



SSACN submission to the RACCE Committee

We have been informed that it is the Clyde Fishermen's Association intention at the meeting of the Committee on 27/01/2016 to have an MSP raise an objection and/or propose an annulment of the MPAs the CFA see as having overshoot the original recommendations and requirements.

If that is the case we would like the Committee to consider an alternative view, as too often a decisions regarding the inshore marine environment have been made solely according to the needs of the fishing industry and without the involvement, co-operation or input from the recreational and tourism sectors.

Not only has this caused disastrous impact to the marine environment, but it has reduced a recreational fishery, once recognised as a top European destination, to one which no longer attracts the angling competitions, festivals and the individual anglers who historically contributed so much to the tourism industry's national and local economies.

SSACN have been involved in the MPA process throughout – it has made huge demands, in time and personal expense, on our unpaid volunteers - attending workshops, preparing documents, meetings etc. and we have always accepted that achieving consensus means that not everyone can get their own way

However, it would appear, that once again, the commercial fishing industry is seeking to overturn consensus when it does not suit them and to further their argument, they use data which is at best questionable and most certainly has not been subject to independent peer review, yet the government's own funded paper "Management of The Scottish Inshore Fisheries; Assessing The Options for Change" is totally ignored, even though it clearly demonstrates that reducing mobile gear between 0-1 and 0-3 miles from the shoreline will results in many £ millions being added to local economies in a relatively short time.

As part of their argument, they also appear to be claiming that most MPAs have been agreed as a result of the commercial sector and government reaching a consensus rather than as a result of an inclusive process, and that reaching a consensus by any other approach, would have unsatisfactory outcomes for all concerned.

We would argue that such bilateral agreements actually result in unsatisfactory outcomes for every other stakeholder and that the Scottish Government should make their decisions in a balanced, proportionate and transparent manner, which fully assesses the environmental and economic impacts to all stakeholders and seeks to support the goal of sustainable development and minimal environmental impact.

In closing and to quote CS Lochhead, "We need a new relationship with the seas to safeguard this unique and precious natural resource for future generations. With increasing and competing demands being made on our seas, I believe now is the time to modernise and streamline the management of our marine environment to deliver sustainable economic growth."

Sacrificing Scotland's inshore waters and MPAs at the demand of the commercial fishing sector is a totally unacceptable form of marine stock / species management and one not suited to CS Lochhead's aspirations.

Steve Bastiman

On behalf of the Trustees of SSACN