

# Response ID ANON-NC4Z-R539-J

Submitted to Blue Carbon Action Plan - Consultation  
Submitted on 2024-08-06 18:04:27

Thank You

## Introduction

1 What is your name?

Name:  
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2 What is your email address?

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3 What is your organisation?

Organisation:  
Royal Town Planning Institute

## Proposed Vision

4 Do you agree with the proposed vision?

Answer: - Answer::  
Yes

Please provide further comments to support your answer:

This is an ambitious vision which is integrative and multi-faceted. It needs to be supported by a Marine Plan for Northern Ireland which is ambitious, influential, focuses on delivery and is well resourced. It is imperative that the strong link between marine and terrestrial planning is recognised and efforts are made to ensure that these are joined up.

## Proposed Aims 1

5 Do you agree with aim 1?

Answer: - Answer::  
Yes

Please provide further comments to support your answer:

It is imperative that the strong link between marine and terrestrial planning is recognised and efforts are made to ensure that these are joined up. There will be implications arising from development and decisions made in the marine environment on land, and vice versa. Given this, we need to ensure that the frameworks put in place complement and support one another in order to successfully address the challenges presented by climate change and biodiversity loss.

## Proposed Aims 2

6 Do you agree with aim 2?

Answer: - Answer::  
Yes

Please provide further comments to support your answer:

## Proposed Aims 3

7 Do you agree with aim 3?

Answer: - Answer::  
Yes

Please provide further comments to support your answer:

There needs to be cohesive land, coastal and marine planning, with an overarching framework for decision making that is consistent, evidence-based and secures a sustainable future for the maritime area. Any spatial policies must set the basis for holistic, cooperative and integrated decision making and planning responses, as many of the issues affecting a particular locality require action at other scales and in a wide range of specialisms.

There is a strong link between marine and terrestrial spatial planning which needs to be acknowledged and properly resourced. The Northern Ireland Audit Office and Public Accounts Committee 2022 reports recognise that the land use planning system is not currently adequately resourced, both at local authority level and within statutory consultees, both of which have a potential role to play here. The system needs to be properly resourced, both financially and in terms of skills and labour, in order to function effectively.

### Proposed Objectives 1

8 Do you agree with objective 1?

Answer: - Answer::

Yes

Please provide further comments to support your answer:

At the same time as collating evidence, we would recommend establishing a web map portal, mapping the baseline data. This could be coordinated with mapping links to relevant planning policies or activities in the area. The web map portal would need to be owned, managed and updated in order to be of continuing value.

### Proposed Objectives 2

9 Do you agree with objective 2?

Answer: - Answer::

Yes

Please provide further comments to support your answer:

### Proposed Objectives 3

10 Do you agree with objective 3?

Answer: - Answer::

Yes

Please provide further comments to support your answer:

Any mechanism of prioritisation will require a cohesive spatial planning framework.

### Proposed Objectives 4

11 Do you agree with objective 4?

Answer: - Answer::

Yes

Please provide further comments to support your answer:

### Proposed Objectives 5

12 Do you agree with objective 5?

Answer: - Answer::

Yes

Please provide further comments to support your answer:

### Proposed Objectives 6

13 Do you agree with objective 6?

Answer: - Answer::

Yes

Please provide further comments to support your answer:

We support an inclusive governance structure, and recommend the inclusion of spatial planners in this governance structure.

## Proposed Objectives 7

14 Do you agree with objective 7?

Answer: - Answer::

Yes

Please provide further comments to support your answer:

Part of the role of the RTPI as a learned institution is to promote and advance the training and education of planners in terrestrial planning, but now there is the need to extend this training and education into the marine and coastal environment. We must be mindful that we are operating within a new marine planning system that is underpinned through the Draft NI Marine Plan (DAERA, 2018), the NI Marine Act 2013 and the UK Marine Policy Statement 2011, and Marine and Coastal Access Act 2009. Our planners (across all aspects of planning: local planning authorities, DfI, Planning Appeals Commissioners, and private planning consultancies) will need to undergo significant training and working with specialists in the marine environment to deal with planning issues that they have never seen before. This will require specific engagement with planning professionals, and the planning schools in Northern Ireland.

## Proposed Action 1

15 Are actions numbered 1.1 – 1.5 sufficient to meet objective 1?

Answer: - Answer:

No

Please provide further comments to support your answer:

As noted previously, at the same time as collating evidence, we would recommend updating the Marine Map Viewer or establishing a web map portal, mapping the baseline data of blue carbon habitats. This could be coordinated with mapping links to relevant planning policies or activities in the area, as well as showing the Marine Protected Areas. The web map portal would need to be owned, managed and updated in order to be of continuing value.

## Proposed Action 2

16 Are actions numbered 2.1 – 2.6 sufficient to meet objective 2?

Answer: - Answer:

Yes

Please provide further comments to support your answer:

## Proposed Action 3

17 Are actions numbered 3.1 – 3.2 sufficient to meet objective 3?

Answer: - Answer::

Yes

Please provide further comments to support your answer:

## Proposed Action 4

18 Are actions numbered 4.1 – 4.3 sufficient to meet objective 4?

Answer: - Answer:

Yes

Please provide further comments to support your answer:

## Proposed Action 5

19 Are actions numbered 5.1 – 5.4 sufficient to meet objective 5?

Answer: - Answer::

Yes

Please provide further comments to support your answer:

## Proposed Action 6

20 Are actions numbered 6.1 – 6.2 sufficient to meet objective 6?

Answer: - Answer::

Yes

Please provide further comments to support your answer:

As noted previously, we would recommend the inclusion of spatial planners in any governance structure, acknowledging the importance of integrating terrestrial, coastal and marine planning, both north and south of the border.

### Proposed Action 7

21 Are actions numbered 7.1 – 7.3 sufficient to meet objective 7?

Answer: - Answer::

Yes

Please provide further comments to support your answer:

Please note the previous comment about the need to train and upskill planning professionals and engage with the planning schools in Northern Ireland in order to successfully promote blue carbon as a nature-based solution. With the ambitious targets to be met for NI, there will be significant opportunities for growth in the planning system.

### Your Contribution

22 Please outline which action(s) your organisation may be able to contribute to.

Comments::

Working with DAERA to identify an education and skills programme for planners in Northern Ireland (Action 7).

### Have we missed anything

23 Thank you for taking the time to respond to this consultation. Having reviewed the Blue Carbon Action Plan is there anything else that you wish to add?

Please provide further comments to support your answer: