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E:MD.MarineLicensing@gov.scot

Conservation (Natural Habitats, &c.) Regulations 1994

Application for a licence to disturb or injure marine European protected species (EPS) for one of the following purposes

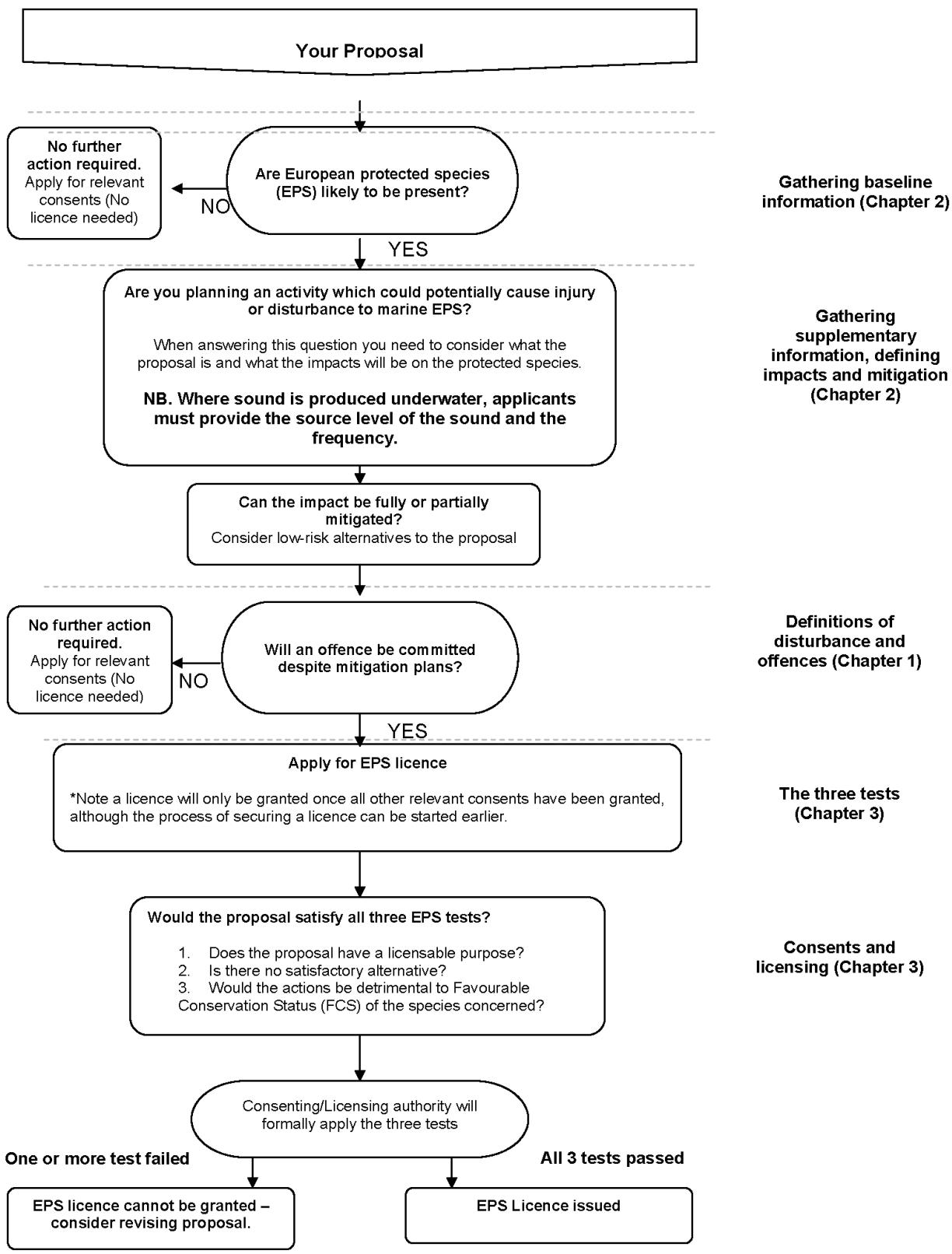
- For preserving public health or public safety or other imperative reasons of overriding public interest (including those of a social or economic nature and beneficial consequences of primary importance for the environment)
- For preventing the spread of disease
- For preventing serious damage to livestock, foodstuffs for livestock, crops, vegetables, fruit, growing timber or any other form of property, or to fisheries.

Please use this application form if you wish to undertake works/activities that would affect European protected species in the Scottish inshore marine area (0 – 12nm).

