**Action Points/Decisions from National Inshore Fisheries Forum meeting 21.01.2016**

**Bord Iascaigh Mhara, Crofton Road, Dun Laoghaire, Dublin**

1. Recreational potting SI signed by Minister Coveney on 20.01.2016. Operational from 1st February 2016. NIFF Secretariat to forward press release and SI when available.
2. Proposal to QMAC re: 1% by-catch allocations for inshore boats – QMAC came back to NIFF for a more detailed proposal. SW RIFF having discussed this at their meeting on 26.11.15 are happy for NIFF to shelve this proposal. NIFF agreed to shelve proposal.
3. NIFF has secured two positions on the Celtic Sea Herring Management Advisory Committee. It was agreed by the NIFF which two members would attend the next meeting of this committee. Chair of the CSHMAC to forward NIFF secretariat details of rules and procedures for this committee.
4. VAT exemption on vessels under 15GT – NIFF chair to write to Minister of Finance, outlining this issue as a matter of urgency and cc to Minister Coveney. DAFM to raise this issue at the next Marine Taxation group meeting.
5. SWRIFF line caught fishery plan- NIFF were due to meet with Bord Bia at this meeting but postponed it due to very full agenda. Proposal to be further developed at SWRIFF. NE & SERIFF to further develop the plan for line caught mackerel. NIFF to be kept up to date with progress on both these proposals.
6. DAFM and BIM asked the NIFF members to look at the EMFF schemes particularly the Inshore Fisheries Conservation Scheme and develop ideas that they would like to see in the schemes and revert back asap.
7. MI to have to full year of scientific data on the North Irish Sea Razors compiled by February 2016.
8. Following today’s meeting the NPWS, DSP and IFI officials are all happy to continue dialogue with the National Inshore Fisheries Forum.
9. Conflict between vessels of different sizes in inshore waters- issue has been raised through the SE RIFF initially but also with the SW and WRIFFs. The RIFFs to go back to their members for feedback and to develop a specific proposal from the NIFF. A number of options need to be developed for a proposal. Any change to this would require public consultation.
10. Financial support for industry in getting bi-valve fisheries classified/opened. EMFF Inshore Scheme broad enough to include. Could be run like the v-notching scheme for example by prioritising areas. The MI and the SFPA are trying to develop a protocol. Industry needs to bring proposals directly to the SFPA. RIFFs need to look at their bivalve areas and decide where they want to prioritise classification and forward this information to SFPA.
11. DSP queries- clarification was sought on a number of social welfare issues in regard to fishermen. Some were clarified at the meetings other to be clarified by e-mail to NIFF secretariat. A call was made by the NIFF for a tailor made social welfare scheme for fishermen and the reason for it were outlined by NIFF members. DSP explained that all the social welfare policies are based on legislation through the Finance Act. This can only be changed at budget time in October. The DAFM to work with NIFF to develop a proposal well ahead of the next budget for submission in July so that it may be considered in the next budget. It was suggested that research could be undertaken on how social welfare issues are addressed for fishermen in other countries.
12. DG mare call to look at small scale coastal fisheries – NFFO were successful in their bid and NIFF Chair has been in contact with Nathan de Rozarieux, consultant who is coordinating the project with NFFO. It was agreed that the RIFFs and NIFF would work with Nathan to examine the Forum process and look at our strengths and weaknesses. The NIFF members were provided with the EU call for proposals – Mare/2014/04 Support measures for small scale fishing document to examine and bring back to their RIFFS.
13. NW herring proposal – NRIFF proposal was adopted as a NIFF position with the stipulation that the proposal be further developed following suggestions from the NIFF members. NIFF members from the NRIFF have agreed to work on the proposal and come back to NIFF.
14. Inland Fisheries Ireland –The DAFM asked why oyster fisheries for example in Blacksod Bay where they co-exist with scallop fisheries have no management measures associated with them where as scallop do? They are all in the same Natura area. This query has already gone from the DAFM to the DCNER. Dr Cathal Gallagher, IFI to follow up.
15. NIFF chair handed a letter he received from the Eel fishermen of the Slaney addressed to the IFI to Dr Cathal Gallagher. Dr Gallagher is to reply and cc NIFF secretariat.
16. Cadmium in crab update – SFPA is working closely with the 8 exporters and the Chinese to resolve the issue and will keep the NIFF updated on progress.
17. Reluctance of inshore vessels to contact the Coastguard when in danger – BIM to broach this issue with Brian Hogan, MSO at their next meeting in a few weeks’ time. NIFF chair has also been in contact with the MSO and the Coastguard on this issue. Both the Coastguard and the MSO have also displayed a willingness to engage with NIFF Chair. NIFF to ask RIFFs to consider promoting/attending meetings hosted by Coastguard/RNLI on Safety in the Fishing Industry as outlined in a recent “Skipper” article.
18. Two issues were raised in regard to the new PFD/PLB lifejackets grant aided under BIM’s Enhanced Basic Safety Training Course: 1.) front of the lifejacket wearing out due to wear and tear and 2.) servicing of the lifejacket. Two actions were suggested: 1.) return a sample of worn out jacket so that it can be examined by the manufactures SIOEN to see if it can be repaired or redesigned if necessary and 2.) BIM training to investigate establishment of a service replacement scheme for lifejackets with SIOEN.
19. AOB - The introduction of Certificate of Competency for all fishermen is being worked on as a response to the Leech report and BIM will keep NIFF briefed on progress.

**Date of next NIFF meeting still to be confirmed**