

Draft statutory guidance to the Marine Management Organisation on its contribution to the achievement of sustainable development

Presented to Parliament pursuant to section 2(6) of the Marine and Coastal Access Act 2009

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**Department for
Environment, Food and Rural Affairs**

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to the
Marine Management Organisation
on its contribution to the achievement
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1. Introduction

- 1.1 This statutory guidance addressed to the Marine Management Organisation (MMO) sets out the UK Government's view of the role of the MMO and the principles it should follow in fulfilling its overall objective of making a contribution to the achievement of sustainable development, in accordance with section 2 of the Marine and Coastal Access (MCA) Act 2009 (see 'statutory and policy framework', page 9).
- 1.2 The establishment of the Marine Management Organisation under the MCA Act 2009 is a key step towards delivering the Government's vision of '**clean, healthy, safe, productive and biologically diverse oceans and seas**'¹ by bringing together the delivery of many marine management functions in one organisation and forging strong links between its activities. The combination of marine functions delivered by the MMO, together with the knowledge and expertise it will accumulate over time, will result in integrated implementation of the Government policies that the MMO is responsible for delivering in the marine area. This will both improve the way the UK uses its marine resources and maximise the range of benefits it gets from them, whilst seeking to ensure an overall balance of conservation, energy and other resource needs.
- 1.3 The Secretary of State is required to give the MMO guidance on how it is to make its contribution to the achievement of sustainable development, taking into consideration the MMO's functions and the resources available to it. This guidance has been issued after consultation with the MMO and other interested organisations and individuals. The MMO must have regard to this guidance in carrying out its functions.
- 1.4 This is one of a suite of documents which will guide the MMO's operations. These include the normal documents associated with the governance of an executive Non Departmental Public Body (NDPB), the relevant marine policy documents associated with the MMO's new function of marine planning, relevant National Policy Statements and a range of guidance relating to the exercise of individual MMO functions. A list of the relevant documentation is set out in section 3 of this document. As the planning system is developed any necessary detailed guidance will be identified and brought forward.
- 1.5 This document will be reviewed (and if necessary reissued) once the MPS has been adopted and in the light of the development of the marine planning system.
- 1.6 The MMO's overall sustainable development objective is reflected in the action plan set out in its 3-year corporate plan, which includes the MMO's strategic outcomes and related targets agreed with its sponsoring Departments. These outcomes, viewed as a whole, represent the contribution that the MMO must make to the achievement of sustainable development. The MMO's activities will be subject to regular performance review by the Secretary of State and the MMO will be required to report on progress towards achievement of its strategic outcomes in its annual report, which the Secretary of State must lay before each House of Parliament.

¹ *Safeguarding our Seas (2002)*: http://www.defra.gov.uk/environment/marine/documents/marine_stewardship.pdf

2. Sustainable Development

2.1 The UK Sustainable Development Strategy 'Securing the Future' sets out the Government's five principles in relation to sustainable development.² The goal of sustainable development is to enable all people throughout the world to satisfy their basic needs and enjoy a better quality of life, without compromising the quality of life of future generations. The five principles have been articulated for the marine area as the 'high level marine objectives', adopted and published by the UK administrations in 2009:

- **achieving a sustainable marine economy;**
- **ensuring a strong, healthy and just society;**
- **living within environmental limits;**
- **promoting good governance; and**
- **using sound science responsibly.**

2.2 The Marine Policy Statement (MPS) will be informed by the high level marine objectives and play a key role in ensuring that they are achieved. It will draw together in one document the shared policies and objectives of the UK Government, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland for the sustainable development of the UK marine area. In the meantime, the high level marine objectives will steer the UK Administrations and the wider public sector in making their joint contribution to the achievement of sustainable development in the marine area and in the broader context. They will guide, inform and educate the public, business and voluntary sectors in their actions and attitudes, and underpin the UK approach to negotiation and implementation of European and international marine policy.

Role of the Marine Management Organisation

2.3 In seeking to fulfil its sustainable development objective the MMO will draw on the high level marine objectives (see section 4 of this guidance). Once adopted, the MMO must act in accordance with the Marine Policy Statement, which will be its framework for preparing marine plans and taking decisions which affect the marine environment. When a draft MPS has been formally issued for consultation it will be a relevant consideration for the MMO to which it should have regard pending adoption of the finally agreed MPS (see also paragraph 2.8). It should also have regard to any relevant National Policy Statements arising from the Planning Act 2008.

