



HM Government

East Inshore and East Offshore Marine Plans Executive Summary



April 2014

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Foreword



The seas surrounding the United Kingdom are vitally important to our nation. Our marine economy is currently worth more than £49 billion a year and has the potential to grow significantly. The marine environment is also home to over 8000 species, including some of the world's most important seabird populations, which we must protect for future generations.

Over the years United Kingdom seas have become increasingly busy, with industries such as oil and gas, wind farms, shipping, aggregates and fishing competing for space with each other and with nature, while the coast is a popular destination for leisure and tourism. In response the [Marine and Coastal Access Act](#) 2009 introduced marine planning to ensure a sustainable future for our seas.

The first step was the adoption of the United Kingdom-wide [Marine Policy Statement](#), which provides the framework for United Kingdom marine plans and for decisions likely to affect the marine area. Marine plans will inform and guide decisions by regulators managing the development of industry in marine and coastal areas, while conserving and enhancing the environment. Alongside the work in England, plans are also being developed in Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales.

Marine plans will provide certainty and clarity for developers by indicating areas to consider or avoid – saving time and money. Developers will also be able to use the plans to guide their applications, which will help investments become operational more quickly, so that they contribute to the economy earlier. The boundary between land and sea is the focus of many activities and marine planning will help facilitate an integrated and holistic approach to the planning and management of coastal areas; contributing to the economic regeneration and development of local communities.

The adoption of England's first two marine plans, for the East Inshore and East Offshore marine areas, is a significant milestone and the culmination of years of work by Government, industry, voluntary organisations and individuals. These plans, however, are only the beginning. The Government is committed to developing eleven marine plans, covering all of England's seas by 2021.

We have learned many lessons from preparing these first plans and will learn more as we implement them. They will guide the preparation of future plans, which we

expect will provide more locally specific and detailed guidance than has been possible to date.

With the publication of the East Inshore and Offshore Marine Plans, England is one of the first countries in the world to introduce such a comprehensive and integrated approach to the management of its marine area, and it is a credit to all involved that we are leading the way in this field.

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "George Eustice". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

George Eustice MP
Parliamentary under Secretary of State for Farming, Food and Marine Environment

Executive Summary

Background

1. These two plans, East Inshore and East Offshore, are the first two marine plans to be produced for English seas. The East Inshore Marine Plan area includes the coastline stretching from Flamborough Head to Felixstowe, extending from mean high water out to 12 nautical miles, including inland areas such as the Broads and other waters subject to tidal influence, and covers an area of 6,000 square kilometres. The East Offshore Marine Plan area covers the marine area from 12 nautical miles out to the maritime borders with the Netherlands, Belgium and France, a total of approximately 49,000 square kilometres of sea. Producing these first marine plans has therefore been the equivalent of developing a terrestrial Local Plan for around 40% of England's land area. Since both marine areas are very busy and contain much of the planned new activity in English seas this has required detailed consultations with stakeholders and numerous issues to be considered.
2. The [Marine and Coastal Access Act](#), 2009 introduced a number of measures to deliver the United Kingdom Government's vision of "clean, healthy, safe, productive and biologically diverse oceans and seas". These included the introduction of a marine planning system, comprising the United Kingdom [Marine Policy Statement](#) (adopted by the Government and the Devolved Administrations in March 2011) and marine plans. The Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs is the marine plan authority and has delegated most of the functions in respect of marine plans to the Marine Management Organisation. In 2011 the Department for Environment and Rural Affairs recommended eleven marine plan 'areas' for the English Inshore and Offshore Marine regions. The Marine Management Organisation are currently producing two plans at a time, starting with these current plans.
3. The aim of marine plans is to help ensure the sustainable development¹ of the marine area. Marine plans will contribute to economic growth in a way that benefits society whilst respecting the needs of local communities and protecting

¹ As defined in United Kingdom Sustainable Development Strategy, see <http://sd.Defra.gov.uk/documents/mainstreaming-sustainable-development.pdf>

the marine ecosystem. They will help to reduce the net regulatory burden on applicants and users by acting as an enabling mechanism for those seeking to undertake activities or development in the future and providing more certainty about where activities could best take place. As a result, the East Inshore and Offshore Marine Plans should provide developers with greater certainty on where to invest their capital, ensuring that marine projects benefit from the right information at the right time, so they can move from 'concept to consent' more quickly. Analysis suggests that there will be an economic benefit from the East Inshore and Offshore Marine Plans, building on a calculated current economic activity of £10bn in the East marine plan areas.²

