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**Chair, Tamar Estuaries Consultative Forum &**  
**The Port of Plymouth Marine Liaison Committee**  
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**Tamar Estuaries Consultative Forum (TECF)**

**Response to the Marine Bill Consultation Document**

1. Tamar Estuaries Consultative Forum (TECF) welcomes the opportunity to respond to the Marine Bill consultation document. TECF brings together relevant authorities and partners for the management of the Plymouth Sound and Estuaries European Marine Site and the wider estuary and coastal management requirements. With nearly two decades of experience, TECF provides a strong example of effective partnership delivery of integrated coastal management at the local level.
2. In reference to some of the key considerations outlined in the consultation document we have the following comments:

**Section 8**

**Marine Spatial Planning**

3. We welcome the opportunities that MSP could provide, including:
  - development of a national strategy for managing coastal and marine assets as part of a sub-sea strategy as appropriate.
  - defining appropriate sub-regional management units with clear strategies and objectives reflecting a shift towards ecosystems management. Sub-regional boundaries/ management units to be appropriately identified taking into account catchment, ecosystem and other relevant natural/ ecological boundaries. For example these could reflect the River Basin Districts (RBD) as defined under the Water Framework Directive (WFD).
  - a strategic overview of developments in the coastal environment at a regional and local level.
  - improved assessment of the cumulative and in-combination effects of development projects, at a regional and local scale.

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- opportunity to progress from a ‘habitats and species’ based management approach to an ecosystem based approach.
- improved coastal monitoring and information management. Improved access to data for all users/ managers/ decision makers. Nationally, regionally and locally.
- opportunity for MSP to reflect/ compliment the current land planning system, particularly if powers and responsibilities for management of the ‘wet’ areas could potentially be devolved to local authorities.
- guidance for the development and delivery of local strategic objectives for smaller management units such as estuary complexes, including the identification of statutory duties for managing smaller scale units.

## **Section 9**

### **Licensing Marine Activities**

4. We welcome any opportunity to simplify/ integrate marine licensing in order to improve efficiency on the ground. The current system of marine consents can be long, protracted and unnecessarily costly for all parties involved.

## **Section 10**

### **Improving Nature Conservation**

5. We acknowledge the current lack of protection outlined in the consultation document and agree in principle that identifying a network of Marine Protected Areas (MPAs) is likely to contribute to objectives to conserve and enhance marine ecosystems and biodiversity.

6. It is felt that the key to success of MPAs will lie in the delivery, the planning and management, particularly for those potentially situated along the coastal fringe. It is recommended that a Marine Bill consider the devolution of powers to establish MPAs to appropriate local bodies. At the same time the provision of national and regional strategic guidance for MPAs as part of a sub-sea strategy, is essential, particularly for the purpose of meeting objectives to protect commercially important species.

## **Section 11**

### **Marine Management Organisation (MMO)**

7. With the consideration of adopting Marine Spatial Planning and the integration of marine licensing, it is agreed that there is a need for an (MMO) to facilitate these functions. The MMO is expected to function as a service and delivery mechanism at the national and regional level, and have excellent communication with an appropriate local body or local bodies.

### **General Comments – Delivering ICZM in coastal areas**

8. As a long-standing partnership and in order to improve our ability as key stakeholders in effectively managing the coastal and marine assets in our local area we look to the Marine Bill to provide ‘top-down’ leadership and guidance for our ‘bottom-up’ initiatives.

9. With regard to delivery of integrated coastal management at a local level we would like to re-assert the values and strengths of existing coastal and estuary partnerships, management groups and forums. The value of these groups should be recognised and considered as a fundamental part of any ‘new’ delivery mechanism put forward. Long-

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standing management partnerships provide the intangible merits of having established open/ transparent communication and trust across the sectors and political divides. Fundamentally these groups are instrumental in conflict resolution, the core principal for effective integrated planning and management.

10. In as far as the parallel ICZM consultation document (June 2006) recognises delivery of ICZM by local partnerships, it is essential to address some of the key challenges and threats underpinning their stability and ability to deliver. There should be a statutory duty on all competent authorities, led perhaps by the principal Local Authority/ Authorities, with corresponding additional resources provided to participate in the preparation and implementation of Integrated Coastal Zone Management (ICZM) strategies. The ICZM strategy should formalise the mechanism for ensuring that the terrestrial and marine spatial planning systems mesh, without displacing those statutory plans.



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