



The Scottish Parliament
Pàrlamaid na h-Alba

RURAL AFFAIRS, CLIMATE CHANGE AND ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE

Cllr Stephen Hagan
COSLA
Spokesperson for Development,
Economy and Sustainability

c/o Clerk to the Committee
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8 January 2015

Dear Councillor Hagan

Scotland's National Marine Plan

Thank you for submitting written evidence to the Rural Affairs, Climate Change and Environment Committee in respect of its scrutiny of the draft National Marine Plan (NMP).

As you may be aware the Committee took evidence from stakeholders on the draft NMP at its meeting yesterday and how the final NMP will be reflected in the proposed regional marine plans was discussed during the evidence session.

The Committee heard concerns that local authorities may not have the necessary resources, experience or expertise readily available to them to take forward regional marine plans and notes that in your response¹ of 25 October 2013 to Marine Scotland's *Planning Scotland's Seas* consultation you highlighted that while local authorities looked forward to being involved in the development of the regional marine plans "such work will require resources to ensure effective engagement and delivery...given the increased level and complexity of marine activity that often occurs in coastal zones" and that "It is important that planning authorities are adequately resourced given the potentially significant increased workload the suite of proposed new marine planning arrangements and associated measures will introduce".

¹ <http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Resource/0044/00440805.pdf>

As the draft NMP currently being considered by the Committee differs in some areas to the consultation, the Committee would be grateful if you could confirm whether your comments of 25 October 2013 still apply. The Committee would also be grateful if you could provide your views on what level of experience and expertise in marine planning you believe is available in, and to, local authorities in Scotland at the current time.

As we are working to a statutory deadline and are required to report on the draft NMP shortly, we would be grateful if you could provide a response by **noon on Tuesday 13 January 2015**. This would enable us to consider your response prior to hearing evidence from the Cabinet Secretary on 14 January.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading 'Rob Gibson' with a stylized flourish at the end.

Rob Gibson MSP
Convener