2.4 The Government expects the MMO to show leadership as a marine manager, planning organisation and regulator, trusted by all to make a significant contribution to the sustainable development of the marine area. The existing responsibilities of the Marine and Fisheries Agency (principally fisheries management, licensing and enforcement) will be taken on by the MMO on the day it commences operation, as well as the new functions set out in the MCA Act.

² 'Securing the Future: The UK Government Sustainable Development Strategy', March 2005 (6467).
http://www.defra.gov.uk/sustainable/government/publications/uk-strategy/documents/SecFut_complete.pdf

It is essential for the MMO to continue to deliver existing functions effectively whilst building its capacity to deliver its principal objective of making a contribution to the achievement of sustainable development. Thus sustainable development principles must be embedded in all the MMO's activities and the approach it takes to all its decision making.

- 2.5 The MMO must have regard to the high level marine objectives when considering how best to integrate economic, environmental, and social considerations in its decision making. The MMO should seek wherever possible to deliver integrated solutions underpinned by all five principles, although it should be recognised that the high level marine objectives are themselves potentially conflicting. Any decision will need to be made in an explicit and transparent way making clear the contribution to the achievement of sustainable development in the marine area and in the broader context.
- 2.6 In reaching impartial decisions based on the best available evidence, the MMO should take a risk-based approach that allows for uncertainty, recognising the need to use sound science responsibly (see 'evidence based decision making' and 'use of sound science', pages 6 and 7). It should identify and take into account the potential benefits and anticipated adverse impacts (which may be economic, environmental and/or social), including the multiple and cumulative impacts of proposals when viewed with other projects and activities. The MMO will need to weigh the potential positive and negative impacts of each proposal, drawing on different, identifiable lines of evidence to consider the potential impacts. The precise nature of the impact(s) will depend on a number of factors, including the type of activity under consideration, the impact on the marine environment, nature conservation and biodiversity or ecosystems, heritage assets, local economy, social effects and compatibility with other activities. The MMO should ensure that such decisions meet statutory requirements under UK and EU legislation and are consistent with our obligations under international law.
- 2.7 The MMO should integrate its consideration of individual projects and impacts into a forward looking and strategic approach in keeping with the MPS, as reflected through the objectives for that area. This means actively seeking opportunities to develop innovative solutions which will maximise potential benefits.
- 2.8 Wherever possible the MMO should seek to accommodate multiple uses of the marine area and consider the possibilities for co-existence. Where uses/activities are not compatible with each other or will potentially have adverse impacts on the environment, the MMO will need to decide which use has priority in given circumstances and the likely risks. It is for Government to establish the policy framework so that decisions can integrate economic, environmental and social needs and the Marine Policy Statement (and ultimately marine plans and any associated guidance) will help decision makers to resolve conflicting priorities. The MMO will have the opportunity to feed into the development of the draft MPS and any guidance.
- 2.9 As the new functions outlined in the MCA Act are transferred to the MMO over the first year or so of its operation, its main responsibilities will encompass:

- An integrated system of marine planning that will direct decision-makers and users towards more efficient, sustainable use and protection of our marine resources and provide advice for regulators and planning authorities.
- A streamlined, transparent and consistent system for licensing marine activities and developments - the MMO will be the single point of contact for marine licences in England's inshore zone and the UK offshore zone, making the whole process easier to manage and understand for developers.
- A dynamic contribution to conserving natural resources, eco-systems and species, including contributing with others to the development and responsible management of marine protected areas.
- Modernisation and streamlining of the management and regulation of England's marine fisheries, with a view to delivery of our long term vision for sustainable fisheries: 'Fisheries 2027'.
- Maximising compliance with sea fisheries, nature conservation and licensing legislation using a modern set of enforcement powers.
- Contributing marine expertise to emergency responses and coordinating returns to the EU and international bodies.

2.10 The MMO will also have an important role to play in helping to mitigate and adapt to climate change impacts in the marine area, primarily through its marine planning function. Adaptation to climate change is embedded in the MMO's business planning and corporate reporting processes.

