

MIGRATORY FISH COMMITTEE

Minutes of meeting on Sunday, 27 March 2022, at 10.30am on Zoom

Present:- Messrs Campbell, Pirie and Walker.

1 CHAIRMAN:- CC hoped that the overnight clock advance had not caught out one or two members. Given that nearly one in ten of Scotland's adult population are infected by Covid 19 currently, he thought that the decision not to hold a live meeting was justified. Several members not present had welcomed the decision and he was disappointed that so few had attended.

2 APOLOGIES:- Messrs Picken and Wight.

3 CONFLICTS OF INTEREST:- There were none to declare.

4 MINUTES OF MEETING OF 12 DECEMBER 2021:- proposed CC, seconded AW.

5 ELECTION OF MFC OFFICE BEARERS FOR 2022

CC and JP are content to continue as chairman and secretary respectively. OMcL, the anticipated vice-chairman, has withdrawn his nomination due to pressure of work. Should CC not be present at a committee meeting it was agreed that those attending would agree a chairman for the day.

6 SANA LTD AND ASL

The SANA Ltd AGM was held on 13 March at the King Robert Hotel in Stirling. CC had attended. He reported that the proposal to progress the formation of ASL as a membership body, incorporating the three governing bodies, was passed without demur. Likewise, his proposal to delegate responsibility for negotiating the specific arrangements to SANA directors, who would report back to the next AGM, was passed.

7 SEPA AND NATURESCOT CONSULTATION

This was on proposals for a risk-based framework for managing interactions between sea lice from marine finfish farm developments and wild Atlantic salmon in Scotland with a closing date of 14 March. While the proposals were mainly technical there were aspects of the proposals, including the near passing over of sea trout, which the MFC considered should be raised. The draft submission was on the SANA website for comment before being submitted before the deadline.

8 NATIONAL BEAVER STRATEGY

OMcL, on behalf of the MFC, attended some of the recent sequence of meetings on formulating a beaver strategy. The general movement in favour of tolerating or encouraging the spread of beavers seems unstoppable at present.

9 THE GRIGGS REPORT

This report was on the regulatory process for aquaculture in Scotland. It presents a consenting and framework system for the future. Within this a licensing system for operators is proposed. The fees

which would be paid for licences would be a new income stream for better regulation. In the case of finfish the licence fee would relate to the tonnage of fish licenced. The report, including annexes, runs to fifty pages.

In the view of CC, within the remit given to Professor Griggs, the proposed licensing system for operators is a very good development. A licence, once awarded, can be taken away. So it is a tougher system. We have proposed in the sea lice submission that some of it be used to pay boards/trusts to be involved in supervision of the new system for sea lice regulation. So, if we get that, it's no longer being wholly controlled by SEPA/MS fish health.

10 OUTSTANDING BUSINESS

i) Scottish Wild Salmon Strategy:- This was published in January. Including a ministerial foreward, the document runs to nineteen pages. The vision is that Scotland's wild Atlantic salmon populations flourish and are an example of nature's recovery achieved through the application of best-practice science and management. The objectives include Scotland's rivers having healthy, self-sustaining populations of wild Atlantic salmon that achieve good conservation status. The many pressures being experienced by salmon in Scotland are detailed with five priority themes for action spelled out. There is also the intention to build an evidence base through co-ordinated scientific research and monitoring. A group is now working on how the above will be implemented. Monitoring of the success or otherwise of the implementation will be essential in determining whether the strategy has been not just another report on the shelf.

ii) Avian predators:- this report based on crop contents is awaited.

iii) Review of Scotgov policy on stocking:- also awaited.

11 NASCO

The 2022 annual meeting will be held 6 to 9 June at Dalmahoy Hotel and Country Club, Edinburgh. The extent of any SANA physical presence is uncertain at present. The expense is difficult to justify when SANA can make its views known through the NGO Group of which we are a member. Tomorrow, 28 March, AW will attend a Zoom meeting of NGOs. Under discussion will be the submission of the NGO group on the report of NASCO's External Performance Review Group.

12 FMS

The 2022 conference will be held via MS Teams on 31 March. Hard copies of the 2022 FMS Annual Review may be available this year in addition to the online copy.

13 AOCB

None

14 The next MFC meeting was set for Sunday 26 June. Virtual or face to face to be determined.

The meeting closed at 11.10am