Important : Before completing this form, please read these notes carefully Applicants are advised to read these notes in conjunction with [The Protection of Marine European Protected Species from injury and disturbance: Guidance for Scottish Inshore Waters](#). If further clarification is needed please contact Marine Directorate Licensing Operations Team (MD-LOT) on 0300 244 5046 or email: MD.MarineLicensing@gov.scot

Flowchart showing the decision-making process

Please refer to the relevant chapter of [The Protection of Marine European Protected Species from injury and disturbance: Guidance for Scottish Inshore Waters](#)



Please complete all relevant sections of the form.

Please ensure that you answer questions fully in order to avoid delays.

The completed application should be sent to Marine Directorate Licensing Operations Team (MD-LOT) at the address below or emailed to MD.MarineLicensing@gov.scot.

If the activity relates to a renewable energy project, completed applications should be sent to Marine Scotland Licensing Operations Team (MD-LOT) at the address below or emailed to MD.MarineRenewables@gov.scot

We will not process unsigned application forms.

Please ensure that you provide appropriate information to support your application. Applicants can provide this supporting information in the form of an EPS Risk Assessment. Guidance can be found in [The Protection of Marine European Protected Species from injury and disturbance: Guidance for Scottish Inshore Waters](#). Please contact MD-LOT if you wish to discuss the level of supporting documentation required for your application. Failure to provide sufficient supporting information may delay the consultation and licensing process.

MD-LOT will aim to determine whether a licence should be issued **within 6 to 8 weeks of acceptance of a completed application**. However, please note that for large scale or complex projects, the determination period may be longer.

If you experience any problems filling in this form, please contact MD-LOT.

Please use this application form if you wish to undertake works/activities that would affect European protected species in the Scottish marine area (0 – 12nm).

Please note that European protected species are also protected in the offshore marine environment (between 12 and 200 nautical miles). Species in this area are protected under The Conservation of Offshore Marine Habitats and Species Regulations 2017.

Do not use this form if your application relates to scientific, research, conservation or educational purposes. Please contact NatureScot, email licensing@nature.scot, Telephone 01463 725364 or visit the [NatureScot website](#) for a licence application for these purposes. NatureScot also issues licences for the purposes of marking animals or plants in relation to conservation or introducing them to particular areas for conserving natural habitats, and for protecting zoological or botanical collections.

Before a licence can be granted, it is essential that other relevant licences or consents have been secured for the proposed activity (eg Marine licence).

It is the responsibility of the applicant to obtain any other consents or authorisations that may be required.

Part A

Section 1 Personal details

Please provide details of the individual, company or partnership you wish to be named on the licence. The licensee is responsible for ensuring compliance with the licence and its conditions. Under the Conservation (Natural Habitats) Regulations 1994 (as amended) it is an offence to fail to comply with the terms and conditions of a licence.

Section 2 Previous applications

Please provide details of any previous relevant licences.

Part B

Section 3

Species

Please provide details of the species that will be affected by the work, the number likely to be affected and a description of how this number was determined. The number of animals must be the maximum that could be affected prior to any mitigation measures being applied. This information can be described in detail in your supporting information. You will need to provide detailed proposals (to be included in the 'supporting information') of all the mitigation work that you plan to carry out which will affect European protected species.

Location

Describe the location of the proposed works. Include a list of the latitude and longitude co-ordinates (WGS84) of the boundary points of the proposed project. WGS84 is the World Geodetic System 1984 and the reference co-ordinate system used for marine licence applications. Co-ordinates taken from GPS equipment should be set to WGS84. Coordinates taken from recent admiralty charts will be on a WGS84 compatible datum. Ordnance survey maps do not use WGS84. In a few cases, (e.g. laying of cables or pipelines) it may only be practicable to supply co-ordinates for the start and end points.

Example: For positions read from charts the format should be as in the example: 55°55.555'N 002°22.222'W (WGS84). The decimal point specifies that decimals of minutes are used and the datum is stated explicitly. If seconds are used then the format should be as in the example: 55°55'44"N 2°22'11"W (WGS84).

It is important that the correct positions, in the correct format, are included with this application, as any errors will result in the application being refused or delayed.

Section 4 Consideration of designated sites

Please provide details of any designated sites affected by your proposals. You are advised to consult NatureScot, or other appropriate regulator, if the work you propose to do affects a European site, a MPA or a Site of Special Scientific Interest.

