



**The European Commission is currently working on both a Maritime Policy and a Marine Strategy, whilst in the UK the Government is working towards developing a Marine Bill. The RYA is following progress on all of these initiatives and making representations directly within the UK and to the European Commission through the European Boating Association. This briefing note explains the differences between the various proposals and identifies the websites where you can get more information.**

## EU MARITIME POLICY

On 2 March 2005, the European Commission decided to start work on a Green Paper for an all embracing Maritime Policy. This policy is led by the Directorate-General for Fisheries and Maritime Affairs within the Commission.

The background to the decision of the Commission of 2 March and guidance for its further work towards the adoption of the Green Paper are contained in the Communication *Towards a future Maritime Policy for the Union - A European vision for oceans and seas*.

The Maritime Policy is designed to ensure an integrated approach is achieved, avoiding conflicts and optimising synergies between various sea-based activities so the full economic potential of oceans and seas is achieved in a sustainable manner whilst safeguarding the environment.

The policy will also encourage greater stakeholders' participation and enable all the parties concerned to consider the sea as a whole as well as understand the implications of each set of activities thereon.

A Task Force, made up of Commissioners responsible for sea-related policies and chaired by Commissioner Borg, will prepare the Green Paper on a future maritime policy for the Union.

The publication of the Green Paper is scheduled for the first half of 2006 and will launch an extensive consultation exercise as to possible options for a maritime policy for the Union.

### **More information:**

[europa.eu.int/comm/fisheries/maritime/index\\_en.htm](http://europa.eu.int/comm/fisheries/maritime/index_en.htm)

## EU MARINE STRATEGY

In October 2005, the European Commission proposed an ambitious strategy to more effectively protect the marine environment

across Europe. This strategy is led by the Directorate-General for Environment within the Commission. The Marine Strategy will constitute the environmental pillar of the Commission's Maritime Policy.

The Thematic Strategy on the Protection and Conservation of the Marine Environment aims to achieve good environmental status of the EU's marine waters by 2021 and to protect the resource base upon which marine-related economic and social activities depend.

A Marine Strategy Directive will establish European Marine Regions on the basis of geographical and environmental criteria. Each Member State, in close cooperation with the relevant other Member States and third countries within a Marine Region, will be required to develop Marine Strategies for its marine waters.

The Marine Strategies will contain a detailed assessment of the state of the environment, a definition of "good environmental status" at regional level and the establishment of clear environmental targets and monitoring programmes.

Each Member State will draw up a programme of cost-effective measures. Impact assessments, including detailed cost-benefit analysis of the measures proposed, will be required prior to the introduction of any new measure. Where it would be impossible for a Member State to achieve the level of ambition of the environmental targets set, special areas and situations will be identified in order to devise specific measures tailored to their particular contexts.

The Marine Strategy is consistent with the **Water Framework Directive** from 2000 which requires that surface freshwater and ground water bodies (lakes, streams, rivers, estuaries, coastal waters...) achieve a good ecological status by 2015 and that the first



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review of the River Basin Management Plan should take place in 2021.

### More information:

Marine Strategy:  
[europa.eu.int/comm/environment/water/marine.htm](http://europa.eu.int/comm/environment/water/marine.htm)

Water Framework Directive:  
[europa.eu.int/comm/environment/water/water-framework/index\\_en.html](http://europa.eu.int/comm/environment/water/water-framework/index_en.html)

## UK GOVERNMENT MARINE POLICY

The Government's first Marine Stewardship Report - *Safeguarding Our Seas* was published on 1 May 2002 and sets out the UK Government's vision as "clean, healthy, safe, productive and biologically diverse oceans and seas".

Underpinned by the principles of sustainable development, integrated management and the conservation of biological diversity, the report outlines how the UK Government aims to adopt an ecosystem-based approach to marine management.

### More information:

[www.defra.gov.uk/environment/water/marine/uk/stewardship/](http://www.defra.gov.uk/environment/water/marine/uk/stewardship/)

Between 1999 and 2004 the Government undertook a fundamental and comprehensive review of marine nature conservation management in the UK. The Review was advised by a Working Group comprising representatives of UK Government Departments, the devolved administrations, relevant statutory agencies, representatives of commercial and recreational interests and non-Governmental conservation organisations.

