



Marine  
Management  
Organisation

# Our MMO Story – the next ten years

...ambitious for our seas and coasts



# Foreword

In 2020, the Marine Management Organisation proudly marks ten years as the manager and independent regulator of England's seas.

In just one decade, we have developed and delivered a trusted marine planning, licensing and regulatory framework supporting environmental and economic progress.

Now, as we embrace a period of momentous change for our nation, the importance of the sea to the country's future prosperity and wellbeing has never been greater.

How we use and look after our seas remains one of the biggest challenges of our times. At MMO we are focussed on how we will tackle this challenge over the next ten years.

Our aspirations are high for our marine environment, our industries and our coastal communities, and to achieve them we will need the support of our many stakeholders.

Here we share the story of who we are, what we do, and what we are aiming for. I look forward to our next steps, which will be to engage and work with our customers, stakeholders and delivery partners on how we will achieve our aims together.



**Hilary Florek**  
Chair, MMO Board

## ...Ambitious for our seas and coasts

MMO was created in 2010 by the Marine and Coastal Access Act, and has many achievements to be proud of. We will build on these past ten years as we enter a new decade with a fresh, bold vision for the future prosperity of our seas, coasts and communities.

Driven by government's aim for clean, healthy, safe, productive and biologically diverse oceans and seas, MMO's purpose is to protect and enhance our precious marine environment, and support UK economic growth by enabling sustainable marine activities and development.

MMO manages 230,000 square kilometres of hugely diverse seas, almost double that of England's land mass. Our seas are among the busiest in the world. We don't always appreciate the extensive benefits we draw from them, whether for leisure, transport, commerce, fisheries, construction, energy and communications. And critically, our seas provide significant environmental benefits.

To give some context, 95% of imports and exports come by sea. Around 20m tonnes of aggregates are safely taken from our seas for construction projects each year.

And the UK is working towards a third of our electricity being produced from offshore wind by 2030. Our seas are also home to 175 marine protected areas. At the same time, our seas and coasts are the backbone of our fishing and seafood industries with a combined gross value added to the economy of almost £2 billion per year.

MMO will be at the centre of a successful transition from the EU, at the heart of enabling the further development and delivery of renewable energy, and we will play a key role in supporting delivery of the government's exciting environmental ambitions.

We know we won't do this alone. We will be outward-looking, collaborating with our stakeholders on our aspirations and shared ambitions for our marine environment, industries and communities.

MMO will engage with our customers and stakeholders and together create 'win-win' outcomes that use the natural asset of the sea for the benefit of people and the economy, and ensure we protect and enhance our marine environment for future generations.

Using our expertise in marine management we will also continue to play a leading global role, supporting the protection and sustainable development of the world's seas.

Put simply, MMO aims to deliver for the good of the UK, as well as for the whole of the planet.

We were on our way to unveiling our new MMO vision just as the Covid-19 pandemic hit. As our attention quickly turned to supporting our customers and stakeholders to respond to the health and economic crisis, we began being the MMO we aspire to be, and to use guiding principles and values to help secure and deliver lifeline funding to the fishing industry, and provide support for our marine development sectors.

So we decided it's time to share our vision, and begin the next stage of MMO's journey with renewed purpose, ambition and identity.

We look forward to supporting our customers, partners and stakeholders recover, and to work together towards a prosperous future for our seas, coasts and communities.



**Tom McCormack CBE**  
CEO

# Looking to our future

In late 2019, MMO was doing a lot of thinking about the future. Our focus was about our role in the context of leaving the EU, supporting the new government's economic and environmental ambitions, and preparing for a range of game-changing legislation for fisheries and the environment.

How would MMO create 'win-win-wins' in the context of climate change, economic recovery and environmental protection, balancing those critical priorities?

How could we use our marine skills, expertise and evidence to be a force for good for our seas and coasts?

And mostly, what is our vision? What positive changes do we want to help make happen in the next ten years? And what are our plans to get there?

