

**NWIFCA Quarterly Meeting
17th March 2017: 11.00 a.m.**

**AGENDA
ITEM NO.
14**

**SUMMARY REPORT - TECHNICAL, SCIENCE AND BYELAW
COMMITTEE – 7TH February 2017**

1. The minutes of 1st November TSB were approved.

Matters Arising (Agenda Item 4)

2. Mr Jones clarified that ground discrimination does not show cockle stocks.

Byelaw 11 Permit to Dredge (Agenda Item 5)

3. The extension to the emergency byelaw has been granted. The issue of a workable permit charging scheme is still on going with treasury guidance favouring a flat charge across board the following were discussed:
 - I. The charging structure and the aim of full cost recovery.
 - II. Changes to the wording of the byelaw, such as changing length to length overall.

Leven and Pilling Cockle Fisheries Report (Agenda Item 6)

4. Fishing effort at both fisheries is as expected. Early minimum landing size issues have been dealt with and none have been detected since. Returns to date are 136.3t from Leven and 16.8t from Pilling. Following the outbreak of bird flu at the Pheasant Farm in Pilling there has been no industry activity in the area and all IFCA activity in the area has been frozen.

Science Report (Agenda Item 7)

5. The report included:
 - a) An update on EMS Work - Work required to meet the 2016 deadline for European Marine Sites is close to completion.
 - b) The Bird Food Model - The science team attended a workshop with colleagues from Natural England, the RSPB and NRW on 'the bird food model' for cockle and mussel fisheries. The topic of 'Birds and their Food' was proposed as an agenda item for the next TSB.
 - c) The Recreational Sea Angling Strategy - The strategy has been started and is a working document. A dedicated angling email address has been established: angling@nw-ifca.gov.uk. IFCOs have been tasked to collect details from interested anglers.
 - d) North West Coast Connections
 - e) Fylde Coast Protection Scheme
 - f) Halite Gas Storage Caverns - Preesall, Wyre

Cockle and Mussel Fisheries (Agenda Item 8)

6. Surveys last year showed there is a stock of subtidal mussel in the Solway that could lead to a potential fishery if it survived the winter. A meeting was held in Silloth in January to discuss with all sectors the potential fishery. There was disagreement on the prospect of changing CSFC Byelaw 15 to allow for larger vessels. Further survey results have shown that the subtidal mussel is no longer present. The meeting brought forward three recommendations:
 - I. Approval to issue an annual scientific dispensation for three vessels for use of a dredge in the Solway to search for subtidal mussel;
 - II. Approval to issue an annual scientific dispensation for one vessel for use of a suction dredge in the Solway to search for cockle in the Solway;
 - III. Approval to issue an annual NWSFC Byelaw 1 scientific dispensation to two vessels for use of a dredge in Morecambe Bay to ground-truth AGDS data.

Bass Update (Agenda Item 9)

7. The 2017 Bass regulations have been delivered as an insertion into the TAC and Quota Regulations 2017. It applies catch and release for recreational fishing during the first half of the year. There was discussion around the enforceability aspect of the new legislation and the need for further clarification from government.

A.O.B. (Agenda Item 10)

8. The Cefas C-Bass project has been tagging Bass on the South Coast and in France. A small pot of Defra underspend from the project has been allocated to carryout fishermen's stakeholder engagement within the North West. The workshops will bring the stakeholders up to date on the project and data so far. Cefas will be asking fishers for information on the timings and locations of bass and for volunteers to be trained in tagging techniques. NWIFCA Officers will be helping the project identify stakeholders within the district.

Clerk
6th March 2017