

The North Sea Regional Advisory Council

NSRAC Secretariat
Woodhill House
Westburn Road
Aberdeen AB16 5GB
Scotland



NSRAC

15 July 2008

In this, the week that the EU Marine Strategy Framework Directive enters into force, please find attached the *North Sea RAC Framework Protocol for interactions between windfarms and fisheries*.

Based on the outputs of a scoping meeting of stakeholders, practitioners and invited experts, the protocol was developed by a UK-based focus group appointed by the NSRAC Spatial Planning Working Group. The protocol is a contribution towards developing best practice for assessing the impact of windfarms on fisheries, and for determining how the two sectors should interact and liaise to their mutual benefit, over the lifetime of any windfarm. Key issues for the fishermen (which include not only the capture sector but also recreational fishers) are the transparency of the consultation process, displacement of fishing effort, and mitigation.

The authors of the protocol acknowledge that the approaches (e.g. to exclusion zones and access) taken by different Member States around the North Sea will differ, according to national legislation and strategies, and that even within any given jurisdiction the issues will differ according to the site in question.

Nevertheless, based on the experience of several North Sea States, the protocol contains issues which transcend national jurisdictions and makes a number of key recommendations (Section 8). These are based on an assessment of:

- Political setting
- Consultation: liaison and communication
- Consultation: site identification
- Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) and spatial planning
- Dedicated research
- Access/Displacement/Mitigation

With the increasing pressure of human activity in the North Sea, and the need to find equitable solutions in the context of spatial planning, this protocol is offered as a guide to best practice and as a stimulus to developing better approaches and outcomes.

Euan Dunn
Chair, NSRAC Spatial Planning Working Group

Chairman – **Hugo Andersson**, tel: +46 (0) 7089 64880, email: hugo.andersson@lio.se
Secretary – **Ann Bell**, tel: +44 (0) 1224 665341, email: ann.bell@aberdeenshire.gov.uk

NSRAC is a company limited by guarantee, registered in Scotland No 273169
Registered Office: Johnstone House, 52-54 Rose Street, Aberdeen, AB10 1HA