

SANA LTD - MIGRATORY FISH COMMITTEE

Minutes of meeting on Sunday, 27 September 2015 at 10.30am, The Windlestrae Hotel, Kinross

1 PRESENT:-Messrs Balfour, Campbell, Duncan, McLennan, Pirie, Walker and Wight

2 APOLOGIES:-J Stephen.

3 CHAIRMAN:-CC noted that it was an interesting time for salmon fishing in Scotland and it was rewarding to be in on the developing situation. Meetings continue apace.

4 MINUTES OF MEETING OF 28 JUNE 2015 – All agreed that they be approved.

5 MATTERS ARISING FROM MINUTES OF 28 JUNE

Progress with the Sea Trout Group funds – see AOCB

6 WILD FISHERIES REFORM

Soon after the meetings which he has attended at Victoria Quay CC had circulated notes on the meetings. These notes can only reveal a certain amount of what transpires at the meetings and of the content of papers for the meetings. Minutes of these meetings are posted in due course on the official website.

All aspects of FMOs are being considered. In CC's interpretation of the evolving situation, FMOs could have more status than DSFBs and might be expected, though the planning process, to initiate management actions, rather than the National Unit. FMOs might have a considerable number of members, with a few forming a management committee. This appeared to be the current setup with the Tweed Commissioners. As with DSFBs, FMO meetings could open to interested parties to attend. FMOs may not need to be charitable bodies but might have a charitable body in the wings to fund certain projects.

In CC's opinion, the introduction of a rod licence, or some substitute, is unlikely to be in the draft Bill given the resulting probable furore in proximity to the Scottish parliamentary election in May. A widespread perception is that its introduction would not assist in attracting more participants to angling and might even drive some to cease angling. CC asked for views on the weekly close time. After various aspects of its relevance and consequences were aired it was agreed that the present national weekly close time of 18.00 on Friday to 06.00 on Monday should remain together with the extension for R&L which excludes Sunday.

7 NATIONAL STRATEGY

AW had attended the first meeting on 7 Sept. The next meeting is on 28 Sept. Again those attending must be discreet. The strategy will be published along with the draft Bill before the May 2016 election. The bottom line of the strategy will be for more fish, viz bigger and better fish stocks.

8 LICENCES AND CARCASS TAGS

The government proposals for comment, published in late July, contained both a surprise and uncertainties over the use of 'salmon', 'wild salmon' and 'Atlantic salmon'. The surprise was 'to prohibit the taking of Atlantic salmon outwith inland waters'. A government spokesman was heard to say that the affected netsmen would be compensated. At least one DSFB believes that this ban will be for three years in the first instance. Details of licensing arrangements, tagging and costs for R&L are still unknown. It is thought that the government has accepted that sea trout should in time be included in the licensing and tagging scheme.

Bill Duncan reported on a briefing by Bill Jack and David Summers of the Tay Board at which no clear guidance was provided on how licences and tags for killing salmon by rod and line would be implemented.

9 STOCKING OF DIPLOID AND TRIPLOID TROUT

Following the publication of stocking guidelines by MS and subsequent disquiet at the NMFC, CC and AW raised their concerns and questions when at the Pitlochry laboratory. As a result further guidance will be issued and a number of specific questions have been drafted. These will be submitted to MS on final approval of them by the NMFC. AW looked up the details of diploid and triploid stocking. The picture is far from clear for both *salmo trutta* and rainbow trout and sources of stock in Scotland are also uncertain.

10 ASFB AND RAFTS

The ASFB AGM will be on 3 November in Perth.

11 NASCO

A meeting of NGOs will take place in Edinburgh next year. AW expects to attend. The ICES report to NASCO for the 2015 annual meeting is now on the NASCO website.

12 ESKS AND YTHAN

A number of breaches of the weekly close time bag net regulations at Pullar stations resulted in a £7,000 fine. It is

thought that additional similar breaches will be brought to court. This year the fixtures for nets were removed as per the regulations at the start of the close season.

On the Ythan estuary a year round designated seal haul out site has been proposed. It is a rectangular area within which seals must not be harassed when out of the water.

13 CATCHES AND THE 2015 SEASON

The statistical bulletin for 2014 South of the border was published recently. Notable is the declared sea trout catch by net in the North East of England of 46,116 averaging 4lb, This is considerably greater than the sum of the declared all Scotland net plus rod catch of 28,166 in 2014. Also in the bulletin are details of rod licence types, numbers taken out and the resulting income.

Thus far in Scotland this year salmon catches in many areas are up on those of 2014. Some rivers and parts of others have been even poorer than in 2014. For the all Scotland R&L 2015 catch to recover from the low of 2014 to a more typical figure an end of season flurry may be needed unless many of the smaller rivers aggregate a substantial total. In contrast to salmon, sea trout numbers seem to be on an upward trend throughout the country.

14 NMFC MINUTES

In those of 19 Sept the administrator's attendance at a social media workshop was noted. The agreement on the Tay for canoes and rafts seems to be holding.

15 SANA LTD

JP had recently looked at the MFC section on the SANA website. Particularly in light of presently ongoing developments for legislation on fishery management and on angling regulations the section was disappointing to say the least. The MFC membership list was out of date and 'recent MFC minutes' were of March 2014. A drastic revision and updating is necessary. At the next SANA board meeting CC will raise the issue of how this can best be achieved. Members were unenthusiastic about entering social media.

16 AOCB

AW will attend a meeting on 20 Oct when the use of the remaining £22K of the Sea Trout Group's fighting fund will be finally settled. The STG constitution provides for it to be divided between SANA and S&TA. By SANA taking its share then donating it to Fish Legal/S&TA the whole sum can be devoted to the ongoing campaign and a possible legal case against salmon farming.

S&TA are now called 'Salmon and Trout Conservation UK' with a strap line of 'Protecting wild fish and their habitats since 1903'.

DATE AND PLACE OF NEXT MEETING

The next MFC meeting was set for Sunday 6 December at 10.30am in Kinross,

The meeting closed at 13.00.