4. The principal means through which the marine plans are applied will be through the decisions made by public authorities (see 'The effect of marine plans' below). This will be delivered through existing regulatory and other decision-making mechanisms.
5. In this instance both plans have been prepared in one integrated process as most of the activities in each plan area require a coordinated approach across both areas. This includes offshore wind farms, fishing, shipping, cabling, and other interests common to both areas, including certain habitats and species. To provide a consistent and simple approach a single document has been produced with policies relevant to either the East Inshore or East Offshore Marine Plan Area or to both. The document includes a 20-year vision for the plan areas.

Vision for East Marine Plan Areas in 2034

By 2034 sustainable, effective and efficient use of the East Inshore and East Offshore Marine Plan Areas has been achieved, leading to economic development while protecting and enhancing the marine and coastal environment, offering local communities new jobs, improved health and well-being. As a result of an integrated approach that respects other sectors and interests, the East marine plan areas are providing a significant contribution, particularly through offshore wind, to the energy generated in the United Kingdom and to targets on climate change.

How will this look in 2034 if the vision is achieved?

6. By 2034, new infrastructure developments and the improved coordination of existing activities in the East plan areas are providing increased economic and social benefits, to both local communities along the East coast and those in adjacent areas. The approach enables sustainable commercial fishing, shipping, aquaculture, aggregate extraction and other activities to continue or grow, while allowing the development of new business opportunities, ensuring safety at sea and protecting the environment. Essential infrastructure for the onward transportation of goods or energy is in place along the coast.
7. As a result of effective planning across both land and sea, and an appreciation of the unique features of the East marine plan areas, key elements of the coastal

² Marine Management Organisation (2014) Analysis of the East Inshore and East Offshore Marine Plans

landscape, adjoining seascape and heritage, including the character created by traditional activities such as fishing, have been conserved and enhanced. As a result, tourism and recreation continue to make a significant contribution to prosperity and well-being.

8. Both the East Inshore and Offshore Marine Plan Areas are in Good Environmental Status (in accordance with the Marine Strategy Framework Directive), relevant habitats and species are in 'favourable conservation status' (as required under the [Habitats](#) and [Wild Birds](#) Directives), partly as the result of a well-managed and ecologically coherent network of Marine Protected Areas which includes individual sites in 'favourable condition'. New activities, developments and uses will have been implemented and managed to ensure, alongside environmental protection, that sustainability has been achieved. Offshore wind farms in the plan areas will be making a significant contribution to meeting the United Kingdom's target under the European Union [Renewable Energy Directive](#)³ and the [Climate Change Act](#) 2008. The offshore wind industry has been developed in a sustainable way that does not compromise the importance of national, European and international shipping links and connectivity with other countries while maintaining the essential requirements of navigational safety.
9. The best use is made of new technologies in the plan areas, contributing to sustainable/low carbon energy production from wave and tidal energy and climate change mitigation, and through the transport and storage of carbon dioxide emitted from fossil fuel use. Gas production continues to be an important activity and new technologies will have improved the ability to maximise production of hydrocarbons from reserves in the marine plan areas while continuing to ensure minimal environmental impact.

National Policy Context

10. These marine plans conform with the [Marine Policy Statement](#) and other national policy including the National Planning Policy Framework and National Policy Statements. The Localism Act also places a duty to cooperate on the Marine Management Organisation and other public authorities. It requires local authorities and other public bodies to work together on planning issues: "to reflect genuine shared interests and opportunities to make common cause"⁴.
11. The plans give an area-specific expression of the [Marine Policy Statement](#) (and other national policy). As such, the marine plans' policies do not establish new requirements but rather apply or clarify the intent of national policy to the East Inshore and Offshore Plan Areas, taking into account the specific characteristics of the plan areas including the available evidence, the resources, activities and issues, and the perspective of stakeholders.

