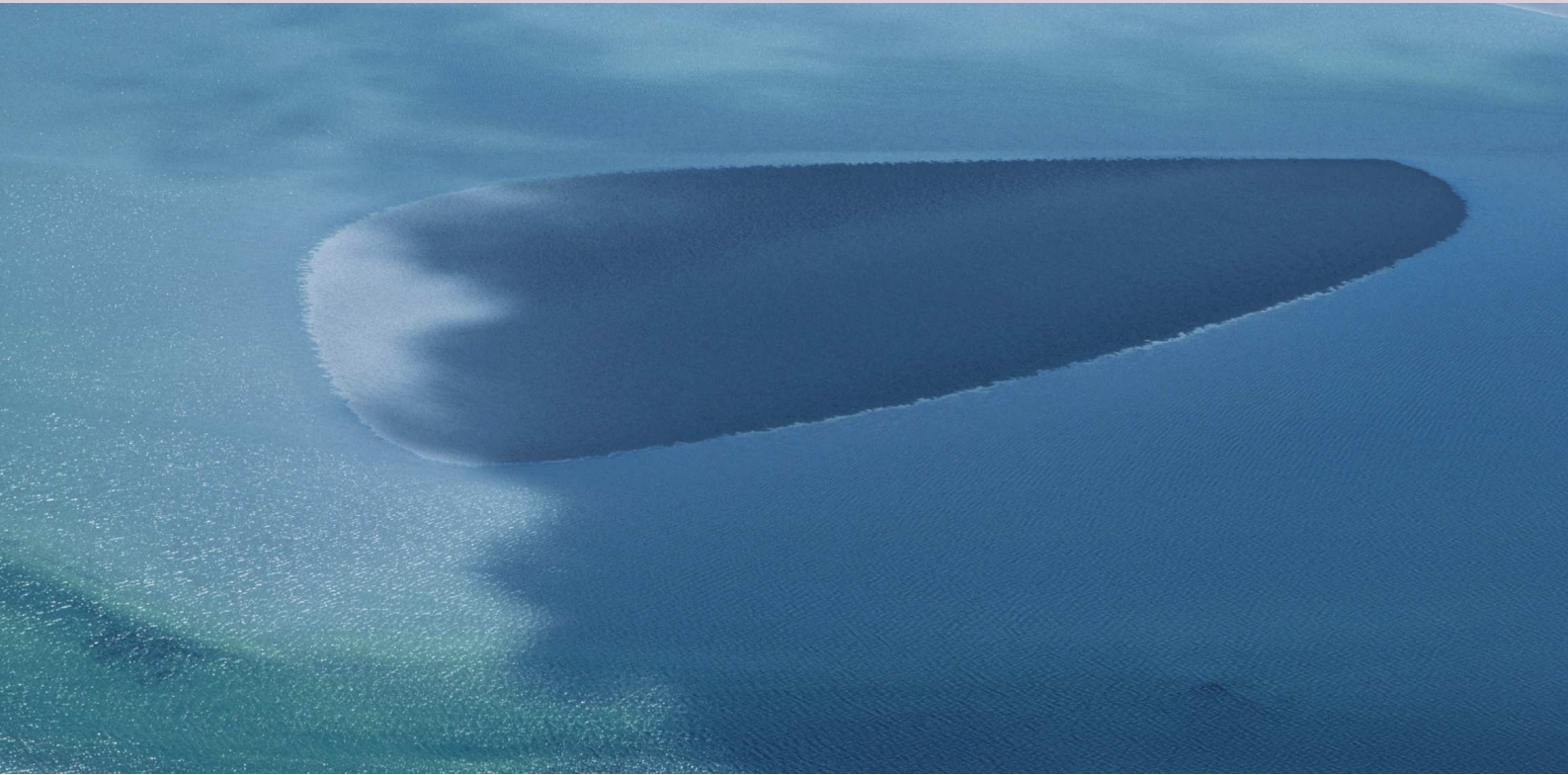


# Scottish Election 2011 Briefing

## Scotland's seas



Our coast and seas bring **enormous benefits** to Scotland's **economy** by providing **jobs, food, transport, tourism** and **energy**; at the same time they also help to regulate Scotland's climate.

Yet our seas remain in a **degraded** and **unhealthy state**, particularly where the influence of centres of human population and industry are greatest.

**Commercial fish stocks** are still **being over-exploited**, endangering the livelihoods of local fishing communities and marine ecosystems of which the fish are an integral part.

Scotland is home to **internationally important colonies** of 24 species of **breeding seabirds** and their numbers have plummeted since the 1990s as a result of a number of factors including lack of food due to commercial over-fishing, changing weather patterns and pollution.

**Recent legislation has given us the tools to tackle many of these problems, but unless action is taken now to manage our seas sustainably and restore marine habitats and ecosystems to a healthy state, the huge benefits our seas bring to society will be lost.**

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The Scottish Wildlife Trust would like to see the next Scottish Parliament and Government:

- **Designate a suite of ecologically coherent Marine Protected Areas** covering the full range of types of site, from representative habitats to critical sites for mobile species by 2012
- **Prioritise measures to restore the damaged habitats and ecosystem health** of Scotland's seas, coasts and estuaries
- **Ensure that marine renewables are developed and deployed in a truly sustainable manner**, taking full account of biodiversity
- **Work with the UK Parliament and government at Westminster and others to persuade the European Union to end the madness of fish discards** under the Common Fisheries Policy
- **Ensure that policy is based on scientific evidence** by safeguarding Scotland's marine research institutions