

SANA LTD - MIGRATORY FISH COMMITTEE  
Minutes of meeting on Sunday, 11 March 2018 at 10.30am, Green Hotel, Kinross

1 PRESENT:- Messrs Campbell, McLennan, Picken, Pirie, Walker & Wight.

2 CHAIRMAN:- CC welcomed those present to the next yearly cycle of MFC meetings. In reporting to the SANA Ltd AGM on 25 February CC drew attention to and commented on the annual MFC report which is on the website. He also noted as a good news development the anticipated cessation of the North East of England drift net salmon and sea trout fishery this year and the closure of the T and J net fishery next year. JP would be visiting BB and would pass on good wishes from MFC members for a speedy recovery.

3 APOLOGIES:- Messrs Balfour, McKay and Stephen.

4 CONFLICTS OF INTEREST:- None were declared.

5 MEMBERSHIP AND OFFICE BEARERS OF THE MFC

At the SANA Ltd AGM on 25 February J McKay, J Pirie and A Walker were appointed for three year terms on the MFC. A possible new member for the MFC has been put forward by one member. This person is well versed in salmon fishery matters in Scotland but is not at present eligible to join the MFC. It was agreed that CC would speak to him about joining the MFC. Anticipating a positive outcome from this approach, an invitation to be co-opted onto the MFC would be made when the person became eligible.

RP proposed CC as chairman, AW as vice chairman and JP as secretary for the coming year. This was seconded by OMCL.

6 MINUTES OF MEETING OF 3 DECEMBER 2017:- Their adoption was proposed by RP and seconded by OMCL. These minutes would be forwarded to the administrator for posting on the website.

7 MATTERS ARISING FROM THE ABOVE MINUTES:- covered under following headings.

8 WILD FISHERIES REFORM

After little emerging for some time, there has been a quite a rush of announcements and documents this month. Under the banner of funding to address challenges faced by salmon stocks, around £700K will be spent on work to help address the range of pressures related to the decline of Scottish wild salmon stocks. This includes £500K for research and activities which includes a new national programme of local sampling of juvenile salmon in rivers to monitor their abundance. This will also assist in assessing sea and brown trout stocks. £200K is earmarked for a Wild Fisheries Governance Fund. DSFBs and those interested in establishing new DSFBs can bid for support in setting up mergers or new boards which will improve the efficiency and effectiveness of fisheries management. The fourth and fifth SRG six weekly updates have been, simultaneously, published. Also released is a table of the sixteen SRG workstreams with each one coloured green, blue, amber or red as an indication of their progress status. Seven are green, one is blue, four are amber and four are red. Red indicates behind schedule with little progress thus far. In this category is a short life Protection Orders working group. Given SANA's interest and involvement in this issue CC believed that this presented an opportunity for SANA to put forward proposals for the future of protection orders as WFR develops. This issue is very largely one for the NMFC but protection orders where their area covers salmon waters do interest the MFC. It was agreed to contact the NMFC regarding drafting proposals in relation to protection orders. RP agreed to liaise with the NMFC on the issue should it agree to drafting proposals which in due course might be the basis for a consultation from the government. In contrast brown trout conservation is green, on track with substantive progress. An SRG meeting is planned for later in March. Depending on the date chosen either CC or AW should be able to attend. The cabinet secretary for ECC&LR, RC, is understood to be intending to introduce a WFR bill during session 2018/2019.

9 CROWN ESTATE BILL CONSULTATION

CC has circulated draft responses and the resultant draft has been on the SANA website for comment. None have been received. The bill is a lengthy and complex document. One issue concerning the disposal of assets by managers is not entirely clear to lay readers of the bill. CC will attend the stakeholders' meeting on 12 March. He will seek to clarify the disposal question and indicated the stance he would take should other stakeholders attempt power grabs.

10 RE&C COMMITTEE INQUIRY ON SALMON FARMING IN SCOTLAND

The deadline for submissions to this inquiry is 27 April. A draft has been circulated and is on the SANA website for comment. (RE&C – Rural Economy and Connectivity)

Since the MFC meeting in December 2017 the ECC&LR (Environment, Climate Change and Land Reform) committee has held an inquiry into and reported on the environmental impacts of salmon farming. This inquiry was built on a 174 page report commissioned by the Scottish parliament from a consortium led by SAMS Research Services Ltd. Around twenty authors contributed to the report. There were also around ninety submissions from various bodies and individuals in response to the committee's hosting a call for views on the SAMS report. The committee held two evidence sessions one in late

January the other in early February. At the first of these a few of the authors of the SAMS report were questioned while at the second a few of the stakeholders who had made submissions were questioned. At the latter session diametrically opposed views were aired. In early March the ECC&LR committee issued a eighty page report including twelve conclusions. This report has been fed on to the RE&C committee to inform its inquiry. The MFC welcomed the conclusions of the ECC&LR committee. To an extent they were all that the MFC might have hoped for. In bold type in the conclusions was the sentence – The status quo is not an option.

Given the conclusions of the ECC&LR committee the draft submission from SANA to the RE&C committee inquiry is very much in line with mainstream thinking on the way forward for the salmon farming industry. At the moment three submissions have been submitted to the inquiry. The committee have six evidence sessions planned. The first took place on 7 March while the second is on 14 March when FMS and S&TC are among those appearing.

#### 11 CONSERVATION REGULATIONS

There have been appeals about the grades calculated for a number of rivers. Some are known to have resulted in a river moving up a grade, viz the grade number has been reduced. The removal of lochs from the calculations has been one of the drivers of this.

Still no information on the breakdown of the compensation to coastal netmen has been released. It is understood that there may be a legal challenge relating to the sums to be paid out.

#### 12 PINK SALMON

From the various documents and messages seen it is clear that MS is keeping a close watch on the situation. Its views on pinks as a quarry and a possible bio-security issue are now much more in line with those of the MFC. As yet the results of comparisons of genetic profiles of last year's visitors with those of established and natural stocks has apparently either not been published or not been completed.

Whether the numbers of pinks encountered during 2017 are repeated in 2019 and also if even year fish appear this year will be awaited with interest.

#### 13 NASCO

This year's main NASCO gathering will take place in Portland, Maine in early June. The MFC was pleased to hear that the board had agreed to fund the attendance of AW at the meeting. A contribution to the costs of attendance has also been sought from a frequent donor. AW outlined the many advantages, scientifically and contact and profile wise of a continuing presence at the annual NASCO gathering.

#### 14 FISHERIES MANAGEMENT SCOTLAND

The frequent distribution by FMS of newsletters, events at parliament and information on others issues assists members in tracking developments in the fisheries arena.

#### 15 THE 2017 AND 2018 SEASONS

Weather and time into 2018 prevent any meaningful pointers for the season being apparent. Members did report landing very strong well mended kelts with maggot free gills. Late running fish perhaps.

In April the reported catch figures for 2017 are expected to be published by MS. These will include updated figures for 2016. Another overview of 2017 catches for many rivers will be included in the FMS Review for 2018 which will probably be published in early April.

#### 16 SANA LTD

Angling Scotland Ltd does not have a substantive existence. A manager is to be appointed. A McIntosh presently has a holding role.

The ambitions of FMS and others in angling development were noted.

At the AGM the president commented that SANA did not promote itself widely enough and that efforts to remedy this would be made.

#### 17 AOCB

None to note.

#### 18 NEXT MFC MEETING

The next MFC meeting is planned for Sunday 1 July 2018 in Kinross at 10.30am.

The meeting concluded at 1.15pm with a vote of thanks to the chairman.