



marine reserves

The MARINET UK Marine Reserves Campaign

Further Information

The MARINET submissions to Defra and the Joint Committee of MPs and Peers can be seen on our website:

<http://www.marinet.org.uk/marinebill.html>

The Royal Commission support for 30% highly protected reserves can be seen at:

<http://www.rcep.org.uk/fisheries/Chapter8.pdf>

Marine reserves can rescue our seas

There is an invisible crisis facing UK seas.

Commercial fish stocks and marine biodiversity are in serious decline due to over-exploitation and poor management. Urgent action is required to arrest and reverse this decline. Highly protected marine reserves, where all extractive activity is prohibited, is the management tool which can rescue our seas.

Therefore the MARINET Marine Reserves Campaign will be tabling an amendment to the Marine Bill when it comes before Parliament in the autumn to place a legal duty upon the Secretary of State to create an ecologically coherent network of highly protected marine reserves covering at least 30% of UK seas out to 200 nautical miles by 2015.

This campaign requires your support, and asks you to contact your Member of Parliament. Tell your MP to vote for the amendment. You can instruct your MP by visiting them, or by sending them a postcard obtainable from MARINET.



<http://www.marinereserves.org.uk>

MARINET is the Marine Network of Friends of the Earth Local Groups



Friends of the Earth

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Key Questions and Answers

Does the EU Common Fisheries Policy prevent us from protecting fish?

The CFP regulates fishing. However the UK has sovereign powers to create marine reserves and, if the marine reserves protect the whole marine ecosystem, then the UK can act to protect its own fish stocks.

How do we know that marine reserves work? Why the figure 30%?

A scientific study of 80 marine reserves worldwide has shown that the number of species, and the size of individuals within those species, is between 20 to 30% greater in reserves than in the seas outside. The 30% figure is widely accepted as necessary to rebuild fish stocks, and is recommended by the Royal Commission on Environmental Pollution.

Who else supports the MARINET amendment on marine reserves?

MARINET has consulted widely and found widespread support amongst marine industries, government agencies and environmental NGOs for its position. When the Joint Committee of MPs and Peers considered these proposals in June/July, the Committee's Report supported:

- 1 A legal duty in the Marine Bill on the Secretary of State to create marine reserves.
- 2 The reserves should form a network, not just isolated sites.
- 3 The network should be based on science, and thus have ecological coherence.

4 There should be a timetable for creating this network.

5 The Government should work to remove historic EU fishing rights in UK seas.

Therefore, it is clear that there is widespread support in Parliament for MARINET's amendment.

What we still need to establish is that these reserves should cover 30% of UK seas out to 200 nautical miles. This is what the MARINET amendment seeks to achieve.

Does your MP know?

- Our seas are dangerously overfished and the North Sea spawning populations of Cod, Herring, Halibut and Whiting are at all time historical lows, and if we continue to fish for them as we do they will very likely cease to be available as food.
- North Sea spawning populations of Plaice, Mackerel, Saithe and Sole are being harvested unsustainably. Therefore their future as our food supply is also in jeopardy.
- The Government has been told by the Royal Commission on Environmental Pollution that it must set aside 30% of our seas as highly protected marine reserves if our fish stocks are to recover.
- Currently only 2% of UK seas are marine reserves, with less than 0.002% being given highly protected marine reserve status.