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Public Petitions Committee  
C/O Clerk to the Committee  
Room T3.40  
The Scottish Parliament  
Edinburgh EH99 1SP

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10 December 2015

Your ref: PE01431

Dear Public Petitions Committee

**Public Petitions Committee – Consideration of Petition PE01431**

Thank you for your request of the 8<sup>th</sup> December 2015 for a formal update on progress to take forward the Demonstration and Research MPA for Fair Isle, as proposed by FIMETI.

Following three iterations of the proposal and after 3 years of discussions with the proposers and stakeholders, the independent assessors now consider that the Fair Isle D&R MPA proposal meets the criteria set out in the MPA Selection Guidelines. Marine Scotland agree with this assessment. FIMETI are aware of this and have welcomed the outcome of this assessment.

The next step is to take the proposal forward to consultation, subject to Ministerial approval. FIMETI, as well as Flora and Fauna International who are assisting the Fair Isle community on the proposal, are also aware of this, and are content that the proposal be taken forward at the most opportune time for consultation in the early new year. If the Committee would find it helpful, I can update the Committee when a decision on this is taken.

I trust this reassures Committee members of the progress that has been made on the potential designation of the Fair Isle D&R MPA.

Yours sincerely,

**Sebastian Howell**  
**Marine Scotland - Policy Adviser**