



It is anticipated that there will be resource implications, but these are unclear at this time.

## 5. BACKGROUND/MAIN ISSUES

The recently approved Marine (Scotland) Act 2010 allows for the management of the competing demands on marine resources more effectively. A National Marine Plan will set up the strategic objectives for the Scottish marine area including important marine activities such as renewable energy, aquaculture, conservation, recreation and tourism, ports, harbours and shipping etc. The National Marine Plan will be implemented at a regional level via regional marine plans. Scottish Marine Regions will each have a Marine Planning Partnership to develop and implement a regional marine plan. The Scottish Government has now launched its consultation on defining the most appropriate boundaries for Scottish Marine Regions (SMRs).

The Council agrees that SMRs should be created for the purpose of marine regional planning. The Council also states that regional boundaries should be aligned to each other as much as possible but appreciates different regions may require different boundaries as a result of different coastal characteristics to ensure integrated management of the marine environment.

The consultation document asks a series of questions and sets out 3 options for SMR boundaries. These along with a proposed response are provided in Appendix 1.

The Council has selected option 3 as the most suitable boundary for the SMR. This option suggests a boundary that is aligned with the existing Inshore Fisheries Group (IFG) which is similar to the local authority boundary. In this option there would be 3 regions in the east coast covering the: -

1. Moray Firth;
2. Eastern seaboard from Rattray Head to a point in Angus; and
3. South east of Scotland to Berwickshire incorporating both the Firths of Tay and Forth.

The Council proposes the boundary from Rattray Head to the Mouth of the North Esk River in Angus. The Council will, however, work with Aberdeenshire Council to help establish the most suitable boundary for both Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire Councils. A workshop is planned for 26 January 2011 to help establish a boundary that will be suitable for stakeholders in the east coast, and the Council's response to the consultation may need to be refined as a result of the discussions from the workshop.

## 6. IMPACT

The creation of a SMR and the role of local authorities will assist the Council in delivering a number of Single Outcome Agreement Outcomes including: -

1 - 'We live in a Scotland that is the most attractive place for doing business in Europe'.

2 - 'We realise our full economic potential with more and better employment opportunities for our people'.

11 - 'We have strong, resilient and supportive communities where people take responsibility for their own actions and how they affect others'.

12 - 'We value and enjoy our built and natural environment and enhance it for future generations'.

14 - 'We reduce the local and global environmental impact of our consumption and production'.

This report does not have an effect on people's equality and human rights, therefore, an Equality and Human Rights Impact Assessment has not been conducted.

## 7. BACKGROUND PAPERS

- i) Appendix 1 – SCOTTISH MARINE REGIONS; defining their boundaries – a consultation. Aberdeen City Council Response paper.

## 8. REPORT AUTHOR DETAILS

Anne-Marie Gauld  
Environmental Planner  
[amgauld@aberdeencity.gov.uk](mailto:amgauld@aberdeencity.gov.uk)  
01224 523317

Appendix 1 – SCOTTISH MARINE REGIONS; defining their boundaries – a consultation. Aberdeen City Council Response.

**Q1. Do you believe that Scottish Marine Regions should be created for the purposes of regional marine planning?**

Yes  No

**Q2. Do you agree that for the first regional plans for those regions with large amounts of internal seas, the seaward boundary should be**

measured from MHWS? For subsequent plans a baseline boundary should be used.

Yes  No

**Q3. The seaward limit of the Scottish Marine Regions boundaries within the west coast internal waters should be from MHWS to – (tick your preferred choice): -**

3nm  6nm  N/A

**Q4. At least initially, planning for Strategic Sea Areas not included within a Scottish Marine Region should be undertaken within the National Marine Plan.**

Yes / No Not applicable

**Comments:** Strategic Sea Areas do not affect Aberdeen City Council, therefore, the Council is unable to comment on this question.

**Q5. What are the practical implications of any of the marine boundaries not being aligned?**

**Comments:** If boundaries are not aligned then there will be a lack of a joined up approach to marine planning. The marine environment has no boundaries, therefore, there needs to be links made between neighbouring regions so that there is a smooth transition between one boundary and the next. There may also be issues in terms of consistency for marine developments that may cover two marine regions with different boundaries.

**Q6. Should we align all marine boundaries?**

Yes  No

**Comments:** The Council believes that marine boundaries should be aligned as much as possible so that there is consistency between regions. It does, however, realise that this may be difficult particularly in areas where the characters of the coasts are very different. For example, the character of the coast in the east is different to that of the west coast. Therefore, there needs to be an approach taken where the best boundary is applied to each region, but ensures that there is a joined up approach between each region where these boundaries differ.

**Q7. Do you support option 1?**

Yes  No

**Comments:** The East Coast SMR (from Rattray Head to Fife Ness) would be too big under this option.

**Q8. Do you support option 2?**

Yes  No

**Comments:** The use of existing administrative models would not be appropriate as they do not have all of the relevant stakeholders that would be required for a SMR. Some stakeholders in existing models may also have little or no interest in marine planning.

**If you support option 2 do you wish SMR boundaries to be aligned with the boundaries established for: -**

IFG  AAG  Not applicable.

**What do you believe are the benefits of option 2 over 1 and 3?**

**Comments:** Not applicable.

**Q9. Do you support option 3?**

Yes  No

This option splits the east coast into 3 more manageable regions. Boundaries can also be modified to suit stakeholder needs.

**Do you have any views on how the west coast should be split? (Tick your preferred choice): -**

X should align with IFG  Not applicable

X should align with AAG  Not applicable

X should align with LA  Not applicable

**Do you have any views on how the east coast should be split? (Tick your preferred choice): -**

Y should align with IFG

Y should align with AAG

**Comments:** This would be a more manageable option. The IFG option has been selected as the boundary is very similar to the local authority boundary making it more suitable and appropriate for the Council.

**Q10. Do you believe that the creation of Scottish Marine Regions discriminates disproportionately between persons defined by age, disability, sexual orientation, gender, race and religion and belief?**

Yes  No

**Q11. If you answered yes in question 10 in what way do you believe that the creation of Scottish Marine Regions is discriminatory?**

**Comment:** Not applicable