



Section 1: General Policies

The policies within this Plan are designed to guide all marine and coastal users in terms of proposed and existing development(s) and activities. Users of this Plan must also comply with the National Marine Plan and other relevant legislation.

The general policies within this section of the Plan provide a framework for the sustainable development and use of the marine and coastal environment. The policies within this section can be considered cross-cutting, as they are all potentially relevant to any proposal for development or activity by any sector or user of the marine and coastal environment and should be adhered to in advance of the relevant sectoral policy. The chapters are laid out in the same order as they appear in the National Marine Plan.

Each chapter follows the same format, this includes:

- A context which sets out a summary of the main information relevant to the policy area. More information on each of the areas can be found within the [Clyde Marine Region Assessment](#).
- Objectives and policies; objectives provide a measurable strategic aim or goal for each policy area and policies which will deliver the objectives are set out underneath.
- Maps are included at the end of the chapter. For the latest available spatial data, see [National Marine Plan interactive](#) (NMPi). It is recommended that NMPi is used in conjunction with this Clyde Regional Marine Plan.
- Links to further information on the policy area.



Chapter 7: Marine Litter

The Marine Litter Strategy for Scotland should be taken into account. This chapter contributes to achieving the strategic directions set out within that strategy; where objectives contribute to a specific strategic direction, this is indicated in brackets.



A beach clean in Kintyre.

Clyde Marine Region Context

Marine litter is found across the Clyde Marine Region. Shallow coastal areas of depths less than 40 m have a much greater abundance of marine litter than deeper waters. Greater abundances have been found in bays, which are more sheltered. This is reflected in the

Clyde Marine Region where, due to the prevailing south westerly winds, litter congregation areas or ‘sinks’ are found in sheltered areas at the top of the Clyde sea lochs and also south-facing shores.

In UK waters around 70 % of marine litter is plastic, which will persist in the environment for thousands of years. All plastics progressively fragment into microplastics through mechanical action and photo-degradation. Micro-plastics can also enter the marine environment ready formed. Pre-production plastic pellets, or ‘nurdles’ also contribute to the issue and can be found on beaches in the Clyde Marine Region.

It is important to note that 80 % of marine litter comes from terrestrial sources, and so a broad approach, taking into account terrestrial sources is essential, in order to prevent litter entering the marine environment. A number of volunteer, community groups and charities have been carrying out beach and riverine cleans, some over a long period of time, in the Region.

For further detail on this issue, see Chapter 4.8 of the [Clyde Marine Region Assessment](#).

Objectives

	<p>Objective ML 1 Marine and coastal related development(s) and structures do not contribute to marine litter in the Clyde Marine Region and do contribute to a circular economy (SD2¹). MEASUREMENT: Marine licence and Town and country planning applications processes as applicable.</p>
	<p>Objective ML 2 A reduction in the volume of litter entering the marine environment through the Clyde Marine Region catchment area, in particular plastic material (SD 1²&2). MEASUREMENT: Marine Conservation Society beach clean statistics. Data from any relevant riverine citizen science monitoring projects.</p>
	<p>Objective ML 3 An increase in beach and riverine cleaning activities and data collected through such activities which contribute to the evidence base on marine litter (SD4³) within the Clyde Marine Region.</p>

¹ Strategic Direction 2: Reduce marine and coastal based sources of litter, in coordination with land sourced litter being reduced by the national litter strategy.

² Strategic Direction 1: Improve public and business attitudes and behaviours around marine and coastal litter, in co-ordination with the national litter strategy.

MEASUREMENT: Marine Conservation Society active beach cleans and other active community led litter clean up groups. Contribution to Beachwatch and Nurdle data. Number of riverine citizen science or other monitoring projects, e.g. Upstream Battle. Enrolment in the Keep Scotland Beautiful Clean – up Scotland initiative.

Policy – Authorisations and consents

Policy ML 1 Marine licence applications for development(s) in the Clyde Marine Region require a waste minimisation and management plan for the lifecycle of the proposal including construction, active use and any decommissioning or remediation works. This should illustrate initiatives to contribute to a circular economy and, where appropriate, indicate measures to avoid and mitigate for the accidental release of plastic nurdles, flakes or powder. Disposal of marine waste/litter at sea is prohibited.

Policy – Management

Policy ML 2 Existing coastal and marine development(s) and structures should be maintained by the relevant authority or owner, such that they do not contribute to litter entering the marine environment.

Policy ML 3 Waste water infrastructure should be designed, wherever practicable, to reduce the risk of litter entering the marine environment through water courses or any other pathway.

