



# going overboard

"There is now a greater awareness than ever before of the importance of sound management of our marine environment and promoting the sustainable use of our coasts and seas." Lofty aims, let's hope they can deliver.

The record of previous governments and their agencies is not good. They have in the past ignored their obligations to SAC's under the European Habitats Directive by interpreting the rules to suit their own ends. Let's hope an SNP-led Government will do better.

It is important that as many people as possible respond positively to the consultation. Let them know that as divers we are the ones who see the damage done by unsustainable methods of fishing. Diving is responsible for putting millions of pounds into local economies so it is crucial to protect our fragile marine environment for future generations to enjoy.

There are many ways to send in your response so please lend your support and help protect the seas around our coast.

You can also book tickets to the ScotSAC conference online this year details of how will appear on the website soon. Looks like a good conference again this year. Confirmed speakers are Martyn Farr one of the world's leading cave divers and John Bantin of DIVER magazine who will be telling us how he got the best job in diving. And Claire Peddie, chair of BSAC will lead us through one of her recent expeditions, at this point we're not sure if it will be Ascention Island or Sulawesi, either way it will be good.

There will be a photo competition so if you're coming bring a print plus we'll have the usual sideshows from MCS etc. The venue is the same as last year Oban High School and the date, November 15.

Jack Morrison, Editor

THE SCOTTISH Government has announced its intention to introduce a Marine Bill for Scotland. You are invited to respond to this consultation by October 6, 2008. Rural Affairs and Environment Cabinet Secretary Richard Lochhead said the bill would deliver: a simpler regulatory system for the marine environment; more action on marine nature conservation; a strategic national approach; greater local control over marine and coastal areas.

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