

CONSULTATION QUESTIONS

1. Do you agree with the proposals set out in the draft Scottish Marine Regions Order 2013?

Yes No

If no, please explain why not and your suggested alternative(s).

Thank you for the opportunity to respond to the Scottish Marine Regions (SMR) Order consultation 2013.

In line with our response to the previous SMR consultation in 2011, Solway Firth Partnership supports the concept of regional marine planning and the scale of the proposed SMR for the Solway. This should enable the effective engagement of a meaningful community of interest and consideration of local issues and priorities within the context of the National Marine Plan.

2. Do you have any further comments? In particular we are seeking views on

- the drafting of the Order;
- the co-ordinates establishing the marine region boundaries;
- the boundaries outlined at paragraph 8 above;
- the names of the regions suggested; and
- the illustrative map.

In line with our previous response, we welcome alignment of the seaward boundary of the SMR for the Solway with neighbouring administrations. This avoids creation of further divisions in an area which already has complex boundary issues and enables a direct connection in planning terms between adjacent administrations.

We welcome adjustment of the boundary between Solway and Clyde SMRs to align with the local authority administrative boundary between Dumfries and Galloway Council and South Ayrshire.

Therefore, our only comment on this consultation concerns the name of the region which we strongly feel should be 'Solway' rather than 'South-West'. For clarity, all references in the current draft of the Scottish Marine Regions Order 2013 reading 'the Scottish marine region for the South West' to be amended to read 'the Scottish marine region for the Solway'.

The name has great historic significance and has been used since the thirteenth century. It comes from a ford, the Sulwath, a crossing on the River Esk linking

Scotland and England. It has gradually been adopted as the regional name for a much wider sea area and is the natural name for the marine planning region.

In line with the ministerial commitment to joint marine planning between Scotland and England, the term 'Solway' represents the whole estuary rather than 'south-west' which is only meaningful in a Scottish context. We can reasonably expect that there will be an associated Marine Planning Partnership and while the structure of this, and indeed whether or not there is such a set-up, is still a matter for debate, our position has always been that such a body should comprise both Scottish and English interests. It may well be appropriate to encompass Manx and Northern Irish interests as well, although clearly the framework of this structure would be set in Scottish legislation. Solway is a term that better reflects the region and all its interests than 'south-west' which only makes sense from a Scottish perspective.

There is also a very strong sense of regional identity and of shared interests between communities around the Solway which should be protected by maintaining the local name. Regional identity is also an important marketing tool, for example, we use terms like 'the Solway coast' frequently in tourism promotions and the name has the potential for greater use in marketing locally landed seafood. We should take every opportunity to reinforce the 'brand' by using the regional name: Solway.

3. Do you believe that the creation of Scottish Marine Regions discriminates disproportionately between persons defined by age, disability, sexual orientation, gender, race and religion and belief?

Yes No

4. If you answered yes to question 3 in what way do you believe that the creation of Scottish Marine Regions is discriminatory?