



Mr Lorcan O' Cinneide
Chairman,
WG 4, NWWRAC
C/o Board Iascaigh Mhara
P.O. Box 12, Crofton Road
Dun Laoghaire
Co. Dublin

30th March 2010

Dear Lorcan,

First of all apologies for missing the last Working Group 4 meeting in Madrid. John Crudden produced an excellent report and should be considered as a permanent replacement for the absent Rapporteur.

I am also in receipt of the un-dated paper tabled by The Irish Sea sanctuary. All such submissions are useful in fuelling the debate on fisheries management in the Irish Sea. However, I shall not dwell on the proposal contained in this paper. Suffice to say we oppose the kind of closures advocated by Johnny Woodlock.

On a more positive note, Johnny does mention the workshop organised by the NWWRAC and held in Belfast on the 30th September 2009. As you know that gathering resulted in a series of observations/recommendations, which included;

- The need to strengthen the scientific assessments
- The need to base a new approach based on mutual trust and confidence
- The need to build a better understanding of the role of natural mortality and in particular seal predation
- The need to build an alternative approach within the context of CFP reform which according to the Commission's Green paper would offer greater opportunities for initiatives at regional level and a transfer of responsibilities to industry organisations

During this meeting officials from DARD indicated their support for these recommendations and suggested that financial assistance (EFF) could be forthcoming to advance the work required to answer some of these questions.

It is almost six months since this workshop was held. A range of other issues and the resulting pressures we all face eclipsed the follow-up. Next year the long term cod recovery regulation shall be reviewed and of course the reform of the CFP carries on in parallel with this.

You and Sean have committed to producing a paper for the next NWWRAC Executive Committee meeting. May I suggest you discuss this with Barrie Deas, who 12 months ago drafted a similar paper for the NFFO. In parallel with this process we need to decide how to progress the issues arising from the Belfast workshop. Is another focus group required?

I look forward to hearing from you.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Alan McCulla', with a long horizontal flourish underneath.

Alan McCulla OBE (Chief Executive)

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