

PEMBROKESHIRE COASTAL FORUM

MANAGEMENT GROUP MEETING ON 6 FEBRUARY 2003

CONSULTATIONS

The Forum has been consulted on a number of documents. The management group is asked to advise on the nature of the response to be given in each case. It is suggested that the focus of any response should be the extent to which the particular consultation document should be promoting integration and, if it should, whether it actually does. This particular focus is suggested on the basis that individual members of the Forum will no doubt be making more detailed technical comments.

Adopting the above approach the following observations are put forward as the basis of a response for each of the consultations:

- 1. Seas of Change – the UK Government’s consultation paper to help deliver its programme for the marine environment** [*a copy of the document is attached in a separate file*]

We should welcome the opportunity to comment on the paper and the emphasis that is now being given to the marine environment and the adoption of the ecosystem approach to it. In doing so it is important to stress the need to integrate activities with the marine environment. In paragraph 2.8 the word “balance” is used giving the wrong emphasis. Whilst integration is to the fore in paragraph 2.12 it is important to emphasise the need for integration of marine with terrestrial. This is rather lost in the paper.

The strategic goals [para 2.19] for the marine environment seem to fit the bill, though integration with the terrestrial is not included. Should it?

The supporting approach to the strategic goals is set out in para 2.21. Generally it seems to be a good approach particularly in terms of the involvement of stakeholders. In the second bullet point the terms “reconcile” and “accommodate” are used. In essence this means integration. Perhaps they should say that. It would be clearer and more positive.

Stakeholder involvement is given great prominence in chapter 3. This is to be welcomed. Views are sought on the need for a new stakeholder group for England – Wales and Scotland already have one. The paper dismisses the idea for England because it would be too big and unwieldy. This is unfortunate because one could envisage the groups for the 4 countries coming together to provide a UK view from stakeholders. This would be the pinnacle for the likes of our Forum, which could feed issues up through the system.

2. **Pembrokeshire Marine cSAC Issues Report** *[it is assumed that you all have copies]*

It is disappointing to note that there is no reference to the Forum and the role that it might be able to play in creating the overall climate within which the SAC is managed. This was a point that had to be made strongly to WEFO when they asked what the difference was between the two initiatives. Integration of activities with the SAC will be crucial but little is said of the effectiveness of the existing mechanisms that exist to achieve this. The Forum is already playing an important role by setting up a range of mechanisms to bring people together to ensure better understanding of the issues at stake and to help provide practical ways forward. This should be of great help to the SAC. It is to be hoped that the eventual plan for the SAC will pick up on this.

3. **The Community plan for Pembrokeshire** *[it is assumed that you all have copies]*

Again it is disappointing that no reference is made of the Forum and the role it can play in helping to deliver many of the aims and objectives of the plan. This is particularly evident in Section 6 of the plan, which is headed "Linking things together", where many of the plans and strategies appear to be covering single issues. This despite being involved in the process and being seen by Officers preparing the plan as one of the key networks in the County. It is also unfortunate that coastal issues do not seem to register strongly and yet Pembrokeshire is a maritime county. Equally it is unfortunate that integrated coastal management is not yet seen as something that we should be striving for in Pembrokeshire. This shows that the Forum still has a job to do to get its message across.

Edward Holdaway
26 January 2003