



Marine  
Management  
Organisation

# Draft North East, North West, South East and South West Marine Plans: Consultation Summary 2020

July 2020



INVESTORS  
IN PEOPLE

Bronze



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## **1. Introduction**

The statutory consultation on the Draft North East, Draft North West, Draft South East and Draft South West Marine Plans under the [Marine and Coastal Access Act \(MCAA\) 2009](#) concluded on 20<sup>th</sup> April 2020. The Marine Management Organisation (MMO) is now using the formal representations received to finalise the plans for submission to the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra) for consideration for adoption. In accordance with the [Statements of Public Participation](#) the MMO has produced this summary of stakeholder comments. In accordance with the [Marine and Coastal Access Act \(MCAA\) 2009](#) a Modifications Report will also be published when the marine plans are adopted.

The draft marine plan documents cover seven marine plan areas: the six inshore and offshore plan areas for the North East, North West and South West together with the South East which only has an inshore plan area. To promote integration, and ease of reading, the inshore and offshore plans for an area have been combined into a single “Plan” document. Those for the North West Inshore and Offshore Marine Plan Areas, for example, are referred to throughout this summary as the “North West Marine Plan”.

This consultation summary document provides background information on the development of the four draft Marine Plans, details of the consultation process, followed by summaries of the comments received from stakeholders. Section 4 of this document summarises the overarching themes emerging for policy areas across all plans, before moving on to discuss specific trends within each marine plan. Please note that this summary document has been produced mid-way through the amendments process and therefore some changes are yet to be finalised. Details of the next steps in the process are given in the final part of this summary.

## **2. Background**

Marine plans are prepared for the purposes of Section 51 of the [Marine and Coastal Access Act \(MCAA\) 2009](#) and will be adopted with the agreement of the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs. Marine plans are prepared under the policy framework provided by the UK [Marine Policy Statement](#) (MPS) and together

they underpin the marine planning system for England. The [Marine Policy Statement](#) sets out the high-level marine objectives (HLMOs). Marine plans in England set out in more detail how the HLMOs will be delivered for regional issues over a 20-year horizon that supports the shared UK vision for “clean, healthy, safe, productive and biologically diverse oceans and seas”.

The development of the draft North East, draft North West, draft South East, and draft South West Marine Plans followed an iterative process, which began in 2016. An initial engagement period of launch events and a ‘Call for Issues’ started the process. There were three iterations of marine plan products which were developed with stakeholder engagement and involvement throughout. Each of the three iterations were made up of nine month periods of marine plan development work followed by three months of stakeholder engagement. After each period of engagement stakeholder responses were analysed and used to build the next iteration. The marine planning process has also been complemented and informed by several assurance processes, including formal statutory assessments (Sustainability Appraisal and Habitats Regulations Assessment), an independent Peer Review Panel, and cross-governmental governance arrangements.

For further details on the engagement undertaken for each iteration please use the links below:

- [Iteration 1 Engagement Summary](#)
- [Iteration 2 Engagement Summary](#)
- [Iteration 3 Engagement Summary](#)
- [Iteration 3: You Said, We Did Report](#)

In 2016, the MMO launched a [Call for Issues with Supporting Evidence](#) as a first step in developing the North East, North West, South East and South West Marine Plans. The call was to start a conversation with stakeholders about what the opportunities, challenges and needs are for each of the marine plan areas over the next 20 years. The MMO also gathered evidence to support these issues. Following this, an Issues Database, supporting evidence, initial proposed policies and a new interactive format

were published. The Iteration 1 engagement period in early 2017 was used to seek feedback on these products through workshops and an online questionnaire.

Iteration 2 involved developing policy options to address marine planning issues. Cause and Effect workshops were held in July and August 2017 to understand and discuss the most appropriate marine planning responses to the issues raised in each marine plan area. Stakeholder views, the available evidence and feedback from the Sustainability Appraisal, were used to develop a range of policy options to address marine planning issues. The Iteration 2 engagement period in early 2018 sought stakeholder feedback on the most appropriate policy options and the draft visions for each of the marine plan areas.

Iteration 3 saw further engagement over the summer of 2018. The MMO tested new and altered policies with sector specific experts. Feedback from this engagement in combination with Iteration 2 stakeholder feedback, an independent Sustainability Appraisal and compatibility checks, led to the selection of policies to address each marine plan areas issues. It was these policies, with their additional supporting text including details of how policies are to be implemented, that were the subject of Iteration 3 engagement between January and March 2019. Following the Iteration 3 engagement period the MMO finalised the draft North East, draft North West, draft South East, and draft South West Marine Plans.

The statutory consultation on the draft North East, draft North West, draft South East, and draft South West Marine Plans ran from 14 January until 20 April 2020. The consultation was extended by two weeks in response to the COVID-19 health emergency. The statutory consultation was the opportunity for stakeholders to make their formal representations on the draft marine plans before they are amended and then submitted to the Secretary of State for consideration for adoption.

The consultation draft marine plans, and those finally adopted, are a material consideration within decision-making processes; they provide the framework and direction for decision-makers and others.

Stakeholder participation in the development of marine plans is essential to their adoption and effective implementation, and is an opportunity for them to reflect local issues. The MMO engaged with various stakeholders to promote the consultation and encourage stakeholders to respond. This included consultation webinars, attendance of events, a social media campaign and the delivery of implementation training sessions for decision-makers in each marine plan area.

This consultation summary report provides details of the consultation, comments received from stakeholders, details of the subsequent analysis of comments, and the next steps in the development of amended plans for onward submission to the Secretary of State.

Stakeholder comments on the draft plans are summarised here, but there are limited details on the MMO's response to them. The amendments process is still underway, including follow-up with stakeholders and the assessment of any changes to policies through the Sustainability Appraisal and Habitats Regulations Assessment. All amendments made to the draft marine plans as a consequence of the consultation will be reported definitively in a Modifications Report. The Modifications Report will be published alongside the marine plans once they are adopted by the Secretary of State for the Environment, Food and Rural Affairs.

### **3. Consultation Webinars**

In January and February 2020, five webinars were hosted by the MMO to complement the consultation for the four draft marine plans. One for each plan and another for national stakeholders that had an interest in one or more marine plans.

The principal purpose of the webinars was to provide guidance to participants on how to respond to the consultation. They also provided an overview of the responsibilities of the Marine Management Organisation, the adoption of the East and South Marine Plans, the development of the Draft North East, North West, South East and South West Marine Plans and their implementation. The majority

considered themselves more likely to respond to the consultation after taking part in the webinar.

### **3.1 National Webinar**

There were 54 stakeholders who dialled into the national webinar, which provided an overview of the consultation for all four Draft Marine Plans.

A [recording of the national webinar](#) and a full list of questions asked by participants with responses was produced.

### **3.2 North East Webinar**

There were 35 stakeholders who dialled into the webinar. Participants had a range of experience of marine planning, with most intending to respond to the consultation.

[Responses](#) to questions raised during the webinar have been shared with all stakeholders and a [recording of the north east webinar](#) is also available.

### **3.3 North West Webinar**

There were 25 stakeholders who dialled into the webinar. Participants had a range of experience of marine planning, with all intending to respond to the consultation.

[Responses](#) to questions raised during the webinar have been shared with all stakeholders and a [recording of the north west webinar](#) is also available.

### **3.4 South East Webinar**

There were 28 stakeholders who dialled into the webinar. Participants had a range of experience and knowledge of marine planning, with all intending to respond to the consultation.

[Responses](#) to questions raised during the webinar have been shared with all stakeholders and a [recording of the south east webinar](#) is also available.

### **3.5 South West Webinar**

There were 25 stakeholders who dialled into the webinar. Participants had a range of knowledge of marine planning, with many intending to respond to the consultation. [Responses](#) to questions raised during the webinar have been shared with all stakeholders and a [recording of the south west webinar](#) is also available.

## **4. Consultation responses and feedback**

### **4.1 Overview of stakeholder responses to the Consultation**

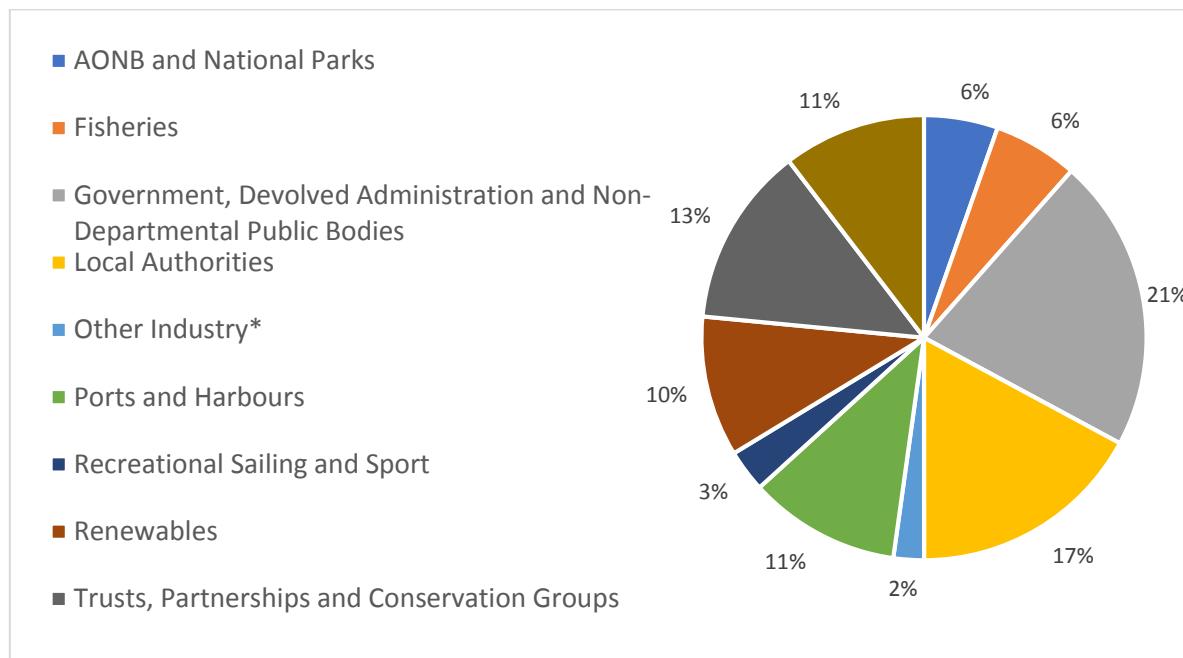
The statutory consultation on the draft North East, draft North West, draft South East, and draft South West Marine Plans asked a wide range of questions about the draft marine plans, a full list can be found in Annex A.

In total 209 consultation responses with 7,078 individual comments were received across all four draft marine plans. Some of the 209 consultation responses were made for multiple marine plan areas, therefore when the response rate is broken down for each plan area there appears to be a higher response rate than 209. Some of the individual comments also apply to multiple marine plan areas, therefore if they are split by marine plan area there are more than 7,078. The responses were submitted through three different channels: the online Citizen Space tool, an alternative submission form and by email. Stakeholders provided comments on the background, vision, objectives, policies, and on applying the plan as a whole. An additional 420 comments were received on the Draft Sustainability Appraisal.

The Appropriate Assessment Information Report for the Habitats Regulations Assessment on the four draft marine plans, although not open for formal comments, was published to support the consultation. The final Appropriate Assessment Information Report for the Habitats Regulations Assessment will be completed on the marine plans with advice from the statutory nature conservation bodies, which includes a re-screening of policies amended in response to the consultation.

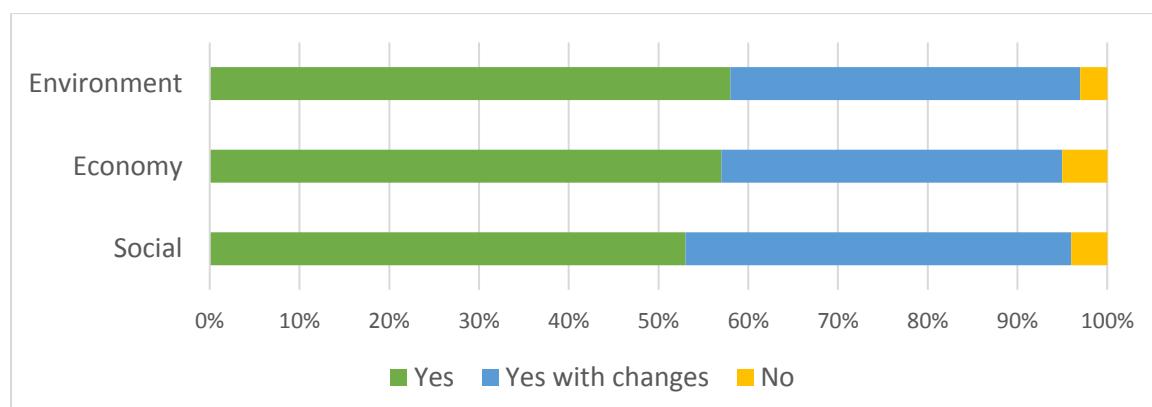
The overall percentages of responses received by sector, and level of agreement with policies by theme, across all draft marine plans are shown in the charts below. Equivalent breakdowns are provided for each draft marine plan in later sections (see 2.3-2.6).

**Figure 1: All plan area responses received by respondent sector.**



\*Aggregates, Aquaculture, Cables, Carbon Capture and Storage, Oil and Gas

**Figure 2: Respondents agreement with draft marine plan policies by policy theme, combined results for all four draft marine plans.**



## **4.2 Emerging trends in stakeholder comments**

This section provides an *indication* of predominant trends among the comments received in the consultation. It is not an exhaustive list, comments were received on all sections of the draft marine plans. One or more draft marine plans may be cited. This is an indication that the policy area or section in the plan or plans received particular attention from stakeholders. It does not signify that no comments were received on these matters for the other plans.

### **4.2.1 Overarching comments across all draft marine plans**

A common theme that ran across many policies was a request for clarity in defining phrases that were considered vague, for example “other development or activities”. Similarly, defining the word “significant” was suggested and we received requests to either add it or remove it from certain policies. The term “significant” will not be defined as it can only be determined by the conditions of an individual proposal. The term is included in policies where appropriate, and where in line with current legislation.

A high number of comments requested more clarification on the mitigation hierarchy, which is used within multiple policies. The different mitigation hierarchies used contain deliberate differences in line with the strength of the policy. Policy strength was determined firstly through the options process at iteration 2 and then further tested and iterated in subsequent plan development stages. As a result of the comments received through the consultation the text within the marine plans and the technical annexes will be edited to add further explanatory text and ensure that the mitigation hierarchy and its application are consistent across policies.

Several requests were made for clarification within the marine plans on the overlap between marine and terrestrial planning regimes. Clarification on the need to use the marine plan documents with the more detailed technical annex was also requested.

There was a mix of views regarding policy strength, with many respondents providing locally specific information, for example on habitats and species.

The integration of policies across the plans was requested such as the socio-economic benefits (that were covered in the employment policies) also being added to the regeneration policies.

