

Coastal Issues Special Interest Group



European Commission –
Directorate General for Maritime Affairs & Fisheries
“CFP Reform”
B-1049 Brussels
Belgium

Email: mare-cfp-consultation@ec.europa.eu

Transport & Environment
East Sussex County Council
County Hall
St Anne's Crescent
Lewes
East Sussex
BN7 1UE

Contact: Dr Kate Cole, Support Officer, LGA Coastal Issues SIG
Email: kate.cole@eastsussex.gov.uk
Direct Dial: 01273 481621

24 December 2009

Dear Sir

CONSULTATION ON GREEN PAPER – REFORM OF THE COMMON FISHERIES POLICY

The Local Government Association Coastal Issues Special Interest Group is pleased to provide the following response to the above consultation.

The Local Government Association (LGA) represents around 500 local authorities in England and Wales, who in turn represent over 50 million people. The LGA has long been concerned about the management of our coast and marine environment and addresses these issues through a Special Interest Group (SIG) on Coastal Issues. The Group currently comprises more than 70 Local Authorities from around the coast of England and aims to champion and take forward the coastal strategy and represent the collective interests of all maritime local authorities.

Given our area of interest, this response is made from the perspective of the future management of inshore fisheries in England. However, we have some reservations on the structure of the forthcoming Marine Management Organisation (MMO) and we will be monitoring the cooperation between the MMO and the new Inshore Fisheries Conservation Authorities (IFCAs) carefully. It reflects the views of the SIG members; views of individual Local Authorities may vary. We support the views put forward by the Association of Sea Fisheries Committees and of individual Sea Fisheries Districts around the English Coast.

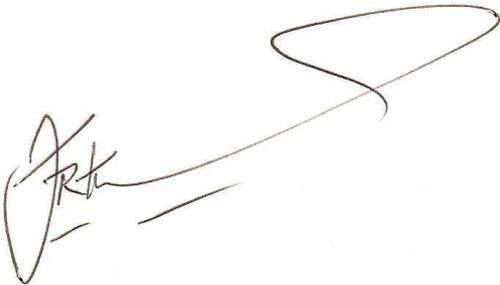
The LGA Coastal Issues SIG welcomes the opportunity to comment on the above document, and strongly supports the overall aims to improve existing fisheries management, including the development of the principle of maximum sustainable yield, review of the relative stability principle, establishment of better correlation between the market and catch sector, and most especially, protection of small-scale coastal fishing.

In terms of the Commission's stated priorities for the reform, and the actions suggested to meet those priorities, the SIG would like to highlight the following.

- The principles of long term management plans are welcomed.

- In responding to proposals within England's new Marine and Coastal Access Act, the SIG has welcomed proposals to protect the marine environment, particularly the identification of Marine Protected Areas (MPAs), as it recognises that a healthy marine ecosystem is important for both nature conservation and the industries that depend on the sea, most notably fisheries. We have also stated that the identification of these MPAs should be based on the best scientific evidence rather than on socio-economic factors. We would therefore welcome a clearer definition of the socio-economic balance versus environmental protection referred to in the green paper.
- It is the opinion of the SIG that a stronger emphasis on developing management measures at a regional or local level that recognise specific situations and needs should be encouraged. The SIG also recognises that such decision making carries responsibility and that suitable reporting and reviewing arrangements will be needed to ensure the system is appropriate.
- The SIG strongly supports a differentiated management regime for large and small scale vessels.
- The SIG also welcomes and strongly supports proposals to protect the rights of individual member states to manage the 12 nm zone for their respective inshore fleets and believes that all member states should comply to the legislation relevant to that zone.
- Proposals to improve market prices through the promotion of fresh, local, sustainably caught fish and the management of the level of cheaper fish imports are encouraged.
- The SIG supports the principle of management measures being based on the best available scientific information and believes that the new IFCA's can and should play a key role in improving knowledge and the quality of data available for decision making within the inshore zone.

Yours faithfully

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'R. Thomas', followed by a long, sweeping horizontal line that ends in a large, stylized loop.

Councillor Roger Thomas (East Sussex County Council)
Chairman, LGA Coastal Issues SIG