



## SCOTLAND: GIVING A GLOBAL VOICE TO COASTAL COMMUNITIES

*"I am writing on behalf of our community group, Skye Communities for Natural Heritage. We are a group that is concerned with maintaining and enhancing our rich, natural environment on the Isle of Skye, Scotland. At present, even in our very remote location, we see commercial activities polluting and damaging the environment and reducing biodiversity at an ever increasing pace. **Capitalism alone is not the answer; indeed this will result in an uninhabitable and barren world. Our seas are under attack, probably more so than on land, as they are seen as a free dumping ground. We need help and support to turn the tide, to leave a better legacy for future generations.** We need to urgently gather a louder voice and momentum for change, collectively, globally, and in doing so to turn around the self-destructive course that we are on."*



**Ian Dobb, Skye Communities for Natural Heritage, Scotland**

Scotland's coast supports an astonishing 8,500 animal and plant species, ranging from tiny barnacles and elegant anemones to the mighty basking shark – the world's second-largest fish. Although Scotland has recently established a network of Marine Protected Areas (MPAs), the voices of the local communities that live in and around the coast are often left unheard in the management of their seas. Decision making is predominantly influenced by a powerful industrial fishing lobby.

In close partnership with the Community of Arran Seabed Trust (COAST) – recognised as global pioneers of community conservation – Fauna & Flora International (FFI) is supporting a

growing number of communities to develop their own aspirations for the management for their neighbouring coastal waters, helping fledgling community groups to realise their own ambitions for locally appropriate marine protection. Support to the Fair Isle community, for example, resulted in the establishment of a new MPA in their waters, which will enable research to determine how they can best protect the globally-renowned seabird colonies that nest here. In addition, FFI is helping these communities create a strong and sustainable Coastal Communities Network, to enable them to work together more effectively and create a community-led voice for Scotland's inshore waters.