

## THE NORTHERN IRELAND MARINE BILL

Dear Committee,

The Irish Federation of Sea Anglers welcome the opportunity to make a contribution to the Committee on the proposals for our Marine Bill.

The IFSA are the officially recognised body throughout Ireland for Recreational Sea Angling and was founded in 1953. The IFSA organise and run International/Home international and national events as well as other competitions throughout Ireland.

Section 3, Bye Laws ,24 in the Marine Bill proposal is of great concern to the IFSA as access to our coast and estuaries is of paramount importance to RSA, including the collection of bait for the purpose of RSA, this could devastate RSA in many ways and we recommend this be looked at again in relation to RSA access and use. This also could hamper RSA tourism and associated jobs to NI which also has failed to be developed over decades by NITB.

The IFSA have for many years had conservation to the fore and have been operating sea angling competitions on a strict catch and release basis for both boat and shore and therefore have very little impact upon the Marine Environment.

We are concerned that the NI Marine Bill will encounter real difficulties in its current form and support the NIMTF in their drive to achieve an MMO for Northern Ireland which is the only way the complex needs for our Marine Environment can be achieved. A general UK interpretation of the requirements will miss the opportunity for Northern Ireland to protect fully our Marine Environment.

The various departments have demonstrated difficulties in working in an effectively collective way.

The IFSA took a full part in the Inshore Fisheries Review hosted by DARD and DCAL in 2006, the final result of nearly a years consultation and working groups resulted in the Inshore Fisheries Review recommendations. (see link below)  
Not one RSA recommendation has been implemented!

[http://www.dardni.gov.uk/index/publications/pubs-dard-fisheries-farming-and-food/review\\_of\\_inshore\\_fisheries\\_report.htm](http://www.dardni.gov.uk/index/publications/pubs-dard-fisheries-farming-and-food/review_of_inshore_fisheries_report.htm)

DCAL tasked Price Waterhouse Cooper to carry out a survey into the socio-economic impact of recreational angling in Northern Ireland.(see link below)  
Not one recreational recommendation has been implemented.

[www.dcalni.gov.uk/economic\\_impact\\_of\\_angling\\_final\\_report\\_july](http://www.dcalni.gov.uk/economic_impact_of_angling_final_report_july)

More recently DARD have commissioned AFBI to carry out yet another survey on RSA no doubt this too will join the above to gather dust on a shelf!

The point I am making is that neither DARD nor DCAL have the resources or will to act upon the recommendations from the consultations regarding recreational angling in general, how could they and other departments possibly deal with the new demands of the NI Marine Bill.

The best option is to have an MMO to tailor the specific needs of our Marine resource.

The PWC identified over 5,000 RSA's in NI, this figure is low as many RSA are affiliated to any organisation.

In 2005 PWC stated that the net domestic economic impact in NI was £20.7 Million per year supporting 778 full time jobs.

PWC also identified the best case projections for 2015 were £64.8 Million per year supporting 2,464 full time jobs.

There is enormous unfulfilled RSA tourism possible for NI but access to the RSA needs to be maintained and protected.

In 2005 PWC figures showed tourism angling generated £1.8 Million per year with projections for 2015 at £6.6 Million.

In total recreational angling could be generating for NI, £71.4 Million per year every year at least! This figure could well be exceeded if we were to start to do what is needed to promote all forms of recreational angling in NI.

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