

GUIDELINE I

PARTNERS WILL PROTECT, PROMOTE AND INVEST HERITAGE AND IDENTITY, INCLUDING THE UNDERWATER AND LAND-BASED ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND BUILT HERITAGE, THE ARTS, LOCAL CUSTOMS, TRADITIONS, CRAFTS AND SKILLS

Background:

A long history of marine and coastal resource use and the development of maritime industries, has left the Moray Firth with a rich and diverse cultural heritage. This is highly valued as an integral part of the Moray Firth's character and culture and is a major tourist attraction. The individual features of the coast including buildings, archaeological sites and shipwrecks form the fabric of the built heritage of the Firth. Certain elements, such as the fishing villages, are distinctive to the area; others are part of a pattern of connections throughout Scotland, linking the hinterland to its coastal fringe. Other facets of the cultural heritage include the arts, local customs, traditions, crafts and skills, language and dialect.

Key ways in which The Moray Firth Partnership can help include:

- encouraging the sharing of best practice across local authority boundaries;
- encouraging work undertaken at a national level to have a local focus;
- encouraging national and regional work to use locally generated information.

Key Issues and Opportunities include:

- involving local people and groups to harness and communicate existing local knowledge;
- unquantified current and potential damage to archaeological sites from coastal processes, management and people pressure;
- addressing the difference in built heritage protection between local authorities;
- recent curbing of financial resources available to built heritage conservation;
- developing a database of existing information;
- raising awareness of the interest and importance of the cultural heritage;
- sharing good cultural heritage management practice;
- identifying and restoring historic connections across the Firth;
- investing in and promoting the built heritage in order to bring in economic benefits to the area;
- increasing our understanding of the history of interaction between people and the coastal environment.

Complementary initiatives include:

National: Historic Scotland (including 'Shorewatch'), Forestry Commission (internal training), Scottish Natural Heritage (where it relates to sites of natural heritage importance), Scottish Civic Trust.

Regional: The Highland Council (including Food Festival), Highland Interpretive Strategy Project (Planning Handbook, database of all existing interpretation), The Moray Council, Aberdeenshire Council (Geographical Information Systems of all cultural heritage sites), Footpath Trust (training), Ross & Cromarty Enterprise (Tourism Training Scotland).

Local: Kilmorack Heritage Association, Community Councils (eg Cromarty), local museums and galleries, Heritage Centres, (eg Findhorn Village), Brora Harbour Users Association, Cawdor Estate, Burghead Dive Club (running courses).



NO	ACTION	1999/ 2000	2000/ 2001	2001/ 2002	2002/ 2003	LEAD BODY	CONTRIBUTORS	ROLE OF THE MFP SECRETARIAT
1.1	Identify and quantify the threats on built heritage sites (including coastal processes, site management and people pressure)		✓			AC (PD)	KHA, HC (IM), SNH, SCT, EM, Re, MVSO, CFLG, HISP, INCC	Assist with distributing results
1.2	Share best practice in cultural heritage management through a seminar for staff including development of standard measures on the value of preserving sites, differences in the application of legislation relating to built heritage protection and seek to resolve them		✓			AC (PD)	KHA, HS, NTS, SCT, FT, MVSO, Re, RACE, SNH, HIE	Co-ordinate as part of a series of seminars Links to Partnership Project 4
1.3	Develop and publish a Guide to Cultural Heritage Management Best Practice			✓		<i>to be determined</i>	KHA, Re, SNH, MVSO, HC, HS, AC	Assist with seeking funding
1.4	Develop and implement a cultural heritage training programme for staff of organisations covering the Moray Firth and evaluate effectiveness			✓		<i>to be determined</i>	KHA, HISP, FT, MVSO, Re, KHA	Help with publicity
1.5	Publish and publicise Historic Scotland's Coastal Archaeology Survey of the Moray Firth (Caithness to Nairn)	✓				HS	INCC, KHA, Re	Help identify local means of publicity
1.6	Carry out archaeology survey for Nairn to Fraserburgh and publicise			✓		<i>to be determined</i>	KHA, AC (PD), MVSO, EM, INCC, HS	Assist with seeking funding, help identify local volunteer help
1.7	Identify how existing cultural heritage information might be made more available to (a) decision-makers and (b) the general public, including the development of a database of cultural heritage sites			✓		<i>to be determined</i>	INCC, AC (PD), HC (IM), KHA, Re, HS, MVSO, EM, NSCC, Re, SNH, FT	Links to Partnership Project 1
1.8	Develop a community research and assessment programme for the cultural heritage (eg 'Shorewatch')			✓		<i>to be determined</i>	KHA, INCC, AC, SCT, HC (IM), MVSO, EM, FVHC, Re, HS, MC, PP, NSCC, RACE, SNH	
1.9	Produce teaching materials on the cultural heritage of the Moray Firth including a factsheet on the significance of the Moray Firth coastal zone throughout our cultural history		✓			HC (IM)	KHA, NSCC, Re, SNH, HS, INCC, EM	Assist with seeking funding, help distribute materials
1.10	Ensure the Firth's unique cultural heritage is an essential part of tourism marketing strategies		✓			HOST, AGTB	KHA, MC, AC, MVSO, EM, NSCC, Re, RACE, SNH	
1.11	Identify how the Firth has been used as a source of food in the past. Ensure Moray Firth food production is incorporated into existing food promotion activities			✓		<i>to be determined</i>	KHA, RACE, SNH, HS	Help distribute results. Use local food in annual conference
1.12	Identify how language and dialect might be promoted in the Moray Firth to be determined				✓	<i>to be determined</i>	KHA, MC (EDP), AC, MVSO, EM, RACE	
1.13	Initiate a project that celebrates the Firth through artistic activities				✓	<i>to be determined</i>	KHA, MVSO, RACE, SNH	Assist with seeking funding

