

## 4. General Policies

Two general policies have been developed to provide an over-arching policy framework for the Loch Etive ICZM Plan, which apply to all sectoral developments and activities. They bring together existing land use policy to manage and protect the Natural and Historic Environment, Wild Migratory Salmonids, Invasive Non Native Species and Water Quality, and to consider where practicable, how to manage Climate Change. These policies also encourage the involvement of local communities in the planning process.

### POLICY LE GEN 1 – DEVELOPMENT AND ACTIVITY

#### PART A – Policy Framework

Marine and coastal developments and activities should be consistent with:

- relevant Argyll and Bute Development Plan policies, within the Argyll and Bute Council area of Loch Etive;
- relevant Highland Development Plan policies, within the Highland Council area of Loch Etive;
- additional policies for individual activities, detailed in Section 6; and
- policy guidance in the relevant Policy Zone (Section 7).

#### PART B – Other Development Requirements

Marine and coastal developments are required to:

- take account of the likely effects of climate change including sea level rise, flooding, increased storm risk and effects on coastal erosion and sediment transport;
- ensure no deterioration of water body status under the Water Framework Directive and facilitate improvements to water body status wherever possible;
- consider effects on marine and coastal areas used for marine science, particularly long term research stations;
- be consistent with Policy LE INNS 1; and
- obtain the necessary authorisations from other competent authorities to proceed.

#### PART C – Enhancing the Natural and Historic Environment

The Loch Etive ICZM Plan:

- promotes and supports co-ordinated action to manage and remove marine litter and debris;
- supports existing measures to protect sensitive and ecologically important sites and areas, species and habitats in and around Loch Etive;
- encourages projects that will map the extent of known fragile species and habitats in the Plan area;
- recommends measures to further enhance visitor appreciation of natural and cultural sites of significance in the area such as improved access to, better interpretation, signed trails and guided tours;
- recognises that promotion, interpretation, improved access and facilities is appropriate only in some areas in order to maintain the wild and remote nature of the loch elsewhere; and
- encourages voluntary approaches to protecting important areas for marine and coastal biodiversity such as adherence to codes of conduct.

#### PART D – Community Development

- 1) Developers and competent authorities should seek to involve communities during the planning process, to allow informed decision making that accounts for their needs and aspirations.
- 2) Developments, activities and facilities that meet the following criteria are encouraged:
  - highlight the natural and cultural assets of the area and its communities which make it distinct;
  - assist in achieving sustainable development aspirations for the area and its communities;

- provide economic and social benefits for local communities;
- further diversify the Argyll and Bute economy to provide job opportunities; and
- promote a culture of enterprise and provide conditions for sustainable business growth.

#### Justification

Integrated Coastal Zone Management (ICZM) plans should provide policies for the existing and future use and development of a specific coastal area to assist day-to-day planning decisions and management of interactions within the area. Two general policies have been developed to provide an overarching policy framework for the Loch Etive ICZM Plan and apply to all developments and activities.

This policy encourages sustainable development and activity that is consistent with existing Argyll and Bute and Highland Council policy and considers effects on natural heritage, historic interests, water quality, and the implications of climate change.

The policy encourages the involvement of local communities in the planning process and aims to safeguard features of interest which have been recognised as important to the area. The process of developing the draft Loch Etive ICZM plan has involved significant input from local stakeholders and this policy aims to assist activities achieve their full potential through sustainable growth, where appropriate, in line with the needs and aspirations of local communities.

### **POLICY LE INNS 1 - REDUCING THE RISK FROM MARINE INVASIVE NON-NATIVE SPECIES**

All marine users (commercial and non-commercial) should consider the potential risks of spreading invasive non-native invasive species (INNS) particularly when moving equipment, boats or live stock (e.g. fish and shellfish) from one water body to another.

To reduce the spread of INNS it is not permitted to:

- release aquarium plants or animals into the environment;
- knowingly move INNS to new locations;

Marine users are encouraged to minimise the risk of introduction of new species and potential for further spread of established INNS by:

- maintaining boat hulls clear of fouling organisms, particularly when moving to and from new areas;
- cleaning boats and equipment before transporting them from one water body to another;
- cleaning and drying dive and fishing gear after use;
- reporting any sightings to the relevant organisations (see Appendix IV); and
- follow other existing good practice and codes of conduct identified in the relevant activity section of the Plan (Section X).

Where new developments or the use of them present a risk of introducing or increasing the spread of INNS, developers are encouraged to:

- promote awareness of non-native invasive species amongst their users;
- develop bio-security measures, such as protocols and risk assessments to manage introduction, spread and eradication of invasive non native species; and
- the developer should undertake awareness raising with customers and monitoring of vessels to allow early warning and develop protocols for the eradication of particularly damaging non native species.

### Justification

After habitat loss, non-native invasive species are considered to pose the greatest threat to biodiversity. Invasive non-native species can have significant effects on native species and habitats and can negatively affect commercial activities such as aquaculture. Activities such as shipping, recreational boating or aquaculture can inadvertently introduce marine invasive species to our waters and some species can also be transported naturally by ocean currents or wind or may travel attached to floating objects such as seaweed or plastic containers.

This policy aims to promote necessary management and good practice required to minimise the risk of spreading or introducing INNS.