Relevant principles

2.11 In addition to the existing policies and strategies relating to the marine area, which are to be expressed in the Marine Policy Statement, the MMO will need to have regard to a number of widely accepted principles in exercising its functions:

ecosystems approach - based on a number of core principles, including that of adaptive management of the natural environment to respond to changing pressures, including climate change, and taking decisions at the appropriate spatial scale while recognising the cumulative impacts of decisions³. The recently adopted EU Marine Strategy Framework Directive applies an ecosystem-based approach to the management of human activities while enabling sustainable use of marine goods and services. The MMO should adopt an ecosystems approach in its decision making and development of operational policies.

better regulation – effective and well-targeted regulation and enforcement to improve regulatory outcomes without imposing unnecessary burdens on business (in line with the Legislative and Regulatory Reform Act 2006 and Regulators' Compliance Code 2007). The MMO should have regard to the five principles of good regulation: that regulatory activities should be transparent,

³ See ecosystems approach action plan: <http://www.defra.gov.uk/environment/policy/natural-environ/change/government.htm>: which is based on a number of core principles closely allied to those of the Convention on Biological Diversity: <http://www.cbd.int/decision/cop/?id=7148>

accountable, proportionate, consistent and targeted. Whilst complying with EU regulatory requirements the MMO should ensure that it is efficient and effective in its application of regulation and its enforcement activity should be proportionate to achievement of the regulatory outcomes.

evidence based decision making - sound evidence and monitoring will underpin effective marine management. In pursuing an evidence-based approach to its decision making the MMO must seek to ensure that its decisions can be justified objectively. The MMO is under a duty to take account of all relevant facts and matters which are within its own knowledge or which it is reasonably able to acquire – this is an objective test – and may also take into account such other material as it thinks it needs and is or appears likely to be appropriate. The MMO will need to assess and critically evaluate evidence and analyses from a variety of sources relating to all aspects of sustainable development. The evidence to which the MMO may have regard when making decisions includes socio-economic information, monitoring data, predictive modelling studies and other research material. The MMO should draw on existing research and make use of any relevant research being commissioned by other bodies wherever possible (drawing from existing networks such as the Marine Environment Data and Information Network), but has the ability to commission its own research if necessary.

facilitating information and data sharing - the MMO will benefit from the accumulated expertise of, for example, the UK Marine Monitoring and Assessment Strategy (UKMMAS) which systematically collects evidence to assess whether the UK seas are clean, safe, healthy, productive and biologically diverse, the Marine Environment Data and Information Network (MEDIN)⁴ and the cross-government Marine Science Co-ordination Committee (MSCC), of which the MMO will be a member⁵. In addition, the MMO will continue to benefit from the expertise provided by the Centre for Environment, Fisheries and Aquaculture Science (Cefas), which is developing a data bank from its work in providing scientific advice (and subsequent monitoring) for the determination of licensing applications. The MMO may also need to use Automatic Identification System (AIS) data on shipping movements to support decisions relevant to navigation and to access relevant terrestrial/coastal data from relevant organisations such as the Environment Agency. Where appropriate, the MMO will need to enter into agreements or memoranda of understanding with organisations holding relevant data in order to facilitate data sharing. The MMO should seek to share knowledge, data and expertise with others and draw on their expertise to enable the MMO to develop as an organisation and to enhance the contribution it makes to the sustainable development of the marine area.

use of sound science - sound science is one of the five principles of sustainable development and thus also of the high level marine objectives. The importance of marine science is recognised in the UK marine science strategy 2010-2025⁶, which sets out the common UK view of what science is needed to inform strategic decisions and a co-ordinated approach to ensure that science is

⁴ <http://www.oceannet.org>

⁵ See Annex 1 of the UK Marine Science Strategy (link below) which shows how the MSCC links with other groups

⁶ <http://www.defra.gov.uk/environment/marine/documents/science/mscc/mscc-strategy.pdf>

delivered. In taking decisions and exercising its functions the MMO should use sound science responsibly in line with UK sustainable development policy, which includes consistently applying *the precautionary principle*⁷ – where there are threats of serious or irreversible damage, lack of full scientific certainty is not to be used as a reason to postpone proportionate and cost-effective measures to prevent environmental degradation. It should be sensitive to the potential impacts on sites of particular significance, e.g. sites designated for reasons of environmental protection, marine heritage assets, sites of particular socio-economic interest. The MMO should be able to carry out a critical evaluation of the scientific evidence accumulated in the course of carrying out its range of activities. As well as having access to a wide range of scientific data and expertise as outlined above, the MMO will be able to call upon the advice and assistance of its Chief Scientific Adviser and Scientific Advisory Group and should make full use of these resources while developing its capability to act as an intelligent agent.

building expertise – case studies will be an important part of the MMO knowledge bank, especially those where difficult decisions involving conflicts of use/activity arise. So too will ‘life cycle analysis’ carried out on developments in the marine area, from the initial stages (e.g. planning/licensing applications, sustainability appraisal, environmental impact assessment) through to monitoring, enforcement and, potentially, decommissioning of installations and/or change of use. Existing case studies, relating for example to aggregate dredging, can provide practical examples of resolving conflicts in use and any measures taken to mitigate adverse effects. The MMO must also build its capability to evaluate economic, social and environmental evidence in order to take informed decisions and give appropriate advice to Government and other public bodies.

participative working - the MMO should collaborate effectively with, and give authoritative advice to Government, other authorities and regulators, and other stakeholders. It should consider the different relationships outlined below in undertaking its functions, developing interactions with others in taking decisions.

