments on the case for designation, management options and socioeconomic assessment for the *North-west sea lochs and Summer Isles* possible Nature Conservation MPA?

Designation: Yes No

Management Options: Yes No

Socioeconomic Assessment: Yes No

All of the above: Yes No

SEPA agrees with this proposed designation and protection of its features will be supported through our regulatory processes and delivery of the wider RBMP objectives outlined in the West Highland (Summer Isles and East Minch) sub-basin plan. SEPA also notes that there is a recovery objective for flame shell and maerl beds within this site.

18. Do you have any comments on the case for designation, management options and socioeconomic assessment for the *Noss Head* possible Nature Conservation MPA?

Designation: Yes No

Management Options: Yes No

Socioeconomic Assessment: Yes No

All of the above: Yes No

SEPA agrees with this proposed designation and protection of its features will be supported through our regulatory processes and delivery of the wider RBMP objectives outlined in the North Highland sub-basin plan. The site partially overlaps with this sub-basin plan.

19. Do you have any comments on the case for designation, management options and socioeconomic assessment for the *Papa Westray* possible Nature Conservation MPA?

Designation: Yes No

Management Options: Yes No

Socioeconomic Assessment: Yes No

All of the above: Yes No

SEPA agrees with this proposed designation and protection of its features will be supported through our regulatory processes and delivery of the wider RBMP objectives outlined in the Orkney and Shetland sub-basin plan.

20. Do you have any comments on the case for designation, management options and socioeconomic assessment for the *Rosemary Bank Seamount* possible Nature Conservation MPA?

Designation: Yes No

This MPA is located offshore and is outwith SEPA's remit.

Management Options: Yes No

Socioeconomic Assessment: Yes No

All of the above: Yes No

21. Do you have any comments on the case for designation, management options and socioeconomic assessment for the *Small Isles* possible Nature Conservation MPA?

Designation: Yes No

Management Options: Yes No

Socioeconomic Assessment: Yes No

All of the above: Yes No

SEPA agrees with this proposed designation and protection of its features will be supported through our regulatory processes and delivery of the wider RBMP objectives outlined in the West Highland (Sea of Hebrides and Ardnamurchan to Southern Skye) sub-basin plan.

22. Do you have any comments on the case for designation, management options and socioeconomic assessment for the *South Arran* possible Nature Conservation MPA?

Designation: Yes No

Management Options:

Yes No

Socioeconomic Assessment:

Yes No

All of the above:

Yes No

SEPA agrees with this proposed designation and protection of its features will be supported through our regulatory processes and delivery of the wider RBMP objectives outlined in the Clyde sub-basin plan. SEPA also notes that there is a recovery objective for maerl beds within this site.

23. Do you have any comments on the case for designation, management options and socioeconomic assessment for *The Barra Fan and Hebrides Terrace Seamount* possible Nature Conservation MPA?

Designation:

Yes No

This MPA is located offshore and is outwith SEPA's remit.

Management Options:

Yes No

Socioeconomic Assessment:

Yes No

All of the above:

Yes No

24. Do you have any comments on the case for designation, management options and socioeconomic assessment for the *Turbot Bank* possible Nature Conservation MPA?

Designation:

Yes No

This MPA is located offshore and is outwith SEPA's remit.

Management Options:

Yes No

Socioeconomic Assessment:

Yes No

All of the above:

Yes No

25. Do you have any comments on the case for designation, management options and socioeconomic assessment for the *Upper Loch Fyne and Loch Goil* possible Nature Conservation MPA?

Designation:

Yes No

Management Options:

Yes No

Socioeconomic Assessment:

Yes No

All of the above:

Yes No

SEPA supports this proposed designation and protection of its features will be conferred through our regulatory processes and delivery of the wider RBMP objectives outlined in the Clyde sub-basin plan. SEPA also notes that there is a recovery objective for flame shell beds within this site.

26. Do you have any comments on the case for designation, management options and socioeconomic assessment for the *West Shetland Shelf (formerly Windsock)* possible Nature Conservation MPA?

Designation:

Yes No

This MPA is located offshore and is outwith SEPA's remit.

Management Options:

Yes No

Socioeconomic Assessment:

Yes No

All of the above:

Yes No

27. Do you have any comments on the case for designation, management options and socioeconomic assessment for the *Wyre and Rousay Sounds* possible Nature Conservation MPA?

