

North South Ministerial Council
Joint Secretariat



An Chomhairle Aireachta
Thuaidh Theas
An Chomhrúnaíocht

PAPER NSMC FCIL 2 (12) JC

NORTH SOUTH MINISTERIAL COUNCIL

AQUACULTURE & MARINE MEETING

FOYLE, CARLINGFORD & IRISH LIGHTS COMMISSION (FCILC)

DERRY CITY COUNCIL OFFICES

4 JULY 2012

JOINT COMMUNIQUÉ

1. The twentieth North South Ministerial Council Aquaculture and Marine meeting was held in Derry City Council offices on 4 July 2012. The meeting was attended by Pat Rabbitte TD, Minister of Communications, Energy and Natural Resources, Michelle O'Neill MLA, Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development, Fergus O'Dowd TD, Minister of State, Department of Communications, Energy and Natural Resources and Nelson McCausland MLA, Minister for Social Development. Minister Rabbitte chaired the meeting.

PROGRESS REPORT

2. The Council received a progress report on the work of the Loughs Agency, from the Chairperson, Winston Patterson, and the Chief Executive, Derick Anderson.

3. Ministers welcomed the development of a formal operational plan with the PSNI and An Garda Síochána to deal with assaults on Agency staff. and expressed their concern at two recent serious assaults
4. Ministers noted the position on the survival of Atlantic Salmon which is causing very significant concern with less than five per cent of the juveniles leaving the systems returning as adults.
5. The Council welcomed the Memorandum of Understanding between the Food Safety Authority of Ireland and the Agency and the positive impact this will have on shellfish hygiene and noted the ongoing improvements in the Lough Foyle oyster fishery and the reduction in incidents of Bonamia.
6. The formal launch of the EU funded IBIS project and progress already made was welcomed. Twelve PhD students have taken up their positions, the first cohort of Masters students has been appointed and a full complement of support staff is in place.
7. Ministers noted progress on Marine Tourism and Angling Development particularly the completion of the pontoon at Meadowbank, the Agency's significant contribution to the Clipper Round the World event and preparations for the sea and trout angling events of the 2013 World Fire and Police Games.

PRESENTATION ON WATER FRAMEWORK DIRECTIVE FISH MONITORING IN THE FOYLE AND CARLINGFORD AREAS

8. The Loughs Agency made a presentation on Water Framework Directive Fish Monitoring and Ministers noted the practical use of this information by both the Loughs Agency and other statutory stakeholders.

LOUGHS AGENCY BUSINESS PLAN 2012

9. The Council approved the Loughs Agency's Business Plan 2012 and recommended budget provision for 2012 of €5.0525m (£4.3957m).

ANNUAL REPORT AND FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

10. The Loughs Agency Annual Report and draft Financial Statements for 2011 were noted.

LEGISLATION

11. The Council welcomed progress on the delivery of the Loughs Agency's, Legislation Implementation Plan, noted that further regulations will require NSMC approval later in 2012 and approved for a further year, to July 2013, a procedure to support the Loughs Agency in dealing, through regulations, with emergencies such as pollution incidents.

LOUGHS AGENCY PENSION ARRANGEMENTS

12. Ministers noted that the Loughs Agency has reviewed pay and pension arrangements for its staff. A draft economic appraisal recommended that the Agency takes the necessary arrangements to join the North/South Pension Scheme. It was noted that following consideration of the legal and financial implications of this, an update will be provided at the next NSMC Aquaculture and Marine meeting.

DATE OF NEXT MEETING

13. The Council agreed to meet again in Aquaculture and Marine format in October/November 2012.

Joint Secretariat
4 July 2012