

North South Ministerial Council
Joint Secretariat



An Chomhairle Aireachta
Thuaidh Theas
An Chomhrúnaíocht

PAPER NSMC ENV 2 (12) JC

NORTH SOUTH MINISTERIAL COUNCIL

ENVIRONMENT MEETING

FARMLEIGH, DUBLIN

15 JUNE 2012

JOINT COMMUNIQUÉ

1. The fifteenth North South Ministerial Council Environment meeting was held in Farmleigh, Dublin on 15 June 2012. The meeting was attended by Alex Attwood MLA, Minister of the Environment, Danny Kennedy MLA, Minister for Regional Development and Phil Hogan T.D., Minister for the Environment, Community and Local Government. Minister Attwood chaired the meeting.

WASTE MANAGEMENT

2. The Council welcomed reviews in both jurisdictions of policies on the management of waste tyres and the opportunity for greater engagement on an all-island basis with a view to maximising the environmental benefits and deterring illegal operators.
3. Ministers noted that a report on an all-island tyre survey, led by the Department of the Environment (DOE), is expected at the end of July 2012. Consultants appointed by the Department of the Environment, Community and Local Government (DECLG) to conduct the Review of the Producer Responsibility Initiative Model will specifically examine the issue of waste tyres in consultation with the DOE.

4. Ministers noted that arrangements are underway for the appointment of a new Chair of the North South Market Development Steering Group (NSMDSG) as a successor to Margaret Daly. They also noted and endorsed revised terms of reference for the NSMDSG which will focus on strategic priorities with relevant experts co-opted to the Group, as necessary, to deal with specific initiatives identified in the work programme.
5. It was reported that an update on the DECLG led Bulky Waste Reuse Management Feasibility Study will be presented to the next NSMC Environment meeting.

CROSS BORDER MOVEMENTS OF WASTE

6. The Council noted that reports on the repatriation of waste from sites at Kilkeel and Newry during 2011 and 2012 are now with officials in Dublin City Council and include an outline of the lessons learnt for consideration when dealing with future sites. A further two sites have been identified for the 2012-2013 programme and planning for this work is underway.
7. Ministers noted that a tender for the procurement of landfill capacity has recently been issued by Dublin City Council for all remaining sites and is expected to be completed by July 2012. A further tender for the procurement of transport for remaining sites from 2013 onwards has also issued.
8. It was reported that joint enforcement actions to deal with illegal operators is a priority for both Environment Ministers and Departments continue to target resources on this.

ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION

9. The Council noted that EU Directives in the areas of environmental quality and protection generally contain provisions requiring co-operation between Member States in relation to cross border issues and significant transboundary effects.
10. Ministers noted the current work on EU Directives on Air Quality, Industrial Emissions and Noise within each jurisdiction and noted the requirement for information sharing and joint action in certain circumstances.
11. Ministers requested officials to research further opportunities for mutually beneficial joint working in this area and to present their findings to Ministers at the next NSMC Environment Meeting.

WATER QUALITY

12. Ministers noted that coordination is ongoing in relation to the implementation of the current River Basin Management Plans and the preparation of the 2nd cycle of the plans required under the EU Water Framework Directive.
13. The Council noted that the North South Working Group on Water Quality will receive regular updates, as appropriate, on EU policy developments in the area

of water quality which may arise during Ireland's Presidency of the European Union in the first six months of 2013.

14. The Council welcomed the recent success of the respective awards ceremonies for Ireland and Northern Ireland under the Blue Flag and Green Coast Schemes organised by An Taisce and Tidy NI.

ENVIRONMENTAL REPORTING AND RESEARCH

15. The Council welcomed the publication of the Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) state of environment report "Ireland's Environment 2012" in June 2012 and looked forward to inclusion of the joint environmental indicators in the next publication of the "Ireland North and South: A Statistical Profile" compiled and produced by the Central Statistics Office (CSO) and the Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency (NISRA).
16. Ministers noted the successful FP7-Environment workshop organised jointly by InterTradeIreland, the Northern Ireland Environment Agency (NIEA), and EPA which was attended by over 60 researchers and provided an update and guidance on the July call for research proposals.
17. Ministers noted publication of a preliminary report, funded by the EPA, on the environmental impacts of hydraulic fracturing (fracking), in May 2012, and that a more comprehensive programme of research is planned. NIEA and Geographical Survey NI (GSNI) will be invited by EPA to provide input to the scoping and steering of this work.

OTHER BUSINESS

18. The Council considered the recommendation of a selection panel for the appointment of a Chief Executive to the Trade and Business Development Body (InterTradeIreland). A further announcement will be made in due course following acceptance of the appointment.

NEXT MEETING

19. The Council agreed to hold the next Environment meeting in Autumn 2012.

Joint Secretariat
15 June 2012