

North South Ministerial Council
Joint Secretariat



An Chomhairle Aireachta
Thuaidh Theas
An Chomhrúnaíocht

PAPER NSMC FCIL 2 (14) JC

NORTH SOUTH MINISTERIAL COUNCIL

AQUACULTURE & MARINE MEETING

FOYLE, CARLINGFORD & IRISH LIGHTS COMMISSION (FCILC)

INVESTNI NORTH WEST REGIONAL OFFICE

27 JUNE 2014

JOINT COMMUNIQUÉ

1. The twenty-fifth North South Ministerial Council Aquaculture and Marine meeting was held in InvestNI North West Regional Office on 27 June 2014. The meeting was attended by 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 O'Neill 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, John Pollock.
3. Ministers welcomed progress on the activities of the Loughs Agency, including the Agency's ongoing conservation and protection efforts and participation in Operation Salar and the participation in the planting of trees in the Glenshane Pass Area Climate Change Adaptation Initiative of Northern Ireland.

4. Ministers also welcomed an update on the drafting of Regulations by the Loughs Agency which will require NSMC approval in 2014, the progress with the Management Agreement, an update on progress of the IBIS Project and progress on Angling Development and the recent Angling Conference.
5. The Council approved the continuation of the framework designed to support the Loughs Agency in dealing with emergencies such as a serious pollution incident for a further period of 1 year with effect from 20 July 2014 and agreed to review the operation of this procedure including its possible renewal based on a report from the Body and the Sponsor Departments before 20 July 2015.

FOYLE AMBASSADOR PROJECT PRESENTATION

6. The Council welcomed the presentation by the Loughs Agency on provision of the Foyle Ambassador Project, a pilot environmental education programme and noted the benefits of such programmes for the Foyle.

MARKETING THE LOUGHS' RESOURCES

7. The Council welcomed the report on the activities of the Loughs Agency in promoting and marketing Foyle and Carlingford Loughs including the Foyle Maritime Festival 2014, angling development and promotion, delivery of Interreg IVa programmes, provision of a portable event platform for Carlingford Lough, Food Festivals, the Greenway Project Carlingford and Foyle and Carlingford Sailability.

ALL-ISLAND AQUACULTURE SHELLFISH CONFERENCE

8. The NSMC noted that arrangements are underway for an All-island Aquaculture Shellfish Conference to take place in June 2015.

LOUGHS AGENCY CORPORATE PLAN 2014-16 AND BUSINESS PLAN 2014

9. 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;
 - develop Marine Tourism and Angling; and
 - effectively and efficiently deliver on its statutory mandate and responsibilities.
10. The NSMC approved the Loughs Agency Corporate Plan 2014 – 2016 and Business Plan 2014 and noted the recommended budget provision for 2014 of £4.127m (€4.799m) and noted the indicative budgets of £3.950m (€4.593m) for 2015 and £3.774m (€4.388m) for 2016.

ANNUAL REPORT AND DRAFT FINANCIAL STATEMENTS 2013

11. The NSMC noted the Loughs Agency's Annual Report and draft Financial Statements for 2013 and that following certification of the Financial Statements by the Comptrollers and Auditors General they will be laid before the Northern Ireland Assembly and the Oireachtas.

AMENDMENT TO THE LOUGHS AGENCY PENSION SCHEME

12. The Council approved the determination made by the Loughs Agency to amend the Foyle Fisheries Commission Pension (Amendment) Scheme 1979.
13. They also approved the Loughs Agency (Foyle Fisheries Commission) Pension (Amendment No.3) Scheme 2014 (to allow for employee contribution rates to be increased) and that this amended Scheme shall apply to the Body.

FSPB 2014-2016 CORPORATE PLAN AND BUSINESS PLAN 2014

14. The NSMC noted that the key strategic objectives for FSPB for 2014 2016 are:
 - deliver targeted messages and campaigns positively supporting safer and healthier food choices;
 - develop relationships with food-linked organisations and the broader food sector in order to explore and develop synergies;
 - utilise research to support the communications evidence base and positively influence the environment in which food is marketed; and
 - support disadvantaged communities and those in, or at risk of, food deprivation.
15. The Council approved FSPB's Corporate Plan 2014 - 2016 and Business Plan 2014 and noted the recommended budget provision for 2014 is €8.16m (£7.01m) and the indicative budgets of €7.82m for 2015 and €7.48m for 2016 which will be subject to budgetary considerations by the Northern Ireland Executive and the Irish Government.

DATE OF NEXT MEETING

16. The Council agreed to meet again in Aquaculture and Marine sectoral format in Autumn 2014.

**Joint Secretariat
27 June 2014**

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