Section 5 Activities to be licensed

Please indicate the activities you intend to undertake that would otherwise be unlawful. Provide details of the proposed commencement and completion dates of the activities. The licence start date will not be backdated, since to commence a project for which a licence has not been obtained may constitute an offence resulting in appropriate legal action.

It is the licensee's responsibility to apply for any further licences or an extension prior to the expiry of the initial licence.

Section 6 Purpose of the licence application

Please indicate the purpose of the licence application, the first of the legal tests. Please complete the relevant annex to provide justification for the licensing purpose. This is the legal basis of the application.

Section 7 Satisfactory alternatives

Please provide your consideration of why there is no satisfactory alternative. This must include all other options that have been evaluated, the alternative sites that were considered by you and why they were rejected (if no other sites were considered, you must provide the reasons why), as well as all alternative methods of carrying out the work and alternatives dates / timings.

In relation to each alternative considered, please provide an explanation of why you consider it to be satisfactory or unsatisfactory. In respect of any alternative sites please provide the location(s) and details of the alternative site(s), or your views on how the activity/proposal might have been achieved differently, and any other helpful information; e.g., pros and cons of alternative sites, or whether there is likely to be demand for all suitable sites to be used to meet an identified need. Please explain how this conclusion was reached.

Section 8 Summary of the planning / licensing position

Detail all consents and licences required for the proposed project and indicate those that you have applied for or received.

Section 9 Noise monitoring

Under the Marine Strategy Regulations (2010), there is now a requirement to monitor loud, low to mid frequency (10Hz to 10kHz) impulsive noise. This includes use of seismic airguns, other geophysical surveys (<10kHz), pile driving, explosives and certain acoustic deterrent devices. This monitoring requires completion of a form at the application stage (giving details of the proposed work) as well as completion of a 'close-out' form (giving details of the actual dates and locations where the activities occurred). The close-out form should be returned within 12 weeks of completing the 'noisy' activity or, in the case of prolonged activities such as piling for harbour construction or wind farms, at quarterly intervals or after each phase of foundation installation. These forms are available on the [Marine Noise Registry website](#).

Section 10 Scotland's National Marine Plan

Scotland's National Marine Plan has been prepared in accordance with the EU Directive 2014/89/EU, which came into force in July 2014. The Directive introduces a framework for maritime spatial planning and aims to promote the sustainable development of marine areas and the sustainable use of marine resources. It also sets out a number of minimum requirements all of which have been addressed in this plan. In doing so, and in accordance with article 5(3) of the Directive, the Marine Directorate has considered a wide range of sectoral uses and activities and have determined how these different objectives are reflected and weighted in the marine plan. Land-sea interactions have also been taken into account as part of the marine planning process. Any applicant for a marine licence should consider their proposals with reference to Scotland's National Marine Plan. A copy of Scotland's National Marine Plan can be found on the [Scottish Government website](#).

Indicate whether you have considered the project with reference to Scotland's National Marine Plan and provide details of considerations made with reference to the policies, including but not limited to General Policies 9 and 13 (GEN 9 and GEN 13), that have been considered. If you have not considered the project with reference to Scotland's National Marine Plan please provide an explanation.

Section 11 Privacy notice

This section briefly describes the Scottish Ministers responsibilities in relation to Data Protection based on the requirements of the data protection laws and the Environmental Information (Scotland) Regulations 2004 and the Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act 2002.

Part D

Section 12 Declaration and warning

It is important to read the declaration and warning sections before signing the application form.

Site visits and compliance checks

It is possible that the licensing authority may undertake a site visit prior to the issue of a licence. The majority of site visits will be arranged several days in advance and will be conducted in the presence of the licensee (or applicant) however there may be occasions when a site visit will be made at short notice.

Licensees should be aware that they may receive a request for a site visit by the licensing authority, or a person authorised by the licensing authority, to assess site conditions against the conditions of the licence. It is essential that if any of the agreed mitigation measures contained in the application and supporting information are changed for any reason, the licensing authority is informed as soon as possible.

The Licensing authority will monitor compliance with licences issued based on the information included in licence reports.

Where to seek further information

Further information can be obtained from Licensing Operations Team at the address below.

Marine Directorate - Licensing Operations Team
Scottish Government
375 Victoria Road
Aberdeen
AB11 9 DB

Tel: 0300 244 5046
Email: MD.MarineLicensing@gov.scot

While every effort has been made to ensure the information contained in this document is accurate, nothing in this document should be taken to replace the current legislation in force at this time. You are advised to obtain qualified legal advice in relation to your rights and responsibilities under the 1994 Regulations and other legislation.

