

*Scottish Seaweed Industry Association Meeting
15 November 2023*

Regulatory guidance for new and expanding marine seaweed aquaculture businesses in England

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Department
for Environment
Food & Rural Affairs



Cefas



Marine
Management
Organisation



The need for guidance on licensing

Navigating the process to secure a marine licence for seaweed aquaculture has been identified as a **key challenge** by seaweed industry stakeholders.

The English Aquaculture Strategy calls for the “development of specific marine licensing guidelines for macroalgae culture that reflects its nature, scale and impact of these extractive, low trophic species” [Critical Action 1].

SEAFOOD
— 2040

English Aquaculture Strategy



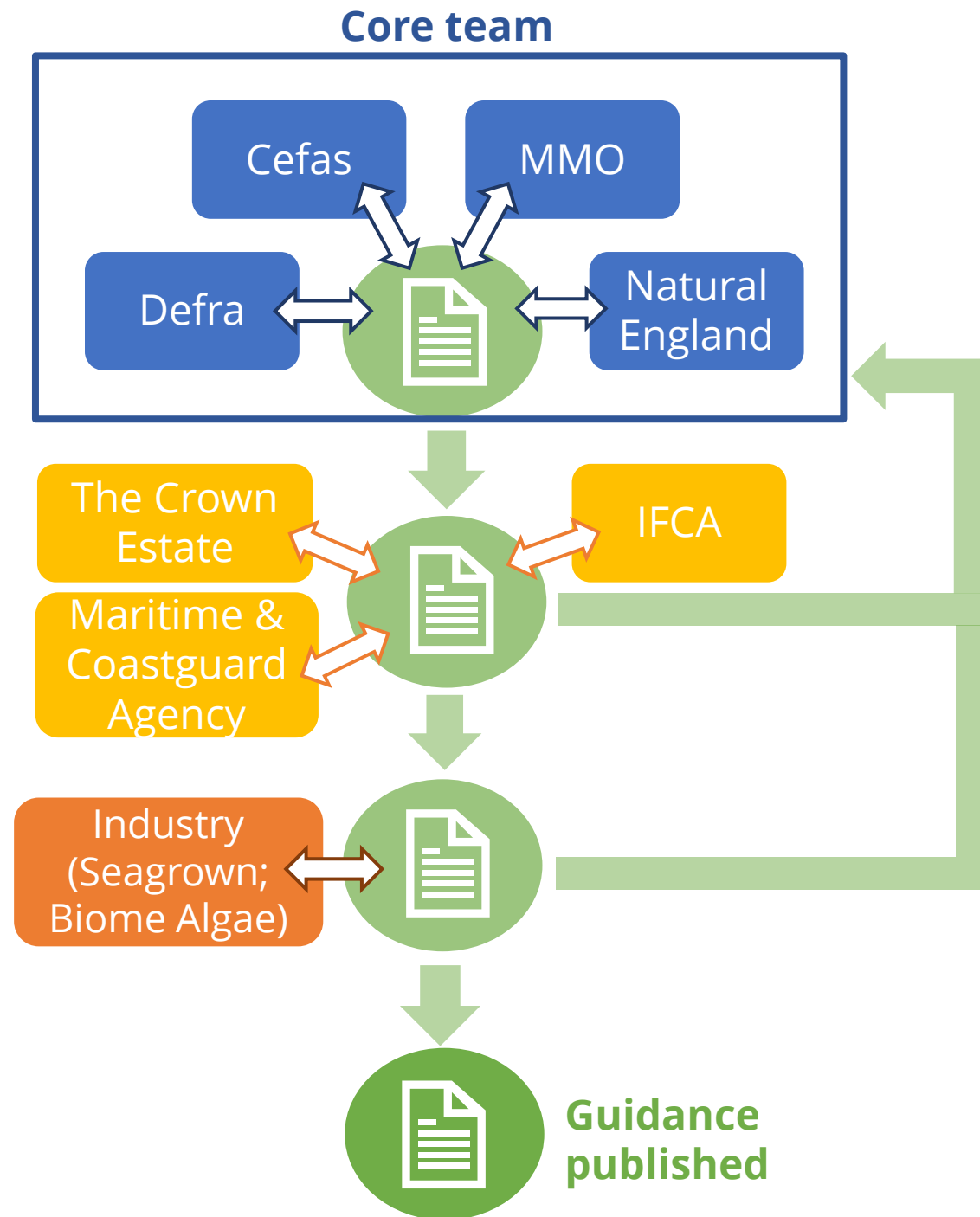
Aims of the guidance

- To **provide clarity** for both applicants and regulators of the licence, consents and authorisations required to set up, operate and decommission a seaweed farm in English marine waters.
- Focus on **information** that an applicant needs to provide to navigate the processes
- Where existing documentation is available, the guidance will **signpost to relevant links and resources**, rather than replicate information
- This guidance **does not cover**: the regulatory regimes relating to the sale/export of seaweed grown in aquaculture; cultivation of seaweeds in tanks or raceways on land, nor cultivation of algae in freshwater environments.

