

UK MARINE POLICY STATEMENT

The consultation draft of the UK wide Marine Policy Statement is laid before the National Assembly for Wales in accordance with paragraph 10(2) of Schedule 5 (the Schedule) of the Marine and Coastal Access Act 2009 (the Act).

The consultation draft incorporates the Impact Assessment and the non-technical summary of the Appraisal of Sustainability.

In accordance with paragraph 10(4) and (5) of the Schedule if, during the period allocated to the Assembly for legislative scrutiny of the draft, the Assembly makes a resolution or an appropriate Assembly Committee makes recommendations, with regard to the draft, the Welsh Ministers, as the policy authority must lay before the Assembly their response to the resolution or recommendations.

By virtue of paragraph 10(7) of the Schedule, the period allocated to the Assembly by the Welsh Ministers for scrutiny of the consultation draft is 12 sitting weeks from the date the document is laid i.e. 21 September 2010.

Background

The UK wide Marine Policy Statement will be the first stage of new systems of marine planning being introduced around the UK under the Act, whose purpose will be to help achieve sustainable development within the UK marine area.

The Statement will provide the overarching policy framework for the UK marine area within which Marine Plans will be developed, and set the direction for marine licensing and other relevant authorisation systems.

The Welsh Ministers are working towards adoption of a UK wide Marine Policy Statement by spring 2011, to be agreed jointly with the UK Government, Scottish Government and Northern Ireland Executive.

The second stage will consist of a series of marine plans that will interpret and present UK wide policies within the Marine Policy Statement and apply area specific policy, spatially where appropriate, within marine plan areas. Marine plans must be consistent with the Marine Policy Statement.

The Welsh Assembly Government will be responsible for developing marine plans for the Welsh marine area.

Public Consultation

The UK Administrations undertook joint pre-consultation on the Marine Policy Statement between March and May 2010, by way of a discussion paper, and issued a revised draft on 21 July 2010 for 12 weeks formal consultation. The deadline for responses is 13 October and the UK Administrations intend making available a summary of the responses later that month.