

### **SUSTAINABLE FISHERIES REVIEW**

#### **Purpose of Report**

To inform members of progress made on the NWIFCA Sustainable Fisheries Review since the last NWIFCA meeting.

#### **Recommendations**

That the report be received.

#### **Background**

1. A set of Working Principles for the Sustainable Management of Fisheries within the NWIFCA District was adopted at the full NWIFCA meeting on 30<sup>th</sup> September 2011.
2. A proposal to implement a Sustainable Fisheries Project (hereinafter called 'the Project') with partner agencies was agreed at the 30<sup>th</sup> September meeting.
3. The Authority agreed to establish a workshop that will involve all key stakeholders to progress the Project. A briefing on the areas of work and relevant expertise and experience needed to make the workshop a success was agreed by the TSB meeting in October.
4. A small working group was set up to plan the workshop, consisting of Dr. Judith Clark, Prof. Chris Frid, the Chief Executive, Science Team, EA, NE and MMO representatives.

#### **Progress**

5. The working group met on 28<sup>th</sup> October and agreed the following:
  - a) the Sustainable Fisheries Review should be integral to the NWIFCA's core work, notwithstanding resource implications;
  - b) a basic list needs to be drawn up of all the fisheries within the District – action BH;
  - c) the fisheries need to be prioritised in terms of i) economic value and ii) issues in terms of sustainability risks;
  - d) the two highest priority fisheries will be first to be reviewed;
  - e) without having to have carried out b), the District's cockle fishery was felt by all in attendance to stand out as the number one priority under (ci) and (cii), and that in view of its commercial value to the District and nationally, the number of issues around fisheries management it presents, and the current level of public and media interest, it has the potential to unlock funding possibilities;
  - f) the list will be used to develop a work programme for all of the District's fisheries;

- g) there are two existing 'blueprints' or toolboxes for assessing inshore fisheries in terms of sustainability which have been used by SFC / IFCAs – the Strategic Environmental Assessment process as used by North East SFC, and Navigating the Future (NtF), used by Sussex SFC and more recently by Kent and Essex IFCA. The national IFCA TAG group reported that both of these processes are valid and lead to similar outputs. The NtF forms the preliminary assessment for MSC accreditation, so if a fishery subsequently wanted to go down that route in the future, the benefit of using that process is that that stage has already been carried out. Documents relating to these two processes were circulated to Working Party members to peruse. The general feeling of the meeting was to adopt the NtF model;
- h) a North West District Cockle Review could be used as a model for other cockle fisheries in the UK, and the NWIFCA be recognised as taking a lead;
- i) the TAG meeting reported that there had been discussion of conducting IFCAs' Sustainability Reviews using a consistent approach across all IFCAs, most likely utilising NtF. This approach had been welcomed by the MMO. It would be potentially cheaper for a national bid rather than individual IFCAs. SABG (Shellfish Association of GB) had also been approached but this had apparently stalled. The Chair of the TAG Group has contacted SABG to ascertain the current situation and will report back on the response;
- j) an initial step in a cockle fishery review would be to carry out a workshop inviting stakeholders with expertise / local knowledge in this fishery, ensuring engagement and ownership at the outset;
- k) there is a need to capitalise on momentum and progress investigating opportunities for funding with the expertise offered by EA and NE. Action: MK to follow up with Bill Darbyshire and Chris Lumb.

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**21<sup>st</sup> November 2011**