Part A. The applicant: personal details

These questions relate to the person who will be the named licensee. The licence can be issued to an individual or a company or a partnership and the licensee will be responsible for ensuring compliance with the licence and the conditions of the licence. Under the Conservation (Natural Habitats) Regulations 1994 (as amended) it is an offence to fail to comply with any condition imposed by a licence.

1. Name of applicant

Title:

Forename(s)

Surname:

Company name:

Business title (if appropriate):

Address:

Tel no. (inc. dialling code):

Email address:

2. The applicant: previous applications:

Have you previously held a wildlife licence issued in the UK? (please tick as appropriate)

Yes No (If yes, please complete below, if no, please go to Part B)

Who issued the licence?

Licence number (most recent licence)

Year in which the licence was issued.

What species were covered by the licence?

What activity was covered by the licence e.g. disturb, injure?

Part B. The application

3. Species

(a) Please indicate which species is / are affected by the proposed works.

Common name(s):

Scientific name(s)

(b) How many individual animals will be affected by licensed work? This number must be the maximum number that could be affected before any mitigation measures are applied.

Please provide a description of how this number was calculated / estimated

(c) Location of proposed licensed action

Latitude and Longitude co-ordinates (WGS84) defining the extent of the project. Please continue on a separate sheet if necessary.

Latitude										Longitude									
		°				.				'N			°			.			'W
		°				.				'N			°			.			'W
		°				.				'N			°			.			'W
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		°				.				'N			°			.			'W
		°				.				'N			°			.			'W

Please refer to the additional coordinates form

(d) Provide a brief description of the proposed activity and the methods to be used. This should make clear which equipment / activities you consider require an EPS licence and also the equipment / activities you consider do not require an EPS licence.

Detailed information should be included in your supporting information. Please provide details of the source levels and frequencies of underwater noise if relevant.

(e) Briefly state how you will minimise the impact of your proposed work on European protected species.

Detailed information should be included in your supporting information.

4. Consideration of designated sites

Designated Areas: National Nature Reserves (NNR), Sites of Specific Scientific Interest (SSSI), Special Protection Area (SPA), Special Areas of Conservation (SAC), Ramsar sites, Marine Protected Areas (MPA). Information on designated sites is available on [NatureScot's website](#).

(a) Will any part of the proposed activity fall within /or adjacent to an area covered by a Yes No
designated site eg SSSI, SAC, MPA?

(b) Please give the name of the designated site(s) and either the outcome of your consultations or the reason why you have not consulted (see note 4). Please enclose any relevant correspondence.

5. Activities to be licensed

Proposed methods

(a) Please complete all relevant columns in the table below to indicate the methods you propose to use, the activity involved and the time period in which you propose to use each method. This information will be used when preparing the licence to cover activities that would otherwise be unlawful, and failure to give full details may result in an inappropriate licence being issued.

Activity to be licensed (please tick)						Time period	
Capture	Kill (exceptional circumstances only)	Injure	Transport	Disturb/ Harass	Method to be used, (e.g. piling)	From	To

6. Purposes of the licence application (tick one box only)

A licence can only be issued if 3 specific legal tests are met. The section below relates to the first of these tests. The options shown are taken from the Conservation (Natural Habitats, &c.) Regulations 1994.

Please indicate which purpose relates to the proposed works

(a) Preserving public health or public safety (we will require evidence that there is a risk to public health or public safety e.g. an imminent risk of flooding) Regulation 44(2)(e)

Complete annex A

(b) or other imperative reasons of overriding public interest (including those of a social or economic nature and beneficial consequences of primary importance for the environment) Regulation 44(2)(e)

Complete annex B

(c) Preventing the spread of disease Regulation 44(2)(f)

Complete annex C

(d) Preventing serious damage to livestock, foodstuffs for livestock, crops, vegetables, fruit, growing timber or any other form of property, or to fisheries. Regulation 44(2)(g).

Complete annex D

In addition

(e) If you wish to use acoustic deterrent devices to protect fish farm sites in Scottish waters, you must also complete Annex E

7. Satisfactory alternatives

This relates to the second of the legal tests which must be satisfied. Please explain why there is no satisfactory alternative to carrying out the proposed work affecting the species. You must describe all possible alternatives which were considered and why they were considered unsatisfactory.

Alternatives may include but should not be limited to alternative equipment, methods, location and timing. You must also consider the option of not undertaking the work. It is not acceptable to state that 'there is no alternative'.