GUIDELINE 2

PARTNERS WILL WORK TOGETHER TO INCREASE THE UNDERSTANDING OF THE EFFECTS OF CLIMATE AND SEA-LEVEL CHANGE AND DEVELOP A FIRTH-WIDE RESPONSE TO SUCH CHANGES

Background:

Historically, partly due to long-term astrological cycles and other reasons that are not well understood, the climate has always changed. Recently there have been good indicators which suggest that we are currently going through an unusual period of rapid change. One of the indicators is the increasing frequency of storms and this, coupled with rising sea-levels, will place low and soft coastline at risk. Those areas of the Moray Firth under greatest risk are likely to be on the exposed coastline rather than the coast within the sheltered Firths. Any development, tourist and recreation infrastructure that has been established on low lying ground, such as raised beaches and dunes, will be particularly vulnerable to rising sea levels and frequency of storms and may be considered at risk.

Key ways in which The Moray Firth Partnership can help include:

- encouraging an holistic and consistent approach across administrative boundaries;
- bringing this issue higher up the agenda;
- applying international and national information to the local situation;
- helping to increase understanding of the implications of climate change among decision makers and the public.

Key Issues and Opportunities include:

- the impact that climate and sea-level change will have upon coastal margins and the human activities that take place there;
- a lack of basic information and no co-ordinated long-term approach to collecting information, making it difficult for decision-makers to formulate policy and assess the local effects of any global climate change.

Complementary initiatives include:

National: Forest Enterprise (monitoring effects on forests, flora and fauna condition), Scottish Natural Heritage and Scottish Environment Protection Agency (both have responsibilities where coastal processes and climate changes have impacts upon the environment).

Regional: Aberdeen University (studies of effects of environmental variation on wildlife populations), Highlands & Islands Enterprise Network (ThinkNet and encouraging best practice through grant offers), Highland Cycle Campaign (local action to reduce the processes contributing towards climate change), Aberdeenshire Council (Aberdeen coastal study), Highland Geological Society.

Local: Kilmorack Heritage Association (developing computer modelling ideas), Moray Firth Wildlife Centre (awareness raising exhibition), Cromarty Firth Liaison Group.

The agencies responsible for coast protection structures are: Central Government acting as Ministry of Defence, North of Scotland Water Authority, Forest Enterprise and Trunk Road authorities, local government acting as Coast Protection Authority and Planning Authority and Regional Roads Authority, private landowners, commerce including Railway Companies and Harbour Authorities/Trusts.

NO	ACTION	1999/ 2000	2000/ 2001	2001/ 2002	2002/ 2003	LEAD BODY	CONTRIBUTORS	ROLE OF THE MFP SECRETARIAT
2.1	<p>Hold a seminar to:</p> <p>(a) review existing information of the potential effects of climate change</p> <p>(b) identify hard and soft coast at risk from sea level rise and communicate this to partners in easily understandable form</p> <p>(c) identify a range of site specific management practices that cause least disruption to natural and other resources</p> <p>(d) consider current research on the effect of climate change on nutrient production</p>		✓			HC(RT)	KHA, MC (EDP), AC (TRP), SNH, FRS, CFLG, SEPA, HS, AB, SWT	Co-ordinate as part of a series of Best Practice seminars. Links to Partnership Project 4
2.2	Using a mathematical model (or GIS) to predict 'what if' scenarios to help plan for change			✓		<i>to be determined</i>	KHA, MC (EDP), AC (TRP), HIE, SEPA, SNH, HC (RT), HS, SWT	Assist with seeking funding
2.3	Identify and publicise a range of ways in which the reduction of processes which are contributing to climate change can be addressed at a local level			✓		<i>to be determined</i>	KHA, MFWC, HCC, HIE, SEPA	Help raise awareness