The Review of Marine Nature Conservation (RMNC) Working Group published its report to Government on 26 July 2004 detailing its investigation and recommendations for improving protection for marine habitats and species in the UK maritime area.

On 8 December 2005 the four administrations within the UK set out their shared policies for marine biodiversity in response to the recommendations of the five year Review of Marine Nature Conservation in the document *Safeguarding Sea Life: the Joint UK*

*response to the Review of Marine Nature Conservation.*

### More information:

[www.defra.gov.uk/wildlife-countryside/ewd/rmnc/index.htm](http://www.defra.gov.uk/wildlife-countryside/ewd/rmnc/index.htm)

## UK MARINE BILL

In December 2004, Defra published its five year strategy *Delivering the Essentials of Life* which committed Defra to improving the current framework for managing and protecting all our marine resources through a Marine Bill. The Government also made a commitment in its 2005 election manifesto to "introduce a new framework for the seas, based on marine spatial planning, that balances conservation, energy and resource needs".

In order to deliver these commitments and the Government's vision for the marine environment Defra are preparing a Marine Bill. The Bill aims to put in place a better system for delivering sustainable development of the marine and coastal environment. This will address both the use and protection of our marine resources. The objective is to provide the framework that will allow the different uses of the sea to coexist and develop harmoniously.

It is expected that the main components of the Bill will be the establishment of:

- a marine management organisation
- a marine spatial planning system
- improved coastal and estuary management
- a simplified marine consents process
- improved conservation of marine biodiversity and establishment of marine nature reserves for nationally important species
- integrated fisheries management and marine enforcement

The draft Marine Bill will be published in 2006, by November at the latest, and will be subject to a public consultation. Introduction to Parliament will then be dependent on the availability of Parliamentary time, but it is



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expected that the likely date for introduction will be sometime during 2007.

A consultation paper is due to be published at the end of March 2006.

How the Bill will apply to the devolved administrations is not yet clear.

### **More information:**

DEFRA:

[www.defra.gov.uk/environment/water/marine/uk/policy/marine-bill/index.htm](http://www.defra.gov.uk/environment/water/marine/uk/policy/marine-bill/index.htm)

RYA position:

[www.rya.org.uk/KnowledgeBase/environment/marine\\_bill.htm](http://www.rya.org.uk/KnowledgeBase/environment/marine_bill.htm)

## SCOTTISH COASTAL AND MARINE NATIONAL PARKS

The Scottish Executive has decided to improve its management of the coastal and marine environment through extension of the National Parks (Scotland) Act 2000.

In June 2005, the Scottish Executive announced their intention to create Scotland's first Coastal & Marine National Park during 2008. This follows the Government's consideration of the responses received from the consultation on *Strategic Framework for Scotland's Marine Environment* in 2004.

Ministers have proposed that the new coastal and marine National Park will be set up under the existing framework of National Parks (Scotland) Act 2000, and it will therefore have the same four broad aims as the terrestrial National Parks already in existence in Loch Lomond & The Trossachs and the Cairngorms. These are:

- conserving and enhancing the natural and cultural heritage;
- promoting the sustainable use of natural resources;
- promoting the understanding and enjoyment of the special qualities of the area; and
- promoting the sustainable economic and social development of its local communities.

These aims will be pursued collectively, so that the achievement of one aim for the area will not undermine the achievement of another but should contribute to it. In this way, social and economic development will be addressed alongside the proper protection of the natural heritage. However, in cases where there appears to be irreconcilable conflict between these aims, priority will be given the protection of the area's natural and cultural heritage.

### **More information:**

Scottish Executive: [www.scotland.gov.uk](http://www.scotland.gov.uk)

Scottish Natural Heritage:  
[www.snh.org.uk/strategy/CMNP/sr-adnp01e.asp](http://www.snh.org.uk/strategy/CMNP/sr-adnp01e.asp)

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ST 13/03/06