

CONSULTATION QUESTIONS

- **Do you support the development of an MPA network in Scotland's Seas?**

Yes

I firmly support the development of an MPA network. There is a very real need to establish areas that allow benthic recovery. The goals should be twofold: the improvement of biodiversity and the recovery of a sustainable inshore fishery

- **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

The area would benefit from an MPA because at present there is high pressure put on the benthic environment through commercial fishing activities. The worst of these is scallop dredging followed by bottom trawling for nephrops. Even creeling is at an unsustainably high level. Species such as tall sea pens are maerl beds etc are good indicators of a healthy sea bed and are all to rare at present.

Management Options:

Yes

A kilowatt limit on trawlers. A total ban on trawling the upper reaches of the two Loch Brooms. No Scallop dredging in the MPA at all. Creel limits imposed. This would have be self policed by the local fleet which is composed of small trawlers and creel boats.

Socioeconomic Assessment:

Yes

MPA s would be beneficial to the area in that the nephrops fishery would improve. At present it is declining year on year in quality as smaller and smaller prawns are landed. Fin fish although not commercially important in the area at present would increase with better nursery grounds. This would benefit a much larger area than the MPA. Possible recovery of herring. Tourism through improved biodiversity wildlife operators etc Recreational angling. The area was famous for skate in the 1980s.

Diving recreationally and for scallops.

All of the above:

Yes No

Comments

- **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 pMPA 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.

Central Fladen must be protected in line with scientific advice and I support the 'Central Fladen pMPA only' option to be included in the network. This would be the most ecologically coherent option, providing scope for tall sea pen recovery beyond what may be a remnant population in 'core' Central Fladen.

Sustainability Appraisal

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

no

Final Thoughts

- **On the basis of your preferences on which pMPAs 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?**

No

The MPAs are isolated islands so the word network is not that suited.

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

Yes

I feel that the MPAs are only partially addressing the problem of bottom trawling. This is the number one culprit and if the 3 mile limit was reinstated the MPAs would be unnessecary. I would like to see this as a step towards a 3 mile limit and not small pockets of important species dotted around our coast.

Thank You.