8. Other licences / consents

Please detail below all licences / consents you have applied for or received. Before a licence can be granted, it is essential that other relevant licences or consents have been secured for the proposed activity (eg Marine licence).

Type of licence / consent (e.g. marine licence, local planning authority, local works licence)	Date applied for	Reference no.	Date of issue of licence / consent

9. Noise monitoring

Please indicate if any of the following noise generating activities will be taking place during the operations:

Use of explosives Piling Use of Acoustic Deterrent Devices
Survey equipment operating in the range 10 Hz – 10kHz

If you have ticked any of the above boxes please complete a proposed activity form on the [Marine Noise Registry website](#).

Please note the form must only be completed once for each activity. If you have already completed a form for this activity (eg through the marine licensing process) please give details.

EPS licence applications will not be accepted until this form has been completed and submitted.

10. Scotland's National Marine Plan

Provide details of considerations made with reference to the relevant policies that have been considered.

11. Privacy notice

The Scottish Government's Marine Directorate - Licensing Operations Team (MD-LOT) has a range of statutory responsibilities including determining applications for licences to disturb or injure marine European protected species (EPS) under the Conservation (Natural Habitats, &c.) Regulations 1994 and The Conservation of Offshore Marine Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 and Basking shark licences under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981.

MS-LOT will, where necessary, process personal information including: names, addresses, email addresses and telephone numbers to determine a licence application. Personal information will be stored securely in the Scottish Government's official corporate record.

A full privacy notice can be found on the [Scottish Government website](#). If you are unable to access this, or you have any queries or concerns about how your personal information will be handled, contact MS-LOT at: Marine Scotland - Licensing Operations Team, Marine Laboratory, 375 Victoria Road, Aberdeen, AB11 9DB. Email: MD.MarineLicensing@gov.scot

Have you remembered to enclose supporting information with your application, as described in the accompanying guidance? Please check

Completed application form	<input type="checkbox"/>
Completed annex	<input type="checkbox"/>
Map or chart	<input type="checkbox"/>
Correct co-ordinates	<input type="checkbox"/>
EPS risk assessment or supporting information	<input type="checkbox"/>

Part C. Declarations

12. I have read and understand the guidance provided in this application form. I declare that the particulars given are correct to the best of my knowledge and belief, and I apply for a licence in accordance with these particulars.

I authorise employees or representatives of the Scottish Ministers to enter the site which is subject to this application for the purpose of monitoring and inspecting the permitted works.

Warning

Under the Conservation (Natural Habitats, &c.) Regulations 1994 (as amended) it is an offence to fail to comply with the conditions imposed by a licence. The licensee is responsible for ensuring compliance with the licence.

The Scottish Ministers can modify or revoke a licence at any time, provided there are good reasons. Any licence that may be issued is likely to be revoked immediately if it is discovered that false information was provided and resulted in the issue of a licence.

Under the Conservation (Natural Habitats, &c.) Regulations 1994, any person who in order to obtain a licence knowingly or recklessly makes a statement or representation, or furnishes a document or information which is false in a material particular, shall be guilty of an offence and may be liable to criminal prosecution. Any person found guilty of such offences is liable on summary conviction to imprisonment for a term not exceeding six months or to a fine not exceeding level 5 on the standard scale (currently £5,000), or to both imprisonment and a fine.

Note: Previous convictions for wildlife offences will be taken into account and in some cases may mean that the Scottish Ministers do not consider it appropriate to grant a licence.

Signature of the
Applicant

Date

(The person named at part 1)

Name in block letters

Note – If signing on behalf of a company, please append your signature with “on behalf of company name”.

The completed application should be signed and sent to Marine Directorate Licensing Operations Team (MD-LOT) at the address below or emailed to MD.MarineLicensing@gov.scot or MD.MarineRenewables@gov.scot

Please remember to include all supporting information.

Marine Directorate - Licensing Operations Team
Scottish Government
375 Victoria Road
Aberdeen
AB11 9DB

Disclaimer

While every effort has been made to ensure the information contained in this document is accurate, nothing in this document should be taken to replace the current legislation in force at this time. You are advised to obtain qualified legal advice in relation to your rights and responsibilities under the 1994 Regulations and other legislation.

Annex A

Only to be completed if you selected preserving public health or public safety in question 6 of the application form

Please complete all questions

Give details of the risk to public health or safety

How has the risk been identified? Please give details of any expert advice received.

How will the proposed activity address the identified risk?