There were minor amendments needed in many policies to accurately reference a place, area or position. For example, the ports, harbours, and shipping policy referenced the “Harbour Administration Area” which instead should have been “Statutory Harbour Area”.

Links within policy text that are outdated or incorrect will be updated. Other comments requested changes which were not within the remit of marine planning or were beyond the scope of the marine plan.

#### **4.2.2 Environment Policy Theme**

##### **Marine litter**

Many comments regarding marine litter were received on the Draft North East and North West Marine Plans. Stakeholders requested a top-down governmental approach to preventing waste and reducing plastic use. Others requested the policy be strengthened from “aspire” to “must”. Requests were received to improve the explanation on provisions to prevent marine litter, and to include the risk to navigational safety resulting from the waste.

Respondents requested the addition of information about “abandoned, lost or otherwise discarded fishing gear” (ALDFG), aquaculture, and plastic pellets (nurdles) which can all contribute towards marine litter. Respondents also requested more emphasis on the benefits of reducing marine litter to support the aims of marine protected areas.

Clarification was sought in several areas, for example, that the term marine litter excludes man-made archaeological materials. Clarity was also requested on the role of waste planning authorities and local planning authorities with regards to the application of relevant marine litter policies.

## **Water quality**

Many comments requested that “protect” be added to the policy wording to support proposals that “protect, enhance and restore water quality”.

There were requests to include deterioration of “bodies of water” to the policy wording, but this would mean that the policy only applied to areas within 1nm where the Water Environment Regulations (Water Framework Directive) apply. The policy wording is likely to be retained to provide broad coverage of both the offshore and inshore marine plan areas. However, clarification has been provided to demonstrate that water quality is supported by the Water Environment Regulations (in the inshore plan area out to 1nm) and the Marine Strategy Regulations (beyond 1nm). More information will be provided in the implementation section regarding how to apply the policy within and outside 1nm, including developments or activities which are of benefit to water quality and should be supported.

Several comments sought a clear difference between shellfisheries and aquaculture. There were also requests for removal of the reference to the Blue Flag award scheme as not all local authorities subscribe to the scheme.

Updates were requested to the bathing water statistics, which will be updated to the 2019 statistics. References to Article 4.7 derogation will also be updated to refer to Section 17 & 19 of The Water Environment Regulations 2017.

## **Net gain**

A wide range of comments were received on the net gain policy. Some stakeholders suggested policies should only refer to biodiversity net gain rather than wider environmental net gain due to lack of an agreed approach for the latter. There were some requests for net gain delivery to be separated from the mitigation hierarchy and to apply in all cases, not only in cases where adverse impacts cannot be mitigated and therefore require compensation. Other comments requested clarity that net gain requirements do not apply in marine protected areas (MPAs) and MPA legislation takes precedence, with further comments requesting more guidance on implementing net gain in the offshore marine area. A number of comments stated that the metrics, for example the [Defra Biodiversity Metric 2.0](#), require further

development before a net gain approach can be implemented. A range of stakeholders requested reference to net gain be removed from the plan policies altogether until it is made mandatory in the marine area with guidance available.

Discussions are ongoing with the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs to agree how to refer to biodiversity gain and net gain in marine plans in light of the range of comments received and in line with developing government policy. It is likely that the principles of biodiversity gain will be woven through the enhancement elements of relevant policies. Existing requirements to deliver biodiversity gain, as set out under the terrestrial planning framework which applies in the intertidal area, will be referred to in supporting text.

## **Biodiversity**

Most comments received were supportive of the biodiversity policies within all of the draft marine plans. A particularly high number of comments were received in relation to the biodiversity policies in the Draft South East and South West Marine Plans. There were some concerns raised that the mitigation hierarchy used in the policies would not be strong enough to protect designated sites. However, in that circumstance, the stronger marine protected area policies would apply. The biodiversity policies aim to protect species and habitats outside of designated sites.

Other comments requested the removal of “significant” from the policy wording. In order for the policy to be proportionate, “significant” will not be removed from the policy wording. Some stakeholders highlighted the discrepancies between the policy aim in the plan and the supporting text, which will be addressed.

## **Marine protected areas**

Comments for marine protected areas were received on each of the draft marine plans. Most comments supported the policies, with some requests to include “compensation” and to remove “minimise” from the mitigation hierarchy. “Compensation” will not be added to the marine protected area policies hierarchy as the policies have been drafted in line with current legislation and cover all types of marine protected areas. An explanation will be included in the supporting text that

these policies do not remove the provisions for derogations that are present in primary legislation and regulations. “Minimise” will remain in the mitigation hierarchy as the policy applies to all marine protected areas, not only to European sites. Clarification of the approach to the mitigation hierarchy within the marine plans will be provided in upfront text (see section 4.2.1). The supporting text will clarify the relevant legislation applicable for each marine protected area and that proposals must still comply with requirements under the relevant legislation.

There were some requests for clarification of the different types of marine protected areas, and to provide an explanation that Ramsar sites are to be treated as European sites. The supporting text will clarify which marine protected areas are national, European and international, and will confirm that Ramsar sites receive the same protection as special areas of conservation and special protected areas.

Other comments requested “Geodiversity” be included in the first sentence for MPA-4, and the policy wording is likely to be amended as such.

#### **4.2.3 Economy Theme**

##### **Renewables**

Comments were received asking for clarification on the relationship between the data used in The Crown Estate renewable energy leasing process and marine plan policies. The interplay between The Crown Estate and Marine Planning will be added to the supporting text.

Other responses requested for REN-1 to be spatially specific and for clarity on how the policy would be applied in the intertidal area. Comments on the Draft South West Marine Plan requested further consideration of floating offshore wind in the south west. An explanation will be provided for floating offshore wind and why it is important.

WIND-1 is likely to become REN-3 and amended to broaden the policy and cover all technology types for which data is available (floating and fixed foundation wind, wave and tidal). Text will be added in the earlier section of the supporting text to describe and exemplify supply chains.

## **Dredging and disposal**

The dredging and disposal policies received a large number of comments across all of the draft marine plans. Some requested inclusion of the ports and harbour powers which fall under local acts. Stakeholders also asked for the term “significant” to be removed from policy wording and for the waste hierarchy to be specified. The general intent and strength of the policies will be retained, but in response to other comments it is proposed that “alternative use” will be added back into DD-3, together with guidance on its role within the waste hierarchy and recognising that alternative use sites are currently designated as disposal sites.

## **Ports, harbours and shipping**

The ports, harbours, and shipping policies received a large number of comments across all of the draft marine plans with the majority supportive of their strength and intent. Some comments queried the terms “significant” and “appropriate”, requesting definitions or their removal. However, “significant” and “appropriate” will not be removed from the policy wording as it is deemed necessary to keep the policy proportionate, in line with current legislation and other policies. In response to numerous requests policy PS-1 will be revised for all marine plans to include sustainable port development through the National Policy Statement for Ports and greater recognition of the role of the statutory harbour authority.

PS-2 and PS-3 will not be combined as requested in a number of comments. This is due to the fact that PS-2 reinforces longstanding international management measures, accounts for the needs of shipping in International Maritime Organization routes and highlights their importance across all sectors. PS-3 is UK specific and can only be delivered through marine plans. It bridges the gap in the shipping network, connecting International Maritime Organization measures and proactively makes the case for space for shipping in the face of growing industries with permanent footprints such as offshore wind farms.

## **Aggregates**

Aggregates policies attracted many comments across all four draft marine plans as a national industry. Many comments supported the intent of the policies, with a few others which suggested alterations to the policy strength. There were requests for clarification on whether ‘areas of future technical opportunity’ and ‘areas of high potential aggregate resource’ represented the same things, which has been verified. In addition, it was asked if ‘proposals’ referred to aggregate or non-aggregate proposals in the policy text. The decision was made to keep the wording to ‘proposals’ rather than making any distinction, as it applies to all proposals made. Similarly, in response to requests for whether ‘other development or activities’ could be clarified, the term has been replaced with ‘the proposal’ to help keep the text as clear as possible.

There was a concern that the aggregates sector would dominate over other seabed users. Linked to this concern there were requests to include information about other sectors to balance the supporting text. The implementation of the marine plans as a whole, using all of the policies addresses this concern.

### **4.2.4 Social Theme**

#### **Fisheries**

The fisheries policies in all of the draft marine plans received a large number of responses. Some requested that the term “sustainable” be added to the policy text and others asking for clarification between “minimise” and “mitigate” in the mitigation hierarchy.

There were some requests to amend the maps to avoid misinterpretation. Clearer caveats will be added on [Explore Marine Plans](#) against the Essential Fish Habitat data and to the introduction to the Essential Fish Habitat figures within the policies. The caveats will explain more clearly that the maps are only indicative and that there are large data gaps (particularly around coastal waters), which require proponents and decision-makers to gather project level data. Others asked for the Habitats Regulations Assessment text within the policy supporting text to be revised.

Many of the comments received in relation to the fisheries policies within the draft marine plans concerned topics that are not within the remit of marine planning such

as marine licensing queries and quota management. Clarification will be made in the policy supporting text that for the purpose of marine planning, the fisheries policies refer to commercial fishing and recreational fishing falls under the umbrella of ‘Tourism and Recreation’ activities.

## **Heritage Assets**

The majority of comments followed a similar theme for the heritage assets policies in all four draft marine plans. Stakeholders requested differentiation between the degrees of harm to the significance of heritage assets (ranging from no harm through less than substantial harm to substantial harm or finally complete loss) as outlined in terrestrial planning. Other comments requested clarification of the mitigation hierarchy and to the significance of heritage assets.

It is likely that the policy will be reworded to clarify ‘substantial harm’, differences between designated and non-designated assets and ensure general alignment with the National Planning Policy Framework. Changes will also be made to remove “elements contributing to” from the policy to focus on the significance of the asset itself. The mitigation hierarchy will be restructured to make it more consistent with similar changes made throughout all marine plans.

## **Access**

Overall, stakeholders were supportive of the Access policy across all draft marine plan areas. Some stakeholders had concerns over the structure and wording of the mitigation hierarchy within the text which will be clarified and explained in the supporting text.

In response to other stakeholder requests the supporting text will be amended to provide for restrictions to public access, in certain areas, for health, safety and security reasons and to show how these should be considered during the consenting/permitting process.

Some comments highlighted the need for the policy to ensure that public access proposals do not compromise international and national nature conservation sites. The supporting text will be amended to clarify the needs for statutory assessments to

be undertaken to help support conservation objectives of protected areas. Specific examples of disturbance pathways from increased public access and reference to relevant plans and strategies will also be provided to aid decision-makers and proponents.

## **Employment**

Overall, there was strong support for the Employment policy across all draft marine plans and its aim to deliver net increases in marine-related employment. However, amendments will be made in response to comments promoting recognition and support for the importance of maintaining existing employment opportunities, including traditional marine-related employment.

The supporting texts will also be amended to include references to plans and strategies relevant to access and specific to the marine plan areas, where appropriate.

## **Seascape**

In response to comments received changes will be made to further clarify the protection already afforded protected landscapes including National Parks and Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty. Other amendments will bring to the fore, in the supporting text, the descriptions of an area's quality, value and potential for change and so create a more positive start to the policy.

## **4.3 Consultation on the Draft North East Marine Plan**

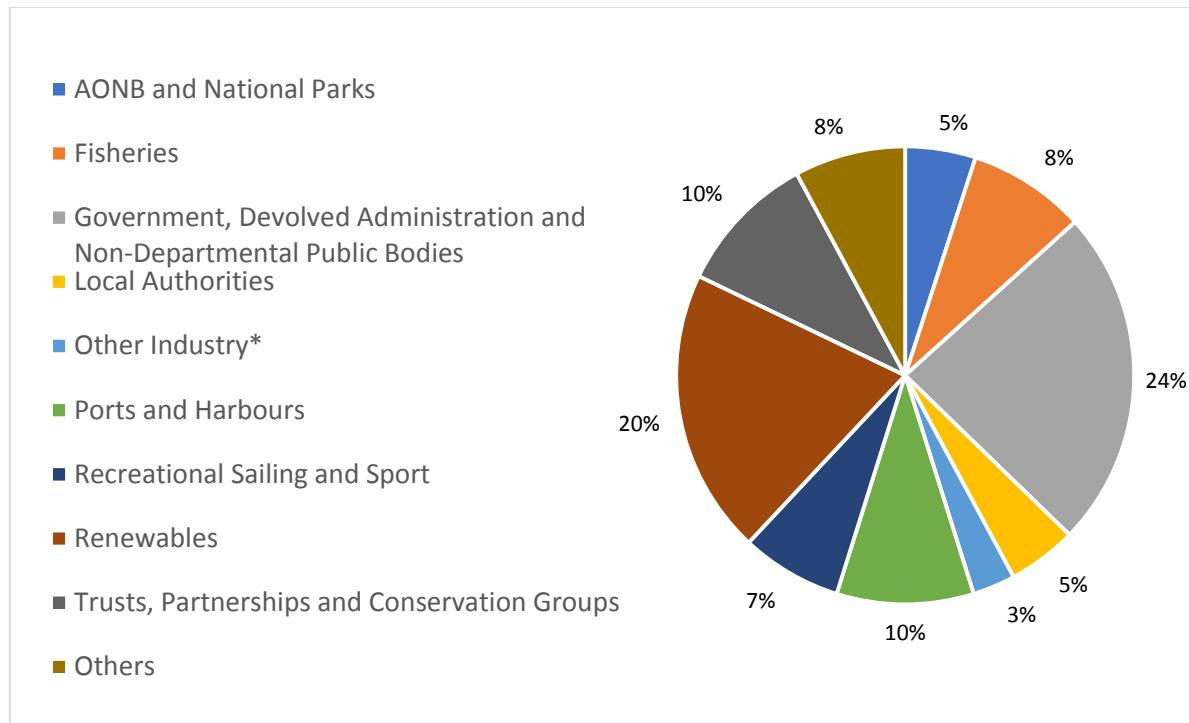


### **4.3.1 Draft North East Marine Plan Consultation stakeholder responses**

A total of 91 responses, with 2,582 individual comments, were received to the consultation on the Draft North East Marine Plan. Please note that these totals include responses received from stakeholders who had selected multiple plan areas to respond to in a single response.

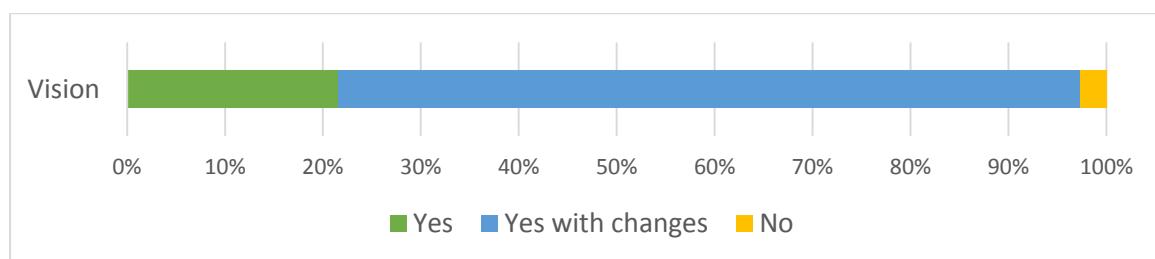
The percentages of responses received by sector, and level of agreement with the vision and policies by theme, are indicated below.

