

RESPONSE FORM

DRAFT SEAWEED POLICY STATEMENT 2013

1. Do you agree with policies 1-6?

State any you agree or disagree with, and your reasons. Agree in principle. Care must be taken not to over exploit.

2. Should policy 2 require local provenance, i.e., stock must originate from the water body the seaweed is to be grown in?

State your reasons: Yes - Must be seaweed species that grow naturally within the area otherwise there is a risk of introducing invasive seaweed species which could be harmful to the local ecosystem.

3. Do you agree with policy 7? YES

State your reasons: Yes, in principle, however must ensure, through continued research, any developments are not creating adverse environmental impacts.

4. Do you agree with policies 8 and 9?

State any you agree or disagree with, and your reasons: Agree. Seaweed growth can be enhanced from the nutrients provided from other marine activities such as finfish farming.

5. Do you think that the size scales (shellfish (small), medium, and extensive), are appropriate?

Give your reasons
We consider small and medium is appropriate, whereas extensive could result in negative environmental impacts.

6. Which consenting option would be most appropriate for seaweed cultivation?

Give your reasons
Transfer to planning only if part of IMTA development. Historically, terrestrial planning can be problematical, which could be disadvantageous to marine related SME's.

7. Should guidance be developed for the harvesting of wild seaweed? If not, what (if any) alternative arrangements would you suggest?

Appropriate wild seaweed harvesting procedures must be put in place by seaweed businesses, with constant monitoring to ensure over exploitation is not taking place. Furthermore, harvesters must be made aware of certain areas, and times of year where and when harvesting is not allowed. Monitoring cannot be just a 'paper exercise' carried out at a desk, but must be physically carried out at harvesting sites. Additionally, quality checking on intake of seaweed must be carried out to ensure seaweed has been cut correctly to ensure sustainability of wild stocks.

8. Should the 1997 Act be amended to provide the flexibility to farm other species or specifically named species? YES

State what named species should be included, and provide your reasons.

In principle Yes – however research should initially be carried out to ensure cultivation of a specifically named species will not have a negative environmental impact.

9. Do you have any comments to make on the BRIA content?

Seaweed cultivation and wild harvesting can be successful, with no environmental impacts as long as appreciation is given to ecosystems. However, history has shown how man has over exploited much of the world's natural resources, therefore the seaweed industry must act with environmental care, awareness and respect, in order to prevent detriment to marine ecosystems.