

North South Ministerial Council
Joint Secretariat



An Chomhairle Aireachta
Thuaidh Theas
An Chomhrúnaíocht

PAPER NSMC FCIL 2 (15) JC

NORTH SOUTH MINISTERIAL COUNCIL

AQUACULTURE & MARINE MEETING

FOYLE, CARLINGFORD & IRISH LIGHTS COMMISSION (FCILC)

NSMC JOINT SECRETARIAT OFFICES, ARMAGH

11 NOVEMBER 2015

JOINT COMMUNIQUÉ

1. The twenty-eighth North South Ministerial Council Aquaculture and Marine meeting was held in NSMC Joint Secretariat Offices, Armagh on 11 November 2015. The meeting was attended by 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 of State McHugh chaired the meeting.

PRESENTATION ON ATLANTIC SALMON RESEARCH IN WEST GREENLAND

2. Ministers welcomed the presentation by Art Niven, Fisheries Biologist at the Loughs Agency, on Atlantic salmon research in West Greenland and noted the importance of international partnerships in developing scientific advice on Atlantic salmon and its application to the Foyle and Carlingford Areas.

PROGRESS REPORT

3. The Council received a progress report on the work of the Loughs Agency from the Vice Chairperson, Alan McCulla, and the Chief Executive, John Pollock.
4. Ministers welcomed the Report on the activities of the Loughs Agency including:-
 - the Agency's ongoing conservation and protection efforts;
 - its continued contribution to international fisheries research of which the Atlantic salmon research in West Greenland is an example; and
 - the Agency's community outreach initiatives.
5. The NSMC noted the position of the survival of the Native Lough Foyle Flat Oyster.
6. The Agency's success in recent awards was acknowledged by the Council. These awards included Employability Champion at the Business in the Community Awards and Sentinus Ambassador of the Year Award. The Council also acknowledged the positive comments of Nicholas Martyn, Deputy Director-General for Regional and Urban Policy at the European Commission, following his review of the IBIS project.

LOUGHS AGENCY BUSINESS PLAN AND BUDGET/GRANT 2016

7. The Council noted that the Loughs Agency has applied the required efficiency savings to the 2016 budget in accordance with agreed guidance issued by the Department of Finance and Personnel and the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform and that Finance and Sponsor Department Ministers have approved the Business Plan and Budget/Grant.
8. The NSMC approved the Loughs Agency 2016 Business Plan and recommended the 2016 Budget/Grant provision of £3.829/€5.471 million.

MARKETING THE LOUGHS' RESOURCES

9. The NSMC welcomed the report on the activities of the Loughs Agency in promoting and marketing the Foyle and Carlingford Areas, including:-
 - angling development initiatives such as the academy, the hubs and the App on Google Play;
 - marine tourism initiatives including Sailability and Celebrate Water; and
 - education and outreach events and activities including the Maritime Ambassador Programme, the Foyle Ambassador Project and events such as World Oceans Day, Bio-diversity Day and the River Discovery Day.

EU FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES

10. Ministers welcomed the Loughs Agency's success in securing in excess of €15 million EU funding for Marine Tourism and Angling Development and the IBIS project.
11. They noted the Agency's plans to avail of future funding initiatives, including European Social Fund, Heritage Lottery, INTERREG V and the Rural Development Programme for the benefit of the Foyle and Carlingford Areas.

DATE OF NEXT MEETING

12. The Council agreed to meet again in Aquaculture and Marine sectoral format in Spring 2016.

**Joint Secretariat
11 November 2015**

www.northsouthministerialcouncil.org