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Sarah Arthur
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3 November 2017

Dear Sarah,

Thank you for your letter dated 26 October 2017 requesting final clarifications (following Marine Scotland's response on 17 October 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.

I have already provided the information you requested in relation to non-breeding season collisions for kittiwake and gannet via a separate email on 1 November 2017.

Please find our responses to your other queries below.

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

Apologies if you consider that the advice received regarding the displacement assessment has been inconsistent. The SNCB matrix approach should be used with the Searle et al 2014 model used to provide context if SeabORD is not available. This is consistent with the scoping opinion.

As indicated in the ICOL letter of 26 October 2017, and discussed in my previous responses, the Searle et al model assumed a 1km buffer whilst current SNH advice is that a 2km buffer should be assumed for the estimation of displacement/ barrier effects. However, in the absence of the SeabORD tool, the outputs from results from Searle et al 2014 still provide highly relevant information on the likely effects of displacement and barrier effect. The species, colonies and wind farms used in Searle et al 2014 are still relevant, and the study provides information on the level of effect that may be expected from such developments in these locations. This information will be of use both in themselves and in informing the mortality/ productivity effect percentages that may be appropriate to use in the SNH matrix approach. It is Scottish Ministers advice therefore that the Searle et al outputs should be presented and used to inform their EIA if the SeabORD model is not available.

The advice relating to use of Searle et al 2014 is that the outputs from the 2014 model, as reported in the Searle et al 2014 report should be used if the SeabORD tool is not available. The advice is **not** that the Searle et al model from 2014 should be re-run.

The SeabORD model and the way that CEH advise that it should be used has changed considerably since the draft version was circulated to the Project Steering Group (PSG). It is still being reviewed by the PSG (alongside the worked example provided with it), with feedback issued at the end of November. The SeabORD tool takes some time to run, and repeated runs of the model are required in order to produce outputs that can meaningfully inform the assessment. Once feedback has been received from the PSG we will then need to ensure that any issues identified that require addressing prior to publication are dealt with. Once the model has been fully reviewed by the PSG they would then be in a position to consider how it could be best applied to inform assessments. It is not possible to speed up this process and the expected timescales are still December (as detailed in my letter of 26 October 2017).

The ICOL query regarding the appropriate prey levels to be assumed in the SeabORD model runs would be informed by the PSG's consideration of the tool. If ICOL decide to progress with the SeabORD modelling through CEH, MSS agree that as per the original assessments 'moderate' prey availability is assumed. However, until the tool is properly reviewed it is not currently possible to provide advice on the number and range of prey levels that should be run. Therefore, MSS would advise that ICOL discuss and identify with CEH the scenarios that they believe would be most appropriate, and justify these in their EIA report.

MS Apportioning tool

The final version of the apportioning tool, user manual and accompanying report are being prepped for publication. The files associated with the tool are more than 5GB in size and so it needs to be ensured that they are made easily available to those wishing to access it. The tool is expected to be available next week, I will email you to let you know once available. Advice on your two points is as follows:

- i. Stage 1 of the SNH two stage apportioning approach uses Seabird 2000 colony count data. If available, Stage 1 should instead use the Apportioning Tool (the WAKE outputs that utilise the Wakefield et al 2017 distribution models). If the Apportioning Tool is not available, then Stage 1 should use the already available SNH apportioning methodology. Stage 2 apportioning uses the more recent SPA colony counts, as advised by SNH. Stage 2 apportioning must use the existing SNH apportioning method because the Apportioning Tool does not currently include the more recent colony count data.
- ii. Other than location, the apportioning tool does not require any information from the other developments to work. However, the estimated effects from the other windfarm/s will need to be known in order for e.g. the estimated number of collisions at that wind farm to be apportioned back to the appropriate colony.

Hopfully this provides the necessary clarification, however please contact me if you wish to discuss.

Kind Regards

Gayle Holland

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