Annex B

Only to be completed if you selected for imperative reasons of overriding public interest (including those of a social or economic nature and beneficial consequences of primary importance for the environment) in question 6 of the application form

Please complete all questions

What benefits will be provided by the proposed activity? Give details and indicate if they are social, economic or environmental. Please indicate if the benefits are short or long term.

What public interest will be served? Who will benefit from the proposed activity? Does the proposed activity address a need?

Why is it imperative the proposed activity goes ahead?

Does the proposed activity support any local regional or national policies? Please give details. Are you fulfilling a statutory role?

Annex C

Only to be completed if you selected for preventing the spread of disease in question 6 of the application form

Please complete all questions

What disease(s) is / are at risk of being spread if the proposed activity does not go ahead? Please give details of any expert advice received.

How will the proposed activity prevent the spread of disease? Please give details of any expert advice received.

Annex D

Only to be completed if you selected for preventing serious damage to livestock, foodstuffs for livestock, crops, vegetables, fruit, growing timber or any other form of property, or to fisheries in question 6 of the application form.

Please complete all questions

What serious damage has occurred or will occur if the proposed activity does not go ahead? Please give details of any expert advice received.

How will the proposed activity prevent serious damage? Please give details of any expert advice received.

Annex E

Only to be completed if you intend to operate ADDs at marine fish farm sites in Scotland Please complete a copy of this annex for each individual site included on your application Please complete all questions

Site name and ID (FS number)

Device Type 1

Device Details

Device name (and version if applicable)

Number of devices proposed

Source level of device (rms and SPLpeak)

Typical frequency content

Please give details of the proposed duty cycle (or available settings) including the system duty cycle

Duration of use of device (e.g. hours per 24 hour period)

Time of use (e.g particular time of day or time of year)

If multiple devices of this type are to be used, please give details of numbers to be deployed and locations in relation to the site.

Management of ADD Use

Please give details of the cues/triggers and the decision process to activate ADDs. These cues / triggers should be specific and measurable and should relate to predation events by seals rather than presence of seals in the area.

Give details of how ADD use is to be reviewed

Give details of criteria for deactivation or removal of ADDs (including if they appear to be ineffective)

Give details of ADD deployment plans and any relevant planning conditions relating to ADD use

Please use additional sheets if you propose to use more than one device type

Annex 2 – Part A. The applicant: previous applications

2. Licence number (most recent licence):

Response: Geophys survey: EPS/BS-00010808; EPS/BS- 00011203
Boulder clearance: EPS/BS-00010893, EPS/BS-00010986, EPS/BS-00011286 and
EPS/BS-00011224
UXO Clearance: EPS/BS-00010894; EPS/BS-00011281; EPS/BS-00011250
OFTI: EPS/BS-00011114

2. What species are covered by the licence?

Response: harbour porpoise (*Phocoena phocoena*); bottlenose dolphin (*Tursiops truncatus*); minke whale (*Balaenoptera acutorostrata*); Risso's dolphin (*Grampus griseus*); white sided dolphin (*Lagenorhynchus acutus*); short beaked common dolphin (*Delphinus delphis*); killer whale (*Orcinus orca*); white-beaked dolphin (*Lagenorhynchus albirostris*); humpback whale (*Megaptera novaeangliae*); fin whale (*Balaenoptera physalus*); long-finned pilot whale (*Globicephala melas*); sei whale (*Balaenoptera borealis*)

2. What activity was covered by the licence e.g. disturb, injure?

Response: Use of Sub-bottom Profiler, Side Scan Sonar, USBL, Boulder clearance and UXO ID, UXO clearance and construction of the offshore transmission infrastructure for Inch Cape Offshore Windfarm, including piling of the offshore substation platform.

Annex 3 – Part B. The application

3. Species

(b) How many individual animals will be affected by licensed work? This number must be the maximum number that could be affected before any mitigation measures are applied.

Response: Considering the conclusions of the EPS RA (document reference IC02-INT-EC-OFL-004-INC-RPT-003), the below refers to disturbance only. The maximum number of individuals of each species that could experience behavioural disturbance is provided below:

Concurrent Monopile & jacket pile driving:

Minke whale – 260 individuals per piling day (1.29% CGNS MU)

Bottlenose dolphin – 18 individuals per piling day (7.96% CES MU)

White-beaked dolphin - 495 individuals per piling day (1.25% CGNS MU)

Harbour porpoise - 3,709 individuals per piling day (1.07% NS MU)

Geophysical surveys:

Minke whale – 11 individuals (0.05% CGNS MU)

Bottlenose dolphin – 0 individuals (0% CES MU)

