

SANA LTD - MIGRATORY FISH COMMITTEE  
Minutes of meeting on Sunday, 25 June 2017, at 10.30am, Windlestrae Hotel, Kinross

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

2 APOLOGIES:- Messrs Duncan and Stephen.

3 CHAIRMAN:- CC wished to make the point that he was leading a good team who contributed to the ongoing WFR and other consultations. Members responded that the chairman's contribution was both expert, immeasurable to a degree and appreciated by only a small circle of anglers. He distributed copies of correspondence with MS and pointed out the staff changes in the Freshwater Fisheries team.

4 CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

JP declared a financial interest in agenda item 12 but he saw no reason for not contributing to the discussion thereon. There were no other declarations of interest.

5 MINUTES OF MEETING OF 12 MARCH 2017

With the insertion of the omitted section on the election of office bearers for 2017/2018 these were approved on the proposal of RP seconded by CC.

6 MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES OF 12 MARCH 2017 - These are covered under following headings.

7 WILD FISHERIES REFORM

The SRG met on 20 April. Minutes of the meeting were posted on the WFR pages of the Scottish Government website on 28 April. At that meeting it was decided that the group would now meet as needed rather than every sixth week but that MS would put a regular six weekly SRG update/report on the WFR web pages. The first of these was issued on 23 June and CC had alerted members to its presence.

Issues raised at the SRG concerning trout had triggered a meeting at Pitlochry with MSS staff to discuss these. CC and AW had attended. MSS surveying of juvenile salmon will be extended to include trout. MSS also indicated that ongoing work on trout genetics may lead to an understanding of the range of anadromy over trout stocks. Funding will come for this work and DSFBs and Trusts will be assisting in the sampling.

The draft fisheries management template which had been circulated has been withdrawn. It had been constructed prior to the Minister's February decisions. DSFBs are to be required to have a FMP approved by MS. The draft one was quite impractical for most DSFBs and was an idealised wish list. The replacement FMP will be much simpler and will include trout.

The National Strategy Working Group on which CC will sit has not yet been convened.

MS continues to explore where funding for fisheries might be sourced. Tapping in to rents to the CEC for sea bed sites used by the aquaculture industry has not been ruled out.

RP was aware of moves which may result in the formation of a DSFB in Ayrshire in an area without one. He feared the consequences if this were to result in additional annual costs for angling clubs who were tenants of fishings. The WFR does encourage and may assist financially the merging and formation of DSFBs.

8 CONSERVATION REGULATIONS

These continue to be refined in a number of respects. The whole package is an extensive body of data and statistical analysis. Appeals about an allocated category are considered on receipt of relevant additional data. The early spring 'no kill' measures combined with a whole season category is not ideal in some systems but additional local voluntary rules can assist.

The order banning coastal salmon fishing is not time limited. There will be a review after three years. Further work on tracking coastal movements and subsequent river entry of salmon is underway to inform this review. CC outlined the provisional information received regarding the compensation being paid to coastal fisheries during the 2016 to 2018 seasons. In due course more detailed final information will be published on the MS web pages.

9 CHEMICALS IN AQUACULTURE AND AQUACULTURE CONSULTATION

Some members had expressed concern over the recent very large increase in the use of hydrogen peroxide in sea lice treatment as the efficacy of other chemicals has decreased. While its potency in domestic use might give cause for concern it is regarded as a benign anti sea lice agent. The sea lice detach and are not necessarily killed but what happens thereafter? While most of the issues in the consultation on planning in aquaculture are not relevant to our interests in the industry some did present an opportunity for SANA to restate its position on salmon farming. CC had circulated a draft response. The set questions in the consultation do not cover all angles and only answering them can imply acceptance of other aspects of the regulations. The draft response answers two relevant set questions and under 'Any other comments' there is a summary of our general position regarding salmon farming and a way ahead avoiding all the present serious impacts on migratory fish and on the wider environment. All agreed with the proposed line taken in the response. There may be additions to the draft when the reaction of the NMFC to the draft is received.