³ European Union (2009). Directive 2009/28/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 23 April 2009, The promotion of the use of energy from renewable sources and amending and subsequently

⁴ [A Plain English Guide to the Localism Act](#)

Scope of the East Inshore and East Offshore Marine Plans

12. Due to the size and complexity of the area under consideration, the marine planning process focussed on those issues likely to drive, or be subject to, significant change in the plan areas and which can be partly addressed by marine planning. Gaps in the evidence base and stakeholder views, however, have resulted in a mix of more strategic policies as well as those that provide more control or influence over the nature or location of activities. For similar reasons, even where policies have been expressed spatially, many of these are indicative, providing a 'signal' towards what is required or to be avoided, rather than being prescriptive; enabling a degree of flexibility.
13. The marine plans' vision and objectives cannot be delivered solely through the marine plan policies but are dependent on a range of measures. To avoid replicating existing plans and measures these are 'signposted' where they include relevant information and policies. Signposting to relevant plans and policies also helps to illustrate the importance of integration between terrestrial and marine plans. Such signposting has been kept to a minimum but sometimes it is necessary to explain why particular policies or measures have been highlighted in this way. To meet the requirements for compatibility set out in the [Marine and Coastal Access Act](#) and contribute to integrated coastal zone management, specific attention has been given to assessing the policies in Local Development Frameworks and related plans.
14. Any decisions made in the marine plan areas must still be compliant with relevant legislation and regulations; the marine plans complement rather than replace such requirements.

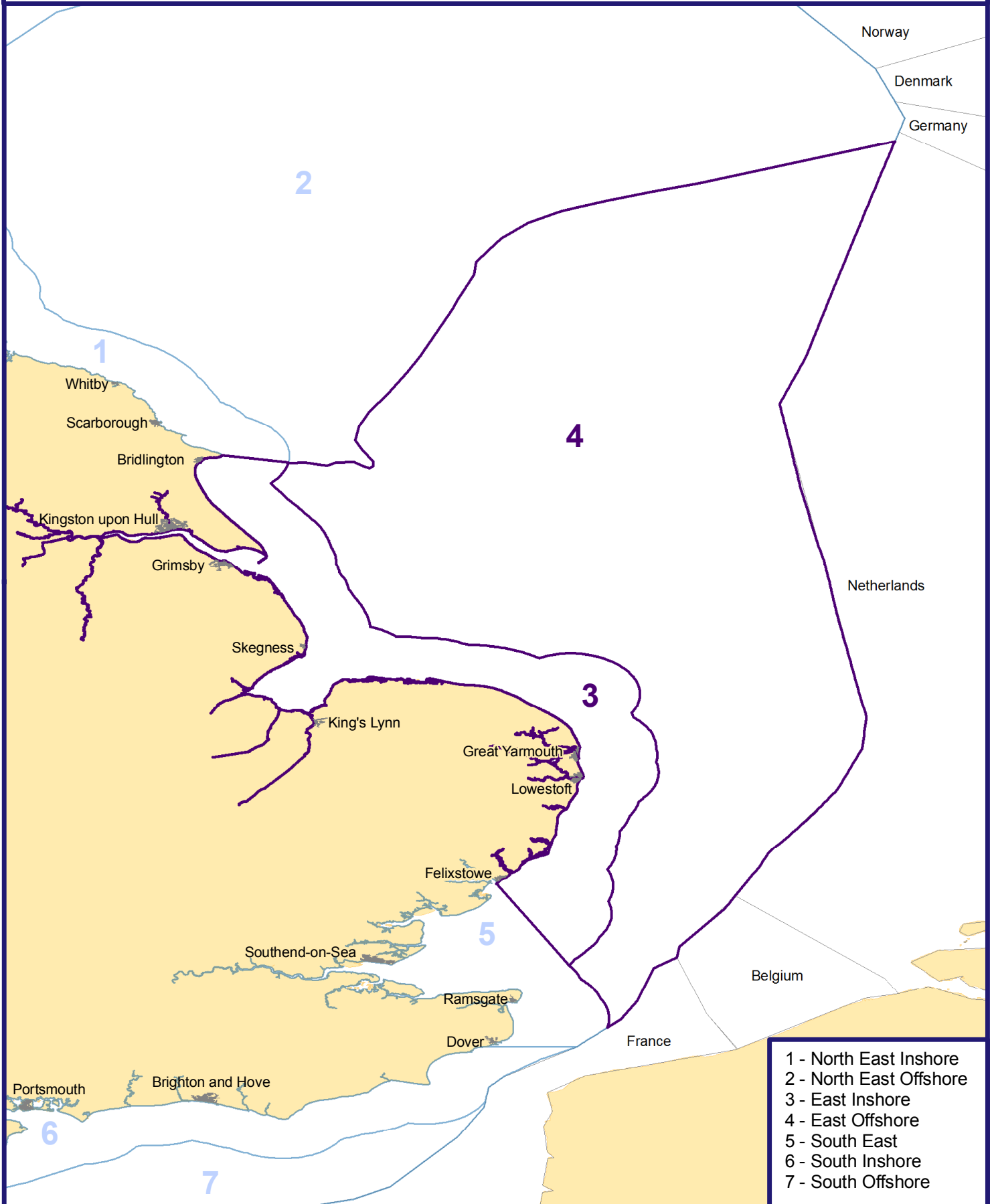
East Inshore and East Offshore Objectives