White-beaked dolphin - 20 individuals (0.05% CGNS MU)

Harbour porpoise - 153 individuals (0.04% NS MU)

Non-piling construction works:

Minke whale – 3 individuals (0.01% CGNS MU)

Bottlenose dolphin – 0 individuals (0% CES MU)

White-beaked dolphin - 6 individuals (0.01% CGNS MU)

Harbour porpoise - 47 individuals (0.01% NS MU)

(b) Please provide a description of how this number was calculated / estimated

Response: Two methods were used for the assessment in the EPS RA (document reference IC02-INT-EC-OFL-004-INC-RPT-003) to estimate the number of individuals that may potentially show a behavioural response to the WTG construction and piling activity: Effective deterrence ranges (EDR) and underwater noise modelling and use of dose-response relationships (Graham et al., 2017). The numbers provided above for pile driving are based on the dose-response as these represent the worst case. The numbers provided above for geophysical surveys and non-piling construction are based on EDRs as no dose-response function is available. For more information regarding the methodology please refer to Piling Strategy document for the Generating Station (IC02-INT-EC-OFC-005-INC-STR-002).

(d) Provide a brief description of the proposed activity and the methods to be used. This should make clear which equipment / activities you consider require an EPS

licence and also the equipment / activities you consider do not require an EPS licence.

Detailed information should be included in your supporting information. Please provide details of the source levels and frequencies of underwater noise if relevant

Response: Construction/ installation of the Inch Cape Offshore Wind Farm Generating Station, consisting of a total of 72 wind turbine generators (WTG), which foundations include 54 monopiles and 18 are jacket piled foundations, and inter array cables connecting the WTG to an existing offshore substation. Please refer to the 'European Protected Species Risk Assessment – Generating Station Report (ref IC02-INT-EC-OFL-004-INC-RPT-003) accompanying this application for more details.

(e) Briefly state how you will minimise the impact of your proposed work on European protected species.

Detailed information should be included in your supporting information.

Response: The proposed mitigations include use of pre-piling Acoustic Deterrent Devices (ADD) and a minimum 30 minute soft-start for piling (followed by a ramp-up in hammer energy), and transit watches for all vessel movement. Please refer to section 8 (Marine Mammal Mitigations) of attached 'European Protected Species Risk Assessment – Generating Station Report (ref IC02-INT-EC-OFL-004-INC-RPT-003) accompanying this application for more details.

Annex 4: Part B The application

4. Consideration of designated sites

(b) Please give the name of the designated site(s) and either the outcome of your consultations or the reason why you have not consulted (see note 4). Please enclose any relevant correspondence.

Response: The closest designated site (SAC) for EPS is the Moray Firth SAC (designated for bottlenose dolphins), located >200 km from the Inch Cape OWF.

The Southern North Sea SAC (designated for harbour porpoises) is >200 km from the Inch Cape OWF.

The assessment carried out in the "consideration of HRA document" (IC02-INT-EC-OFC-005-INC-RPT-002) concluded that the WTG pile driving (alone or in combination with other plans/projects) will not adversely affect the integrity of the sites.

Annex 7: Part B. The application

7. Satisfactory alternatives

This relates to the second of the legal tests which must be satisfied. Please explain why there is no satisfactory alternative to carrying out the proposed work affecting the species. You must describe all possible alternatives which were considered and why they were considered unsatisfactory. Alternatives may include but should not be limited to alternative equipment, methods, location and timing. You must also consider the option of not undertaking the work. It is not acceptable to state that 'there is no alternative'.

Response: Option 1: Do not undertake the works

This project will significantly contribute to the UK and Scottish Governments achieving their renewable energy targets. Without this development, the likelihood of achieving renewable energy targets will be negatively impacted. The project therefore proposes to apply the mitigation outlined under option 4 to mitigate potential effects on EPS.

Option 2: Conduct the works when marine EPS are not present

This is not a satisfactory alternative because marine EPS are present in the North Sea year round. This is the case for the harbour porpoises and dolphin species. It will not be possible to use an alternative location because the location of the Plan Option Area is fixed. There is therefore no time of year when marine EPS are not present in the area surrounding the proposed survey location (or any area within the North Sea). Therefore, conducting the surveys when marine EPS are not present is not an option. The project proposes to apply the mitigation outlined under option 4 to mitigate potential effects on EPS.

Option 3: Do not use piling

Consideration was given to alternative foundation types in the early stage of the development. The use of monopiles and piled jackets were considered to be the most suitable given the ground and environmental conditions, and structural requirements. The project therefore proposes to apply the mitigation outlined under option 4 while it undertakes the proposed work to mitigate potential effects on EPS.