## 10 NASCO

SANA did not have an NGO presence at this year's NASCO meeting in Sweden, 6-9 June. AW continues to receive NASCO papers and circulates relevant ones. He outlined the NGO statements for this year's meeting. The salmon farming industry was upset over the questioning at last year's themed session on salmon farming.

Papers for the 2017 meeting and minutes of the meeting are on the NASCO website. Hours of reading both easy and challenging are there as is much data.

The first heading in the post meeting Press Release is 'Many North Atlantic Salmon Stocks at Critically Low Levels'.

On this year's themed session the Press Release says:-

*Through an important Theme-based Special Session, NASCO explored the effectiveness of using stocking programs as a tool to support wild Atlantic salmon stocks. The session brought together experts on various aspects of and approaches to stocking and was highly informative, thought provoking, and generated discussion among the Parties about the risks of stocking.*

## 11 FISHERIES MANAGEMENT SCOTLAND

JP attended the FMS members meeting on 27 March. Given the dropping of FMOs etc a whole range of issues was discussed in the context of moving forward. The chairman, A Jack, seemed to view salmon farming as a source of funding for fisheries management by eg a levy per ton of production.

The first annual FMS conference was on 28 March. Alan Ayre and JP attended. Speakers included Simon Dryden on the WFR, John Armstrong on Conservation Measures and Jeff Gibbons on Aquaculture. Of note was that the sea trout work stream is not yet up and running. An ICES group has recently looked at this very complex issue. Coastal net fishery compensation was raised but no details were revealed other than to emphasise the review after three years and the uncapped number of years in the order. All the talks are available on the FMS website. Copies of the FMS 2017 Review were available on the day and it is also on the FMS website. A link to this will go on the MFC page of the SANA website.

## 12 REVALUATION

JP recently contacted a Grampian Region assessor. He expected the new valuations to be issued this month but there were remaining points to settle. New to this revaluation is the position of coastal net fishings. Valuations will be largely based on the situation in 2015. Assessors from across the country were to be meeting this month to discuss how these fisheries, banned from fishing but receiving compensation, would be valued. Knowing some net buy off figures for 2015 and in due course the compensation paid during 2016 to 2018 and what valuations are set for these fisheries, a course of action, or none, can then be chosen based on that information.

## 13 CATCHES 2015, 2016 and 2017

In late March the EA published the catch and other data for 2015. Finally the NE of England catch of sea trout emerged, 60,696 fish averaging 4lb per fish.

In April MS released the 2016 salmon and sea trout catch data for Scotland. Figures for 2016 for a few SFDs are also in the FMS 2107 Review. Close inspection of these two sources reveals differences as was the case for 2015. Assisted by an additional file from MSS it is apparent that as MSS include late returns in their files it is when the next year's data is released the following April that the updates appear in published files. Figures extracted from the 2016 data were circulated and CC had updated the commentary and figures in the 'fish killed' file on the SANA website.

In the NASCO papers the NE of England salmon catch in 2016 is given as 18,767 of 47% Scottish and 53 % English origin. How long before the corresponding catch of sea trout is made available? The EA is keen to continue this coastal fishery. Thus far this year in much of the country the low rainfall has masked the numbers of fish as measured by angling success. Where river levels were more favourable or the river large salmon numbers appeared 'good' by recent standards. Recent rainfall has produced a flurry of catches but the class of these fish was not known. On the other hand on the East side of the country sea trout catches are up to if not above the levels of recent years. Notable has been a fair sprinkling of big fish. Are these maiden fish or previous spawners?

14 NMFC MINUTES – None since the March meeting.

## 15 SANA LTD

There is a board meeting this Thursday. Angling Scotland Ltd seems to be unavoidable. Andrew McIntosh will stay on until a replacement is in place with ASL up and running.

## 16 AOCB

CC expects to soon attend a meeting about the Crown Estate at which the results of the recent consultation will emerge.

## 17 DATE AND PLACE OF NEXT MEETING

The next MFC meeting was set for Sunday 1 October 2017 in Kinross at 10.30am.

The meeting closed at 1.30pm.

