Dear Roseanna,

The Loch Carron Urgent Marine Conservation (No. 2) Order 2017 (SSI 2017/205)

I am writing regarding the meeting of the Environment, Climate Change and Land Reform Committee which you attended yesterday in order to provide an update on issues across your remit.

At that meeting, Angus MacDonald MSP asked you about the impact of the introduction of legislation on to urgently designate Loch Carron as a Marine Protected Area (MPA).

As you will know, the Committee recently considered the Loch Carron Urgent Marine Conservation Order 2017 (SSI 2017/158), which was introduced by the Scottish Government as an urgent measure to enhance recovery of the flame shell reef beds in Loch Carron recent damage caused by dredging in the area.

On 14 June 2017, the Committee was made aware of an error in the original instrument concerning the description of the boundaries of the MPA. A new instrument, the Loch Carron Urgent Marine Conservation (No. 2) Order 2017 (SSI 2017/205) was referred to the Committee for consideration and in the accompanying letter to the Presiding Officer it was noted this order would have immediate effect. However, due to the date on which this instrument was laid, the Committee’s consideration of this cannot take place until after the summer recess. Although the order is already in force, the Committee questions whether there is still ambiguity for fishermen throughout the summer until the Committee has had a chance to consider this instrument.

The Committee would welcome clarification of this and how Marine Scotland officials are providing information and guidance for fishermen throughout the summer with regard to the precise boundary of the MPA.
The Committee would be grateful for a response to this query by 30 July 2017.

I look forward to hearing from you.

Yours sincerely,

Graeme Dey MSP
Convener
Environment, Climate Change and Land Reform Committee