

## Action Points/Decisions from the NIFF meeting with Minister Creed held in Agriculture House, Dublin on the 28<sup>th</sup> November 2019.

### 1.) Update on RIFF Renewal

BIM provided an update on the RIFF renewal process and its progress to date. The renewal process in all RIFFs should be completed by early January 2020. Minister Creed thanked all those involved and reiterated that through the renewal process the inshore sector shouldn't miss the opportunity to have strong RIFFs and NIFF.

### 2.) Update on Implementation of the Inshore Fisheries Strategy

BIM provide an update on the Implementation of the Inshore Strategy to date. The membership of the Implementation Group and the 3 areas that the group are working on initially were outlined as follows:

- i. Organisation and Profile
  - a. Audit of current data
  - b. Establish a baseline to measure progress including an economic, social, cultural and downstream effect.
  - c. Climate action
- ii. Management and Planning
- iii. Building Capacity and Resilience
  - a. Knowledge Transfer Scheme – inshore sector learning from more experienced people for example the planning process involved with Offshore Energy. BIM plan to hold a workshop on Offshore Energy in February 2020.
  - b. Improved Digital Literacy of the sector - the group has been exploring mechanisms to foster engagement by the sector through a digital revolution.

**Action Point:** BIM to keep the NIFF informed of progress in the Implementation of the Strategy and proposed workshop on Offshore Energy scheduled for 2020.

### 3.) Update on the revised proposal for Mackerel Hook and Line Fishery from the NW RIFF

This proposal requested that the current cap of 500kg per trip for line caught Mackerel is increased to 1250kg per trip for the reasons as outlined in the proposal. The RIFFs support this proposal. The Minister stated that he is prepared to consider increasing the cap by 50% to 750kgs per trip and if the NIFF would be willing to consider the proposal it should go back to the NW RIFF to see if they will accept this increase and then onto the QMAC for consideration before bringing it back to the Minister. **Action Point:** NW RIFF to discuss the proposed increase of 50% (750kg) and decide if they wish to revise the proposal with the figure of 750kg before forwarding to QMAC for consideration. The QMAC will then advise the Minister of their decision.

### 4.) SFPA Health Certificates for Brown Crab

NW RIFF member informed the meeting of the imminent introduction of a new testing regime for the export of brown crab to China and Hong Kong. From the 2<sup>nd</sup> December 2019 samples will be collected by the SFPA and analysis will be conducted in the Marine Institute. For live crab exports one sample from each consignment (up to 2 tonnes) destined for China will be tested for Cadmium levels and health certs will only be issued if the analysis conforms with Chinese

Cadmium limits. The likelihood is that most of the brown crab will not conform to the requisite levels, effectively making it very difficult to maintain China and Hong Kong as exports markets. The €17 million value of the Chinese brown crab market, the staff of processors and exporters that depend on it and the fishermen that supply them was strongly highlighted by the NIFF members. The issue of the different wordings on health certs issued by different EU member states were raised by the NIFF as well as the potential of a coordinated European approach to China to change cadmium testing to cover white meat only. The NIFF requested a delay to the new testing regime until after the very valuable Christmas market was over. The NIFF highlighted that small inshore day vessels would be most impacted by this new regime whereas larger vivier vessels could land their crab in Holland or Portugal, obtain health certs in those counties and continue to export to China. Small inshore vessels do not have this option and will ultimately lose access to the lucrative Chinese market. The Minister, DAFM and the SFPA all stressed that the integrity of Ireland's food hygiene certification system could not be undermined in any way. While the Minister retains the power to give general policy directives, that power is qualified. The Minister is precluded by statute from interfering in the performance by the SFPA of a function assigned to it or exercising any power or control in relation to individuals or groups of cases with which the Authority may be concerned. The issue of the wording of the health certs and seeking changes to Chinese cadmium testing protocols were left as possible avenues for exploration but chances of success appeared very limited.

#### 5.) Update on deterrent measures for crab clawing

Following the NIFF meeting of the 31<sup>st</sup> May 2019 the IMG reviewed the present proposal on the management of landing of crab claws. They outlined the changes they are proposing including clawing activity only taking place in "approved" establishments. Landing allowances permitted depending on the type of gear used. **Action Point:** NIFF to outline the scope of what any definition of "approved" establishment needs to cover as the SFPA's definition of "approved" premises is very narrow and confirmed to those with EU numbers and does not cover catering establishments for example. NIFF to forward what they feel should be covered by "approved" establishment to the SFPA to draw up a form of wording for this definition that would satisfy everyone or if an alternative but more accurate legal term should be used in the proposal. Once the definition of an "approved establishment is clarified it can be added to the revised DAFM proposal for consideration by the IMG first and then circulated to the RIFFs for their approval/ comments.

#### 6.) Update on Brexit

Minister Creed updated the NIFF on Brexit. A no-deal Brexit seems very unlikely now and the UK could be entering a transition phase until the end of 2020. The free trade deal between the UK and the EU should be negotiated during the transition phase however it is highly unlikely to happen that quickly and therefore the UK would need to seek an extension of the transition period to get a trade deal completed. He emphasised that the fishing industry will be crucial in these negotiations.

#### 7.) Climate Action Plan

Before the presentation on the Climate Action Plan the issue of offshore windfarms was raised and the lack of response to NIFF 's letter to Minister Eoghan Murphy TD and the DHPLG. The NIFF asked Minister Creed if he could help the NIFF in arranging a meeting between NIFF and

Minister Murphy on windfarms. This is an urgent issue for the inshore sector at the present time. The Minister made a commitment to try and set up this meeting.

DAFM gave a presentation to the NIFF on the Climate Action Plan which was launched in June 2019. The plan sets actions across every sector in society which will ensure we meet our 2030 climate commitments. Included in the plan are climate adaptation measures to ensure that the state is ready to protect people from the negative effects of climate change in Ireland and steps to limit any damage. The NIFF was informed that there are a number of case studies in regard to the Seafood sector in the Agriculture, Forestry and Seafood Adaptation Plan. Each of these case studies examines the impact of future climate change projections and steps towards building resilience. The DAFM also stressed the importance of the NIFF making a submission to the public consultation on the draft National Marine Planning Framework. Once this framework is approved, legislation will be enacted to support it. It will be too late at that stage for any changes to the plan. The NIFF need to have their say now. **Action Point:** Further information on Climate action can be found in the link here: <https://www.dccae.gov.ie/en-ie/climate-action/topics/adapting-to-climate-change/national-adaptation-framework/sectoral-adaptation-planning/Pages/Sectoral.aspx>. NIFF secretary to contact MSP team DHPLG to see if a meeting can be set up between them and the NIFF maybe in early January 2020 before the NIFF make a submission to the public consultation. NIFF secretary to send out hard copies of the Draft National Planning Framework to the NIFF members.

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