

19 January 2016

Dear Sir/Madam

## **CONSULTATION ON PROPOSED SPECIAL AREAS OF CONSERVATION FOR HARBOUR PORPOISE AND PROPOSED NEW AND EXTENDED SPECIAL PROTECTION AREAS FOR SEABIRDS**

A number of sea areas around Wales are under consideration as proposed Special Areas of Conservation (SACs) for harbour porpoise and proposed Special Protection Areas (SPAs) for a number of species of seabirds.

SACs and SPAs are areas of land or sea identified as being of European importance for the conservation of biodiversity. Under the EU Habitats and Species Directive 1992, and the EU Wild Birds Directive 2009, all EU member states are required to designate SACs and SPAs and put in place measures to ensure the conservation of the habitats and species for which the sites are designated.

As someone who may have an interest in the areas concerned, we are writing to invite you to respond to this consultation by telling us your views. We are consulting on six proposals:

- North Anglesey Marine / Gogledd Môn Forol possible SAC;
- West Wales Marine / Cymru Gollewin Forol possible SAC;
- Bristol Channel Approaches / Dynesfeydd Môr Hafren possible SAC;
- Anglesey Terns / Morwenoliaid Ynys Môn proposed SPA (a proposed extension to the existing Ynys Feurig, Cemlyn Bay and The Skerries SPA);
- Northern Cardigan Bay / Gogledd Bae Ceredigion proposed SPA.
- Skomer, Skokholm and the Seas off Pembrokeshire / Sgomer, Sgogwm a Moroedd Penfro proposed SPA (a proposed extension to the existing Skokholm and Skomer SPA).

Full details of each of these proposals are available on the Natural Resources Wales website: [www.naturalresources.wales/mn2k](http://www.naturalresources.wales/mn2k). A summary map showing the location of the areas is given at the end of this letter.

The information available on our website includes a consultation paper explaining fully what the consultation is about and how to respond to it, and detailed maps of the boundaries of each proposed site. We have also set out in detail the reasons why we consider these areas to be eligible for designation as SACs and SPAs, and we have provided some Questions and Answers and a range of other supporting technical

information, including draft conservation objectives for the sites and assessments of their potential regulatory impact.

Decisions on whether to designate SACs and SPAs in Wales and Welsh inshore waters are made by the Welsh Ministers, and no such decisions have yet been made in relation to these sites. We are carrying out this consultation on behalf of the Welsh Government and will report the results of the consultation to them. In doing so, we will take into account all consultation responses received, but please note that only relevant scientific considerations can be taken into account by Ministers in deciding whether to designate SACs and SPAs. Information and views on economic and social considerations can help inform future decisions about the way in which the areas should be managed, but cannot influence decisions on the designation of SACs and SPAs or the determination of their boundaries.

Some of these sites lie partly in Welsh territorial waters and partly in UK offshore waters beyond the 12 nautical mile Territorial Sea limit. Sites in UK offshore waters are the responsibility of the UK Government and the UK Joint Nature Conservation Committee (JNCC). NRW and JNCC are working together on these sites, and the consultation will therefore be reported jointly by NRW and JNCC to both the Welsh Government and UK Government. You may also receive correspondence from JNCC in relation to other proposed sites in English, Northern Ireland and UK offshore waters, although we have tried to avoid duplication as much as possible. **Full details of how to respond and where to send your response are given in the consultation paper on the NRW website. Please note that it is not necessary to respond to both NRW and JNCC on any of the above sites, as both organisations will be working closely together, and with the other UK statutory conservation agencies, to review the consultation responses and prepare our reports to Government.**

If you would like paper copies of any of the consultation documents on our website, or have any initial questions about this consultation, please email us as at [marine.n2k@naturalresourceswales.gov.uk](mailto:marine.n2k@naturalresourceswales.gov.uk) or call us on 0300 065 3000. You are also welcome to contact your local NRW office.

Responses to the consultation must be made in writing, and can be made in English or Welsh. The best way to respond is by using our straightforward online response form (follow the link from the consultation page on our website). The online form allows you to provide a brief response, or respond in detail to the consultation questions, including by attaching additional documents if required. If you are unable to respond online, you can respond by email or by letter to the address at the top of this letter.

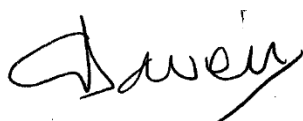
All responses to the consultation must be received by midnight on ~~19 April 2016~~ **3 May 2016 at the latest**, which is when the consultation period ends.

**Please note that in the interests of transparency and openness, all responses to this consultation together with the names of all respondents (but not their addresses or any other personal information) may be made available to any member of the public on request, and may also be published, in part or in whole, including on the NRW**

and/or JNCC websites. All personal information will be handled in accordance with Data Protection Act requirements. If you do not wish your name and your views on these SAC or SPA proposals to be made public, you are advised not to respond to this consultation. When responding, please do not include any personal information about yourself or others within the body of your comments.

We look forward to hearing from you.

Yours faithfully

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Ceri Davies', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Ceri Davies  
Executive Director Knowledge, Strategy and Planning