GUIDELINE 3

PARTNERS WILL PROMOTE THE MANAGEMENT OF THE COAST, IN A WAY THAT TAKES ACCOUNT OF THE WHOLE FIRTH, AND GUIDE THE SITING OF DEVELOPMENTS IN A SENSITIVE WAY

Background:

The coastline of the Moray Firth, as identified by The Moray Firth Partnership, is more than 800 kilometres long, a significant 20% of the coast of mainland Scotland. It is of great scientific and educational importance in the study of late glacial, post-glacial and contemporary landforms. Several sites, such as Morrich More and Culbin Sands, are among the most important examples of coastal landforms in Britain. The coastline provides the physical foundation for many human activities and therefore needs careful management. The Firth's shores continue to evolve under the influence of wind and waves and what happens to one part of the coast may have an effect on another stretch, representing a real or potential threat to infrastructure and property. In the past, coast protection schemes have been very local in nature, with little regard to the effects they are likely to have on the adjacent coastal landforms.

Key ways in which The Moray Firth Partnership can help include:

- encouraging an holistic and long-term management approach across administrative boundaries;
- sharing best practice for managing soft coast, eg dune systems.

Key Issues and Opportunities include:

- developing an holistic and long-term approach to the management of coastal processes;
- addressing diverse, complex and inconsistent legislation, across political boundaries;
- a large percentage of the coastline is a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI). Any development on the coastline affecting coastal processes may have an effect on adjacent SSSIs;
- the Firth's rich archaeological and built heritage is at risk from coastal erosion;
- many of the smaller harbours, important as a local resource for recreation and commerce, are silting up;
- damage to important and protected coastal landforms from some recreational activities;
- improving the basic understanding of coastal processes, including long-term monitoring, to better assist decision makers in formulating policy.

Complementary initiatives include:

National: Maritime & Coastguard Agency (report erosion), Forest Enterprise (preparing coastal sand dunes habitat action plan), Scottish Natural Heritage (management of designated sites and coastal cells research).

Regional: Aberdeenshire Council (Coastal Study, coastal protection inventory, Environment atlas, North East Local Records Centre, Geographical Information System), Highland Cycle Campaign (off-road cycling), Scottish Environment Protection Agency.

Local: Nairn Seafront Tourism Management Plan, Cromarty Community Council (local monitoring), Spey Integrated Catchment planning, Brora Harbour Users Association (have identified local needs), Local Agenda 21, Local Biodiversity Action Plans, Highland Geological Society, Resurgam, Friends of the Earth [Highland] (informal monitoring).

NO	ACTION	1999/ 2000	2000/ 2001	2001/ 2002	2002/ 2003	LEAD BODY	CONTRIBUTORS	ROLE OF THE MFP SECRETARIAT
3.1	Identify the need and cost of preparing a Shoreline Management Plan for the coastline not yet covered (area covered is Burghead to Sutors at Cromarty)			✓		MC (EDP), AC (TRP), HC (RT)	KHA, Re, CFLG, SEPA, SNH, FE, HS	Assist with seeking funding
3.2	Identify how the coastline is used and its importance to the community			✓		<i>to be determined</i>	KHA, MC (EDP), AC (TRP), SNH	Help with publicity
3.3	Identify existing coastal defences and assess their effectiveness and impact on coastal cells			✓		MC (EDP), AC (TRP)	KHA, SEPA, SNH	Help identify local means of publicity
3.4	Identify areas at risk from flooding and erosion and the need for monitoring vulnerable structures and sections			✓		MC (EDP), AC (TRP)	KHA, AC (PD), MVSO, EM, INCC, HS	Assist with seeking funding, help identify local volunteer help
3.5	Establish a database or handbook of those responsible for management and legislation on the coast			✓		<i>to be determined</i>	HC (RT), AC (TRP), MC (EDP), SEPA, SNH	Links to Partnership Project 1
3.6	Write to the House of Commons Select Committee advising that the MFP have identified complexities and inconsistencies in coastal protection legislation and noting that the Committee have identified the same issues. Ask Committee what happens next so MFP can help		✓			MFP, CFLG	SNH	Co-ordinate
3.7	Identify what coastal processes information is required by decision makers and the community and how best they might have access to it		✓			<i>to be determined</i>	KHA, AC, HIE, CFLG, SEPA, SNH, FE	Links to Partnership Project 1
3.8	Set up an informal monitoring programme of the coastline to contribute to better understanding of coastline movements through the ranger service and volunteers			✓		<i>to be determined</i>	HC (RGRS), MC (RGRS), AC (RGRS), KHA, FE, MFWC, FoE, SEPA, SNH, BHUA, HC (IM), HS, SWT	
3.9	Run a best practice training seminar on the management of dune structure for ranger services and tourist industry, raising awareness		✓			HC (RGRS)	AC, MFWC, SNH, SEPA, SWT	Co-ordinate as part of a series of Best Practice Seminars. Links to Partnership Project 4
3.10	Identify mechanisms to prevent coastal damage from, and positively manage, off-road vehicles				✓	<i>to be determined</i>	KHA, AC, HCC, FE	