## In answer to those questions, colleagues and stakeholders said:

- We will actively support government's huge ambitions in its 25 Year Environment Plan, including net zero carbon emissions by 2050 and protecting 30% of the world's oceans by 2030, along with fundamental changes and opportunities for our fisheries as an independent coastal state.
- Our ambitions for MMO are also big - we aim to lead the way in protecting and enhancing our seas whilst enabling industries, people and communities to benefit.
- We are passionate about what we need to do to ensure a thriving, prosperous future for our seas, coasts and coastal communities.
- We want to create more 'win-win-wins' across environmental, economic and societal objectives. This needs balanced judgements. MMO is uniquely placed to make a positive difference.
- We want to become a service-focussed regulator, transforming and creating stronger ongoing relationships with our customers and stakeholders to deliver our objectives.
- Working across government and with others, we will harness the best evidence and technology to make decisions and help deliver our objectives, whether supporting fishing quotas and licensing wind farms, or helping respond to climate change and biodiversity objectives.
- We already know about some of the big changes to come; other big changes and opportunities still need to be figured out. So, we'll use 2020/21 as our 'bridging years' – a key time to work with our stakeholders and delivery partners to reset our marine ambitions for the next ten years, and help shape and solve the big questions for our seas and coasts. And doing so whilst we continue to deliver professional regulatory marine services for our customers and stakeholders.

**“ We have to have a step change, supporting the best in marine management we have developed over the decade, learning and continuously improving.”**

# Our Vision

**A prosperous  
future for our  
seas, coasts and  
communities**

**“** *We must protect and enhance nature and our seas and use them wisely for the benefit of society and the economy – we need to deliver win-win outcomes, with a thriving environment supporting a thriving economy”*

# Our Mission

**As England's marine manager, we protect and develop our seas, coasts and communities for the benefit of generations to come**

**“** *As our name says – we are here to manage our marine environment and we want to manage it well for the future”*





# Our guiding principles

These principles describe the reputation we want to build:

## **Ambitious**

We aspire to be the best we can, working with others to achieve shared objectives

## **Professional**

We are a customer-focussed regulator, delivering outcomes using best available science; evidence and technologies

## **Balanced**

We weigh the evidence, making independent decisions that protect our marine environment and support economic and social prosperity

# Our Values

While our MMO values guide the ways we work:

**Together we are **Accountable**,  
**Innovative**, **Engaging**  
and **Inclusive**.**

**Our MMO  
story comes  
in five parts:**



# 1. Our services

We are the independent regulator for England's seas, professionally delivering service-focussed outcomes for our customers.

We have reframed each of our services to signal our commitment to service-focus and outcomes:

- Enabling sustainable marine development
- Delivering sustainable fishing opportunities
- Protecting marine habitats and wildlife
- Administering marine support funds
- Providing regulatory support and assurance
- Supporting global marine protection

# 2. Our stakeholders

We will be more outward looking, engaging and working collaboratively with our stakeholders and delivery partners to help achieve shared objectives together.

# 3. Our people

Our people are professional and hugely committed, and are MMO's greatest asset.

We will build on this, using our people plan to help MMO become an even better place to work. Our priority is to engage and involve MMO colleagues in our shared vision and purpose, improving the ways we work and support each other.

# 4. Our known changes

The major change deliveries in 2020/21 that are vital to the UK recovery and future prosperity (we know there will be even more change to come):

- Managing successful transition from the EU into an independent coastal state from 1 January 2020/21
- Completing the full set of marine plans covering all of England's seas and coasts
- Delivery of the Control and Capability Programme for a sustainable and more modern fishing industry

# 5. Our bridging years

We recognise the importance of working with others to shape MMO's long-term role across national and international marine agendas.

We will use 2020 and 2021 (our bridging years) to engage our delivery partners, stakeholders and government to figure out and set our strategic ambitions for the next ten years.





# Our services

## 1. Enabling sustainable marine development

We champion and lead sustainable development of our seas and coasts, supporting the UK's £46 billion marine development sector.

This hugely significant sector delivers £500 billion in trade and sustains almost 1 million jobs each year. With 95% of all imports and exports coming into the UK by sea, our ports add a further £17 billion to the economy each year. The whole of the renewable energy economy is worth a further £47 billion to the economy and supports 220,000 jobs.

