

*These notes refer to the Marine Act (Northern Ireland) 2013  
(c.10) which received Royal Assent on 17 September 2013*

# Marine Act (Northern Ireland) 2013

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## EXPLANATORY NOTES

### COMMENTARY ON SECTIONS

#### **Part 2: Marine Planning**

##### ***Section 4: Marine plans for Northern Ireland inshore region***

This section provides for the creation of marine plans, and sets out certain basic requirements as to their content and the way in which they are to be prepared.

Subsection (1) allows the Department to prepare marine plans for “marine plan areas” within the Northern Ireland inshore region.

Subsection (2) places a duty on the Department to seek to ensure that marine plans are prepared for all parts of the Northern Ireland inshore region where the Marine Policy Statement (MPS) (prepared in accordance with the Marine and Coastal Access Act 2009) “governs marine planning” (see subsection (10)).

Subsection (3) defines a marine plan, and requires that a marine plan must be prepared and adopted by the Department in accordance with the process set out in Schedule 1; state the policies of the “relevant Northern Ireland departments” (see subsection (11)); and state that it is a marine plan prepared and adopted for the purpose of section 4.

Subsection (5) specifies that a marine plan must be in conformity with any MPS which “governs marine planning” in the Northern Ireland inshore region, unless relevant considerations indicate otherwise. Marine plans are intended to set out how the policies and objectives stated in the MPS apply at the local level, based on information about specific activities and processes taking place in that area. This ensures that there is a close link between the general policy in the MPS and how it is applied in specific situations in marine plans.

Subsection (10) explains that a MPS “governs marine planning” where the MPS has been adopted and published by the Department (under Schedule 5 to the Marine and Coastal Access Act 2009), has not been replaced or withdrawn and the Department has not withdrawn from it.