**Figure 3: Draft North East Marine Plan consultation responses by respondent sector.**



\*Aggregates, Aquaculture, Cables, Carbon Capture and Storage, Oil and Gas

**Figure 4: Agreement with Draft North East Marine Plan Vision.**



Stakeholders generally supported the vision. Suggestions were made to change the text to include other sectors important to the region that were not mentioned, as well as more plan-area specific content. In lieu of this, the vision has been amended to include references to existing sectors, such as fisheries, and make it more representative of the north east marine plan areas. Some comments requested changes which were not within the remit of marine planning or were beyond the scope of the vision.

There were requests for more consistency across the marine plans for concepts included in the vision statements. In response, the role of offshore renewable energy in helping achieve the UK net zero target was included, as well as updated text in

reference to topics such as natural capital and biodiversity net gain. The importance of co-existence and co-operation to reduce conflict and balance environmental, social and economic needs was also added.

**Figure 5: Agreement with Draft North East Marine Plan Objectives**

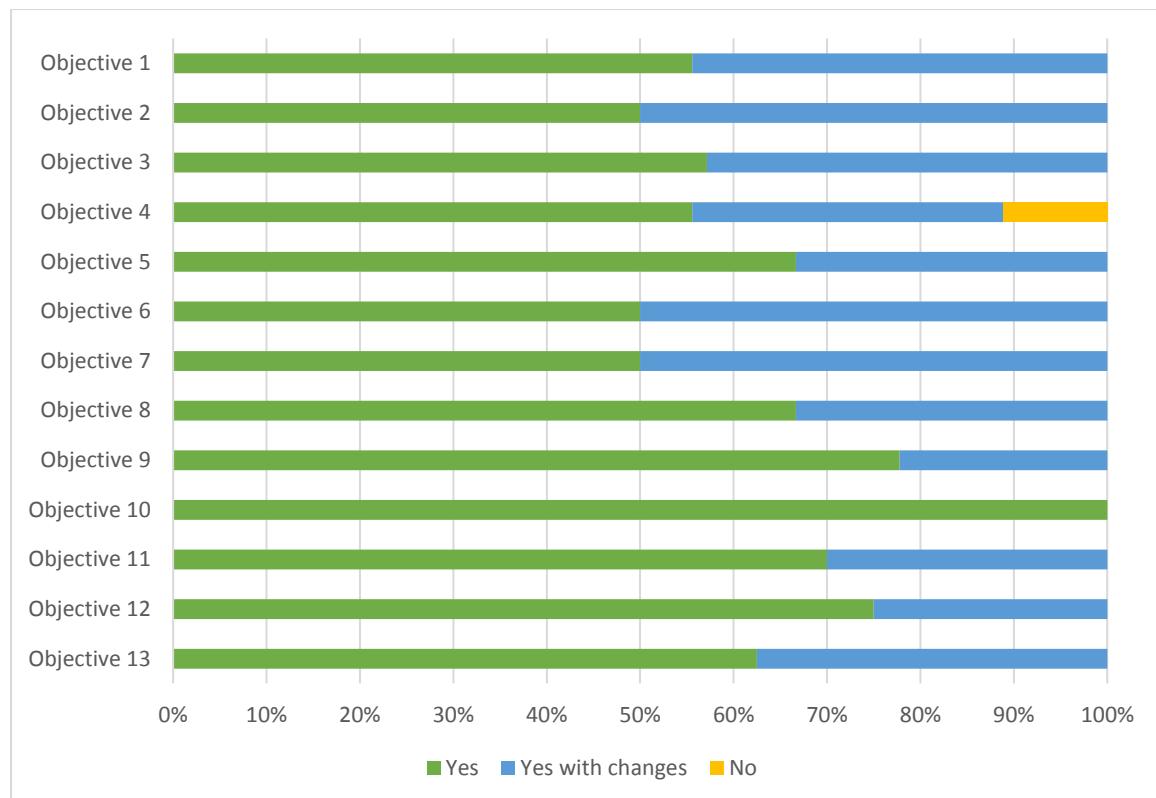
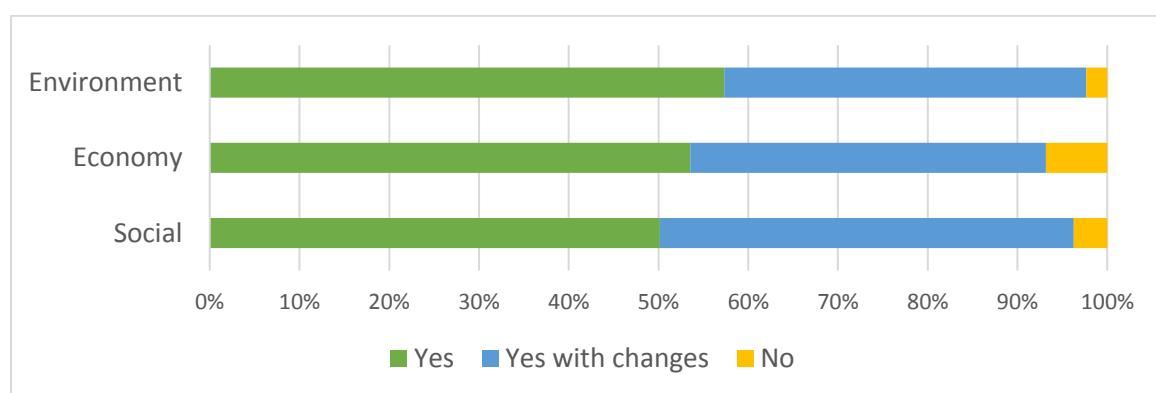
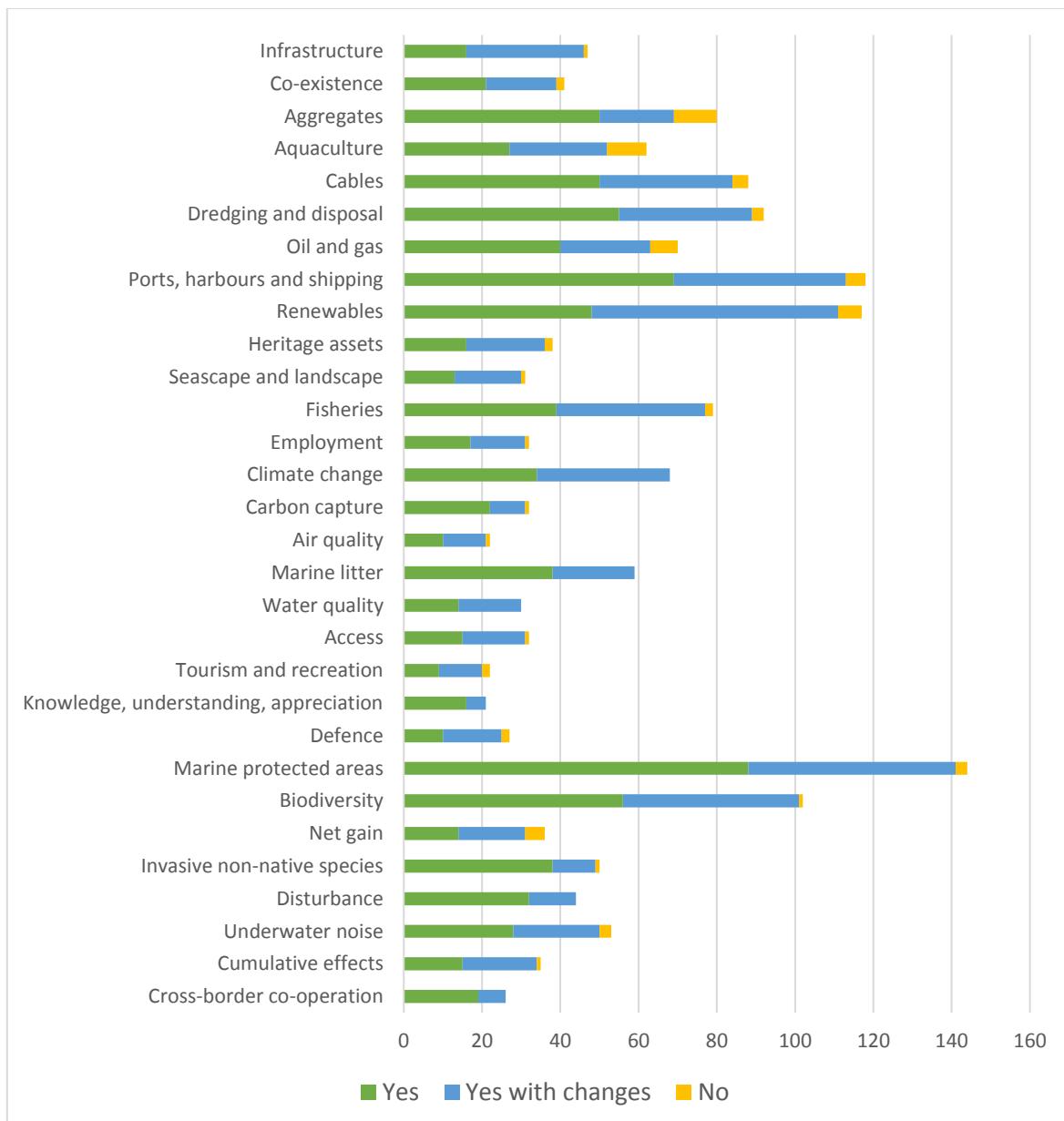


Figure 5 shows that there was broad agreement with the draft North East Marine Plan objectives. The main changes that were requested were for additions of activities of places specific to the north east marine plan areas.

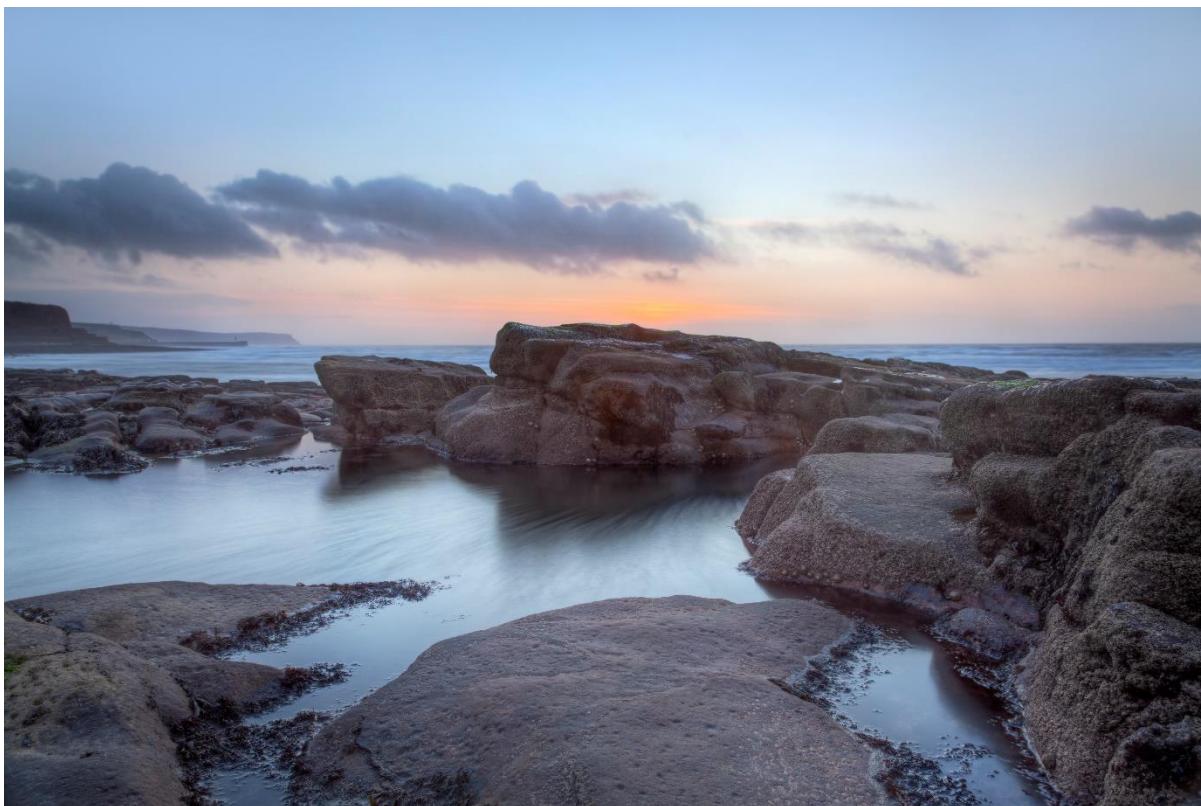
**Figure 6: Agreement with Draft North East Marine Plan policies by policy theme.**



**Figure 7: Number of Draft North East Marine Plan policy comments received, with level of agreement indicated.**



## **4.4 Consultation on the Draft North West Marine Plan**

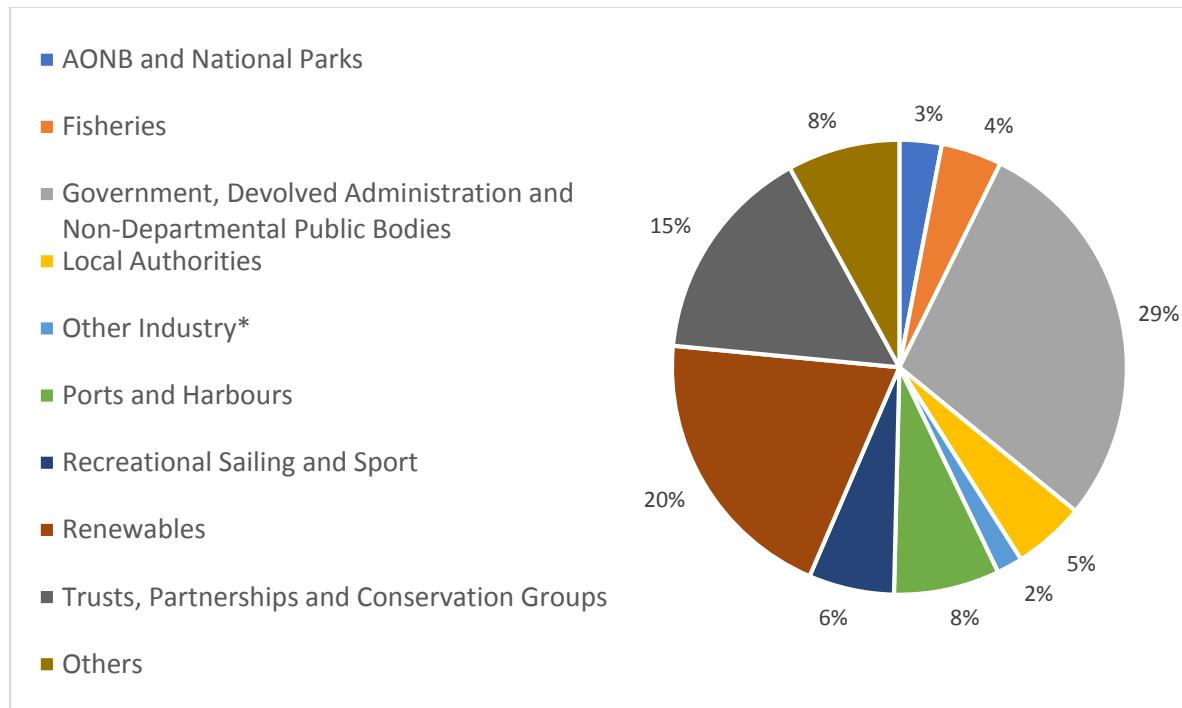


### **4.4.1 Draft North West Marine Plan Consultation stakeholder responses**

A total of 113 responses, with 3,225 individual comments, were received to the consultation on the Draft North West Marine Plan. Please note that these totals include responses received from stakeholders who had selected multiple plan areas to respond to in a single response.