Designation:

Yes No

Management Options:

Yes No

Socioeconomic Assessment:

Yes No

All of the above:

Yes No

SEPA supports this proposed designation and protection of its features will be conferred through our regulatory processes and delivery of the wider RBMP objectives outlined in the Orkney and Shetland sub-basin plan.

Choices to represent features in the MPA Network

28. Recognising the scientific advice from JNCC included alternatives for representing offshore subtidal sands and gravels, ocean quahog and shelf banks and mounds in the Southern North Sea, do you have a preference or comments on the following combinations to represent these features, bearing in mind Turbot Bank will need to be designated to represent sandeel in this region:

- Firth of Forth Banks Complex
- Turbot bank and Norwegian Boundary Sedimentary Plain
- Or Firth of Forth Banks Complex, Turbot bank and Norwegian Boundary Sedimentary Plain

No comment - the search locations for these features are located offshore and outwith SEPA's remit.

29. Do you have any comments on the case for designation, management options and socioeconomic assessments for the preference you have indicated in the question above, regarding alternatives for representing offshore subtidal sands and gravels, ocean quahog and shelf banks and mounds in the Southern North Sea?

Yes No

No comment - the search locations for these features are located offshore and outwith SEPA's remit.

30. Recognising the scientific advice from JNCC included alternatives for representing the burrowed mud feature in the Fladens, do you have a preference or comments on the following combinations to represent these features, bearing in mind the part of Central Fladen (known as Central Fladen (Core)) containing tall seapen (*Funiculina quadrangularis*) will need to be designated to represent tall seapen in this region:

- Central Fladen MPA only
- The tall sea-pen component of Central Fladen, plus Western Fladen
- Or the tall sea-pen component of Central Fladen, plus South-East Fladen.

No comment - the search locations for these features are located offshore and outwith SEPA's remit.

31. Do you have any comments on the case for designation, management options and socioeconomic assessments for the preference you have indicated in the question above, regarding alternatives for representing the burrowed mud feature in the Fladens?

Yes No

32. Recognising the scientific advice from JNCC included alternatives for representing offshore subtidal sands and gravels, offshore deep sea mud, and burrowed mud in OSPAR Regions III and V, do you have a preference or comments on the following combinations to represent these features:

South-West Sula Sgeir and Hebridean slope
Or Geikie slide and Hebridean slope

No comment - the search locations for these features are located offshore and outwith SEPA's remit.

33. Do you have any comments on the case for designation, management options and socioeconomic assessments for the preference you have indicated in the question above, regarding alternatives for representing offshore subtidal sands and gravels, offshore deep sea mud, and burrowed mud in OSPAR Regions III and V?

Yes No

Sustainability Appraisal

34. Do you have any comments on the Sustainability Appraisal of the MPA network as a whole?

Yes No

- i. SEPA recognises the step change that the UK marine legislation will bring to managing Scotland's seas, and that the conservation and restoration objectives within the MPA network are part of the 3-pillar approach to sustainable marine management.
- ii. SEPA supports the role MPAs will play in achieving good ecological/environmental status in coastal and transitional waterbodies.
- iii. SEPA will work with partners to develop guidance to resolve issues that may arise from activities displaced from MPAs into the wider marine environment.
- iv. SEPA looks forward to working with partners to develop an ecosystem services approach to underpin the sustainable management of MPAs and the wider marine environment.

Final Thoughts

35. On the basis of your preferences on which MPAs should be designated, do you view this to form a complete or ecologically coherent network, subject to the completion and recommendations of SNH's further work on the 4 remaining search locations?

Yes No

- i. SEPA recognises that the sites proposed will contribute to an ecologically coherent network of protected areas in the marine environment and welcomes the added protection that will arise from this.
- ii. SEPA supports this process and acknowledges that further sites may be proposed within the search areas described. SEPA also recognises that research MPAs may be considered at a later date for inclusion in the 2014 round.
- iii. SEPA recognises that future MPAs may include additional sites that require restoration measures in areas where the Priority Marine Features are currently unprotected or require restoration.

36. Do you have any other comments on the case for designation, management options, environmental or socioeconomic assessments of the MPAs, or the network as a whole?

Yes No

SEPA welcomes the role that it has had in this process to date, and looks forward to working with partners to support further implementation of the Marine (Scotland) Act 2011.