

**PE1431/H**

Petitioner Letter of 22 May 2013

**Petition PE1431 to Scottish Parliament Public Petitions Committee: Marine Protected Area for Fair Isle waters**

I am writing to update the Petitions Committee on current developments which are pertinent to, and which the Petitions Committee will wish to take into account, in its consideration of the Fair Isle petition (PE1431) on 28<sup>th</sup> May 2013. They are as follows:

- 1) ***Engagement and progress with the Scottish stakeholder Fishing Organisations in seeking consensus over our application.***
  - a. *Shetland Fishermen's Association*: The SFA has accepted an invitation from the Fair Isle community to visit Fair Isle and discuss with the community ways forward. Proposed dates are 31<sup>st</sup> May or 1<sup>st</sup> June 2013. Leslie Tait (SFA Chairman) and Simon Collins (SFA Secretary) will attend.
  - b. *Scottish Fishing Federation*: an invitation was extended to the SFF and its affiliated members to visit Fair Isle and discuss with the community ways forward. Kenny Coull (SFF Secretary) replied (16<sup>th</sup> May 2013) "I can confirm that we are happy to meet to discuss your proposals for a R&D MPA at Fair Isle." The Fair Isle community has proposed dates of the week of 19<sup>th</sup> August or the week of 30<sup>th</sup> September 2013. These dates coincide with provisional plans by Marine Scotland to visit Shetland, when the Fishing organisations are also likely to be there, facilitating their ease of transfer to the isle.

Note: *the choice of Fair Isle as the location is to ensure that all members of the community are afforded the opportunity to engage with the visiting organisations.*

- 2) ***Marine Scotland Timetable for Demonstration & Research MPAs.*** Sebastian Howell, the Marine Scotland officer steering the *D&R* MPA process, informed us on 8<sup>th</sup> May 2013 that assessment of the Fair Isle MPA proposal is being delayed until the first half of next year as the current year is being devoted entirely to consultation and further evidence gathering for the Nature Conservation MPAs.

Nick Riddiford

Coordinator, *Fair Isle Marine Environment & Tourism Initiative* (on behalf of the Fair Isle Community)

22<sup>nd</sup> May 2013