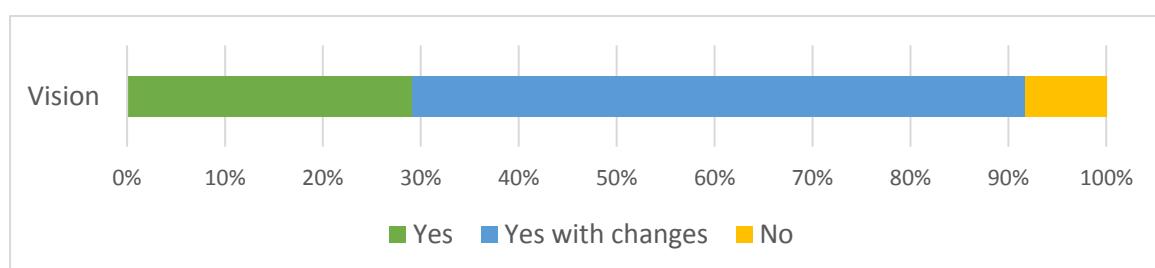
The percentages of responses received by sector, and the level of agreement with the vision and policies by theme, are indicated below.

**Figure 8: Draft North West Marine Plan consultation responses by respondent sector.**



\*Aggregates, Aquaculture, Cables, Carbon Capture and Storage, Oil and Gas

**Figure 9: Agreement with Draft North West Plan Marine vision.**



Some minor clarifications were requested for the North West Marine Plan vision. There were requests for references to specific sectors to be added, as well as mention of how the vision will contribute towards achieving the UK's commitment of reducing greenhouse gas emissions to net zero. The mention of fisheries and natural capital has also been added to the vision, in addition to making reference to landscape and examples of historic assets. Additional locations have also been added in reference to sustainable tourism.

**Figure 10: Agreement with Draft North West Marine Plan Objectives**

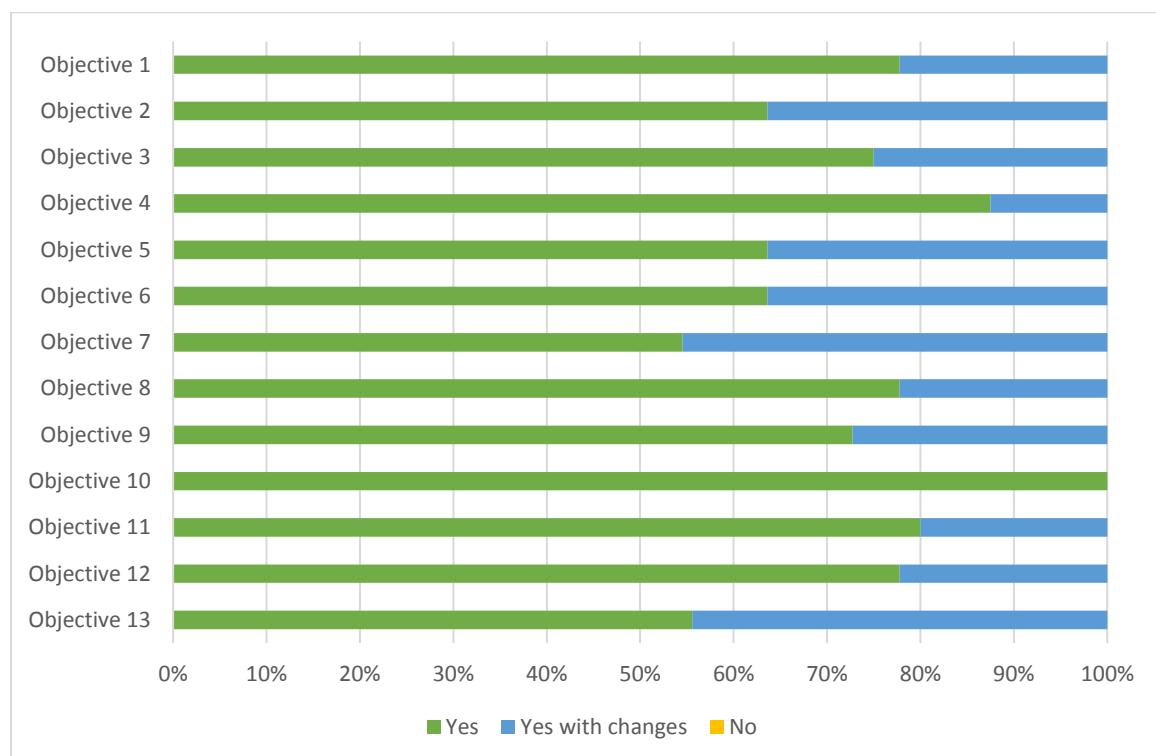
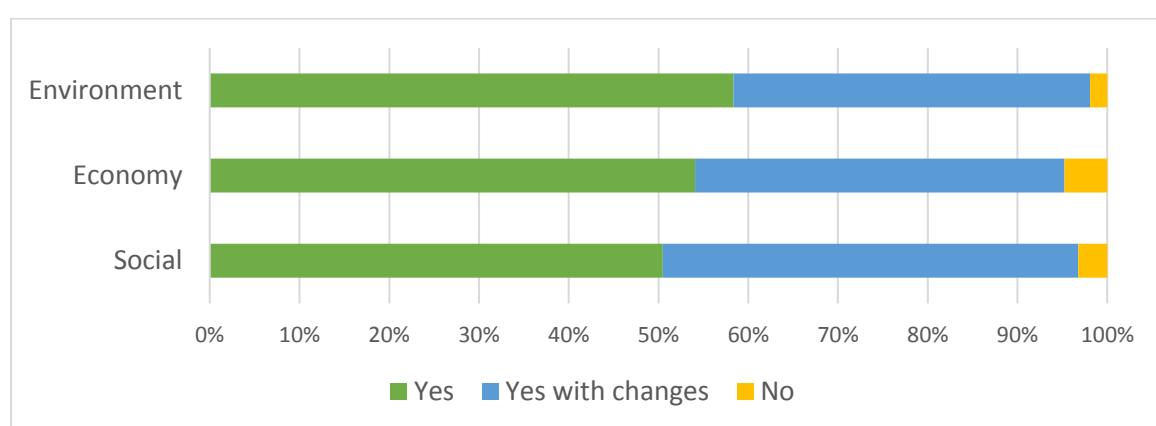
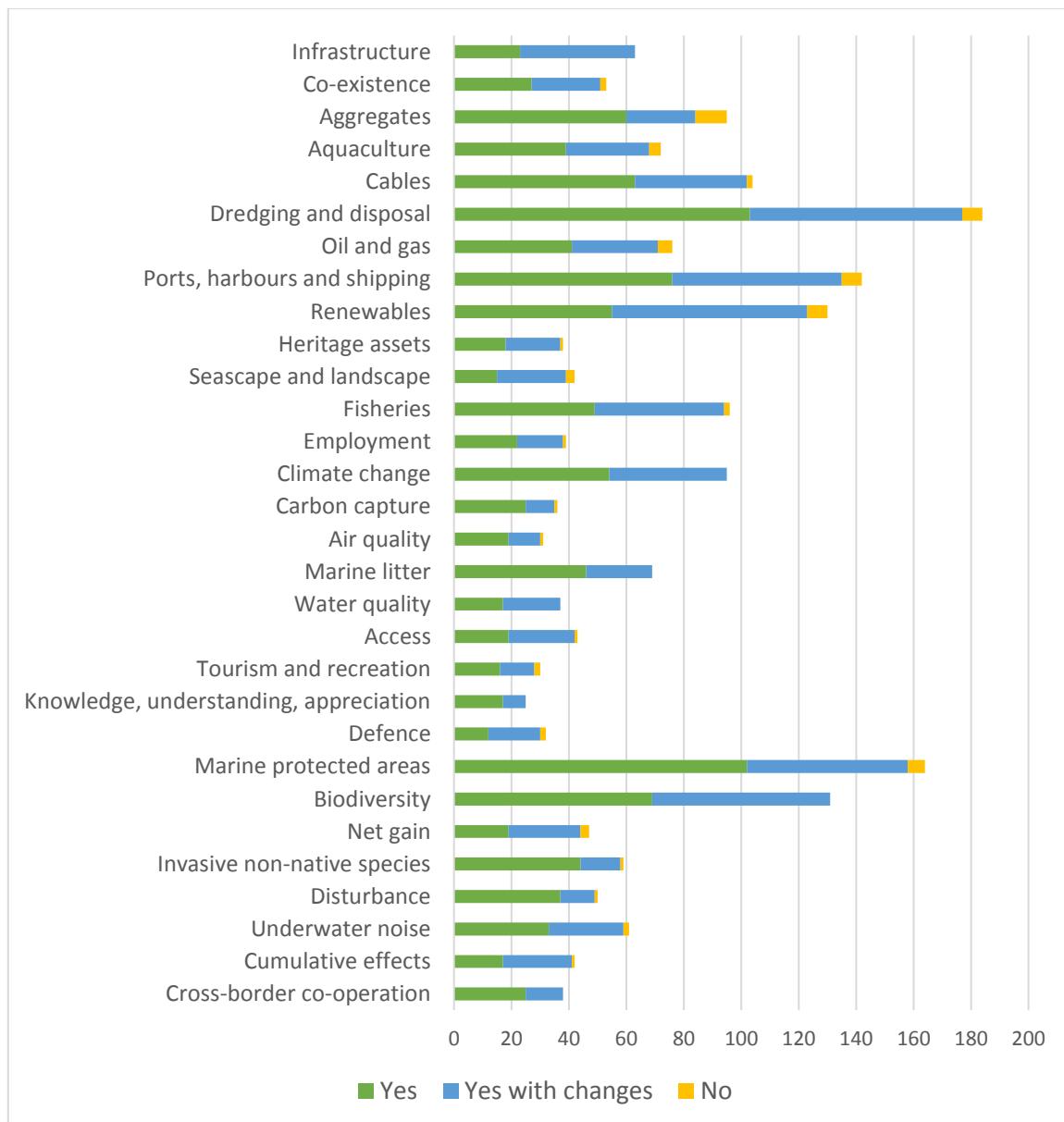


Figure 10 shows that there was a high level of agreement with and support for the draft North West Marine Plan objectives, with no respondents disagreeing with the objectives. The main changes that were requested were for additions of activities of places specific to the north west marine plan areas.

**Figure 11: Agreement with Draft North West Marine Plan policies by theme.**



**Figure 12: Number of Draft North West Marine Plan policy comments received, with level of agreement indicated.**



## 4.5 Consultation on the Draft South East Marine Plan

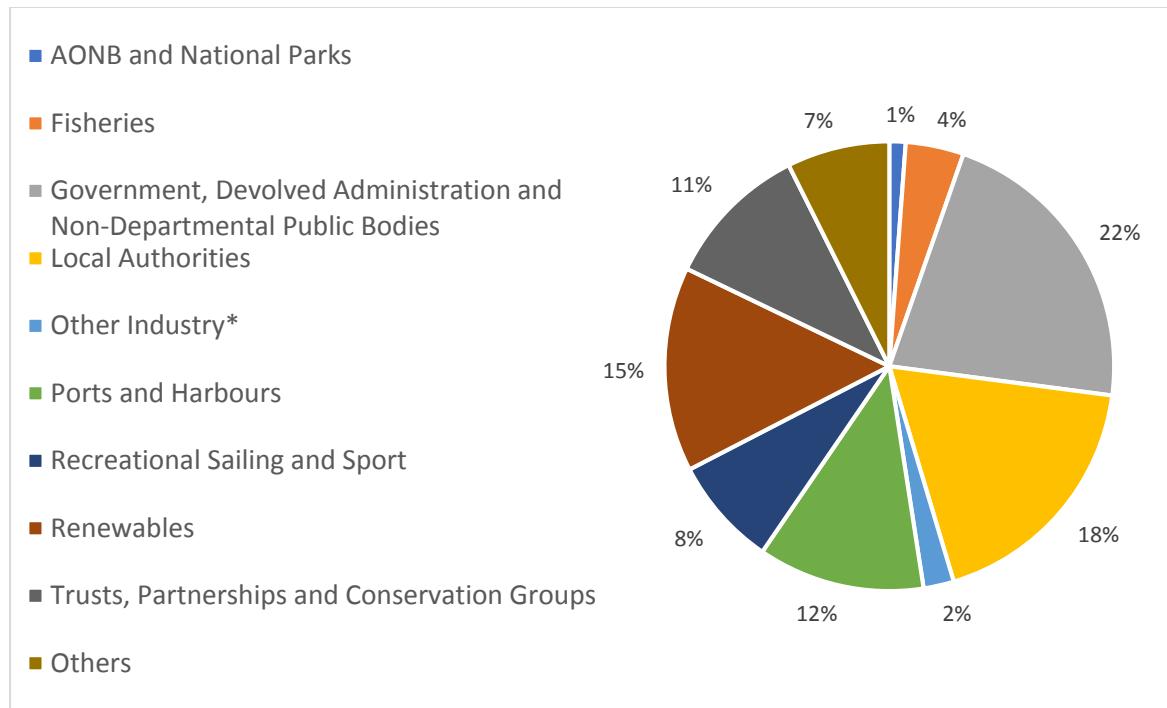


### 4.5.1 Draft South East Consultation stakeholder responses

A total of 116 responses, with 3,466 individual comments, were received to the consultation on the Draft South East Marine Plan. Please note that these totals include responses received from stakeholders who had selected multiple plan areas to respond to in a single response.