Option 4: Restrict/reduce exposure to sound

The proposed embedded mitigations include soft start and ramp up procedure. Additionally, ADD will be used for a set time in order to deter animals from potential injury zone whilst balancing the amount of noise that could result in unnecessary disturbance

In addition, an observer on the bridge of all vessels, during both the WTG Piling and Inter Array cable construction works, will keep watch for marine EPS during all transits to and from the work sites.

Annex 10 Part B. The application

10. Scotland's National Marine Plan

Provide details of considerations made with reference to the relevant policies that have been considered.

Response: The Inch Cape Offshore Wind Farm is a planned project under the Scottish National Marine Plan. This EPS licence is required to enable construction activities for the offshore transmission infrastructure, a key element of the project, and aligns with the following policies of the National Marine Plan:

- > GEN1, GEN2, and GEN3: Inch Cape Offshore Wind Farm is a sustainable development initiative that offers economic and social benefits to Scottish communities.
- > GEN4: The project promotes coexistence with other marine users through consultation and cable burial.
- > GEN5: Generating renewable energy to mitigate and adapt to climate change.
- > GEN6: Consideration was given to marine archaeology protection in the 2018 Environmental Impact Assessment Report (EIAR) and a specific Protocol of Archaeological Discoveries (PAD) is in place.
- > GEN7 and GEN13: Visual and noise impacts are evaluated in the 2018 EIAR for the Inch Cape Offshore Wind Farm.
- > GEN9: Impacts to protected areas and species were considered in the 2018 EIAR.
- > GEN10 and 11: A Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP) approved by MD-LOT in consultation with stakeholders is in place, and covers procedures to reduce risks of spreading invasive non-native species and waste management.
- > GEN13: Noise mitigations are informed in this application.
- > GEN18: Inch Cape has continuously engaged with all relevant stakeholders and interested parties throughout the licensing process and preparation for starting the works.
- > GEN19, 20 and 21: A Marine Licence for the works was granted in 2019, supported by the 2018 EIAR which assessed the impacts resulting from the works and proposed mitigations.

Annex B

Only to be completed if you selected for imperative reasons of overriding public interest (including those of a social or economic nature and beneficial consequences of primary importance for the environment) in question 6 of the application form

Please complete all questions

What benefits will be provided by the proposed activity? Give details and indicate if they are social, economic or environmental. Please indicate if the benefits are short or long term.

Response: The Inch Cape Offshore Wind Farm development area was first identified as part of The Crown Estate (TCE) 2008 offer of lease areas for Offshore Wind development in Scottish Territorial Water (STW), and has now been adopted within the Scottish Sectoral Marine Plan for Offshore Wind. Installation of the proposed OWF will allow the export of renewable energy to the east coast of Scotland, which will assist in reaching climate change targets, benefiting both the economy and the environment. Other benefits include increased income and employment on a local, regional and national scale in addition to increased investment (e.g. infrastructure) in the area. The installation of this OWF will assist in meeting UK and Scottish Government climate change targets, which will provide long term economic and environmental benefits.

What public interest will be served? Who will benefit from the proposed activity? Does the proposed activity address a need?

Response: The development will create employment during all phases for the population of the east of Scotland and the wider UK. It will contribute to the Scottish Government's aims of achieving Net Zero by 2045 and make a significant contribution to meeting the targets set out in the Climate Change (Emissions Reduction Targets) (Scotland) Act 2019. Contributing to meeting the aims of tackling climate change and reducing emissions will benefit the wider population.

Why is it imperative the proposed activity goes ahead?

Response: Inch Cape OWF will contribute to the delivery of renewable energy generation in Scotland, and assist in meeting Scotland's climate change targets.

Does the proposed activity support any local regional or national policies? Please give details. Are you fulfilling a statutory role?

Response: This project is in accordance with Scotland's Offshore Wind Policy Statement (2020) and the Scottish Energy Strategy (2017). One of the targets outlined in this strategy is that 50% of the energy for Scotland's heat, transport and electricity consumption is to be supplied from renewable sources. Inch Cape OWF will contribute to the delivery of renewable energy generation in Scotland, and assist in meeting

Scotland's climate change targets. As highlighted above, the delivery of the project will contribute to meeting the emissions reduction targets and the aims of achieving Net Zero, as set out in the Climate Change (Emissions Reduction Targets) (Scotland) Act 2019.