15. Plan objectives describe the aim of the marine plans that need to be met in order to deliver the vision. The objectives are a package, with each complementary to the others. That does not mean that every objective will be met in every situation and in every location but rather that, taking the marine plan area as a whole, all of the objectives should be delivered in an integrated way. For example, economic, environmental and social objectives must be considered alongside one another.
16. The objectives partly reflect the outcomes in the [High-Level Marine Objectives](#) set out in the [Marine Policy Statement](#). Specific objectives are included on offshore wind energy production and on climate change as they are both of particular importance in the East plan areas. Taking account of the [Marine Policy Statement](#) and that the fact that these are the first marine plans, it was considered important to include objectives on governance and on evidence.
17. The objectives in the table below apply to both the Inshore and Offshore Marine Plan Areas.



Figure 1: East Inshore and Offshore Marine Plan areas and bordering nations

February 2014



- 1 - North East Inshore
- 2 - North East Offshore
- 3 - East Inshore
- 4 - East Offshore
- 5 - South East
- 6 - South Inshore
- 7 - South Offshore

<p>Objective 1</p> <p>To promote the sustainable development of economically productive activities, taking account of spatial requirements of other activities of importance to the East marine plan areas.</p>
<p>Objective 2</p> <p>To support activities that create employment at all skill levels, taking account of the spatial and other requirements of activities in the East marine plan areas.</p>
<p>Objective 3</p> <p>To realise sustainably the potential of renewable energy, particularly offshore wind farms, which is likely to be the most significant transformational economic activity over the next 20 years in the East marine plan areas, helping to achieve the United Kingdom's energy security and carbon reduction objectives.</p>
<p>Objective 4</p> <p>To reduce deprivation and support vibrant, sustainable communities through improving health and social well-being.</p>
<p>Objective 5</p> <p>To conserve heritage assets, nationally protected landscapes and ensure that decisions consider the seascape of the local area.</p>
<p>Objective 6</p> <p>To have a healthy, resilient and adaptable marine ecosystem in the East marine plan areas.</p>
<p>Objective 7</p> <p>To protect, conserve and, where appropriate, recover biodiversity that is in or dependent upon the East marine plan areas.</p>
<p>Objective 8</p> <p>To support the objectives of Marine Protected Areas (and other designated sites around the coast that overlap, or are adjacent to the East marine plan areas), individually and as part of an ecologically coherent network.</p>
<p>Objective 9</p> <p>To facilitate action on climate change adaptation and mitigation in the East marine plan areas.</p>
<p>Objective 10</p> <p>To ensure integration with other plans, and in the regulation and management of key activities and issues, in the East marine plans, and adjacent areas.</p>
<p>Objective 11</p> <p>To continue to develop the marine evidence base to support implementation, monitoring and review of the East marine plans</p>

