

## APPENDIX 4: SCOPING RESPONSES

A scoping opinion was formally requested from the environmental consultation authorities and bodies for Wales, Scotland, England and Northern Ireland. Written responses received are summarised below. It should also be noted that a number of the consultation bodies/authorities participated in and made input at the assessment workshop and stakeholder meeting (captured elsewhere in this document) and many have made informal input during discussions with the SEA Team.

Organisation	Comments summarised	Commentary
Historic Scotland	Overall the scoping report was found to be useful.	
	It was suggested that the report could contain a clear description of the plan preparation process. Confirmation was also sought as to the current understanding of the process, insomuch that the final plan offers blocks for licence and that the Environmental Report (ER) and consultation comments are used to guide this decision.	See Section 4 See Section 1 and 2
	Support was given to the inclusion of potential impacts on the coastal and marine historic environment and the assumption was made that the historic environment baseline will be discussed. However, clarification is sought that this discussion will not focus exclusively on designated sites.	See Sections 7 and 9 and SEA 6 reports Wessex Archaeology 2005 and Flemming 2005.
	The three month period proposed for consultation is acceptable.	
	Several specific comments/points to clarify were made:	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• confirmation is sought that the relevant environmental protection objectives and the way in which they have been taken into account will be addressed</li> </ul>	See Sections 2 and 3
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• several policy documents relevant to the historic environment were listed and it was suggested these be included in the review of the environmental policy framework</li> </ul>	Addressed where relevant to the offshore environment
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• details of the legislation from which Historic Scotland derives its responsibilities were also listed for reference</li> </ul>	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the ER should identify any other plans/programmes which are affected by, or which affect this plan</li> </ul>	See Section 3
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the environmental assessment should address the following issues: the vulnerability of the maritime archaeological resource to damage/destruction from offshore developments and that current</li> </ul>	See Sections 7 and 9 and SEA 6 reports Wessex Archaeology 2005 and Flemming 2005.

Organisation	Comments summarised	Commentary
	<p>knowledge and records of the marine historic environment is relatively poor. As a result the potential for impact is uncertain.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• further details on environmental assessment methods would be useful</li> <li>• the assessment should consider short, medium and long term effects, permanent and temporary effects and secondary, cumulative and synergistic effects</li> <li>• mitigation measures should be considered and where environmental effects are impossible to avoid, details of how these will reduced or remediated through mitigation should be included</li> <li>• the ER should also include the proposed approach to monitoring the environmental impacts arising from plan implementation</li> </ul> <p>Details of information available on the historic environment and their sources has also been provided.</p>	<p>See Section 9</p> <p>See Section 9</p> <p>See Section 9</p> <p>See Section 9</p>
<p>Scottish Natural Heritage (SNH)</p>	<p>The issue of possible seismic surveys being conducted within territorial waters and that the DTI should ensure that these surveys are controlled and regulated to the same degree as those undertaken outside the limits of territorial waters was raised.</p>	<p>See Sections 9 and 11</p>
	<p>Support was given to the recommendation that Operators be made aware of any environmental sensitivities in the surrounding area (e.g. SPA/SAC or any areas which may potentially attract future designation) when new licences are awarded. Operators should also demonstrate, through their Environmental Management Systems, they have:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• a full understanding of any potential impacts of their actions and</li> <li>• the expertise and resources in place to address any potential impacts</li> </ul>	<p>See Section 11</p>
	<p>In general, the importance of implementing and acting upon the recommendations agreed in the environmental report was highlighted and that it would be instructive if the SEA 6 report could indicate the progress made in implementing recommendations from the previous SEAs.</p>	<p>This issue will be discussed with the SEA Steering Group</p>
<p>Scottish Environment Protection Agency (SEPA)</p>	<p>A number of specific comments/points for clarification were made:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• it would be helpful if the ER included a clear description of how the SEA process</li> </ul>	<p>See Sections 2 and 4</p>

Organisation	Comments summarised	Commentary
	<p>and the plan preparation process (i.e. deciding which of the unlicensed blocks are offered for licensing) are integrated</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the implications for coastal morphology and water quality from exploration and future development should be discussed with regard to the Water Framework Directive (WFD)</li> <li>• the main focus of the WFD is groundwater and surface water quality out to 1nm from the coast of England and Wales, but the seaward limit from the Scottish coast is 3nm.</li> <li>• the SEA technical reports provide an excellent review of current knowledge. Information within these reports could be combined using GIS to provide additional information on cumulative issues/impacts within the SEA 6 area</li> <li>• a report discussing potential impacts on the receptors/components in the marine environment would be useful</li> <li>• the ER should also include the following areas: the relationship of the plan with other relevant plans: programmes and environmental protection objectives established at International, Community or Member State level relevant to the plan or programme and how these have been taken into account during preparation of the plan and measures envisaged for monitoring</li> <li>• generally the strategic alternatives proposed to be assessed are acceptable. It would be useful to clarify what alternatives are anticipated in respect of temporal or spatial restrictions.</li> <li>• details of the proposed assessment method at an early stage would be beneficial so that Consultation Bodies could comment on the proposed approach</li> <li>• the range of assessment topics satisfactorily cover the range of environmental issues</li> </ul>	<p>Noted</p> <p>Noted</p> <p>Noted</p> <p>See Section 9</p> <p>See Sections 3 and 9</p> <p>See Section 4</p> <p>See Section 9</p>
The Countryside Agency (Landscape, Access and Recreation Division)	<p>The issue of including potential impacts on the visual amenity, enjoyment and character of the landscape as viewed from the coast was raised.</p>	See Section 9
	<p>The consideration of significant landscape effects should also be expanded to encompass the onshore disposal of returned wastes to landfill and the associated infrastructure and the effects of oil spills on the coast and associated landscapes, in terms of amenity value, recreation and enjoyment and quality of the landscape.</p>	See Section 9

<b>Organisation</b>	<b>Comments summarised</b>	<b>Commentary</b>
Cadw	<p>The two technical reports relevant to the historic environment were commended: both were thought to contain good, general analyses of the potential heritage assets within the area of relevance.</p>	Noted
	<p>The scope of the SEA report was acceptable and the approach adopted in respect of earlier SEA areas deemed appropriate. The importance of examining the potential impact on, as yet, undiscovered archaeology was highlighted and the issue that appropriate geophysical surveys should form part of development planning was raised.</p>	See Section 9
	<p>Potential impacts should also include those from cable or pipe laying on seabed and foreshore areas, as well as terrestrial positions.</p>	See Section 9