Working in partnership

- 2.12 The MMO’s activities will bring the organisation into contact with a wide range of stakeholders including those representing the ports, shipping, aggregates, fishing and renewable energy industries, as well as the recreation and leisure sectors and those with an interest in conservation. They will all look to the MMO to be a professional and proactive marine manager, focused on delivering the Government’s vision of clean, healthy, safe, productive and biologically diverse seas, acting openly and transparently to deliver a coordinated approach to modern marine management and making a real contribution to sustainable development. The MMO should have the necessary skills and expertise to use science and evidence in its decision making, and be held to account on the delivery of its objectives. The MMO will need to ensure it makes the necessary links to access such evidence from the relevant research organisations/experts.

⁷ See also ‘Guidelines for Environmental Risk Assessment and Management’: www.defra.gov.uk/environment/quality/risk/index.htm

- 2.13 The MMO should work closely with a range of other organisations, not only to achieve its own outcomes but to assist others to achieve theirs and together contribute to the achievement of sustainable development. These organisations include the Environment Agency, Inshore Fisheries and Conservation Authorities, the Maritime and Coastguard Agency, Natural England, the Countryside Council for Wales (CCW), the Joint Nature Conservation Committee (JNCC), English Heritage, the Crown Estate, the Infrastructure Planning Commission (IPC), Regional Development Agencies, local authorities, coastal partnerships, coastal National Park Authorities and marine conservation groups.

Regulators and delivery bodies

- 2.14 The MMO's position as a specialised marine manager will enable it to influence the actions of others operating in the marine area and the MMO should therefore look to build and maintain its status as a recognised centre of knowledge and expertise within its areas of responsibility. The MMO should engage with the other regulators and delivery bodies in order to influence and/or contribute to delivering Government policies such as meeting climate change mitigation targets (e.g. through the installation of renewable energy technology), improving water quality through catchment management plans, and contributing its expertise as appropriate to estuary management plans, flood defence initiatives, port developments and other such schemes.
- 2.15 It will be essential for the MMO to understand the respective roles and responsibilities of the other relevant bodies working in the marine area and to develop a close working relationship with them in order to complement, and not duplicate, each other's activities. This will be particularly important in cross-border areas, or transitional/intertidal zones such as estuaries, where the MMO and other relevant bodies will need to agree how to tackle issues together and assist each other in achieving their respective objectives. In coastal areas, as part of its marine planning function, the MMO will have to work with planning authorities, IFCAs, the Environment Agency and other coastal stakeholders to ensure a coherent approach to coastal management. Where appropriate, the MMO should enter into agreements with the other bodies, setting out the principles and ways of working agreed between them that will support and facilitate their respective business operations and stakeholder relationships.

Infrastructure Planning Commission (IPC)

- 2.16 The MMO will also contribute to meeting its sustainable development objective through the advice it gives other bodies. The MMO will have a specific role in relation to the IPC, which has been established to make decisions on applications for nationally significant infrastructure projects such as large wind farms and harbour developments. The MMO, as a statutory consultee to the IPC, will provide advice to developers at an early (pre-application) stage on projects in, or likely to affect, the marine area and may also make relevant representations to the IPC when the IPC is considering such applications. The MMO will also advise on appropriate conditions in any deemed marine licences to be granted by the IPC, will be responsible for monitoring and enforcing such licences and ultimately may provide advice on decommissioning or change of use. Relevant National Policy Statements (e.g. for renewable energy and ports)

will also be a relevant consideration for the MMO when taking decisions on those applications which fall within its own remit.