MMO's role in planning and licensing marine development is to deliver win-win-win solutions that protect the sea and deliver environmental, economic and societal benefits.

We are currently in the final stages of completing comprehensive, evidence-based marine plans that cover all of our seas and coasts (an area almost twice the size of England). These plans will become the definitive guide and planning framework for all marine development in the future.

We've supported £27 billion of marine developments by licensing, permitting and advising upon developments ranging from subsea cabling for telecommunications and power and offshore wind farms to ports and quay constructions, dredging and extracting aggregates for construction and transport infrastructure.



## 2. Delivering sustainable fishing opportunities

The significance of the fishing industry for our coastal communities, and its contribution to food security for an island nation is substantial.

The fishing catch sector in the UK is just one part of the supply chain, which includes the whole cycle of fishing, landing, farming and processing, and supplying domestic and export retail and hospitality industries.

The UK fleet of 6,000 vessels lands around 700,000 tonnes of seafood with a value of around £1 billion each year, supporting 12,000 jobs directly and a further 19,000 jobs in the seafood processing sector.

With finite sea fish stocks to manage for now and the future, MMO's role supports our fishing industry, providing fishing opportunities, informing negotiations to improve trading and quota allocations, licensing sustainable fishing activities, and monitoring, assuring and, when necessary, enforcing compliance with regulations.

As we work through the changes and opportunities to come as an independent coastal state, we will work with our stakeholders and delivery partners, and use **the** best evidence to better match fishing capacity to opportunity, ensuring fish stocks are harvested and maintained at sustainable levels, and the future of our fishing sector and industries are supported.

**“ We continue to manage fisheries well and achieve new regulatory reforms... we become part of the solution for food security.”**

## 3. Protecting marine habitats and wildlife

Climate change and the loss of biodiversity due to human activity continues to threaten the sustainability of the world's seas and oceans. England's seas and coasts are home to 175 Marine Protected Areas, designated to protect and improve the habitats and species essential for healthy, functioning marine eco-systems.

Working with Inshore Fisheries and Conservation Authorities, MMO supports and implements byelaws to confirm activities that are not allowed in each of our Marine Protected Areas.

MMO also plays a national role in responding to and helping to manage marine pollution incidents. Last year, MMO helped to manage and resolve 234 pollution incidents.

## 4. Administering marine support funds

The fishing and seafood processing industry supports 21,000 jobs, contributes £2 billion to the economy and is a vital part of our food supply chain. The industry is also key to the sustainability of many of our coastal communities.

MMO administers funds to protect the marine environment and its natural resources through the European Maritime and Fisheries and the new Maritime and Fisheries Funds. These funds underpin the sector's competitiveness and economic viability, supporting infrastructure developments, safety and process innovations and projects that modernise the industry. Other projects assist local communities impacted by poverty or ill health, with projects aimed at supporting education and inclusion.

Funds are also focussed on projects that support the collection of fishing and economic data, and those that help innovate and modernise how we manage sustainable fishing.

Since 2016, MMO has administered and funded £109m to around 1,500 projects. The funds have attracted additional private funding, increasing the total investment to £125m.

More recently, in response to the Covid-19 emergency and its adverse impact on the fisheries sector, MMO worked closely with delivery partners and industry, and rapidly designed and delivered three support schemes through the government's £10m Fisheries Response Fund, providing direct emergency funding to 1,158 fishing vessel owners, 76 aquaculture businesses and 20 fisheries projects, aimed at the marketing and distribution of domestically caught fish.



## 5. Providing regulatory support and assurance

MMO has responsibility for ensuring compliance with the national and international marine regulations which the UK is signed up to. We do so through regulatory support and assurance of fisheries, marine development and marine support funding.

We work closely with Inshore Fisheries and Conservation Authorities on marine management assurance activities, aligning local and national support and assurance activities. We're supported in our work through a range of key partnerships, including Natural England, the Centre for Environment, Fisheries and Aquaculture Science, the Sea Fish Industry Authority and the Joint Maritime Security Centre.