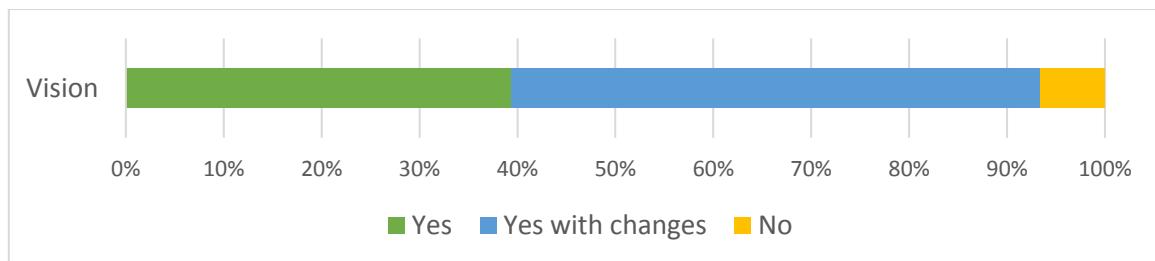
The percentages of responses received by sector, and the level of agreement with the vision and policies by theme, are indicated below.

**Figure 13: Draft South East Marine Plan consultation responses by respondent sector.**



\*Aggregates, Aquaculture, Cables, Carbon Capture and Storage, Oil and Gas

**Figure 14: Agreement with Draft South East Marine Plan vision.**



Two key concerns for the Draft South East Marine Plan vision emerged from stakeholders: firstly that the focus was limited geographically to areas such as London, and secondly that there was insufficient mention of climate change and its wider effects. Some comments requested changes which were not within the remit of marine planning or were beyond the scope of the vision.

In response to the comments received, the vision now has an increased focus on climate change and flooding as well as new wording related to net gain and cumulative effects. Reference to "global shipping" has been added plus the specific mention of the World Heritage Sites in the plan area. Mentions of Suffolk have also increased to ensure more balanced recognition.

**Figure 15: Agreement with Draft South East Marine Plan Objectives**

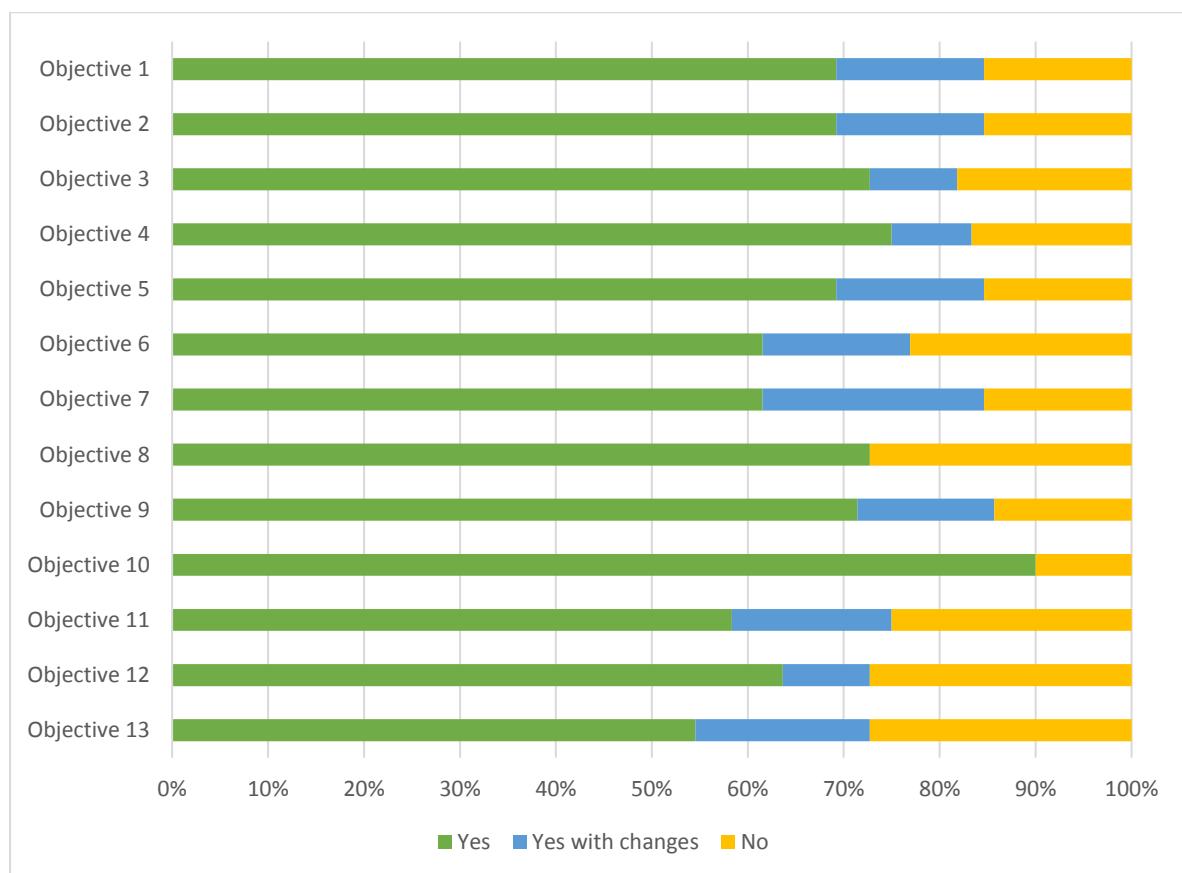
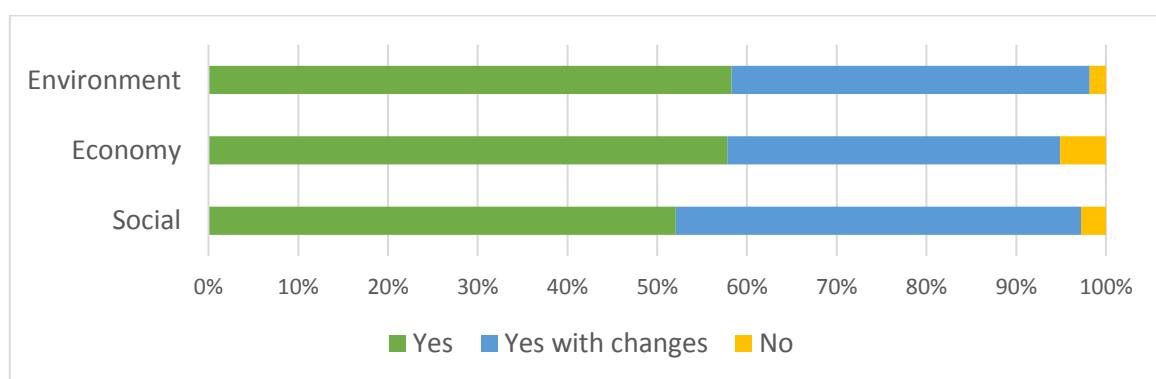
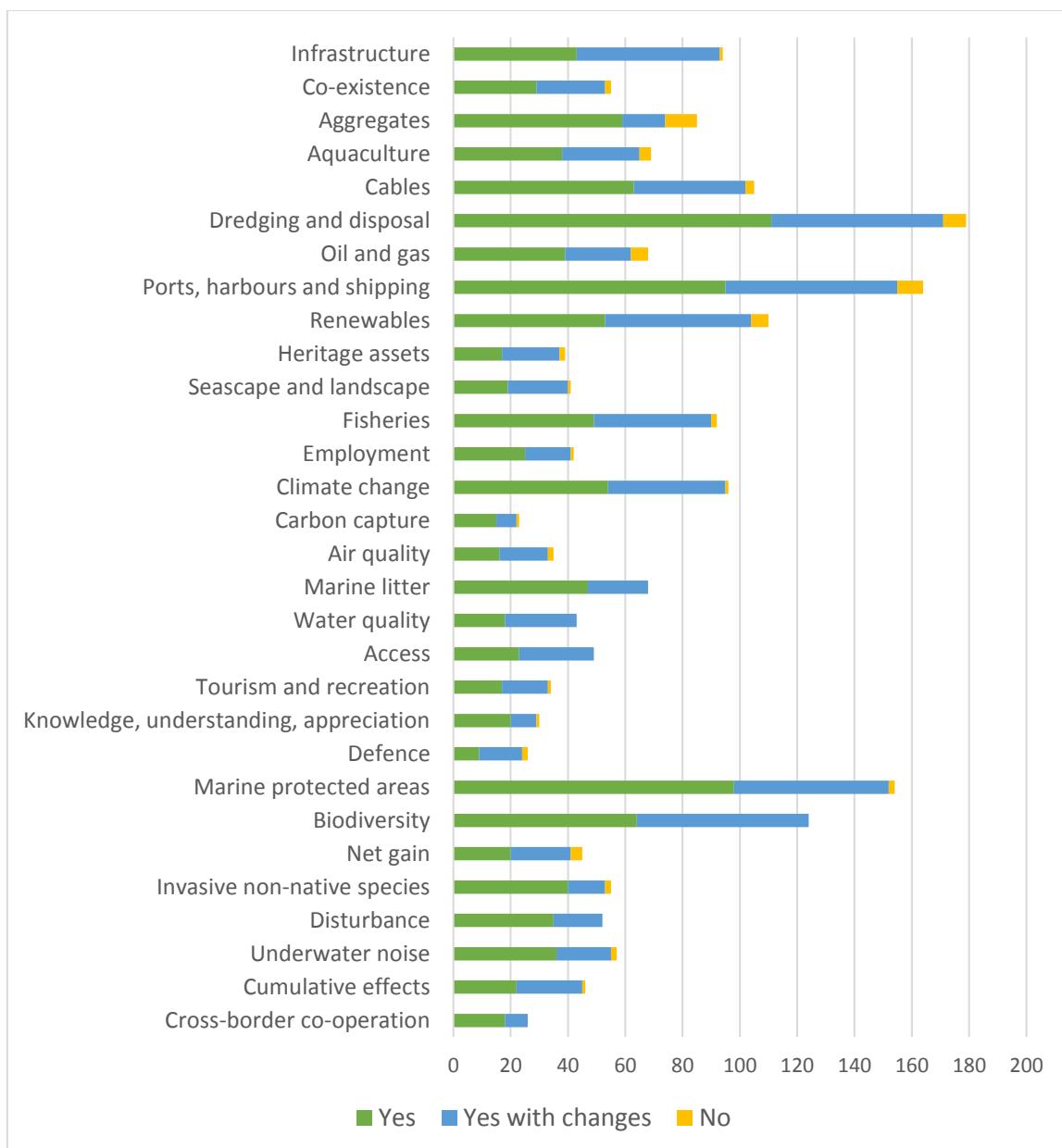


Figure 15 shows that whilst there were high levels of support and agreement with all of the objectives there were some stakeholders who did not support the objectives for the Draft South East Marine Plan. The majority of issues were in relation to the order of the objectives and perceived priority, which mirrors the High Level Marine Objectives in the [Marine Policy Statement](#). It is likely that as a result of this additional explanatory text will be added to all of the marine plans. There were also requests for plan area activities, industries or places to be added to the objective text.

**Figure 16: Agreement with Draft South East Marine Plan policies by theme.**



**Figure 17: Number of Draft South East Marine Plan comments received by policy area, with level of agreement indicated.**



## **4.6 Consultation on the Draft South West Marine Plan**

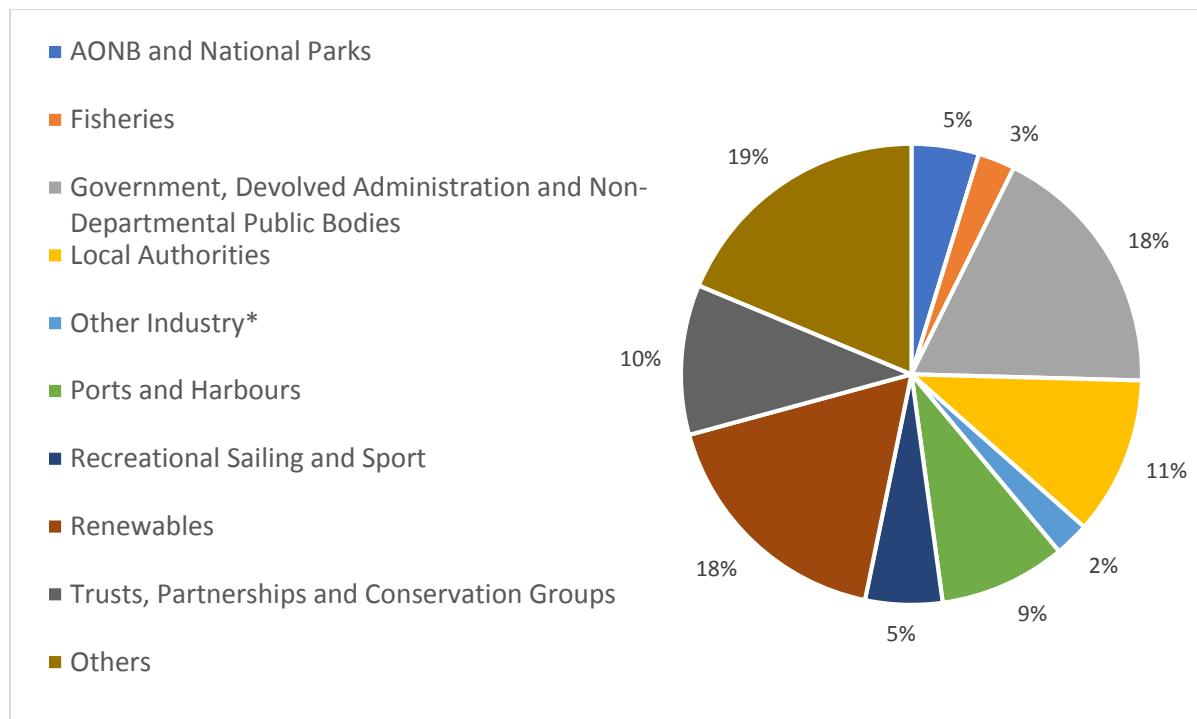


### **4.6.1 Draft South West Marine Plan Consultation stakeholder responses**

A total of 122 responses, with 3,534 individual comments, were received to the consultation on the Draft South West Marine Plan. Please note that these totals include responses received from stakeholders who had selected multiple plan areas to respond to in a single response.

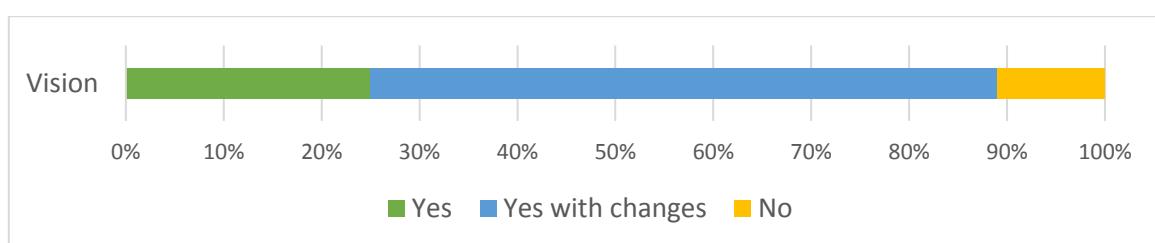
The percentages of responses received by sector, and the level of agreement with the vision and policies by theme, are indicated below.

