



T: 0300 244 4000  
E: scottish.ministers@gov.scot

John Scott MSP  
Deputy Convenor  
Environment, Climate Change and Land Reform  
Committee c/o Clerk to the Committee  
Room T3.40  
The Scottish Parliament  
Edinburgh  
EH99 1SP

05 July 2018

Dear John,

I am writing to advise you of a public consultation that has been launched today. This relates to the Screening and Scoping stage of the project to improve protection given to Priority Marine Features outside the Marine Protected Area network. As you are aware this is a commitment in the current Programme for Government.

It is a statutory requirement of the Environmental Assessment (Scotland) Act 2005 to seek the views of the Consultation Authorities at this stage. However, in the spirit of openness and transparency, I have decided to go beyond this requirement and seek public views at this early stage.

Following this consultation period a Sustainability Appraisal will be undertaken. This Appraisal, along with any proposed new management measures will be subject of a further public consultation around the end of 2018. Subsequent implementation of any measures is planned to take place during 2019.

This current consultation will close on 31 August 2018. Details of the consultation can be found on Citizen Space at: <https://consult.gov.scot/marine-scotland/priority-marine-features>.

**Mairi Gougeon**