



cleaner coasts, healthier seas

Working for a better marine environment

The challenge and our priorities

We are the Environment Agency. It's our job to look after your environment and make it a **better place** – for you, and for future generations.

Your environment is the air you breathe, the water you drink and the ground you walk on. Working with business, Government and society as a whole, we are making your environment cleaner and healthier.

The Environment Agency. Out there, making your environment a better place.

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the challenge

The sea has shaped the history and culture of our island nation and is vital for our future. Businesses, fisheries, tourism, recreation, and wildlife all need clean, healthy and productive seas. One in three people live near the sea, and the coast is a favourite destination for holidaymakers.

Our coasts and seas are a national asset but the growing pressures from human activities, climate change and coastal erosion threaten the quality of the environment and the people and businesses that depend on it.

The challenge we face is to find the right balance between managing human activities

today and protecting the marine environment for the future. The UK Government has recently made a commitment to tackle this challenge with a Marine Bill that will embrace all uses of the sea, protect marine resources and simplify regulation. We welcome the Government's commitment to the Marine Bill. It is a chance to turn the tide.

We are already working closely with businesses and local communities to protect our marine and coastal environment. In this leaflet we briefly summarise our role, set out our priorities for the future, and show how we will help to achieve the UK and Welsh Assembly Governments' aims for the marine environment.



our role

The Environment Agency has a broad range of duties to protect and improve inland and coastal waters. We:

- manage flood risk;
- regulate pollution to maintain good water quality;
- monitor the state of our coastal waters;
- regulate sea fisheries in more than half of our estuaries;
- manage migratory stocks of salmon, sea trout and eels in territorial waters;
- protect species and habitats, especially mudflats and saltmarshes;
- promote recreation at our coasts.

We work in partnership with Government, local authorities and communities to fulfil these duties. Our wide remit and range of expertise puts us in a unique position to make a real difference to the marine environment and help achieve the UK Government's vision for 'clean, healthy, safe, productive and biologically diverse oceans and seas'.

To make it clear how we are working for a better coastal and marine environment we are developing our own Marine Strategy, which will be published in October 2005.



our priorities

1

Getting results for people, businesses and wildlife by promoting sustainable development

Our principal goal is to make sure that marine ecosystems are healthy and protected. We want our coasts and seas to continue to provide food for people, homes for local communities, a destination for tourists, a place for business, and habitats for wildlife. To achieve this it is vital that we all protect our natural resources by putting ecosystems first.

2

Providing integrated management across land and sea

Land-based activities can have a profound effect on the sea – through pollution for instance. We want the management of land and maritime activities to be closely integrated with each other. Our work on the EC Water Framework Directive will lead the way for this in estuaries and coastal waters.

3

Providing efficient regulation of our coasts and seas

Our regulatory work focuses on areas where the environmental impacts and risks are greatest. We are constantly working with businesses to find innovative and cost-effective ways of protecting the environment.

4

Ensuring our coastal and marine environment is valued

We need to make sure that everybody understands the environmental implications of their activities. We will monitor the state of the sea and share this information with Government, businesses and people so that impacts can be reduced.

the Marine Bill



We want the Bill to:

Create

a marine spatial planning framework that will involve all users and regulators and help to deliver sustainable development;

Strengthen

the links between the management of our coasts and seas to create a cleaner, healthier marine environment;

Simplify

regulation, so that businesses, people and regulators can work more effectively together;



Secure

better protection for marine wildlife by reviewing arrangements for marine nature conservation;

Review

the fisheries management regime for both marine and migratory fish;

Improve

arrangements for managing flood risk around our coasts, addressing the challenge of flooding and coastal erosion;

Plan

for the impacts of climate change on marine and coastal areas.

Would you like to find out more about us, or about your environment?

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