

North South Ministerial Council
Joint Secretariat



An Chomhairle Aireachta
Thuaidh Theas
An Chomhrúnaíocht

PAPER NSMC FCIL 1 (11) JC

NORTH SOUTH MINISTERIAL COUNCIL

AQUACULTURE & MARINE SECTORAL FORMAT

FOYLE, CARLINGFORD AND IRISH LIGHTS COMMISSION (FCILC)

NSMC JOINT SECRETARIAT OFFICES, ARMAGH

4 JULY 2011

JOINT COMMUNIQUÉ

1. The seventeenth North South Ministerial Council meeting in Aquaculture and Marine sectoral format was held in the NSMC Joint Secretariat Offices, Armagh on 4 July 2011. The meeting was attended by Michelle O'Neill, MLA, Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development, Minister for Social Development Nelson McCausland MLA, and Pat Rabbitte, TD, Minister for Communications, Energy and Natural Resources. Minister O'Neill chaired the meeting.

PROGRESS REPORT

2. The Council welcomed a progress report on the work of the Loughs Agency, presented by the Agency's Chairperson Tarlach O Crosain and the Chief Executive, Derick Anderson.

3. Ministers welcomed the improvement in the stock profile of native Lough Foyle oysters due to the regulation of the fishery; the opening of an Agency office in Greencastle, County Donegal; the completion of new aquaria in the Agency's visitor centre, Riverwatch; and the completion of amenity sites at Mill Bay and Narrow Water which are supported by NITB as part of the wider Mourne Coastal route. Ministers noted the approval and progress of the INTERREG projects at Meadowbank and the importance of these facilities for the Clipper Round the World Challenge's visit to Lough Foyle. They also noted the completion of the Strategic Environmental Assessment on the introduction of a licensing regime to the Foyle and Carlingford areas for aquaculture and wild shellfisheries in compliance with the relevant EU Directive.

CORPORATE PLAN 2011-2013 AND BUSINESS PLAN 2011

4. Ministers discussed progress on the development of the Loughs Agency Corporate Plan 2011-2013 and Business Plan 2011.

ANNUAL REPORT AND FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

5. Ministers noted the Loughs Agency Annual Report and draft Financial Statements for 2010 and that these will be laid before the Northern Ireland Assembly and the Oireachtas once the Financial Statements have been certified by the respective Comptrollers and Auditors General.

LEGISLATION

6. The Council welcomed progress on the delivery of the Agency's legislation implementation plan, approved two sets of regulations and noted that further regulations will require NSMC approval during 2011 and 2012.
7. The Council approved for a further year, to July 2012, a procedure to support the Loughs Agency in dealing, through regulations, with emergencies such as pollution incidents.

FOYLE AND CARLINGFORD AREA ADVISORY FORUM

8. Ministers agreed that the Agency should initiate a process for the appointment of the third Foyle and Carlingford Advisory Forum in line with best practice and ensuring best value for money.

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT FUND

9. Ministers approved the arrangements for the payment of financial assistance through a small grants scheme as part of its implementation of the Marine Tourism Development Strategy.

NEXT MEETING

10. The Council agreed that the next meeting in the Aquaculture and Marine Sectoral format will take place in October/November 2011.

**Joint Secretariat
4 July 2011**