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# Pen Layout Changes at Marine Pen Fish Farms Screening environmental risk assessment

September 2023. Version 5

## Screening environmental risk assessment

For a pen layout change to be authorised by admin variation, the answer to all the following screening risk assessment questions must be “no”.

Table 1: Screening risk assessment checklist

| **Screening Assessment Questions** | **Yes** | **No** |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Is an increase to the farm’s permitted biomass limit being sought? |  |  |
| Is an increase to a permitted medicine discharge limit being sought? |  |  |
| Will the proposed infrastructure change result in either:   * A decrease in total pen surface area * A decrease in minimum distance between pens (measured from the centre point) |  |  |
| Will the location of the centre of the new pen group layout be more than a distance of 180 metres from the centre of the last modelled layout? |  |  |
| Will the length and width of the new pen group layout be more than 180 metres greater than the length and width of the last modelled layout? |  |  |
| Will the orientation (bearing) of the proposed pen layout be more than ± 30 degrees of that of the last modelled layout? |  |  |
| Is the difference in the average depth of water around the proposed new layout compared with the average depth of water around the last modelled layout greater than 10 metres?  For the purposes of this assessment, “the average depth of water” means the average depth calculated across a box drawn around the farm layout at a distance of 180 metres seaward from the outer edges of the pens on each side of the layout. |  |  |
| If there is a sensitive, protected seabed feature within 500 metres of the last modelled layout, will any pen in the proposed new pen layout be closer than any pen in the last modelled layout to that sensitive seabed feature? |  |  |

#### Notes:

The purpose of question 7 is to assess whether a proposed layout change could result in a farm moving to a place where the assimilative capacity of the surrounding coastal waters to accommodate the farm’s discharges is significantly different from the assimilative capacity of the coastal waters immediately surrounding the existing layout. For example, this may be the case if there is a rapid change of seabed depth in the vicinity of the farm.

To assist with question 8, guidance on identifying sensitive, seabed features is provided in Appendix 1

Where an application meets all above criteria apart from 3, SEPA will accept a standard variation application (30% of application fee), with modelling to demonstrate the increase in intensity is acceptable. This application will not routinely be subject to advertising and consultation.

#### If submitting this checklist in support of an admin variation, please include:

* Site Name:
* Licence Number:
* The centre point NGR for each pen under the proposed new layout:

(12-character NGR: 2 letters and 10 numbers e.g. NW 1234554321)

* The proposed pen size:
* The proposed net depth:
* The NGRs of the proposed pen corner buoys:

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