UK, EU and international

- 2.17 The MMO will need to monitor developments in EU or international policy (such as targets to increase the percentage of energy consumption from renewable sources, reform of the Common Fisheries Policy and implementation of the Marine Strategy Framework Directive), and anticipate how such developments will influence future management of the marine area and the MMO's own role.
- 2.18 The MMO's role in supporting the implementation of the Marine Strategy Framework Directive as well as its UK coordination role under the Common Fisheries Policy will give it an opportunity to develop important working relations with the devolved administrations and with European, regional and international institutions and to strengthen its contribution to sustainable development through working with others. This will be particularly important in cross-border areas where the MMO will need to agree working-level arrangements with devolved authorities to ensure a complementary, coordinated and cohesive approach.

Stakeholders

- 2.19 The MMO will benefit from the experience and advice of the broad range of industry, fishermen's organisations, non-governmental organisations and others with an interest in marine matters. Many of these will be able to contribute their own specific expertise and provide examples of good sustainable practice (e.g. sustainable fisheries, Marine Stewardship Council); which the MMO might be able to adopt (or adapt) in order better to fulfil its overall objective. In turn, the MMO will increasingly be able to provide its own expertise and advice to others.

Statutory and policy framework

- 2.20 Section 2(1) of the MCA Act 2009 defines the MMO's principal objective: it is required to manage its activities with the objective of making a contribution to the achievement of sustainable development, taking account of all relevant facts and matters and in a consistent and coordinated manner. In seeking to fulfil its overall objective the MMO may take any action which it considers necessary or expedient for the purpose of furthering any social, economic or environmental purposes.
- 2.21 The facts and matters that may be taken into account include (section 2(3)) scientific evidence (either available to or reasonably obtainable by the MMO); other evidence relating to the social, economic or environmental elements of sustainable development, and such other facts or matters as the MMO may consider appropriate.
- 2.22 Section 58 of the 2009 Act requires all public authorities (including the MMO) to take any authorisation or enforcement decision in relation to any act which affects or might affect the whole or any part of the UK marine area in accordance with

the appropriate marine policy documents⁸, unless relevant considerations indicate otherwise (in which case the public authority must state its reasons). All public authorities must have regard to the appropriate marine policy documents in taking any decision which relates to the exercise of any function capable of affecting the whole or any part of the UK marine area, but which is not an authorisation or enforcement decision. The appropriate marine policy documents are the Marine Policy Statement and marine plans.

- 2.23 The MPS, once adopted by the UK administrations, will provide the policy framework within which the MMO is to operate. The MPS will set out policies and objectives in the UK marine area, including the UK's European, regional and international obligations, which will contribute to the achievement of sustainable development. It will provide the framework for preparing marine plans and taking decisions affecting the marine area.
- 2.24 National Policy Statements, currently being developed under the Planning Act 2008, are also a relevant consideration for the MMO. Section 10 of the Planning Act places a duty on the Secretary of State, in exercising his functions in relation to National Policy Statements, to do so with the objective of contributing to the achievement of sustainable development. The Infrastructure Planning Commission (IPC) established under the Planning Act has a duty to have regard to the MPS and marine plans when making decisions on Planning Act consents which might affect the marine area. In accordance with normal administrative law principles, any draft MPS or draft NPS will be a relevant consideration for both the MMO and the IPC to which they should have regard when making decisions.
- 2.25 As a public authority, the MMO should also have regard to a number of requirements in the MCA Act and other relevant legislation, for example it is required to exercise its functions so as to best further (or, if this is not possible, least hinder) the achievement of the conservation objectives set for Marine Conservation Zones (MCA Act s.125(2)); and to have regard to river basin management plans where the exercise of its functions affect a river basin district (The Water Environment (Water Framework Directive) Regulations 2003)). Any such duties on the MMO relating to legislation being implemented by other public bodies should form part of the working agreements between the MMO and those bodies and any relevant guidance issued by those bodies should be made available to the MMO.
- 2.26 In addition, work is ongoing to transpose and implement the EU Marine Strategy Framework Directive which is expected, once enacted in the UK (no later than July 2010), to require public bodies to have regard to the marine strategy that the Secretary of State will develop under that Directive. This will consist of an assessment of the state of marine waters against a series of indicators of good environmental status, plus targets and a programme of measures aimed at achieving that status by 2020. The MMO is expected to play a key role in helping the Secretary of State to draw up his marine strategy. Once the strategy is in place, the MMO will need to have regard to this in carrying out its other functions.

⁸ In relation to decisions taken under the Planning Act 2008, the IPC must decide in accordance with any relevant National Policy Statement and must have regard to the Marine Policy Statement and marine plans (see para 2.16).

