

North South Ministerial Council
Joint Secretariat



An Chomhairle Aireachta
Thuaidh Theas
An Chomhrúnaíocht

PAPER NSMC FCIL 3 (14) JC

NORTH SOUTH MINISTERIAL COUNCIL

AQUACULTURE & MARINE MEETING

FOYLE, CARLINGFORD & IRISH LIGHTS COMMISSION (FCILC)

NSMC JOINT SECRETARIAT OFFICES, ARMAGH

5 DECEMBER 2014

JOINT COMMUNIQUÉ

1. The twenty-sixth North South Ministerial Council Aquaculture and Marine meeting was held in NSMC Joint Secretariat Offices, Armagh on 5 December 2014. The meeting was attended by Minister Alex White TD, Minister for Communications, Energy and Natural Resources, Joe McHugh TD, Minister of State at the Department of Communications, Energy and Natural Resources, Michelle O'Neill MLA, Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development, and Mervyn Storey MLA, Minister for Social Development. Minister White chaired the meeting.

OVERVIEW OF THE LOUGHS AGENCY KEY OBJECTIVES

2. The NSMC noted that the key objectives for the Loughs Agency in 2014 – 2016 will be to:

- conserve and protect the fisheries in the Foyle and Carlingford Areas;
 - license and develop aquaculture and shellfisheries;
 - develop Marine Tourism and Angling; and
 - effectively and efficiently deliver on its statutory mandate and responsibilities.
3. The Council noted the benefits to the Foyle and Carlingford areas of the Agency's investment strategy for local and community initiatives.

PROGRESS REPORT

4. The Council received a progress report on the work of the Loughs Agency from the Chairperson, Winston Patterson, and the Chief Executive, John Pollock.
5. Ministers welcomed progress on the activities of the Loughs Agency including the update on the Management Agreement, the progress on the Loughs Agency's Financial Statements 2012 and the Foyle Ambassador Programme.
6. The Council noted the latest position on the survival of Atlantic Salmon in the Foyle and Carlingford catchments and the ongoing conservation and protection efforts. They also noted the position on the survival of the Native Lough Foyle Flat Oyster and the need to balance the conservation imperative with sufficient economic opportunity for the stakeholders in the industry.
7. The Ministers also noted the progress on the IBIS project and the ongoing partnership with the Queen's University of Belfast and Glasgow University.

LOUGHS AGENCY BUSINESS PLAN AND BUDGET 2015

8. The Council noted that the Loughs Agency has applied the required efficiency savings to the 2015 budget in accordance with agreed guidance issued by Department of Finance and Personnel (DFP) and Department of Public Expenditure and Reform (DPER) and that sponsor Department Ministers and DFP/DPER have approved the Business Plan and Budget/Grant.
9. The NSMC approved the Loughs Agency 2015 Business Plan and recommended the 2015 budget/grant provision of £3.950/€4.877 million.

MARKETING THE LOUGHS' RESOURCES

10. The Ministers welcomed the report on the activities of the Loughs Agency in promoting and marketing Foyle and Carlingford Loughs in particular marine leisure infrastructural developments, outreach and community activity and promotion of local seafood products.

EU FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES

11. The Council noted the report on the funding opportunities available to the Loughs Agency and future plans for funding applications which would benefit the Foyle and Carlingford catchments.

THE FOYLE AREA (COMPLIMENTARY ANGLING PERMIT)(RIVER FINN AND RIVER FOYLE) REGULATIONS 2014

12. The Council considered and approved the Foyle Area (Complimentary Angling Permit)(River Finn and River Foyle) Regulations 2014 and authorised the Joint Secretaries to the NSMC to signify its approval on its behalf.

AMENDMENT TO THE LOUGHS AGENCY PENSION SCHEME

13. The NSMC approved the determinations made by the Loughs Agency and the parallel determinations of the other North South Bodies that the North/South Pension (Amendment No.5) Scheme should apply to all North/South Bodies including the Loughs Agency.
14. The NSMC also approved the determination made by the Loughs Agency that the Foyle Fisheries Commission Pension (Amendment) Scheme 1979 be closed and that simultaneously its members transfer to the North/South Pension (Amendment No. 5) Scheme.

DATE OF NEXT MEETING

15. The Council agreed to meet again in Aquaculture and Marine sectoral format in March 2015.

**Joint Secretariat
5 December 2014**

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