SANA LTD - MIGRATORY FISH COMMITTEE

Minutes of meeting on Sunday, 30 September 2018 at 10.30am, Green Hotel, Kinross

1 PRESENT:- Messrs Campbell, McKay, Pirie & Walker.

2 CHAIRMAN:- CC detailed the changing financial position facing SANA Ltd as funding from sportscotland is being reduced. It is certain that spending will have to be reduced in some areas. The MFC may have to consider modifying its established sequence of meetings and also consider a mix of corresponding and attending members.

3 APOLOGIES:- Messrs Balfour, McClennan, Picken & Wight. All four were restricted by medical issues.

4 CONFLICTS OF INTEREST:- None were declared.

5 MINUTES OF MEETING OF 1 JULY 2018:- Their adoption was agreed by those present.

6 MATTERS ARISING FROM THE ABOVE MINUTES:- These will arise under agenda items.

7 WILD FISHERIES REFORM

In late August CC had alerted members to the placing of the somewhat delayed sixth weekly WFR update on the government’s website. The most recent SRG minutes published were in late April 2017. No minutes of any of the several working groups have been published this year or for most of them since 2016.

8 SALMON FARMING INQUIRIES

The publishing of the RECC report is awaited. It should be imminent as the committee is considering their draft report in private sessions. Given the ‘The status quo is not an option.’ in the ECCLRC report earlier this year the RECC report will be revealing. Regarding salmon farming and its ambitions for expansion, diverging stances appear to being adopted by parliamentarians and ministers.

9 CROWN ESTATE SCOTLAND

Interested parties on the Crown Estate stakeholder group were asked to suggest possible pilot management projects which might be trialled. Two are of interest to the MFC. A) that local interests allocate and manage salmon farm leases in a particular area and B) that fishing leases in an area be similarly managed locally. In both cases financial benefit to the managers would be a leading consideration.

CC has put forward the arguments against both of these possible projects given the likely consequences should such management be extended over the country. In particular, with input from OMcL, indicating the potential impact of B on a number of angling clubs which lease CES rod and line fishings. These clubs make angling available to the public but if outbid by a closed syndicate there would be a loss of access by the public to publically owned fishings. It may turn out that neither of these pilot projects is taken forward.

10 RIVER BASIN MANAGEMENT PLANS

This is the third cycle of these plans. Although emanating from the EU the Water Framework Directive has been built into Scottish law so the process goes ahead regardless of BREXIT. Two areas are involved, the Tweed/Solway area and the rest of Scotland.

We should push for ensuring that the issues raised in our submission to Scottish Water are implemented, viz concerns regarding sewage treatment and combined sewage overflows. Further, the best possible ecological condition of all water bodies underpins there being thriving fish stocks. This involves, as appropriate, protecting, improving or reducing factors which impact on water quality and stream structure. Land use practices with consequences such as runoff, diffuse pollution, acidification and stream channel management provide scope for improvement and control.

If SANA contributes to meetings and consultations as the RBMPs are worked up it will require quite a bit of voluntary effort from within SANA.

The committee agreed responses to three of the questions in a preliminary consultation. CC will circulate these to members and to the NMFC.

11 CONSERVATION REGULATIONS

These were introduced in 2016 for an initial three year period followed by a review. That period is now over. The publication of conservation regulations for 2019 must be imminent. While those for anglers might be expected to continue as before will those relating to salmon netting remain unchanged?

Note a mistake in section 10 in the July minutes where ‘2015 to 2018’ should be ‘2016 to 2018’.

South of the border the EA will be working on issuing for 2019 regulations corresponding to those published, but then withdrawn, for 2018.

12 NORTH ATLANTIC SALMON CONSERVATION ORGANISATION

AW had received a letter sent to NASCO from the Greenland Government detailing the conditions, monitoring and control of their salmon fishery in 2018. A sampling program is also in place. The TAC for the fishery is 30 metric tons entirely for restricted home consumption. Given the likely distribution of the catch over rivers of origin and the stringent fishery rules in place, Scotland can be content regarding the impact on Scottish rivers. S Dugan of the SFCC is in Greenland as an observer of the fishery.

13 FISHERY MANAGEMENT SCOTLAND

The SANDS – Scottish Angling National Development Structure – initiative was discussed in the light of further information on its ambitions. Exactly where its Scottish Angling Volunteering Award would fit in the hierarchy of coaching, instructing and disclosure levels was not clear. The driver of the project looks for it to have succeeded or failed after three years given that funding is obtained for years two and three.

14 CATCHES

With the fine summer and low river levels from mid May until this month inhibiting fish from coming into rivers the pattern of inbound salmon and grilse has been hidden. Pointers are that there were more grilse than for the past year or two but summer and later salmon? Catch figures released by the Spey and Tweed for their ‘spring’ angling were low.

Contrasting reports were received of large and small sea trout but as to numbers?

Although the NE of England net catch of salmon for 2017 was included in NASCO papers seeing the corresponding catch of sea trout will probably have to await the publication of the England and Wales catch bulletin for 2017.

15 NMFC MINUTES

CC commented on item 5 in these.

16 SANA Ltd

There is a board meeting on 4 October. As noted in 2 above there will be financial matters to resolve.

The administrator, A McI, is retiring at the end of October. The board will be considering how its administration will continue in the coming austerity. The administration of ASL, having subsumed ADBoS and got underway in early October, will also have lost its administrator. An independent chair may well be sought for ASL.

17 AOCB

None present had heard of any results of genetic work on the pink salmon of 2017.

18 NEXT MFC MEETING

The next MFC meeting was suggested for Sunday 9 December 2018 in Kinross at 10.30am.

The meeting concluded at 12.45pm.