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29 August 2025

Dear Edward,

NMP2 Update: Planning Position Statement – Analysis and Announcement

I am writing to you today to update you on the next steps in the development of the NMP2, following analysis and consideration of the feedback received during the Planning Position Statement (PPS) consultation.

A key stage in the development of NMP2, and as committed to in our ⁱNMP2 Statement of Public Participation and Stakeholder Engagement Strategy, was publication of the NMP2 PPSⁱⁱ. It contained updated objectives representing the national-level ambition for what marine planning could do to support sustainable development in our seas, and the potential approaches to planning policy.

PPS consultation

The public consultation ran from 5 November 2024 to 7 February 2025 seeking feedback on the objectives and policy ideas set out in the PPS, and the early-stage work in the development of NMP2. The consultation received 102 responses in total, from a wide range of individuals, stakeholder groups and decision-makers, representing the varied interest in how we use and protect our seas.

A Consultation Analysis Reportⁱⁱⁱ has now been published, taking account of the feedback received through a thematic analysis of responses. This will be used to inform our next steps in terms of engagement and development of NMP2.

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Community engagement

Additionally, during the consultation period a series of engagement opportunities were offered to encourage communities to give their views on the proposed policy ideas set out in the PPS. These included:

- an in-person National Marine Planning Forum held in Autumn 2024 with approximately 90 delegates
- an online Community Engagement Drop-in event In January 2025 with 46 participants attending from: Lothian, Highlands, Aberdeen/shire, Isle of Canna, Orkney and Shetland
- three in-person community events with the Local Coastal Partnerships for Grampian (Aberdeen) and Solway (Carlisle).

To help consolidate and process the information collected from those events, contractors Howell Marine Consulting (HMC) produced a report^{iv} based on the analysis and synthesis of that information which provided valuable insights into the priorities and concerns of communities across Scotland.

Developing a new marine plan

In developing NMP2, it is important to consider feedback from consultations that are currently underway or planned in the near future, such as the Sectoral Marine Plan for Offshore Wind and Offshore Wind Policy Statement, and developing work to estimate the cumulative impact on fisheries from offshore wind development, cabling, marine protected area designations, and other relevant marine policies.

We are also committed to working collaboratively with other governments where it can accelerate progress towards Scotland's economic and net zero targets, and are working with the UK Government, National Energy System's Operator and The Crown Estate on the spatial modelling and evidence for the Strategic Spatial Energy Plan (SSEP). The SSEP provides an example of how cross-GB governance can work, and we support the intention for the SSEP to provide a coherent and effective plan for energy infrastructure across GB.

It is also important to consider how marine planning can best support those affected by changes in the use of our seas, and identify any mitigation measures which can be built into the plan.

To ensure NMP2 can provide the overarching planning framework for the sustainable development of our seas, it is essential that the feedback received via these consultations, along with the issues raised through our PPS consultation, are considered thoroughly. This includes exploring how best the NMP2 can help to reduce the conflict for marine space, whilst realising the potential opportunities and considering implications for marine sectors and communities.

Therefore, I have made the decision to postpone the upcoming consultation on a draft NMP2, due to take place this Autumn. This will allow further consideration of the feedback received and how best it should inform the approach to NMP2.

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An update on anticipated timing will be communicated later in the year.

Yours sincerely,

GILLIAN MARTIN

ⁱ NMP2 Statement of Public Participation and Stakeholder Engagement Strategy -
<https://www.gov.scot/binaries/content/documents/govscot/publications/strategy-plan/2024/08/scotlands-national-marine-plan-2-stakeholder-engagement-strategy-statement-public-participation/documents/scotlands-national-marine-plan-2/scotlands-national-marine-plan-2/govscot%3Adocument/scotlands-national-marine-plan-2.pdf>

ⁱⁱ NMP2 Planning Position Statement -
<https://www.gov.scot/binaries/content/documents/govscot/publications/consultation-paper/2024/11/nmp2-planning-position-statement/documents/national-marine-plan-2-planning-position-statement/national-marine-plan-2-planning-position-statement/govscot%3Adocument/national-marine-plan-2-planning-position-statement.pdf>

ⁱⁱⁱ National Marine Plan 2: Planning Position Statement Consultation Analysis Report -
<https://www.gov.scot/isbn/9781836919841>

^{iv} Analysis and Synthesis of Community Engagement Events for National Marine Plan 2 -
<https://www.gov.scot/isbn/9781836918486>

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