



This is the Draft Marine Plan for Northern Ireland

Public Consultation

April 2018

Easy Read
Version



Department of
**Agriculture, Environment
and Rural Affairs**

www.daera-ni.gov.uk



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IN PEOPLE**

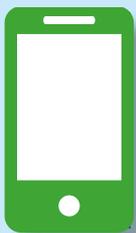
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- **Telephone** 028 9056 9262 and talk to Claire McQuillian If you have a hearing difficulty you can contact the Department via Text Relay. Dial 18001 028 9056 9262



- **Email** marineplanteam@daera-ni.gov.uk



- **Visit** our webpage at www.daera-ni.gov.uk

About us

We are the Department of Agriculture and Rural Development.

What do we do?

Here are some of the things we do.



- We look after the development of farming, forests and fishing in Northern Ireland.
- We provide a service to look after the health and welfare of animals, fish and plants.
- We look after environment and rural development in Northern Ireland.
- We provide research, expert advice and education.
- We look after some parts of public health in how food is made.

What is the draft Marine Plan?

- The Marine Plan will inform and guide the regulation, management, use and protection of the Northern Ireland marine area.
- The Marine Plan is a single document made up of two plans, one for the inshore region and one of the offshore region.
- The Marine Plan has been informed by a Sustainability Appraisal, which incorporates the requirements of a Strategic Environmental Appraisal.

Where is the Marine Plan area?

- The Northern Ireland marine area is made up of an inshore and an offshore region.
- The marine area comprises all marine waters including sea bed, subsoil, sea loughs and tidal rivers, so far as the tide flows at Mean High Water Spring Tide.
- The inshore region extends from the Mean High Water Spring Tide mark out to, at most, 12 nautical miles (nm) and includes tidal rivers and sea loughs.
- The offshore region is the area that extends south-eastwardly from the 12nm territorial limit to the outer boundary of the Northern Ireland marine area (31nm at the farthest point).

Why is there a Marine Plan?

- The Marine Act (Northern Ireland) 2013 and the Marine and Coastal Access Act 2009 require DAERA, as the Marine Plan Authority, to prepare marine plans, for the better management of the Northern Ireland marine area.
- The Marine Plan has been developed within the framework of the UK Marine Policy Statement (UK MPS). This will facilitate the sustainable development of the marine area.
- The UK Government has published a 25 year Environment Plan that commits to having UK Marine Plans in place by 2021.

Who will use the Marine Plan?

- The Marine Plan will primarily be used by Public Authorities taking decisions which affect or might affect the marine area.
- It will also be used by anyone who has an interest in the marine area, including those bringing forward proposals and stakeholders who wish to comment on such proposals.
- Public Authorities include, but are not restricted to, Northern Ireland and UK Government Departments and Agencies, District Councils, The Crown Estate, Harbour Authorities and the Loughs Agency.

How does the Marine Plan affect decision making?

- The Marine Plan (when adopted) will be used by Public Authorities in taking decisions which affect or might affect the marine area, including:
 - Authorisation or enforcement decisions; and
 - Decisions that relate to the exercise of any function capable of affect the marine area.
- Public Authorities when taking authorisation or enforcement decisions that affect or might affect the marine area, must do so in accordance with marine policy documents, unless relevant considerations indicate otherwise. This currently includes the UK Marine Policy Statement and appropriate marine plans, when they are adopted. If decisions are not taken in accordance with these documents, reasons must be given.
- Public Authorities will also need to have regard to the appropriate marine policy documents when taking any decision that relates to a function capable of affecting the marine area, that is not an authorisation or enforcement decision.

What policies does the Marine Plan contain?

- A presumption in favour of sustainable development is at the heart of the Marine Plan.
- The policies provide an overall framework for the management of the marine area, contributing to its sustainable development and to the integration of the marine and terrestrial management processes.
- The policies will enable Public Authorities to guide activities and uses to suitable locations and address any potential adverse impacts.
- The Marine Plan is supported by a publicly accessible Marine Mapviewer, which shows the activities and uses that occur in the Northern Ireland marine area.
- The Mapviewer is available for viewing at <https://apps.d.aera-ni.gov.uk/marinemapviewer/>
- The Marine Plan contains two categories of policy:
 - **Core policies**, which cover the general issues to be considered by decisionmakers on all proposals.
 - **Key Activity policies**, which support a particular activity without undue impact on the marine area, its ecosystem services and the users that rely on them.

Core Policies include:

- Stakeholder Engagement
- Air Quality
- Climate Change
 - Climate Change Mitigation
 - Climate Change Adaptation
- Coastal Processes
- Resilience to Coastal Processes
- Co-Existence
- Cumulative Impacts
- Heritage Assets
 - Designated Heritage Assets
 - Undesignated Heritage Assets
 - Reporting of Heritage Assets
- Invasive Alien Species
- Land and Sea Interaction
- Marine Litter
- Marine Noise
- Natural Heritage
 - International and National Designated Sites and Protected Species
 - Other Habitats, Species or Features of Importance
- Seascape
- Use of Evidence
- Water Quality

Key Activity Policies include:

- Aquaculture
- Carbon Capture and Storage
- Commercial Fishing
 - Proposals with the Potential to Impact on Commercial Fishing
- Defence and National Security
- Dredging
- Energy
- Marine Aggregates
- Ports, Harbours and Shipping
 - Proposals with the Potential to Impact on Navigational Safety
 - Proposals with the Potential to Impact on Shipping
 - Ports and Harbours
- Telecommunications Cabling
- Tourism and Recreation

When does the Marine Plan come into effect?

- The Marine Plan will come into effect when it is published in final form and adopted.

How you can respond to this consultation

- Tell us what you think about the draft Marine Plan.



- **Online:** Completing the online survey from the consultation website: <https://www.daera-ni.gov.uk/consultations>



- **Email:** marineplanteam@daera-ni.gov.uk



- **In writing to:** Marine Plan Team
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