

Issued by Seabed User & Developer Group (SUDG)

21 July 2010



UK Seabed Users and Developers Call for Action to Follow Legislation on Sustainable Development of Marine Environment

The Seabed User & Developer Group (SUDG), which represents marine industries operating around the UK's 12,500 kilometres of coastline, today praised the improved protection of the marine environment and more streamlined regulation provided by the Marine and Coastal Access Act but called for legislation to now evolve into action. The Group particularly welcomes the development of the Marine Management Organisation (MMO) and the opportunity this presents to deliver streamlined and cost-effective legislation, but recognises that to operate effectively, the MMO will need to be properly resourced.

Peter Barham from SUDG commented: "SUDG enthusiastically supports the Government's new framework for managing the demands placed upon our seas and ensuring that development is sustainable. Indeed, we worked closely with Government, regulators and conservation bodies during the development of the Marine and Coastal Access Act and wholeheartedly support its aims. Substantial progress has been made through industry's willingness to invest in new science and to share the knowledge that is emerging as a result."

However, much work remains to be done. SUDG members continue to play significant roles in helping to achieve the aims of the Act as there are enormous opportunities to develop better regulation which can serve the interests of both environment and economy. UK marine industries make a significant contribution to the economy so at this time of emergence from recession, getting the balance right in practice is particularly important; indeed, together they employ nearly a million people and contribute 4.2 per cent of gross domestic product (GDP) and these figures are set to grow considerably with the addition of new technologies and industries."

Mr Barham continued: "While the Act created the framework for managing the marine environment sustainably, much remains to be done to ensure that positive and effective improvements can be delivered in practice.

"In particular, the Act requires that decisions about managing the sea should take into account the socio-economic value of any development proposal as well as the environmental consequences. It is essential that methodology is developed which strikes the right balance

between the two and recognises that ‘win-win’ solutions are often possible. Measurement of environmental risk is now a well-developed science, but processes that relate this to the socio-economic value of any development are still in their infancy. We have some way to go in this respect.”

Mr Barham concluded: “SUDG believes that partnership with regulators and environmental interests is crucial in achieving the Government’s objective for seas that are healthy, biologically diverse and capable of delivering the important social benefits. Therefore it is imperative that as we move from the legislative to practical stage, all parties continue to work together closely.”

Ends

For further information, please call Peter Barham on 01780 450931.

Notes to Editors

1. The Seabed User & Developer Group (SUDG) represents marine industries firmly committed to sustainable development. It includes oil and gas, aggregates, cables, ports, renewable energy, carbon capture and storage and marine leisure. Members share a commitment to aligning the economic opportunities that the sea offers with protection and enhancement of its unique environment. For more information on SUDG and to obtain a copy of the brochure, visit www.sudg.org.uk
2. A reception to launch SUDG’s new ‘Sustainable Development and the Sea’ brochure is taking place on 21 July at the House of Commons. The reception is being hosted by Anne Begg MP and DEFRA minister, Richard Benyon MP, will make the keynote speech.
3. A list of SUDG members can found below.

SUDG Member

British Ports Association
British Marine Aggregate Producers Association
Renewable Energy Association
Oil & Gas UK
Carbon Capture and Storage Association
RenewableUK
The Crown Estate
United Kingdom Cable Protection Committee
United Kingdom Major Ports Group
British Marine Federation

Website

www.britishports.org.uk
www.bmapa.org
www.r-e-a.net
www.oilandgasuk.co.uk
www.ccsassociation.org.uk
www.renewable-uk.com
www.thecrownestate.co.uk
www.ukcpc.org.uk
www.ukmajorports.org.uk
www.britishmarine.co.uk