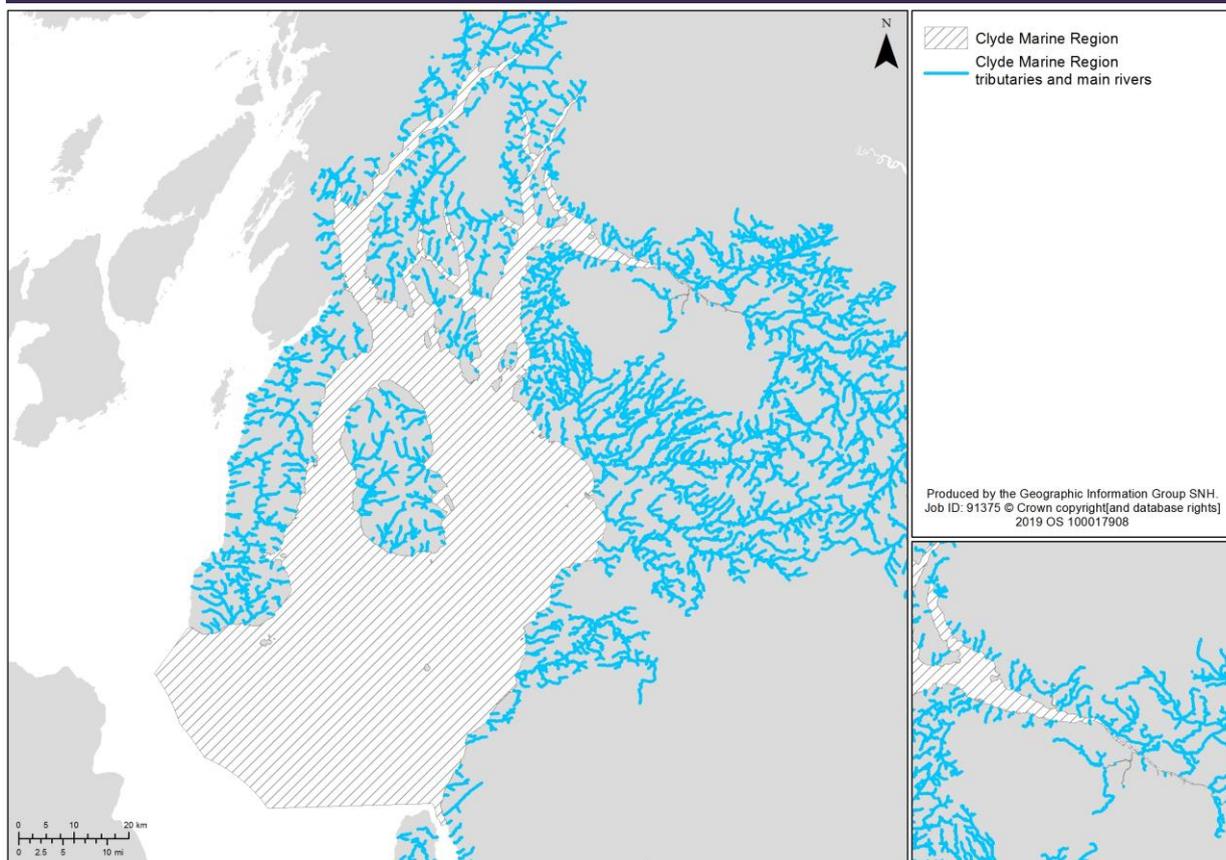
Policy ML 4 Activities by port/harbour operators to provide facilities to fishing vessels under the Fishing For Litter scheme are positively encouraged.

Policy ML 5 Manufacturers and those involved in the shipping and transport or use of plastic nurdles, flakes or powder should adopt examples of best practice guidance to prevent these plastics entering waste water treatment systems and/or the marine environment.

Policy ML 6 The activities of organisations, and/or community and voluntary groups engaged in identifying areas of marine litter accumulation and/or carrying out beach cleans, engagement and communications initiatives relating to marine litter are encouraged where they are in line with this Clyde Regional Marine Plan. The Coastal Litter Management Guidelines for Duty Bodies, created by the Firth of Clyde Forum, should be followed in carrying out any beach cleaning operations. Beach clean organisers and other stakeholders are encouraged to contribute to data collecting initiatives. This includes but is not limited to: the Marine Conservation Society's (MCS) Beachwatch campaign, Fidra's 'Great Nurdle Hunt' data collection project and the SCRAPbook project.

³ Strategic Direction 4: Improve monitoring at a Scottish scale and develop measures for strategy evaluation.

Map ML 1 – Clyde Marine Region catchment area including tributaries.



These maps are indicative only. For up-to-date mapping with interactive features, visit [National Marine Plan interactive](#).

Further information

[Firth of Clyde Forum’s Coastal Litter Management Guidelines for Duty Bodies](#)

The Scottish Government launched the [Marine Litter Strategy for Scotland in 2014](#) to provide a strategic approach to reducing the amount of marine litter in our seas.

The [Marine Conservation Society](#) and its annual [Beachwatch](#) beach cleaning campaign.

[Keep Scotland Beautiful](#) is a charity that campaigns, educates and acts on a range of local, national and global sustainability issues, including marine litter.

[Upstream Battle](#) is a campaign tackling the source of marine litter along the length of the river Clyde and its tributaries.

[Zero Waste Scotland](#) work to enable change around issues such as food waste, sustainability and helping Scotland move towards a Circular Economy.

Fidra is a Scottish environmental charity that runs various projects around marine litter, in particular [The Great Nurdle Hunt](#) and [The Cotton Bud Project](#).

[Operation Clean Sweep](#) is an initiative created by the plastics industry to reduce plastic pellet loss to the environment. It is international and in the UK it is led by the British Plastics Federation.

[SCRAPBook](#) uses aerial photography to identify marine litter across the Scottish coastline.

[Fishing For Litter](#), led by KIMO (Local Authorities International Environmental Organisation) is an innovative project working with fishers to reduce marine litter.