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Department for Environment  
Food and Rural Affairs

**Web:** [www.defra.gov.uk](http://www.defra.gov.uk)

**Our ref: MSD-02-363**

**Date: 27<sup>th</sup> March 2012**

Dear Consultee

## **Consultation on Marine Strategy Framework Directive: UK Initial Assessment and proposals for Good Environmental Status**

I am writing to invite your views on our consultation paper on the initial stages of implementation of the Marine Strategy Framework Directive (MSFD).

The Directive requires Member States to take measures to achieve or maintain Good Environmental Status (GES) for their seas by 2020. GES involves protecting the marine environment, preventing its deterioration and restoring it where practical, while using marine resources sustainably. The Directive is very wide-ranging and sets out eleven descriptors of GES relating to biological diversity, non-indigenous species introductions, commercially exploited fish and shellfish populations, food webs, human-induced eutrophication, sea floor integrity, hydrographical conditions, concentrations of contaminants, contaminants in fish and other seafood, litter and noise.

The purpose of this consultation is to seek views on:

- The draft initial assessment of the state of the UK's seas;
- The proposals for UK characteristics of GES; and
- The proposals for detailed UK targets and indicators of GES.

The following documents can be found on Defra's website (<http://www.defra.gov.uk/consult/open/>):

- Consultation Document
- Impact Assessment

You can find more information on the MSFD including consultation Q&A and factsheets at: <http://www.defra.gov.uk/environment/marine/msfd/>

We welcome your views and comments on the proposals. If you wish to obtain a hard copy of this consultation. Please contact:

Naomi Matthiessen on 0207 238 5388 or Joanne Higgs on 0207 238 4284 ([MSFDTeam@defra.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:MSFDTeam@defra.gsi.gov.uk)).

Or



Marine Strategy Framework Directive Implementation Team  
Area 2D Nobel House  
17 Smith Square  
London  
SW1P 3JR

## Responses

Please send responses to the above contact details by **18 June 2012**.

## Consultation Criteria

This consultation is in line with the Code of practice on Consultations. This can be found at [www.berr.gov.uk/bre/](http://www.berr.gov.uk/bre/)

When this consultation ends, we intend to put a copy of the responses in the Defra library at Ergon House, London. This is so that the public can see them. Also, members of the public may ask for a copy of responses under freedom of information legislation.

If you do not want your response - including your name, contact details and any other personal information – to be publicly available, please say so clearly in writing when you send your response to the consultation. Please note, if your computer automatically includes a confidentiality disclaimer, that won't count as a confidentiality request.

Please explain why you need to keep details confidential. We will take your reasons into account if someone asks for this information under freedom of information legislation. But, because of the law, we cannot promise that we will always be able to keep those details confidential.

We will summarise all responses and place this summary on our website at [www.defra.gov.uk/consult](http://www.defra.gov.uk/consult). This summary will include a list of names of organisations that responded but not people's personal names, addresses or other contact details.

To see consultation responses and summaries, please contact the library at:

Defra  
Information Resource Centre  
Lower Ground Floor  
Ergon House  
17 Smith Square  
London  
SW1P 3JR

Telephone: 020-7238-6575  
Email: [defra.library@defra.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:defra.library@defra.gsi.gov.uk)

Please give the library 24 hours' notice. There is a charge for photocopying and postage.

If you have any comments or complaints about the consultation process, please address them to Defra Consultation Co-ordinator, Area 7B Nobel House, 17 Smith Square, London SW1P 3JR, or email [consultation.coordinator@defra.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:consultation.coordinator@defra.gsi.gov.uk).

Thank you for your help in this matter. If you have any queries please contact us as above.

Yours Faithfully

Naomi Matthiessen

**Ms Naomi Matthiessen (Head of the Marine Strategy Framework Directive Implementation)**

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