Our assurance approach is based on proactive, professional engagement with stakeholders and customers through information and education, working to make sure that the marine rules and regulations that support sustainable fishing and marine development are clear, understood and followed.

MMO operates a range of assurance and inspections activities, including patrols, surveillance and inspections onshore and at sea. We also take appropriate and proportionate legal enforcement action when necessary.

MMO also contributes to wider national maritime security activities as a partner in the Joint Maritime Security Centre, working alongside other sea-based law enforcement agencies to assure the integrity of our Exclusive Economic Zone.

**“How do we change the monolithic regulation – how do we become more dynamic, proportionate and innovative, with more shared ownership and accountability?”**





## 6. Supporting global marine protection

The Blue Belt Programme is central to the UK government's ambition of leading global action to tackle the serious problems of overfishing, species extinction and climate change.

Blue Belt is an ambitious flagship programme to enhance marine protection in the UK Overseas Territories by establishing 4 million square kilometres of protected and managed oceans around five of the UK Overseas Territories and their dependencies. This vast marine area includes some of the most biologically diverse places on Earth, from the penguin colonies of South Georgia and the South Sandwich Islands to the marine turtles of Ascension Island.

The Blue Belt programme is sponsored by the Foreign and Commonwealth Office and delivered by a partnership of MMO and the Centre for Environment, Fisheries and Aquaculture Science. Our work is to help governments to evidence and develop management plans and regulatory regimes to protect these unique ecosystems for future generations.

This has included introducing sophisticated satellite tracking to tackle illegal fishing, advising on legislation and designating a new Large Scale Marine Protected Area, an underwater mountain twice the height of Ben Nevis.

**“Many people think the environment is all about trees – there are way more carbon opportunities in and from our seas”**





# Engaging our stakeholders

Our communications are aimed at informing, supporting and guiding.

We are refreshing our approach to stakeholder engagement to help us know and better understand our stakeholders and what their interests are.

We will proactively seek, value and use feedback from stakeholders to help shape and improve our services.

We also plan to establish and grow more direct relationships with key stakeholders, working together to establish shared objectives and create opportunities for collaboration.

Wherever possible we will work to deliver in partnership, including joint stewardship and a trusted customer approach.

“*Can we get even closer to our stakeholders and partners? How do we develop more collaboration, perhaps co-management and shared stewardship?*”

# Our people

**Our MMO Values:** *Together we are **Accountable**, **Innovative**, **Engaging** and **Inclusive***

MMO is working towards becoming a “top place to work” for all our colleagues.

We will build on strong levels of colleague commitment, dedication and professionalism, with a clear focus on engagement, diversity, inclusion and empowerment.

At the heart of our people plan are our values, which have been developed by colleagues across MMO.

Our people plan has already begun, starting with defining and sharing our vision, purpose and ambitions - **our MMO story**.

Our four **MMO values** are engaging, accountable, innovative and inclusive - and we are working to support colleagues at all levels to live these for real.

We rate colleague **safety and wellbeing** as a top priority; working to protect and support each other's physical and mental health.

We're stepping back on our people **facts and figures** - using them to build shared understanding, to identify and build on our people strengths, and improve the things that matter most

to our people, including colleague engagement, diversity, inclusion and empowerment.

We will continue to improve **engagement**, communicating, involving and respecting all colleagues' views and contributions.

We will engage all colleagues more on change (the small stuff and the big stuff too).

There will be ongoing focus on the leadership we give our people, by growing our **leadership capability** across MMO's newly formed Senior Leadership Team.

We will improve the **places where we work**, including our buildings, furniture and equipment.

Aligned with our everyday work protecting and improving the environment, we will develop and deliver ways to make our own **positive difference** to the planet.

Finally, we want to grow our **MMO community** – valuing, supporting and celebrating our work, volunteering and fundraising.

“

*If we want to retain and develop the best people, we need a clearer, compelling purpose, show we care about colleagues, and are truly committed to empowerment.”*



# Our known changes

## Life after the EU

This key part of our current change programme focusses on being ready for the UK becoming a fully independent coastal state in 2021.