Table 1: Plans Objectives

East Inshore and East Offshore Plan Policies

18. The purpose of the policies is to provide direction or guidance on how decisions should be made to ensure the plan objectives are met. Plan policies are central to the role of marine plans and, in many cases, apply to new, rather than existing, developments, uses and management measures.
19. There are 38 separate marine plan policies. Where possible, plan policies are expressed spatially or locally by reference to maps and other information. Those that support a particular objective are included first, with some brief context as a link between the objective and policies; followed by those on individual sectors to avoid duplicating similar policies under several objectives. Few of the plan policies can be applied in isolation. Instead, it is likely that several plan policies will be pertinent to any decision, or situation. In many cases, policies set out for one sector will apply to other sectors.
20. The detail for each policy is contained in the main chapter of the draft plans. The structure and content for each policy section includes some or all of: context to provide brief background; signposting to existing policies and measures; the policy in text boxes; indication of which plan areas they apply to; justification and explanation in support of the policy; and relevant maps.

The effect of the marine plans – application to decisions

21. The [Marine and Coastal Access Act](#) requires that all public authorities taking authorisation or enforcement decisions, must do so in accordance with marine policy documents (marine plans and the [Marine Policy Statement](#)) unless relevant considerations indicate otherwise. Where a relevant decision is not taken in accordance with the appropriate marine policy documents, the public authority must state its reasons. Applications for development consent for nationally significant infrastructure projects under the [Planning Act](#) 2008 must be determined, by the relevant Secretary of State, in accordance with the relevant National Policy Statement, subject to certain exceptions, and having regard to the [Marine Policy Statement](#) and marine plans.
22. Public authorities taking decisions which are not concerned with authorisation or enforcement but which relate to the exercise of any function capable of affecting the whole or any part of the marine area, for example decisions about what representations they should make as a consultee or in the preparation of terrestrial plans, must also have regard to the marine plan and the [Marine Policy Statement](#).
23. Individual applications for marine developments will continue to require case specific assessments that consider the proposed activity and the location where it will occur. However, the East marine plans set the planning context for case specific assessments, providing a broad picture to inform the assessment of the likely impacts, positive or negative, of proposals and giving an indication of the locations where particular activities or developments may be supported.

Supporting documents and information

24. The plans have been subject to an independent statutory Sustainability Appraisal to ensure that the plan, as a whole, will lead to sustainable development. A Habitats Regulations Assessment was also undertaken to meet the requirements of the Habitats Regulations. An 'Analysis of the East Inshore and East Offshore Marine Plans' provides a largely qualitative discussion of potential economic impacts. The delivery of the plans is supported by Implementation and Monitoring documents.
25. A series of reports produced during different stages in the planning process provide more detail and technical information, including on stakeholder participation, the evidence base, and the development of various aspects of the plans.

Implementation, monitoring and review

26. Marine plans will be principally delivered through the decisions made by public authorities, including but not restricted to the Marine Management Organisation. These decisions should align with the better regulation principles⁵ and lead to action that is proportionate, consistent and targeted; delivered through a transparent and accountable process. In implementing the plans, the relevant public authorities, will need to apply precaution within an overall risk-based approach in accordance with the sustainable development policies of the United Kingdom's Administrations
27. The process of monitoring and periodical reporting on the implementation of the marine plans and any need for review is a requirement under Section 61 of the [Marine and Coastal Access Act](#). The Marine Management Organisation has a duty to review and report on the effectiveness of the plans at intervals of not more than three years after each marine plan is adopted. After each report, the marine planning authority will decide whether or not the marine plan needs to be amended or replaced. In addition, at intervals not more than six years after the passing of the [Marine and Coastal Access Act](#) the Marine Management Organisation will report to Government on any marine plans it has prepared and adopted, its intentions for their amendment, and for the preparation and adoption of further marine plans.
28. The Marine Management Organisation has developed an approach to monitoring taking account of a range of considerations including the Government's [Magenta Book](#), the [Marine Policy Statement](#), and recommendations from the Sustainability Appraisal, Habitats Regulations Assessment and 'Analysis Inshore and East Offshore Marine Plans'.
29. The Implementation and Monitoring Plan provides guidance to public authorities and stakeholders in a clear and transparent way on how and when the marine plan policies and objectives should be applied and on how the effectiveness of Plans will be monitored.

⁵ HM Treasury (2005) Reducing Administrative Burdens: Effective Inspection and Enforcement. Hampton, P.