

North Western Inshore Fisheries and Conservation Authority

Quarterly Meeting: 6 December 2011

Morecambe Town Hall: 10.30 a.m.

Agenda Item: 9

CHIEF OFFICER'S REPORT

Purpose:

To inform members of current priorities and policy issues

Recommendations

- 1. Members' note the matters raised.**

Overview of the period

1. Since mid-August the Ribble cockle fishery has taken up the majority of officer time. This fishery is the subject of a separate report. Other issues covered below are:
 - I. Marine Conservation Zones
 - II. The Inshore Fisheries review by Defra
 - III. The Review of the Common Fishery Policy
 - IV. Funding for the West Cumbria Fishing Industry

Marine Conservation Zones.

2. Defra are now reviewing the advice containing the lists of proposed MCZ sites from all the 4 regional projects including the ISCZ. The final lists and advice was published on 9 September. Sites which are found to have sufficient scientific evidence and justification for designation will be identified and all those sites will be subject to a public consultation.
3. On the 15 November 2011, Defra published a ministerial statement on MCZ. This is attached at Annex A to this report. In summary it puts back the timetable for consultation and designation of MCZ by 6 months
<http://www.defra.gov.uk/news/2011/11/15/wms-marine-conservation-zones/>
4. The MCZ Science Advisory Panel published its response to the advice from the 4 regional projects on 15 November. This is available at the website below. The SAP has compared the evidence underpinning all the proposed sites and ranked them on a scale of 1-5. This ranking by the SAP resulted in the Minister saying that the SAP had reported that only 23 sites out of the 127 total had sufficient evidence to be designated.
5. However, the Marine Conservation Society has requested confirmation from the Minister and pressed for all the proposed sites to be designated. We must assume at this stage that all or many of the sites may still be recommended by Defra and subject to public consultation.
<http://www.defra.gov.uk/environment/marine/protect/mpa/mcz/sap/>

Defra consultation: Reform of Domestic Fisheries Management Arrangements in England.

6. Defra consulted on proposals for reform of inshore fisheries management in England earlier in 2011. The NWIFCA contributed details of the fleet structure in NW England. A key elements of the proposals was to establish local rights to fishing. Possible models proposed included quota held by communities to safeguard small scale fleets in certain areas, allocation of clearer and more stable entitlements to fish across the English fleet using fixed quota mechanisms and safeguards to help retain fisheries access rights in more sustainable fisheries and prevent fishing rights becoming concentrated in the large scale fleet.
7. The full consultation is available from the Clerk or from the Defra website at: <http://www.defra.gov.uk/environment/marine/manage/saif/>
8. Defra have now published a summary of responses which is available at the website below and proposals for the next steps in a letter from the Minister at Annex B to this report. In summary, a number of pilot studies will be set up round England to test the various proposals and ideas which have come out of the consultation.
<http://www.defra.gov.uk/consult/files/111102-fisheries-reform-summary-responses.pdf>

Common Fisheries policy review

9. The recent Defra consultation on the review of the CFP closed on 10 November. The AIFCA response to the CFP including contributions from the NWIFCA was circulated to members. There is no further information on future development of the CFP review at this stage. Any further comments and responses from members can be sent to the office and will be forwarded to Defra to assist them with their ongoing negotiations

Funding for the West Cumbria Fishing Industry

10. A further report on this £2.2M grant was published on the BBC website recently. A copy is included for information at Annex C

Chief Executive
North Western Inshore Fisheries and Conservation Authority
23 November 2011