



GREENPEACE



Marine
Conservation
Society



February 2009

Parliamentary Briefing

Marine and Coastal Access Bill Amendment

Regulation of nets and other fishing gear (Clause 186)

The organisations listed above are closely engaged in the Marine & Coastal Access Bill. We are also members of Wildlife and Countryside Link's Marine Task Force¹, which has been campaigning for several years for improvements in marine conservation.

Background

Section 3 of the Sea Fish (Conservation) Act 1967 is the provision allowing control of the kinds of fishing gear used. This is a welcome power and it has been used to good effect. Clause 186 of the Marine and Coastal Access Bill updates it somewhat, and we suggest that it could be improved in two further ways.

The first of these is a point that we have also made in a separate proposed amendment to clause 152 – IFCA byelaw making powers – in relation to IFCA (as opposed to Government) powers to regulate fishing gear. We believe that there ought to be a power to require the use of best available technologies designed to deter (prevent or reduce) by-catch.

The second improvement is to clarify that the power to control gears can indeed be used for marine environmental purposes (as opposed to the protection of undersized quarry species). Both amendments are shown in the Annex, below.

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¹ Wildlife and Countryside Link is a coalition of the UK's major environmental organisations working together for the conservation and protection of wildlife, the countryside and the marine environment.

Annex – Amendments

Marine & Coastal Access Bill

House of Lords Committee Stage, February 2009

Clause	Clause 186 Regulation of nets and other fishing gear
Amendment	Page 108, line 12: At end insert '(2C) An order under this section may require the use of equipment methods or materials the purpose of which is to seek to prevent or reduce by-catch' Page 108, line 16: At end insert new subclause '(4) In subsection 5A (1) of the Sea Fish (Conservation) Act 1967 insert the words "section 3 or" before the words "section 5"