3. Documentation relevant to the MMO's operations

- **Primary legislation (Marine and Coastal Access Act 2009)** establishes the MMO and describes its powers and broad mechanisms of control, including powers for the Secretary of State to guide and direct the MMO.
- **National Policy Statements** for Ports and Energy: provide a clear statement of Government policy for decisions on nationally significant infrastructure projects.
- **Marine Policy Statement:** provides a specific policy framework within which the MMO must develop marine plans. The Marine Policy Statement and marine plans will provide the framework for the MMO's decision-making in relation to its other functions.
- **Statutory Guidance to the MMO** on its contribution to the achievement of sustainable development.
- **Directions/Guidance** issued by Government Departments to the MMO on the exercise of its various functions, for example on marine planning, marine licensing and marine nature conservation.
- **Advice/guidance** issued by other organisations, such as the statutory nature conservation bodies and the bodies with which the MMO will need to work in partnership, e.g. the Environment Agency, English Heritage.
- **Codes of practice** such as the Regulators' Compliance Code.
- **Framework Document:** sets out the MMO's management, operational, financial and accountability arrangements. The aim of a Framework Document is to ensure that an NDPB operates with the right level of efficiency, flexibility and delegation in order to be fully accountable to Parliament.
- **Corporate Plan:** sets the MMO's strategic outcomes, providing a basis for setting targets and a means of allocating resources for the three years ahead. It is also the basis for reviewing performance, and provides a basis for budgeting and managing resources.
- **Annual Business Plan:** sets out what the MMO intends to do in a particular year through targets and performance measures for its day-to-day business operations.
- **Service Level Agreement** between Government and the MMO: sets out the detail of what the MMO is to deliver. An outcome-based document that sets the framework for managing the MMO's performance.
- **Memoranda of Understanding, Service Level Agreements and other contracts:** provide details of what is to be jointly delivered, define respective roles and responsibilities and provide performance indicators for the MMO's business relationships with strategic partners, other delivery bodies or service providers.

4. High Level Marine Objectives

The UK high level marine objectives were published in 2009. A set of broad outcomes for the marine environment were also identified, reflecting the five principles of sustainable development in the marine context. These are as follows:

Achieving a sustainable marine economy

- Infrastructure is in place to support and promote safe, profitable and efficient marine businesses.
- The marine environment and its resources are used to maximise sustainable activity, prosperity and opportunities for all, now and in the future.
- Marine businesses are taking long-term strategic decisions and managing risks effectively. They are competitive and operating efficiently.
- Marine businesses are acting in a way which respects environmental limits and is socially responsible. This is rewarded in the marketplace.

Ensuring a strong, healthy and just society

- People appreciate the diversity of the marine environment, its seascapes, its natural and cultural heritage and its resources and act responsibly.
- The use of the marine environment is benefiting society as a whole, contributing to resilient and cohesive communities that can adapt to coastal erosion and flood risk, as well as contributing to physical and mental wellbeing.
- The coast, seas, oceans and their resources are safe to use.
- The marine environment plays an important role in mitigating climate change.
- There is equitable access for those who want to use and enjoy the coast, seas and their wide range of resources and assets and recognition that for some island and peripheral communities the sea plays a significant role in their community.
- Use of the marine environment will recognise, and integrate with, defence priorities, including the strengthening of international peace and stability and the defence of the UK and its interests.

Living within environmental limits

- Biodiversity is protected, conserved and where appropriate recovered and loss has been halted.
- Healthy marine and coastal habitats occur across their natural range and are able to support strong, biodiverse biological communities and the functioning of healthy, resilient and adaptable marine ecosystems.
- Our oceans support viable populations of representative, rare, vulnerable, and valued species.

Promoting good governance

- All those who have a stake in the marine environment have an input into associated decision-making.
- Marine, land and water management mechanisms are responsive and work effectively together, for example through integrated coastal zone management and river basin management plans.
- Marine management in the UK takes account of different management systems that are in place because of administrative, political or international boundaries.
- Marine businesses are subject to clear, timely, proportionate and, where appropriate, plan-led regulation.
- The use of the marine environment is spatially planned where appropriate and based on an ecosystems approach which takes account of climate change and recognises the protection and management needs of marine cultural heritage according to its significance.

Using sound science responsibly

- Our understanding of the marine environment continues to develop through new scientific and socio-economic research and data collection.
- Sound evidence and monitoring underpins effective marine management and policy development.
- The precautionary principle is applied consistently in accordance with the UK Government and devolved administrations' sustainable development policy.



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