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Maritime Strategy Web Survey

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Introduction

English Nature has developed a Maritime Strategy to address the issues raised in the Maritime state of nature report: getting onto an even keel. A key part of the process of developing the Strategy was to involve stakeholders whose views were gathered using a number of methodologies including a survey using a web-based questionnaire. This report summarises the key findings arising from the web survey.

The primary objective of the survey was to provide all stakeholders with an opportunity to express their views about our coasts and seas, including ideas for actions that they think should be taken to maintain or improve their condition. Another objective related to finding out what people know about our coasts and seas and what organisations do to manage them.

What was done

The survey was available on the web from 4 June 2003 until 22 September 2003. A link to the survey questionnaire was created from English Nature's web site home page. In addition the survey was promoted using a leaflet and through press releases and various publications.

Results and conclusions

A total of 888 people completed at least part of the questionnaire.

Some of the key findings were as follows:

- The most popular reasons for visiting the coast were: Walking (38%), going to the beach (35%), weekend and day trips (28%), and work (26%)
- The health of our coasts and seas was clearly important to respondents, with 99% agreeing that "The state/health of our coasts and seas matters to me"

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- Although 9% overall had noticed no significant changes, respondents tended to have noticed the following changes:
 - more litter (although 13% had also noticed less litter)
 - more people
 - it being more busy
 - better information for visitors
 - cleaner water
 - less wildlife
- 96% agree to some extent (79% strongly) that areas should be set aside and protected.
- 93% of respondents were "worried about dolphins and porpoises being killed by commercial fishing activities".
- A key question in the web survey was "What actions do you think should be taken to maintain or improve the condition of our coasts/seas?" The top five categories of responses were:
 - Better support for communities and partnerships (25%)
 - Better enforcement of existing rules (20%)
 - Improved integration and management (20%)
 - Apply new technologies or approaches (14%)
 - More protected areas (12%)

English Nature's viewpoint

The results and findings of the web survey were used to inform the development of English Nature's Maritime Strategy. They will be used in particular to inform how English Nature can improve the way it communicates its messages and engages in dialogue, including the way it listens.

Selected references

COVEY, R., & LAFFOLEY, D.d' . 2002. *Maritime State of Nature Report for England; getting onto an even keel*. Peterborough: English Nature

ENGLISH NATURE. 2003. *Developing English Nature's Maritime Strategy. State of Nature one year on*. Peterborough: English Nature

ENGLISH NATURE. 2004. *Our coasts and seas - a 21st century agenda for their recovery, conservation and sustainable use*. Consultation draft. Peterborough: English Nature.

Further information

For the full report or other publications on this subject, please contact the Enquiry Service on 01733 455100/101/102 or email enquiries@english-nature.org.uk

For further information about the work of English Nature, please visit our website at: www.english-nature.org.uk