GUIDELINE 4

PARTNERS WILL RECOGNISE THE IMPORTANCE OF THE NATURAL HERITAGE, PARTICULARLY STATUTORY DESIGNATIONS, AND WILL BE ALERT TO OPPORTUNITIES TO IDENTIFY AND SAFEGUARD OTHER AREAS OF HIGH LANDSCAPE AND WILDLIFE VALUE

Background:

The natural heritage includes the animals and plants of the Moray Firth in addition to its varied land and seascape. It is a spectacular area with many diverse features of natural heritage value, exemplified by the high proportion of national and international designations. It is internationally recognised for its bird and dolphin populations, home to seals and whales, and rich in many different types of coastal and underwater habitats. Many of the natural heritage issues centre on the requirement to balance our local and international obligations to protect and enhance these precious resources with the necessary socio-economic development of the Moray Firth area.

Key ways in which The Moray Firth Partnership can help include:

- raising awareness of concerns among partners.

Key Issues and Opportunities include:

- ensuring that valued marine and coastal habitats and species are protected and, where appropriate, enhanced;
- increasing pressure of coastal development resulting in a direct loss of intertidal and coastal land which is of national and international importance for birds;
- the impact of a range of fishing activities on the wildlife, health and productivity of the marine system as well as the target species;
- increasing shipping movements which may result in catastrophic and/or chronic oil pollution, plus the deliberate and accidental release of other pollutants and rubbish;
- the effect of offshore oil and gas activities upon the natural heritage and the adoption of the most effective contingency measures;
- the effect of recreation and tourism activities upon the natural heritage and the potential to encourage well managed wildlife tourism and recreation;
- the influence of poor river catchment management on the marine system;
- the effect of dredging, mineral extraction and dumping;
- encouraging a strategic approach to future coastal defence;
- underwater noise pollution from seismic testing and underwater explosions;
- communicating more effectively, and reducing hostility towards, the value of the Moray Firth's natural heritage.

Complementary initiatives include:

National: Scottish Natural Heritage (zonal prospectus, Grebe Cross Code, Dolphin Population Model), Scottish Executive Agriculture and Fisheries Environment Department, Scottish Environment Protection Agency, Joint Nature Conservation Committee (Marine Nature Conservation Review surveys).

Regional: Aberdeen University (dolphin surveys), Talisman Energy (UK) Limited (seabed surveys), Aberdeenshire Council (development of environment atlas).

Local: Burghead Dive Club (observe every dive), Kilmorack Heritage Trust, development of North East Local Records Centre, Moray Firth Wildlife Centre (awareness raising exhibition), Macduff Marine Aquarium, Elgin Museum (exhibitions), Forest Enterprise (Community Involvement Programme), Local Agenda 21, Local Biodiversity Action Plans, RAF Kinloss (Conservation Group), Army - Fort George (Conservation Group), Friends of the Earth, Moray Firth Dolphin Trust (research), Local Rural Partnerships, Dolphin Space Programme, Army - Fort George (Conservation Group).



