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Sarah Arthur
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17 October 2017

Dear Sarah,

Thank you for your letter dated 6 October 2017 (received 11 October) requesting further clarifications (following Marine Scotland's responses on 8 September and 29 September 2017) on The Addendum (Ornithology) to the Scoping Opinion for the Proposed Section 36 Consent and Associated Marine Licence Application(s) for Inch Cape Wind Farm and Associated Offshore Transmission Works.

Please find our responses to your questions below.

4. Approaches to estimating impacts from displacement and barrier effects.

As detailed in the response dated 29 September the delay in the SeabORD model is due to the amount of changes that were required to be incorporated into the model following initial development. These changes require further consideration by the steering group prior to publication. The revised timelines for delivery have been agreed between MSS and the contractor. MSS are confident that the model will be available in December but it will not be possible to accelerate this.

As detailed in the response of 29 September it is not necessary to re-run the Searle et al. (2014) model, the previous model outputs will be sufficient to provide context to the SNCB matrix approach. Scottish Ministers understand that the buffers will be different for the matrix approach and the Searle et al model (2014), also that the displacement rate used in Searle model was 40 % for kittiwake whereas the advice in the scoping opinion is that a 30% displacement rate is more appropriate. However as the Searle model is to provide context Scottish Ministers consider that it will be appropriate to discuss these issues in the narrative supporting the assessment.

5. Estimation of bird densities within the buffer.

SNH have confirmed that the approach addresses their concerns previously raised and highlight that if when undertaking their analysis ICOL have any additional queries, SNH would be happy to discuss this further. Scottish Ministers are content with the ICOL approach.

Non-breeding season collisions – kittiwake and gannet

SNH are working on an illustrative example of how the assessment could be undertaken. Further advice on this point will follow.

Colony counts

(i) SNH are content that CEH have confirmed that the more recent colony count data held by CEH covers the Forth Islands SPA, and not just the Isle of May.

(ii) SNH have advised that the data is available on the SMP for the NNR for for both guillemot and razorbill. The counts were carried out on 8th June 2016.

I have requested that SNH update appendix A(ii) of their scoping advice to reflect the latest consideration of the most appropriate colony counts to be used in the assessment. This will be shared with the Forth and Tay developers once available (hopefully this week).

Kind Regards

Gayle Holland