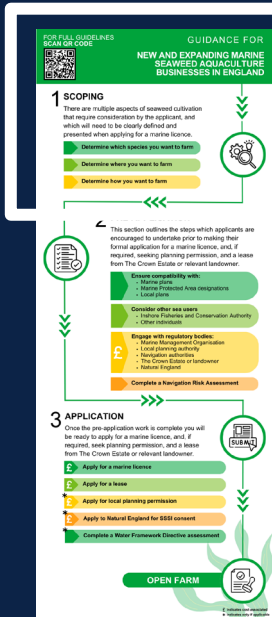


Guidelines development process

Iterative process with core team (including Defra, Cefas, MMO and NE) redrafting document after each round of reviews.



Overview of guidelines



FOR FULL GUIDELINES
SCAN QR CODE



GUIDANCE FOR

NEW AND EXPANDING MARINE
SEAWEED AQUACULTURE
BUSINESSES IN ENGLAND

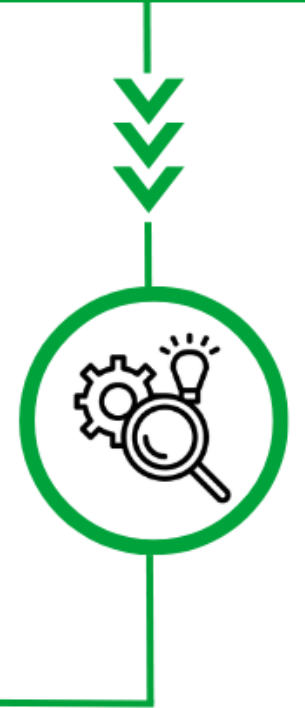
1 SCOPING

There are multiple aspects of seaweed cultivation that require consideration by the applicant, and which will need to be clearly defined and presented when applying for a marine licence.

Determine which species you want to farm

Determine where you want to farm

Determine how you want to farm



Scoping - species

Determine which species you want to farm

- Which species is best for the intended use?
- Is the species suited for the local environmental conditions?
- Is the species naturally occurring in proximity of the farm or regionally absent?
- Is the species native to the UK?
- Is the species already farmed successfully in England or the UK?