A key priority is to help re-shape and implement revised national fisheries policies that support the ambition and potential of our fishing industry, while meeting international marine environment protection obligations and fisheries sustainability objectives.

We are focussed on delivering increased levels of control and enforcement capability to assure fishers are compliant with fishing rules.

We also manage licencing for all UK and foreign vessels to fish in UK waters (where access is permitted) and develop a new fund for the seafood industry and coastal communities.

We have a key role in delivering the intent of government's 25-year Environment Plan, and our other priorities will focus on the climate and biodiversity agenda, supporting economic growth for the UK economy, and our transport infrastructure to support our ports.

## Marine planning: a national framework

MMO is leading the development, implementation and management of a single set of Marine Plans covering all parts of the seas and coasts around England.

For the first time ever, in 2021 England will have adopted a complete and integrated planning framework to manage how we use, develop, protect and enhance our marine environment.

In future, marine plans will guide developers and planning authorities and other decision makers so that their activities happen in a sustainable way.

## Fisheries management - control & capability

To meet our national and international policy and regulatory obligations, and to help achieve balance between fisheries activities and marine environment protection, MMO continues to modernise our fisheries control systems to assure the sustainable harvest of fish, and to extend our fisheries evidence base to strengthen future fisheries management decision making.

We are focussed on exploiting digital technology opportunities.

Working alongside industry we are developing new systems to better manage catching opportunities through digital catch recording and a possible extension of vessel location tracking. We're also developing fisheries data to help harness its full potential, including improved exchange of fisheries information and intelligence with our delivery partners and other nations; whilst modernising the work of MMO's assurance and enforcement teams.



# Our bridging years - setting our ambitions

Our ambitions are high for our seas and coasts and we want to establish our long-term strategic contribution to protect and enhance our marine environment, to assist the global climate and biodiversity agenda and support the UK's economic growth.

In what ways will MMO add further value to the government's ambitions?

We will use 2020/21 (our bridging years) to engage with others to help shape our long-term strategic thinking – working with Defra, and across government, delivery partners, stakeholders and customers.



## **These are the themes we will use to test our strategic ambitions and work out how we will achieve them.**

- 1. Creating a single, integrated marine regulatory framework to protect our marine environment and enable effective development**
- 2. Ensuring the highest degree of protection ever of the UK's 'Blue Belt'**
- 3. Managing a prospering, sustainable, and climate-friendly fishing industry**
- 4. The UK's goal to achieve net zero carbon emissions by 2030 will be at the heart of what we do**
- 5. Making a positive difference to coastal communities through marine support funding**
- 6. Playing a key role in improving our shared global marine environment and the aim to protect 30% of the world's seas by 2030**
- 7. Creating shared marine stewardship and joint collaborations with stakeholders**
- 8. Delivering customer-focussed services, providing quality and value**
- 9. Respected as an effective, professional, expert marine regulator**
- 10. Recognised by our people as 'a top place to work'**



# ...And driving our big ambitions are some strategic 'big questions':

Our aim to drive, and lead, change in the way we manage and regulate our seas, for the benefit of us all now and in the future, requires new ways of working across our whole organisation and with our stakeholders, customers and enabling partners.

We will work these out and create new strategies for:

1. **Our organisational shape and design**
2. **How we better use, share and exploit evidence**
3. **Our service design**
4. **New thinking on regulation and enforcement**
5. **Our approach to funding, commercial activity and charging**
6. **Modernising our services and systems**



**“ We are passionate about making the next ten years count towards our shared aim of a prosperous future for our seas, coasts and communities... we are looking forward with great anticipation to the next steps on our journey which we will take with our stakeholders, partners and customers, to find and grasp the new opportunities ahead.”**

**Our MMO Story – the next ten years is published by:**

Marine Management Organisation  
Lancaster House  
Hampshire Court  
Newcastle upon Tyne NE4 7YH  
Contact: 0300 123 1032  
Email: [info@marinemanagement.org.uk](mailto:info@marinemanagement.org.uk)  
MMO, July, 2020