

NWIFCA Annual Meeting
20th June 2019: 11.00 a.m.

AGENDA
ITEM NO.
13

SUMMARY REPORT - TECHNICAL, SCIENCE AND BYELAW
SUB-COMMITTEE - 14TH MAY 2019

1. **Silloth Subtidal Mussels (Agenda Item 5):** Members were updated on the work carried out since the March Authority meeting. Surveys were carried out using Olex ground discrimination and side scan sonar. Officers have been investigating other options of how to complete the survey work required including the use of a mini-Hamon grab. Discussions have been held with a company who are able to provide subtidal survey equipment. Two drawbacks with the design suggested have been identified which are being further investigated.

Members approved the report.

2. **Science Report (Agenda Item 6)**

The report covered:

Marine Protected Areas in the NWIFCA District
NWIFCA Research Projects
National IFCA TAG Conference and Whelk Working Group
Halite Gas Storage and Brine Discharge
Crown Estate Marine Aggregate Dredging Tender Round 2018/19
EMFF Workshop
Recreational Anglers Engagement
North West Marine Plan – MMO
Meetings/conferences

Cockles: There was a low level of fishing effort at Newbiggin and Pilling in the last few weeks of the season. A dense cockle settlement has been observed at Leasowe and there is the possibility of a fishery being authorised there from September.

Mussels. A survey of South America and Falklands skears were carried out by quadbike which showed the South America bed has sanded over. The Falklands bed seems to be smaller than last year. A dredge fishery is not felt to be anticipated again this year.

Members approved the report.

3. **Cockle and Mussel Permit Byelaw 2019 (Agenda Item 7).** Members were provided with the latest version of the draft byelaw for consideration. Comments made by members Mr Brown and Dr Baxter were considered. Areas discussed included sanctions, flexible permit conditions and waiting list.

Members agreed changes to paragraph 17 of the byelaw to remove the word 'above' from 17a, removal of 17b and rewording of 17c to refer only to cockles..

It was further agreed that a revised version of the proposed byelaw be prepared, taking into account members' comments, and circulated for approval by TSB members, following which the byelaw would be submitted to the June Annual meeting to be 'made'.

4. **Potting Permit Byelaw (Agenda Item 8):** Members were provided with the latest version of the draft byelaw for consideration. Comments received from members Mr Brown and Dr Baxter were considered.

Members considered each of the recommendations in the report and agreed level of permit fees, issue of vessel length, method for defining track record, flexible permit conditions for whelk fisheries and marking of keep pots.

It was further agreed that a revised version of the proposed byelaw be prepared, taking into account members' comments, and circulated for approval by TSB members, following which the byelaw would be submitted to the June Annual meeting to be 'made'.

5. **Byelaw Review (Agenda Item 9):** Members discussed the current byelaw priorities shown in table 2. Comments received from Dr Baxter suggested the Byelaw Review should be a standing agenda item at TSB Committee meetings.

Members agreed that priorities for the Byelaw review should be the current NWIFCA Fish MLS byelaw, the current NWIFCA Byelaw 9 Net fishing regulations and a district-wide winkles byelaw to replace the current Cumbria SFC Byelaw 7.

6. **Any Other Business (Agenda Item 10)**

1. **Prohibition of Mussel Seed Exports from Morecambe Bay to Northern Ireland:** Reports from peeler crab collectors of a Chinese Mitten Crab sighting in the Walney Channel in 2018 had resulted in a prohibition on imports of mussel seed to Northern Ireland. Data provided to DAERA from surveys carried out at Walney, Foulney or Heysham Flat shows no evidence of further sightings of Chinese Mitten Crab... Assistance from Mr John Woodcock, MP has been sought. The DAERA response to Mr Woodcock indicated that the department is unwilling to engage in further correspondence about the decision.

Members agreed that officers continue to provide DAERA with updates on the situation. It was suggested if no evidence of Chinese Mitten Crab is found in surveys by next year the matter could be raised with the Northern Ireland Minister.

2. **National Oceanographic Centre, Liverpool:** The Authority has been asked by NOC to participate in a bid for funding for a pilot study in Morecambe Bay using satellite imagery and land-based radar techniques for intertidal mapping. Actual time and effort involvement from officers in this project looks minimal. NOC is seeking a letter of support in order to submit an application to NERC by the deadline.

Members agreed officers' involvement in this project.

CLERK
6th June 2019