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Gweinidog yr Amgylchedd, Ynni a Materion Gwledig
Minister for Environment, Energy and Rural Affairs



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

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Local Authority Leaders and Directors of the Environment
Chief Executives of Pembrokeshire Coast and Snowdonia National Park Authorities
Chief Executive of Natural Resources Wales
Chief Executive of Joint Nature Conservation Committee
Chief Executive of Dŵr Cymru Welsh Water
Chief Executive Officer of The Crown Estate
Executive Chairman of Trinity House Lighthouse Service
Chief Executive of Network Rail
Director General of National Trust
Chief Executive of Milford Haven Port Authority
Managing Director of Port of Mostyn Ltd
Harbour Master of Saundersfoot Harbour Commissioners
Harbour Master of Newport Harbour Commissioners
Chairman of Gloucester Harbour Trustees
Chief Executive of Associated British Ports, South Wales

1 August 2019

Dear All

Marine Protected Area Network Management in Wales

In your capacity as a management authority in relation to Marine Protected Area (MPA) management, you will be aware last year the MPA Management Steering Group (the Steering Group) published the MPA Network Management Framework 2018-2023 which sets the vision and direction for the management of the MPA network in Wales. In addition, the MPA Network Management Action Plan for 2018-2019 was agreed. It brought together, for the first time, 21 priority network-level actions to improve MPA management and, therefore, improve or maintain condition of the network of MPAs in Wales.

Since then, the Steering Group has worked to produce an Annual Report on MPA management and a new Action Plan for 2019-2020. I enclose copies of both documents for your attention.

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Rydym yn croesawu derbyn gohebiaeth yn Gymraeg. Byddwn yn ateb gohebiaeth a dderbynnir yn Gymraeg yn Gymraeg ac ni fydd gohebu yn Gymraeg yn arwain at oedi.

We welcome receiving correspondence in Welsh. Any correspondence received in Welsh will be answered in Welsh and corresponding in Welsh will not lead to a delay in responding.

The Annual Report provides a detailed update on the progress made in delivering the 21 actions within the 2018-2019 MPA Network Management Action Plan for Wales. It includes information on both outputs and outcomes of management activities, reflecting on how actions are contributing to improving MPA management and, therefore, to improving or maintaining the condition of the MPA network.

The Annual Report reflects on the complementary nature of local level activities occurring within our European Marine Sites, as detailed in a joint report from the European Marine Site Relevant Authority Groups. This report, in addition to being summarised within the Annual Report, is being published on the Welsh Government website.

It is clear Management Authorities have collectively delivered a significant breadth of activity relating to:

- strengthening decision making processes, strategy development and implementation;
- improving the evidence base; and
- increasing our understanding of pressures on MPA features and the wider marine environment.

The Action Plan for 2019-2020 contains 25 specific MPA management actions for delivery by Management Authorities such as yours. The Steering Group, in prioritising the actions has sought to ensure the Action Plan provides a focus for all Management Authorities on actions which seek to improve management of the MPA network and, therefore, improve or maintain the condition of the network as a whole. This year the Welsh Government is funding four of the actions at a cost of £138,500, in addition to the funding already provided to Local Authorities, National Park authorities and Natural Resources Wales to deliver their core functions.

I am grateful to Steering Group members for their engagement and support in preparing this Annual Report and Action Plan. Management of our network of MPAs is a shared responsibility. Guidance is available to support you and your authority in delivering your responsibilities and activities in relation to MPA management, including regulatory consenting; assessment processes; and activity enabling decision making processes, which collectively support the management of the marine environment. A comprehensive list of advice and guidance is provided in Annex 2 of the MPA Network Management Framework for Wales 2018-2023.

If you have any questions regarding the content of this letter, the Annual Report or the MPA Network Management Action Plan for Wales 2019-2020, please contact my officials at the Marine Conservation and Biodiversity Branch on 03000 258151.

Regards,



Lesley Griffiths AC/AM

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