**Figure 18: Draft South West Marine Plan consultation responses by respondent sector.**



\*Aggregates, Aquaculture, Cables, Carbon Capture and Storage, Oil and Gas

**Figure 19: Agreement with Draft South West Marine Plan vision.**



The majority of comments received from stakeholders for the draft South West Marine Plan vision were supportive. In response to comments received, reference to biodiversity net gain and the UK commitment to reduce greenhouse gas emissions to net zero has been strengthened, as has the intrinsic value of the south west plan areas' natural and cultural heritage.

Vision-specific changes which have been actioned, include revised references to ports in the plan area and the vital contribution they make to the area's economy. References to the growth of renewable energies over the 20 year plan period and

the importance of an ecosystems approach in plan-led development have also been included.

**Figure 20: Agreement with the Draft South West Marine Plan Objectives**

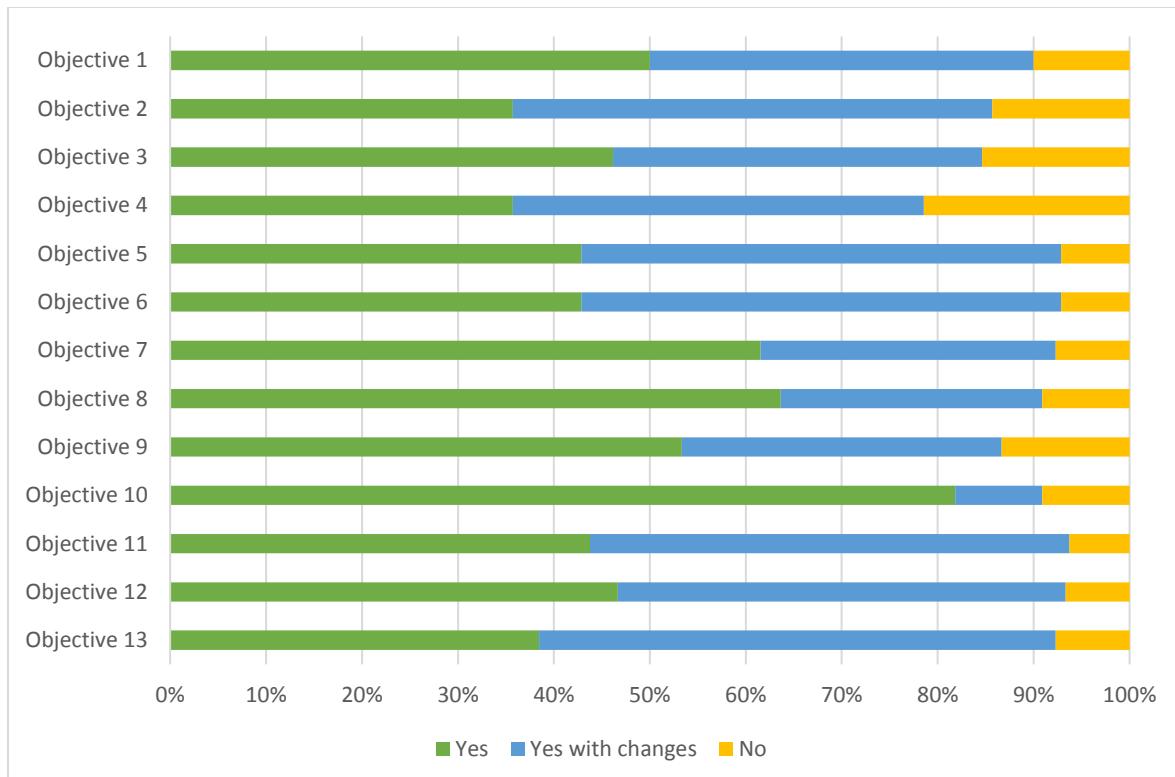
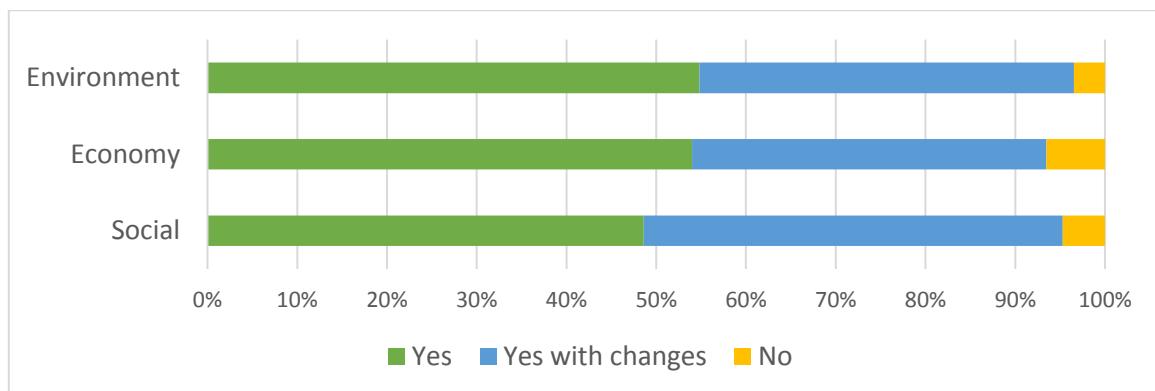
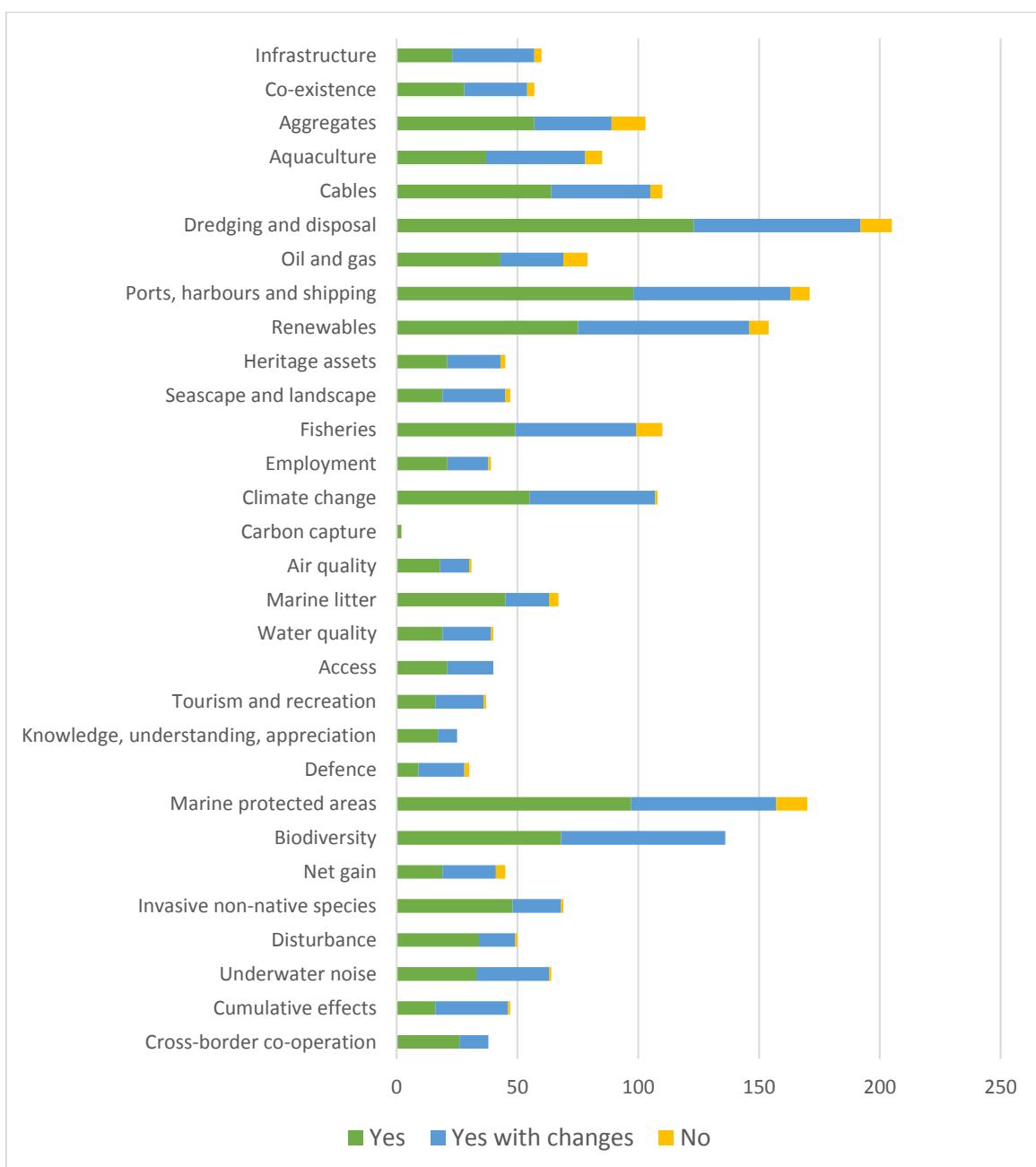


Figure 20 shows that there were high levels of support and agreement with all of the objectives of the Draft South West Marine Plan. The majority of issues where objectives were not supported were in relation to the order of the objectives and perceived priority, which mirrors the High Level Marine Objectives in the [Marine Policy Statement](#). It is likely that as a result of this additional explanatory text will be added to all of the marine plans. There were also requests for plan area activities, industries or places to be added to the objective text.

**Figure 21: Agreement with Draft South West Marine Plan policies by theme.**



**Figure 22: Number of Draft South West Marine Plan comments received by policy area, with level of agreement indicated.**



## **4.7 Feedback on the Sustainability Appraisal**

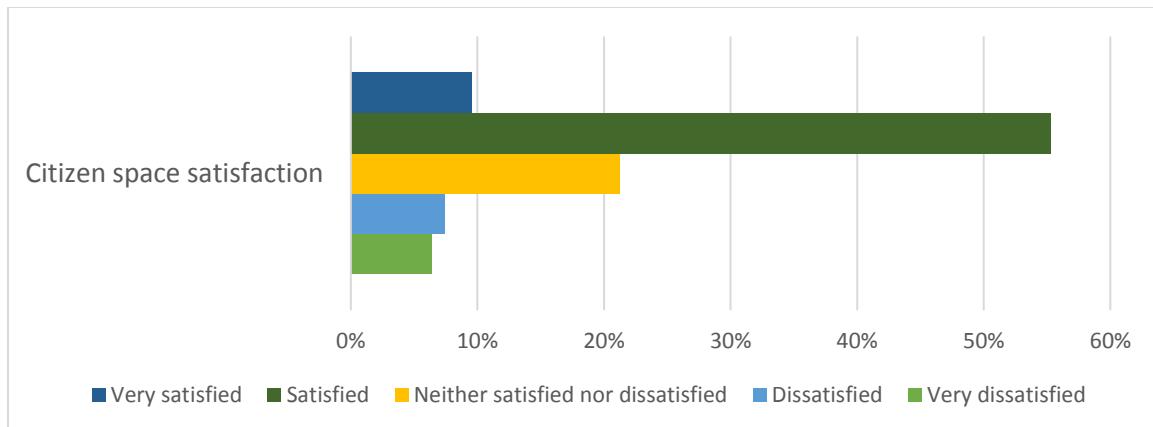
A total of 24 responses, with 420 comments, were received on the findings of the Sustainability Appraisal. Comments were received from a wide variety of stakeholders on all parts of the Sustainability Appraisal for the Draft North East, North West, South East and South West Marine Plans.

In response, the baseline has been updated to ensure it reflects the current situation across all plan areas, and the cumulative effects assessment has been reviewed to ensure that references to other external plans (such as local plans) that marine plans may interact with are up to date and relevant. Other changes include changes to wording and changes to the strength of certain statements, based on evidence submitted by stakeholders. Finally, the approach to some categories of the assessment, including heritage, have been updated. These are still subject to change as we finalise the Sustainability Appraisal assessments as a result of policy wording amendments following consultation.

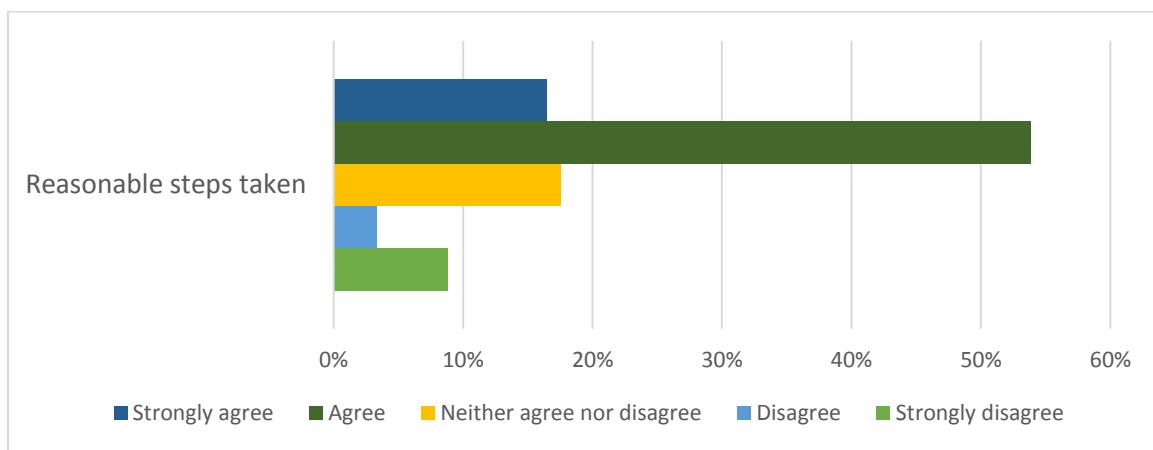
## **4.8 Feedback on the consultation process**

During the consultation, stakeholders were asked to provide their feedback on the use of citizen space, the online tool used to complete the consultations, and whether they believed the MMO had taken all reasonable steps to engage with people or groups with an interest in marine planning as outlined in the approved Statement of Public Participation. Most stakeholders were satisfied with the use of Citizen Space, and most agreed that reasonable steps had been taken to engage with those interested in marine planning.

