

North South Ministerial Council
Joint Secretariat



An Chomhairle Aireachta
Thuaidh Theas
An Chomhrúnaíocht

PAPER NSMC FCIL 3 (12) JC

NORTH SOUTH MINISTERIAL COUNCIL

AQUACULTURE & MARINE MEETING

**FOYLE, CARLINGFORD & IRISH LIGHTS
COMMISSION (FCILC)**

**NSMC JOINT SECRETARIAT OFFICES,
ARMAGH**

12 DECEMBER 2012

JOINT COMMUNIQUÉ

1. The twenty first North South Ministerial Council Aquaculture and Marine meeting was held in the NSMC Joint Secretariat offices, Armagh on 12 December 2012. The meeting was attended by Michelle O'Neill MLA, Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development, Pat Rabbitte TD, Minister for Communications, Energy and Natural Resources and Nelson McCausland MLA, Minister for Social Development. Minister O'Neill chaired the meeting.
2. Minister Rabbitte referred to Ireland hosting the North Atlantic Salmon Conservation Organisation (NASCO) annual meeting in June 2013 and mentioned that Ministers and colleagues from the sectoral area will be invited to participate in that meeting.

APPOINTMENT OF INTERIM CEO

3. Ministers approved the appointment of Mr John Pollock as Acting CEO of the Loughs Agency.

PRESENTATION ON IBIS PROJECT

4. The Loughs Agency made a presentation on the IBIS projects involved with the native oysters in Lough Foyle and on the impact of river barriers on the migration of Atlantic salmon. Ministers noted the valuable contribution these research projects will make to the management and development of these important fisheries.

PROGRESS REPORT

5. The Council received a progress report on the work of the Loughs Agency, - from the Chairperson, Winston Patterson, and the Acting Chief Executive, John Pollock.
6. Ministers welcomed:
 - the reduction of incidents of violence against Fisheries Officers and noted recent custodial offences for such offences;
 - the Agency's engagement with the Lough Foyle native oyster fishermen; and
 - that the Agency is working with the City of Culture offices with a view to incorporating the River Foyle into the festivities.
7. The Council also noted the latest position on the survival of Atlantic salmon in the Foyle and Carlingford catchments and the Agency's ongoing conservation and protection efforts.

LOUGHS AGENCY BUSINESS PLAN 2013

8. The Council noted progress on preparation of the Loughs Agency's Draft Business Plan for 2013.

LOUGHS AGENCY PENSION ARRANGEMENTS

9. Ministers noted that the Loughs Agency had finalised, in consultation with Sponsor Departments, an economic appraisal of the options to regularise its pay and pension arrangements. This appraisal recommended that the Agency take the necessary steps to join the North/South Pension Scheme. Sponsor and Finance Departments are considering the legal and financial implications of the Agency joining the Scheme and recommendations will be brought to a future NSMC Aquaculture and Marine meeting for approval.

LEGISLATION

10. The Council approved two sets of regulations, - the Foyle Area and Carlingford Area (Angling) (Amendment) Regulations 2012 and the subsequent Foyle Area (Control of Fishing) (Amendment) Regulations 2012.

AQUACULTURE MANAGEMENT AGREEMENT

11. Ministers welcomed the progress to date on developing an Aquaculture Management Agreement and in particular the aim of the Loughs Agency and the Department of Agriculture, Food and Marine to have an overarching Management Agreement in place during 2013 to enable the progression of aquaculture licensing in Lough Foyle.

APPOINTMENT OF BOARD MEMBER

12. Ministers approved the appointment of Laurence Arbuckle to the Board of the Foyle, Carlingford and Irish Lights Commission in succession to Tarlach O Crosain. Ministers expressed their appreciation for the significant contribution that Mr O Crosain made to the Board.

DATE OF NEXT MEETING

13. The Council agreed to meet again in Aquaculture and Marine format in March 2013.

Joint Secretariat

12 December 2012

www.northsouthministerialcouncil.org