Scoping - location

Determine where you want to farm

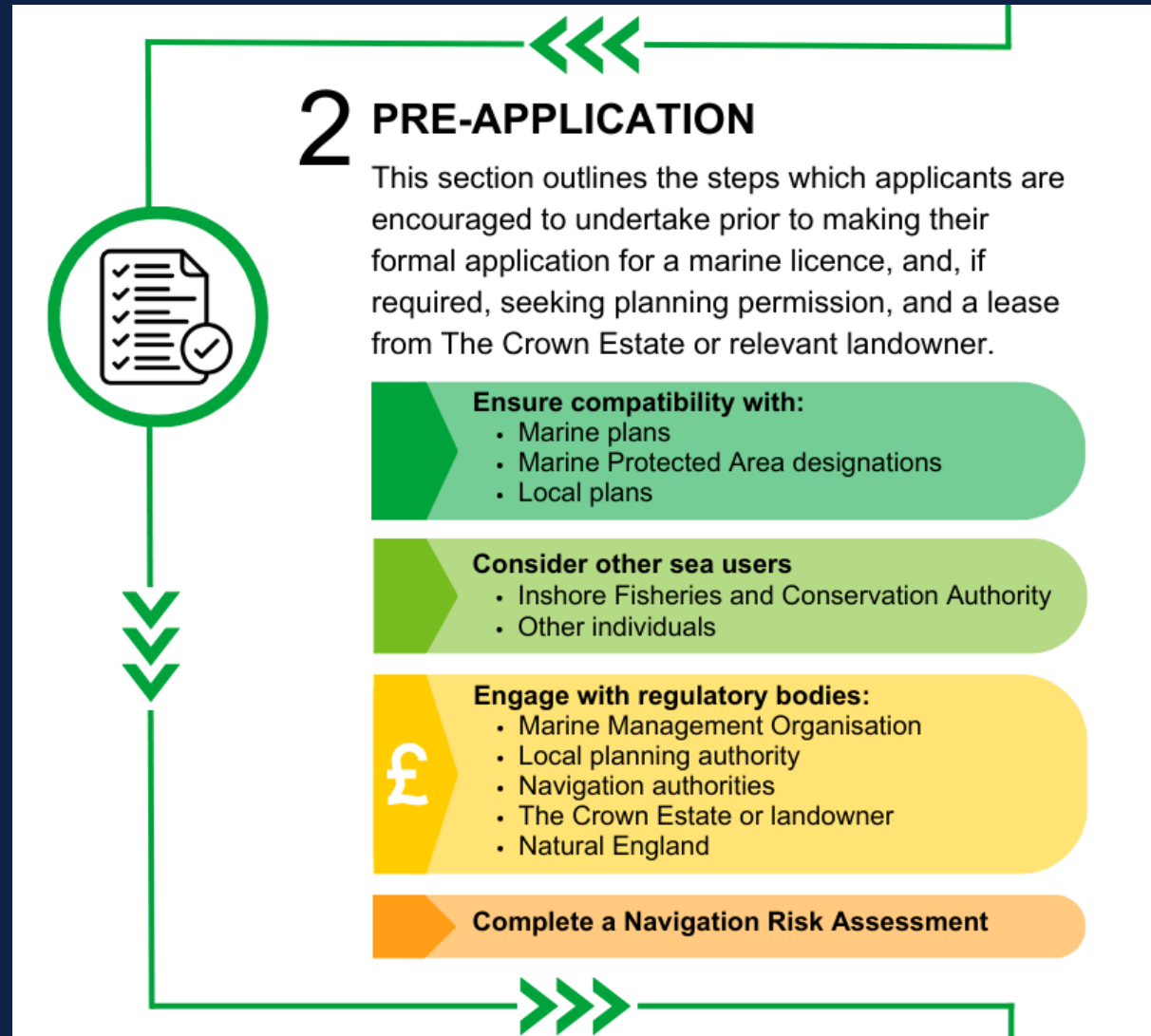
- What are the local environmental conditions at the potential site?
- What other uses are occurring in the area?
- Is there potential for co-locating with other activities?
- Are there any MPAs present in/proximity of the area considered?
- Is the site accessible?
- Which is the nearest port?
- Is there suitable infrastructure on land?

Check:

- Suitable areas for seaweed aquaculture and MPA location in the MMO marine planner
- Habitats, boundaries, other uses of an area on the Defra Magic website
- Natural England designated sites
- For information on wave height around England

Pre-application

Provide information and links to: Marine Plans, Local Planning Authority, The Crown Estate open data portal, fees charged by MMO and NE, relevant contact email addresses.



Application

Provide information and links to: marine licence application form, timeline, and MMO fee; The Crown Estate lease; authorisation to farm non-native or locally absent species.

3 APPLICATION

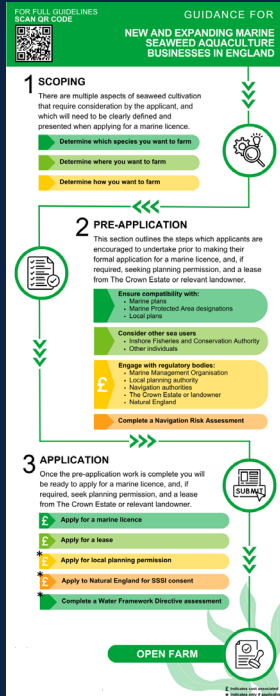
Once the pre-application work is complete you will be ready to apply for a marine licence, and, if required, seek planning permission, and a lease from The Crown Estate or relevant landowner.



- £ Apply for a marine licence
- £ Apply for a lease
- * £ Apply for local planning permission
- * £ Apply to Natural England for SSSI consent
- * Complete a Water Framework Directive assessment



Next step - Publication



Department for Environment Food & Rural Affairs

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Marine Management Organisation



- Reviews completed
- Currently finalising guidelines
- Publication on **Seafish** between end November – mid December 2023
- Advertised widely

Thank you for listening

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