**Figure 23: Consultation responses to “Overall, how satisfied are you with our online consultation tool?”**



**Figure 24: Consultation responses to “Do you agree that the MMO has taken all reasonable steps to engage with people or groups with an interest in marine planning in the north east as outlined in the approved Statement of Public Participation?”**



## **5. Implementation Sessions**

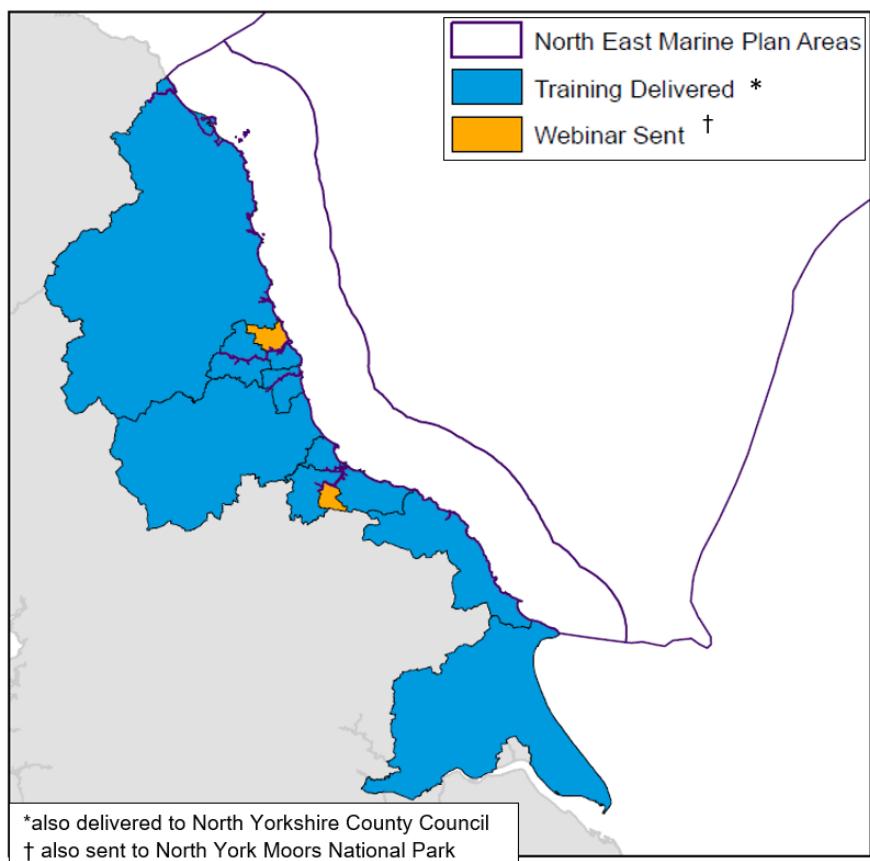
During the consultation period, implementation training sessions were held for decision makers within all seven plan areas. The purpose of the training sessions was to support decision-makers in the use of the draft marine plans, which when they were published became a material consideration in all authorisations and enforcement decisions made by authorities. Details were also provided of the process to develop the draft plans as well as the consultation process and how stakeholders could participate. A range of questions were received during these sessions on the development of marine plans, the impact on decision-making and specific issues relevant to one or more plan areas.

The COVID-19 health emergency affecting the UK impacted on delivery of some face-to-face implementation sessions. To mitigate this, a session was recorded and published on [YouTube](#).

### **5.1 North East Implementation sessions**

The implementation training sessions were attended by 175 decision-makers and others from 11 local authorities, three ports and harbours, one Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty and one IFCA.

**Figure 25: Delivery of implementation training sessions to local authorities in the North East.**

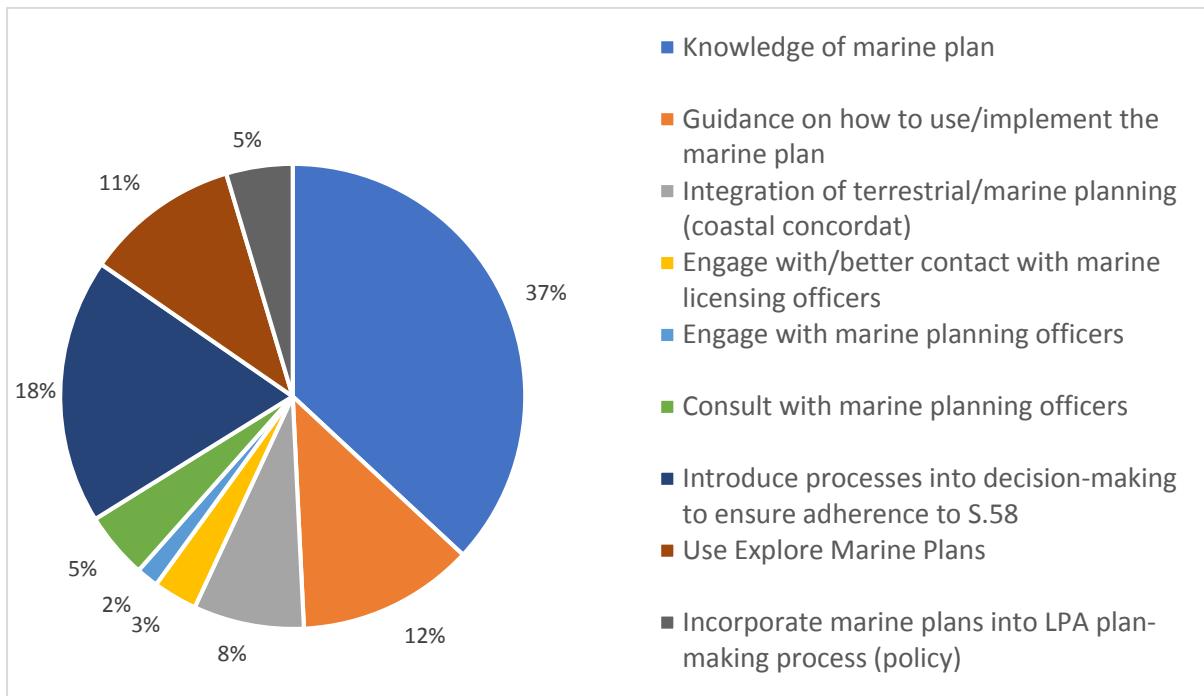


Participants had a range of marine planning experience and were keen to engage. Renewable energy policies were a common theme for discussion across the north east with many requests for more detail on offshore wind and future development. Participants were also keen to discuss water quality, drainage and coastal defence. Types of activity that may require a licence and the correct process for obtaining a licence featured heavily across all implementation sessions, with a desire for guidance and case studies to support understanding.

Other recurring themes included the [Explore Marine Plans](#) digital tool and an interest in the monitoring of the [East](#) and South Marine Plans to establish if adopted plans were being used effectively.

All participants said they would welcome support to successfully implement the marine plans into their ways of working.

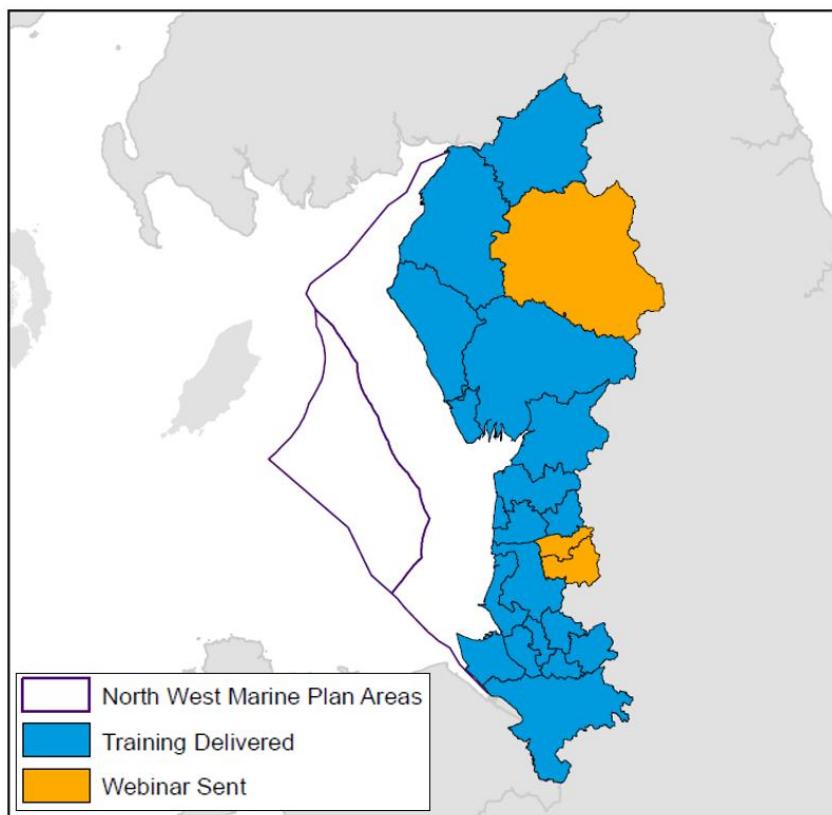
**Figure 26: North East Implementation Sessions: stakeholder responses to “What actions do you and your organisation need to take to implement marine plans?”**



## 5.2 North West Implementation sessions

The implementation training sessions were attended by 114 decision-makers and others from 21 local authorities, eight ports and harbours, two Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty partnerships and one coastal forum.

**Figure 27: Delivery of implementation training sessions to local authorities in the North West.**



Participants were engaged and receptive in the sessions. Many participants felt their knowledge of marine planning had increased and were keen for further sessions and webinars to support the implementation of the North West Marine Plan.

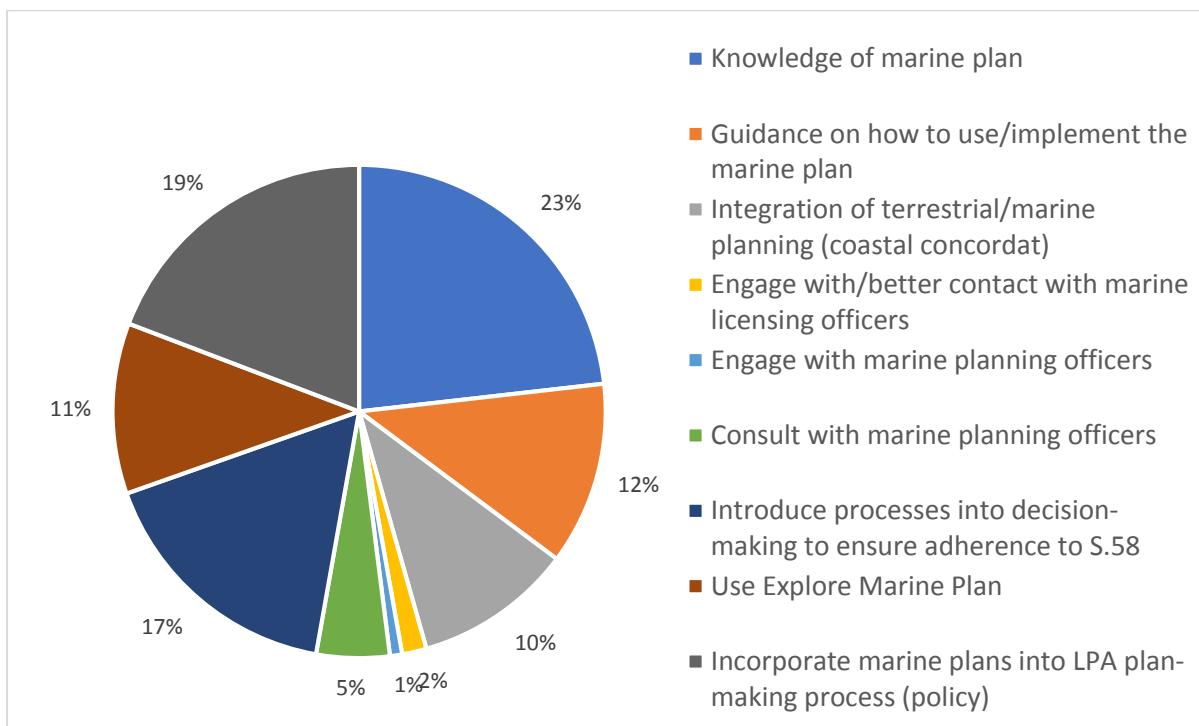
A common theme for discussion across the sessions were the obligations of decision-makers and others under the section 58 Marine and Coastal Access Act, alongside queries on the marine licensing process, for example the Eden North project on Morecambe Bay's seafront.

Other themes included coastal change, the [coastal concordat](#) and high density navigation routes from Port of Liverpool. Sessions focussed on various policy areas,

with the popular policy topics of Ports, Harbours, and Shipping, Climate Change, Water Quality and Cross-border co-operation.

Many local authorities requested case studies from other plan areas and further training once the plan was adopted.

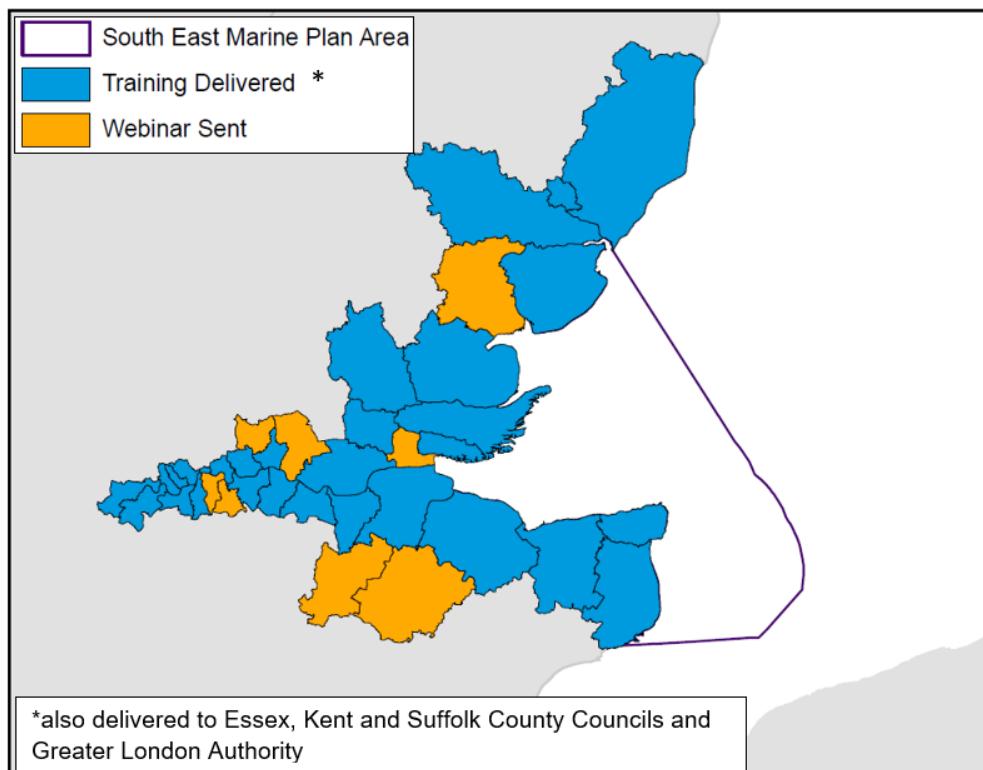
**Figure 28: North West stakeholder responses to “What actions do you and your organisation need to take to implement marine plans?”**



### 5.3 South East Implementation sessions

The implementation sessions were attended by 73 decision-makers and others from 34 local authorities, two ports and harbours and one local partner group.

