

MPAW 19

Ymateb gan : Awdurdod Parc Arfordir Penfro ac Awdurdod Parc Cenedlaethol Eryri

Evidence from : Pembrokeshire Coast Park Authority & Snowdonia National Park Authority

Question 1

Has the management of Welsh seas received sufficient resource and strategic direction to enable sustainable management that supports the well-being of current and future generations? (250 words)

There is a lack of feature condition assessment data (we comment on this further below) but in our opinion the answer is no.

Key issues identified by the MPA management schemes and the LIFE Natura 2000 project are insufficiently addressed.

The nature and scale of key factors like fishing effort, marine litter, invasive non-native species etc. mean that strategic (Wales/UK/European) solutions are required in addition to local MPA management to achieve favourable conservation status for many MPA features.

Question 2

How should Area Statements, to be developed by Natural Resources Wales, cover Welsh seas? (*For example should the sea adjoining each Welsh Local Authority be included in its Area Statement, or should the marine environment be considered separately in one or more marine Area Statements?*) (250 words)

Conservation of the marine environment should be considered at an appropriate ecological scale. There will be integration between terrestrial Area Statements/other terrestrial planning systems and marine planning because of the geographical overlap between them, and because transboundary effects (e.g. freshwater quality) will need to be addressed.

Questions arise regarding the relationship of a marine Area Statement to the Wales Marine Plan and how relevant authorities will contribute to delivery of a marine Area Statement, both directly and via terrestrial planning. A dual approach might be indicated i.e. one where relevant marine issues are incorporated into terrestrial Area Statements as well as contained in the marine Area Statement itself.



Question 3

How well are Wales' MPAs currently being managed?

(This can include aspects such as the condition of sites, staffing to deliver management, surveillance and enforcement activities and the data on the extent of activities taking place in MPAs) (250 words)

Feature and factor data are not available on a timely basis (e.g. Pembrokeshire Marine SAC feature condition assessments are from 2006). Reports to Europe and SoNaRR 2016 indicate that European marine site features are generally in unfavourable condition.

Where management measures are in place it is often difficult to assess their effect on MPA feature condition. Natural Resources Wales requires adequate resourcing to carry out essential marine monitoring and surveillance for management feedback and detection of trends/threats. Project impact can more readily be assessed.

MPA site management is generally hampered by inadequate and/or discontinuous funding. In those European Marine Sites where there has been a workable and consistent level of funding, EMS Officers have successfully delivered a diverse range of (often innovative) projects and levered in additional finance.

PCNPA and SNPA support the relevant authorities group model. RAGs have been effective in working to identify the pressures on site features, but they need to be adequately resourced, ideally with an element of core funding, and supported by strategic policy and enforcement if MPAs are to be managed effectively.

The Wales MPA Management Steering Group has the potential to make real improvements and is welcomed.

Question 4

What are the key issues affecting the effective management of multi-use MPAs? (250 words)

Responses to Q1, Q2 and Q3 apply: lack of timely feature condition assessment data, lack of factor trend data, more resources for marine management and enforcement, strategic direction on key issues.

Question 5

Do existing Welsh MPAs currently provide the right protection for the conservation of Welsh marine biodiversity? (250 words)



A significant proportion of Welsh seas are designated for their conservation value, and the recent designations for harbour porpoise and seabirds are welcomed. However there is a distinction to be made between designation and protection. Based on our responses to Q1, Q3 and Q4, the response to Q5 is no. However, MPAs are an essential part of the solution.

Question 6

What lessons can be learnt from current MPA management activity in Wales (including designation, implementation and enforcement)? (250 words)

There needs to be sufficient funding (ideally including core funding) for staffing and resources at the MPA site level, and a strategic lead on marine conservation including enforcement where appropriate.

Reviews of marine management have consistently concluded that a higher priority should be accorded, and more resources allocated to, MPA management. The most recent review recommended that there should be seven management areas, with each area having a dedicated officer.

Question 7

Are there MPA examples or practices elsewhere that Wales can learn from? (250 words)

The RAGs of which PCNPA and SNPA are members are submitting examples so we have not duplicated them here.

Question 8

The majority of Wales' MPAs are designated under the EU Habitats Directive. How should the Welsh Government's approach to MPA management take account of the UK's decision to leave the European Union? (250 words)

The Habitats Directive is transposed into UK law. The additional benefit of EU membership is the backstop provided by the EU infraction process. The Inquiry may wish to consider how this backstop might be replaced.

Question 9

If you had to make one recommendation to the Welsh Government from all the points you have made, what would that recommendation be? (250 words)

Wales' marine environment requires properly managed marine protected areas (including monitoring) to allow habitats, species and ecosystems to recover and to maximise future generations' sustainable benefit. Management of, and enforcement in, the wider marine



environment is no less important as the matrix in which MPAs exist.

Question 10

Do you have any other comments or issues you wish to raise that have not been covered by the specific questions? (250 words)



National Assembly for Wales

Climate Change, Environment and Rural Affairs Committee