

Marine Science Co-ordination Committee

Terms of Reference

Nature of committee

1. The Committee will provide a high level decision-making body on marine science to meet priority policy needs and help deliver the UK's vision of 'clean, healthy, safe, productive and biologically diverse oceans and seas'. The Committee will provide a strategic overview of marine science¹ and take the decisions required to deliver UK marine science effectively and efficiently. In doing so, it will recognise the essential role that evidence, gathered from monitoring and assessment, research, development, economic and statistical analyses, and social research, has to play. It will also work closely with organisations and individuals across the UK marine science community.

Overall responsibilities

2. The Committee will:
 - shape the UK's capability to provide, and respond to, the evidence² required to demonstrate sustainable development within a clean, healthy, safe, productive and biologically diverse marine ecosystem, including overseeing future UK-wide integrated marine assessments
 - help to shape, support, co-ordinate and enable the delivery of world class marine science for the UK by delivering the UK Marine Science Strategy effectively
 - fulfil statutory obligations and international commitments for marine monitoring and assessment, as set out under the UK Marine Monitoring and Assessment Strategy, including those of the European Marine Strategy Framework Directive
 - improve UK marine science co-ordination across the public sector, taking account of the contributions from non-public sector activity within the UK and the work of overseas partners, in order to create a larger and more effective evidence base and achieve more efficient use of resources

¹ Marine science is taken to span the full range of science activities from curiosity-led blue skies research to directive strategic programmes, and to include natural, social, economic and technological science.

² In the context of MSCC, evidence may be sourced from monitoring, scientific research and development, economic and statistical analysis, and social research.

Actions

3. It will do so by undertaking the following actions:
 - i. identifying requirements for marine monitoring and assessment to meet international and national obligations and commitments for the marine environment, including operational forecasts and socio-economic objectives
 - ii. identifying policy implications resulting from UK marine assessments, and influencing those who can take action
 - iii. delivering the actions arising from the UK Marine Science Strategy, which will help to provide the evidence needed to fulfil the UK's Marine Objectives and other policy drivers. In particular by:
 - taking forward the three priority actions identified within the Strategy relating to: Long-Term Monitoring; Communications; and Science Alignment
 - establishing and implementing delivery plans for the other actions within the Strategy
 - identifying a portfolio of future actions to take forward under the Strategy, as a rolling programme of activities
 - iv. providing, where necessary, a cross-departmental forum for clearance of integrated marine assessments prior to publication
 - v. liaising directly with key sectors (industry, NGO and research & academic sectors) to understand their issues and needs regarding marine science

Reporting arrangements

4. The MSCC will report directly to the Ministerial Marine Science Group and will provide an annual progress report to the Ministerial Group.

Membership

5. The Committee will be comprised of senior representatives of the organisations listed at Annex A.

Annex A: membership of MSCC

- Department of Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Co-Chair)
- Scottish Government (Co-Chair)
- Marine Scotland
- Department of Energy and Climate Change
- Ministry of Defence
- Department for Transport
- Department for Business, Innovation and Skills
- Department for International Development
- Foreign and Commonwealth Office
- Welsh Government
- Northern Ireland Executive
- Meteorological Office
- Centre for Environment, Fisheries and Aquaculture Science
- United Kingdom Hydrographic Office
- Environment Agency
- Agri-Food and Biosciences Institute
- Scottish Environment Protection Agency
- Natural Environment Research Council
- Natural Resources Wales
- Marine Management Organisation
- The Crown Estate
- Joint Nature Conservation Committee
- 3 Non-Executive members
- 1 Ad hominem member
- 1 marine industries representative

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