

# The Marine Bill

## Realising the opportunity

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# Where do we want to get to?

- Clean, healthy, safe, productive and biologically diverse oceans and seas
- Framework to regulate marine activities that ensures sustainable use and protection of our marine resources

# What are we trying to tackle?

- Managing the conflicting demands for development, recreation, aggregates, shipping, energy and fishing whilst ensuring that marine conservation objectives are achieved
- Pressure from Parliament and stakeholders, and recommendations from a series of reviews, for new legislation to improve the framework within which we develop and protect the marine and coastal environment

# Commitments

- Government manifesto commitment to a Marine Bill to introduce a new framework based on marine spatial planning, that balances conservation, energy and resource needs, to obtain best value from different uses of our valuable marine resources by maintaining and protecting the ecosystems on which they depend
- Commitment to publish a draft Marine Bill by November 2006
- Marine Bill introduced later in this Parliament

# How will Marine Bill balance commercial interests against conservation goals?

- Sustainable development will be the defining principle for the policy framework of the Marine Bill
- Our aim is for the Bill to introduce a better system for managing marine resources, so that we can simplify the consents process, whilst ensuring that we manage potential conflicts between uses of the sea and deliver our sustainability objectives

# UK or England only?

- We want an integrated system but some functions are reserved for the UK Government whilst others are devolved to national administrations
- We are working with the National Assembly for Wales, the Scottish Executive, and the Northern Ireland Executive. Where they have responsibility for the management of their territorial waters it will be for the devolved administrations to determine the need to bring forward any new legislation

# What could the Marine Bill do?

- Statutory system for marine spatial planning
- Streamline some of the regulatory regimes for development consents
- Possible new marine management organisation
- Framework for protection of important marine areas, species and habitats including criteria for conserving marine ecosystems
- Revised inshore fisheries management measures

# What happens next?

- Consultation package issued in the next few months
- Stakeholder events during consultation period
- Draft Bill probably published in October 2006 and subject to public consultation
- Introduction later in this Parliament following pre-legislative scrutiny and subject to availability of Parliamentary time

# Summary

- Marine Bill provides an opportunity to fundamentally change the framework for managing human activity in the marine environment
- Overarching theme will be the commitment to delivery of sustainable development
- Effective stakeholder engagement will be crucial to realising the opportunity

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