**Figure 29: Delivery of implementation training sessions to local authorities in the South East.**



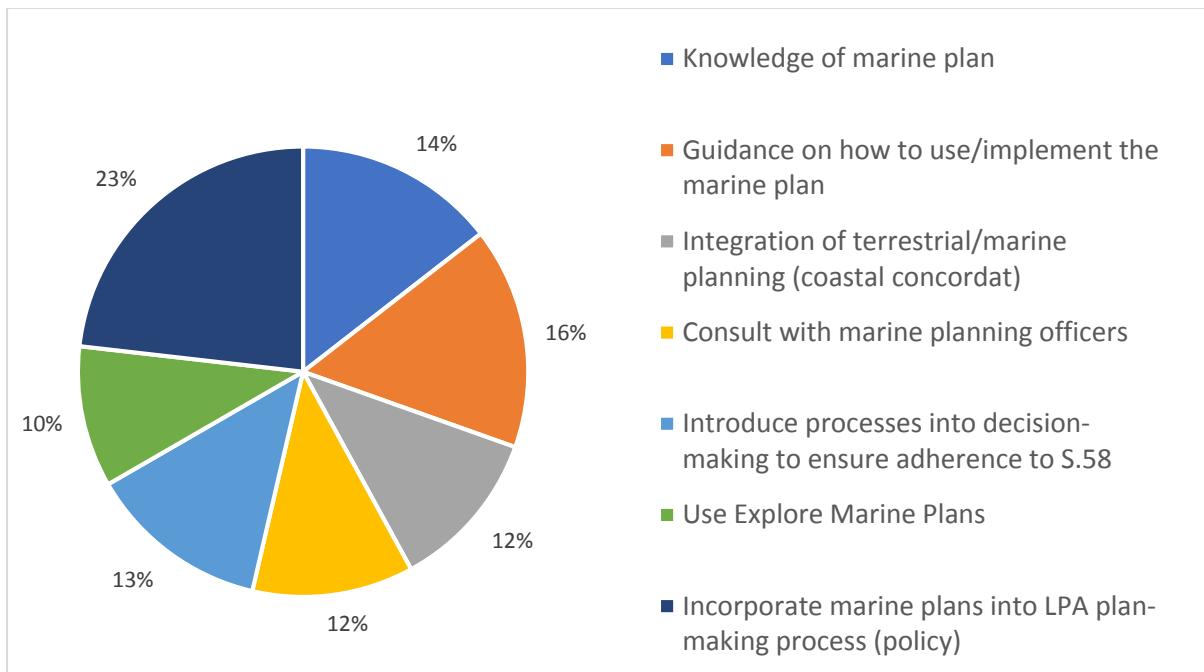
There was a range of experience among the decision-makers with many who had previously engaged and those who were less familiar with the marine planning process. A recurring theme of discussion was the overlap with terrestrial planning, including engagement with Local Plan consultations, and the implementation of marine plan policies.

Participants were keen to clarify any weighting or hierarchy of policies and what it means for plans to be a “material consideration”. Decision-makers flagged uncertainty in knowing when to apply marine plan policies and what implementing the plan looks like in practice.

At the sessions in London, the discussions focused on identifying which policies are more relevant to the tidal Thames, as well as clarifying the Ports and Shipping and

Infrastructure policies. In Suffolk, Essex and Kent there were discussions about the [Coastal Concordat](#), and [Explore Marine Plans](#), with attendees particularly keen to access the marine plan boundary and information on activities in the area.

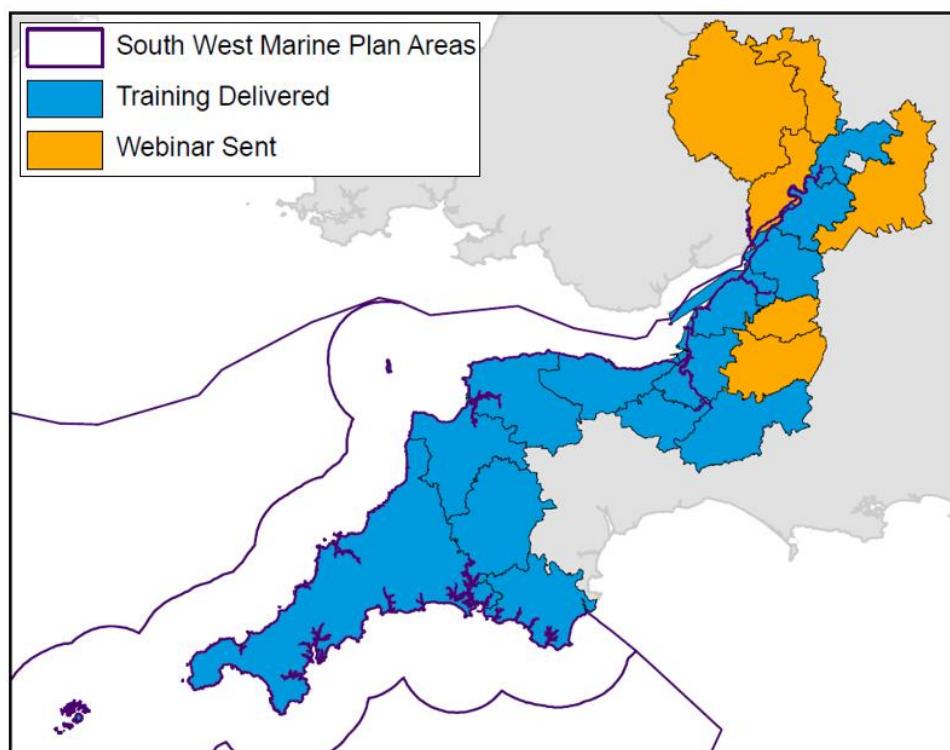
**Figure 30: South East stakeholder responses to “What actions do you and your organisation need to take to implement marine plans?”**



## 5.4 South West Implementation sessions

The implementation training session were attended by 165 decision-makers and others from eight local authorities, three ports and harbours, two IFCAs, one coastal forum and Hinkley Point C nuclear power station.

**Figure 31: Delivery of implementation training sessions to local authorities in the South West.**



Feedback from the implementation sessions was generally positive. Local authorities showed an eagerness to engage and appreciated the opportunity.

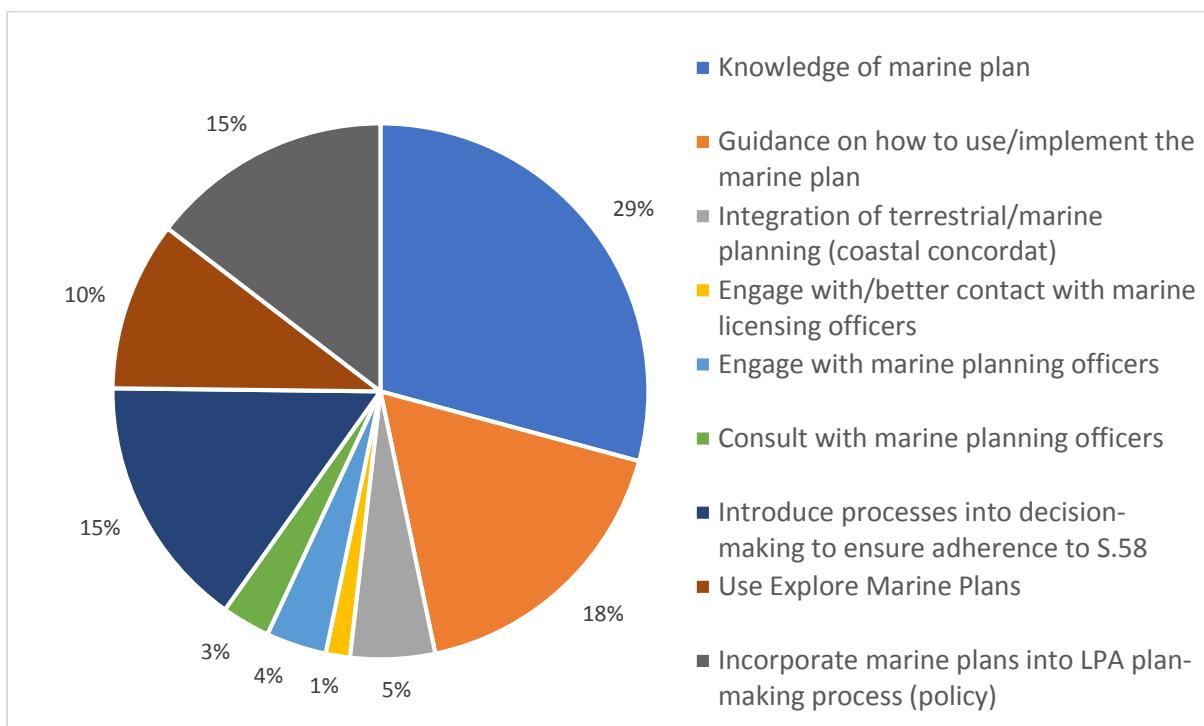
It was highlighted during the sessions that some of the port limits displayed on [Explore Marine Plans](#) were inaccurate due to issues with data provided. This is being looked at by the MMO in conjunction with the UK Hydrographic Office.

Popular policy topics discussed included Renewables, Net gain, and Ports, Harbours, and Shipping.

Participants across all sessions requested case studies to support decision-makers and provide direction, in particular examples of land-based activities that cross borders with other local authorities and the marine environment.

Participants requested further engagement to support marine plan implementation and clearer communication with the marine licensing team.

**Figure 32: South West stakeholder responses to “What actions do you and your organisation need to take to implement marine plans?”**



## **6. Next steps**

The publication of the Draft North East, Draft North West, Draft South East and Draft South West Marine Plans under the [MCAA](#) and the [Marine Policy Statement](#), supports the achievement of the UK vision for ‘clean, healthy, safe, productive and biologically diverse oceans and seas’. The plans provide a coherent, forward-looking, proactive spatial planning approach to the management of the marine area and the activities and interactions that take place within it.

The consultation provided many responses from across all sectors and from all over the UK. The wide range of stakeholder comments have helped to further shape the marine plans ready to be submitted to the Secretary of State for consideration for adoption. The MMO appreciates the engagement of all stakeholders throughout the consultation and over the preceding years of iterative marine plan development.

All stakeholder responses received through the consultation were broken down into comments and categorized in terms of the provisions to which they related within the draft plans and their Sustainability Appraisal. Comments that were received on the Habitats Regulations Assessment documents, although this was not being consulted on, were also categorized and stored. They have then been analysed in regard to the legislative framework for marine planning, the evidence base and the comments of other stakeholders. Where necessary the MMO contacted some stakeholders to clarify their comments and ensure they were given the correct consideration during the analysis stage. In response to stakeholder comments proposed amendments have been or are being drafted to policy text and supporting text, in discussion with government officials or public bodies where required. Amendments are also going to be made to marine plan maps, and to the Sustainability Appraisal, where required. This current report is being published midway through the amendments process and therefore some changes are not finalised. The four amended marine plans will then be assessed through the two statutory assessment processes: the Sustainability Appraisal; and the Habitats Regulations Assessment. Any mitigation measures that are required as a result of these assessment processes will then be applied to the marine plans.

Once the North East, North West, South East and South West Marine Plans are finalised they will be submitted to government for clearance processes ahead of submitting them to the Secretary of State for adoption. The submission will include advice on consideration of the need or not for an independent investigation. The case for adoption will be supported by the updated Sustainability Appraisal and completed Habitats Regulations Assessments. A Modifications Report will also be produced, which will provide a summary of modifications made to the Draft Marine Plans as a result of representations made during the consultation.

Once the four marine plans are adopted they will be published on the MMO website with the Modifications Report, Sustainability Appraisal and Habitats Regulations Assessment. Communications and engagement activities will then be delivered nationally and in each of the marine plan areas to raise awareness among all stakeholders of the status of the plans.

Further implementation training will be delivered by marine planners to support decision-makers using the adopted marine plans. Guidance will also be published along with case studies to assist with management of the necessary changes to decision-making.

Under sections 54 and 61 of [MCAA](#) all matters are kept under review and there is a duty to report on the plans and their effectiveness at three and six yearly intervals. To meet this duty monitoring, reporting, and evaluation are critical functions that the MMO will undertake after adoption to ensure the marine plans adapt to changing conditions including the development of national policies and strategy.

If stakeholders have any questions about the development of marine plans they can contact the MMO at [planning@marinemanagement.org.uk](mailto:planning@marinemanagement.org.uk). Stakeholders can sign-up to the [marine planning newsletter](#), which provides updates throughout the year.

## **Annex A**

### **Background**

Does the Draft [Marine Area] Inshore and Offshore Marine Plan provide adequate background information on the marine planning process and the north east inshore and offshore marine areas?

Yes / Yes, subject to changes / No

### **Vision**

The Draft [Marine Area] Inshore and Offshore Marine Plan provides a 20 year vision for the north east inshore and offshore marine areas. Do you support the Draft [Marine Area] Inshore and Offshore Marine Plan vision statement?

Yes / Yes, subject to changes / No

### **Policies**

Do you support policy [Name] and its aim?

Yes / Yes, subject to changes / No

Do you support policy [Name] implementation text?

Yes / Yes, subject to changes / No

Do you have any other comments on Section 5.X (Sector)?

### **Objectives**

By reference to the sections on objectives, and particularly Table 1 of the Technical Annex, do you agree that the relevant high level marine objectives are appropriate to use as the marine plan objectives for the [Marine Area] Inshore and Offshore Marine Plan?

Yes / Yes, subject to changes / No

Do you agree that the marine plan objectives, as set out in the sections on objectives and particularly Table 1 of the Technical Annex, will lead to the

achievement of the Draft [Marine Area] Inshore and Offshore Marine Plan Vision Statement (Section 2.1 of the Draft Marine Plan)?

Yes / Yes, subject to changes / No

Do you agree that the following policies support the achievement of Objective [Objective]?

Yes / Yes, subject to changes / No

Do you have any other comments about the [Marine Area] Inshore and Offshore Marine Plan Objectives?

Yes / No

### **Applying the Plan as a whole**

Do you consider Section 3 of the Draft [Marine Area] Inshore and Offshore Marine Plan provides adequate information about using and implementing the Marine Plan once adopted?

Yes / Yes, subject to changes / No

Do you agree that all relevant policies together form a coherent package supporting decisions which will generally involve a number of policies?

Yes / Yes, subject to changes / No

Do you agree in applying the Plan as a whole that the policies will collectively achieve the sustainable development, objectives and vision for the north east inshore and offshore marine plan areas?

Yes / Yes, subject to changes / No

### **Other Comments**

Do you have any other comments about the Draft [Marine Area] Inshore and Offshore Marine Plan?

Do you have any other comments about the Draft [Marine Area] Inshore and Offshore Plan Technical Annex?

**Draft Sustainability Appraisal**

Do you have any comments on the findings of the Sustainability Appraisal for the Draft [Marine Area] Inshore and Offshore Marine Plan?

Yes / No

**Consultee Feedback on the Online Survey**

Overall, how satisfied are you with our online consultation tool?

Very satisfied / Satisfied / Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied / Dissatisfied / Very dissatisfied / Don't know

Do you agree that the MMO has taken all reasonable steps to engage with people or groups with an interest in marine planning in the north east as outlined in the approved Statement of Public Participation?

Strongly Agree / Agree / Neither agree or disagree / Disagree / Strongly Disagree