

PAPER NSMC FCIL 1 (09) JC

NORTH SOUTH MINISTERIAL COUNCIL

AQUACULTURE & MARINE SECTORAL FORMAT

CARLINGFORD

30 APRIL 2009

JOINT COMMUNIQUÉ

1. The twelfth North South Ministerial Council meeting in the Aquaculture and Marine Sectoral format was held in Carlingford on Thursday 30 April 2009.
2. The Irish Government was represented by Eamon Ryan, TD, Minister for Communications, Energy and Natural Resources and Minister of State Conor Lenihan, TD. The Northern Ireland Executive was represented by Michelle Gildernew, MP, MLA, Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development and Junior Minister Jeffrey Donaldson, MP, MLA. Minister Ryan chaired the meeting.

Progress Report

3. The Council welcomed a progress report on the work of the Loughs Agency on the conservation and protection of the Fisheries of the Foyle and Carlingford areas, presented by the Chairperson, Mr Tarlach O'Crosain, the Vice Chairperson, Ms Jacqui McConville and the Chief Executive, Mr Derick Anderson.
4. The Council noted the following points:

- The impact of the extreme weather conditions encountered in 2008 on both the commercial and recreational fisheries.
 - The Agency's continued success in the detection of illegal fishing activity.
 - The collaboration with industry partners in the conservation of marine species in Lough Foyle.
 - The development of partnerships with Agencies from both jurisdictions to respond to a major incident in Carlingford Lough.
 - The successful delivery of the amended Foyle and Carlingford primary legislation in improving the significant voluntary conservation and protection support provided by angling clubs and associations.
5. Ministers welcomed progress on the Agency's application for funding under EU INTERREG IV and the development projects supported by the Agency's "Sustainable Development Programme". They also noted the progress made towards the licensing of aquaculture and the introduction of the oyster regulations with the engagement of stakeholders.

Research on Salmon Genetics

6. Ministers welcomed a presentation from Dr Walter Crozier from the Agri-food and Biosciences Institute and Niall O'Maoileidigh from the Marine Institute, on a joint programme of research commissioned by the Loughs Agency and conducted with Queens University, Belfast and the Marine Institute into the genetic population structure of Foyle salmon and stock composition of the commercial fishery. They noted that the science partnerships established during this project have played a leading role in the development of a major Europe-wide research project on use of genetic techniques to identify origins of salmon caught at sea (SALSEA).

Legislation

7. The Council approved the Foyle Area and Carlingford Area (Licensing of Fishing Engines) (Amendment) Regulations 2009 and noted plans to bring forward Commencement Orders that are required for a staged and managed introduction of

the new powers available to the Loughs Agency to develop and license aquaculture and to protect the fisheries in the Foyle and Carlingford areas. They noted that further regulations will require NSMC approval in 2009.

8. The Council also discussed the 2009 Draft Business Plan, progress towards the establishment of an unsocial hours allowance and the salmon hardship scheme.

Next Meeting

9. The Council agreed that its next meeting in the Aquaculture and Marine Sectoral format will take place in July 2009.

Joint Secretariat
30 April 2009