

North South Ministerial Council
Joint Secretariat



An Chomhairle Aireachta
Thuaidh Theas
An Chomhrúnaíocht

PAPER NSMC FCIL 1(15) JC

NORTH SOUTH MINISTERIAL COUNCIL

AQUACULTURE & MARINE MEETING

FOYLE, CARLINGFORD & IRISH LIGHTS COMMISSION (FCILC)

NSMC JOINT SECRETARIAT OFFICES, ARMAGH

27 MAY 2015

JOINT COMMUNIQUÉ

1. The twenty-seventh North South Ministerial Council Aquaculture and Marine meeting was held in NSMC Joint Secretariat Offices, Armagh on 27 May 2015. The meeting was attended by Michelle O'Neill MLA, Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development, Mervyn Storey MLA, Minister for Social Development, and Joe McHugh TD, Minister of State at the Department of Communications, Energy and Natural Resources. 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 the Report on the activities of the Loughs Agency and noted the Agency's ongoing conservation and protection efforts and their continued participation in the Climate Change Adaptation Initiative.
4. They also noted the update on:
 - the survival of the Native Lough Foyle Flat Oyster;
 - the Management Agreement;
 - the progress of the Loughs Agency's Financial Statements 2013; and
 - the progress of the Business Plan 2016.
5. The NSMC welcomed the successful completion of the IBIS project in partnership with the Queen's University of Belfast and Glasgow University.

PRESENTATION ON THE LOUGHS AGENCY'S SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT FUND

6. Ministers welcomed the presentation on the Sustainable Development Fund and acknowledged the community benefits of this programme for the Foyle and Carlingford Areas.

MARKETING THE LOUGHS' RESOURCES

7. 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, marine tourism and education and outreach events and activities.

EU FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES

8. The NSMC noted the Loughs Agency's success in securing EU funding and its plans to avail of future funding initiatives for the benefit of the Foyle and Carlingford Areas.

ANNUAL REPORT & DRAFT FINANCIAL STATEMENTS 2014

9. The Council noted the Loughs Agency's Annual Report and Draft Financial Statements for 2014 and that, following certification of the Financial Statements by the Comptrollers and Auditors General, they will be laid before the Northern Ireland Assembly and both Houses of the Oireachtas.

RENEWAL OF FRAMEWORK FOR EMERGENCY REGULATIONS

10. Ministers 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 one year with effect from 20 July 2015.
11. Ministers agreed to review the operation of this procedure, including its possible renewal, based on a report from the Loughs Agency and the Sponsor Departments, before 20 July 2016.

DATE OF NEXT MEETING

12. The Council agreed to meet again in Aquaculture and Marine sectoral format in Autumn 2015.

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