NO	ACTION	1999/ 2000	2000/ 2001	2001/ 2002	2002/ 2003	LEAD BODY	CONTRIBUTORS	ROLE OF THE MFP SECRETARIAT
4.1	Carry out surveys of seabed flora and fauna for priority areas within the Moray Firth		✓			FRS	AU (LFS), MLA, BDC, KHT, INCC, SNH	Help distribute details of new surveys
4.3	Collect information on marine life through promoting of the 'Seasearch' programme in the Moray Firth through local diving clubs		✓	✓	✓	SNH	BDC, KHT, INCC, MFWC, SEPA, AU (LFS), MMA, MLA, SWT	Raise awareness of Seasearch through MFP newsletter
4.3	Make information on designated sites and their implications more available to the public and decision makers in a positive and understandable form			✓		SNH	KHT, AC, EM, HIE, SEPA, SWT	Help distribute information
4.4	Review best practice at other industrial sites on estuaries and cost/benefit implications		✓			<i>to be determined</i>	KHT	As part of a programme of Best Practice Seminars. Links to Partnership Project 6
4.5	Identify locally valued sites/landscapes and create local management teams for these sites where appropriate (pilot area to be determined)		✓	✓	✓	SWT	KHA, RACE, RAF (K), FoE, SNH, HGS, MC (EDP), AC (PD), FE, MFWC, HC (RGRS)	Help disseminate results
4.6	Complete coverage of Local Biodiversity Action Plans across the Moray Firth			✓		HC (PD), MC (EDP), AC (PD)	KHA, EM, SEPA, SNH, HC (IM), SWT	Help disseminate results
4.7	Develop management arrangements for the Moray Firth marine cSAC for bottlenose dolphins through a group of Relevant Authorities and interested parties		✓	✓	✓	MFP to facilitate	BDC, KHA, MFWC, MFDI, RACE, CFLG, SEPA, SNH, AU (LFS), FRS, SWT, TTEF and all Relevant Authorities	Links to Partnership Project 3
4.8	Identify those stretches of coast that remain relatively undisturbed by artificial barriers (such as sea defences, roads, agriculture & forestry) and develop a strategy for their protection and restoration				✓	<i>to be determined</i>	KHA, MC (EDP), AC (PD), SNH, MFWC, RACE, FOE, RAF (K)	Help disseminate information

PARTNERS WILL EXPLORE OPPORTUNITIES TO OPTIMISE THE BIODIVERSITY AND PRODUCTIVITY OF THE FIRTH

Background:

It is believed that the natural resources of the Moray Firth have been degraded through past and current use, but restoration of diversity and productivity is possible. If undertaken through co-operative action by local communities, public bodies, private companies and voluntary agencies and is properly documented, it could provide a spectacular demonstration of the potential for marine ecosystem restoration with local economic benefits.

Key ways in which The Moray Firth Partnership can help include:

- improving understanding of potential diversity and productivity and communicate this to decision makers and the public;
- bringing together different interests that could benefit from, and contribute to, this work.

Key Issues and Opportunities include:

- improving our understanding of the Moray Firth marine ecosystem and the impacts that human activities have upon it;
- exploring the optimal levels of biological diversity and productivity with a view to restoring the area to these optimal levels.

Complementary initiatives include:

National: Fisheries Research Services, Scottish Natural Heritage, Scottish Environment Protection Agency.

Regional: Inverness Museum (historical and current Highland records and collections), North East Scotland Biodiversity Action Plan, Aberdeen University (recent project on the ecological history of the Firth).

Local: Kilmorack Heritage Association, Conon District Salmon Fishery Board (research), Local centres have relevant exhibitions, eg at the Moray Firth Wildlife Centre, Local Biodiversity Action Plans, Local Agenda 21, Moray Firth Dolphin Trust, (environmental change network) - this is also relevant to other modelling work such as the Forth Estuary Modelling System.



NO	ACTION	1999/ 2000	2000/ 2001	2001/ 2002	2002/ 2003	LEAD BODY	CONTRIBUTORS	ROLE OF THE MFP SECRETARIAT
5.1	<p>Set up steering group to plan a scientific conference to explore the past, present and future capacity of the Firth's ecosystem. Steering group to consider:</p> <p>(a) holding a scientific conference to explore the past, present and future capacity of the Firth's ecosystem (to be held in 2002/2003);</p> <p>(b) establishing how to improve understanding of the historical and future productivity and carrying capacity of the Firth;</p> <p>(c) the possibility of developing a mathematical model;</p> <p>(d) long term data needs;</p> <p>(e) developing a restoration management plan.</p>		✓			FRS	KHA, HIE, SNH, HC (PD), MFWC, AU (LFS), MC (EDP), AC, MFDI, SWT	Help organise meetings
5.2	Implement second phase of analysis of marine fauna historic records		✓			AU (LFS)	KHA, Re, SNH, MVSO, HC, HS, AC	Assist with seeking funding