

Angling Consultative Council of Ireland

Review of 2021 Progress

Background

Minister for the Environment, Climate and Communications, Eamon Ryan, T.D., established the Angling Consultative Council of Ireland (ACCI) in November 2020. The overall objective of this Council is to put a formal process and structure in place to harness those representative bodies that are willing to productively contribute to the sport of angling and to support cooperation across its component disciplines. Participation is open to all national angling representative organisations.

Functions

According to the agreed Terms of Reference, the Group is intended to:

- be the channel for orderly, progressive and constructive engagement on significant policy issues with Inland Fisheries Ireland (IFI) and also senior officials in the Department of the Environment, Climate & Communications (DECC) and the Minister
- be a significant conduit for access to organisation - related funding, particularly sponsorship and supports for youth development, social inclusion, training and development and governance
- embrace and operate to the highest standards of sports governance (those of Sport Ireland)
- be a key mechanism for angling stakeholder input to the development of a new policy statement for the inland fisheries sector

Current Membership

Participation is open to all national angling representative bodies. Current members are listed below:

- Angling Council of Ireland
- Irish Federation of Sea Anglers
- Salmon and Sea Trout Recreational Anglers of Ireland
- Irish Federation of Pike Angling Clubs

- Irish Pike Society
- European Federation of Sea Anglers
- Irish Angling Development Alliance
- Irish Charter Skippers Association
- Federation of Irish Salmon and Sea Trout Anglers

Officials from DECC and IFI also attend ACCI meetings.

2021 Work Programme

The ACCI met eight times in 2021. Members were invited to identify priority issues for inclusion in the ACCI Work Programme for 2021. Six themes were identified as priority issues by the members as follows:

- Conservation & Habitats, including, inter alia:
 - MPAs - a submission was made on behalf of ACCI to the consultation/observation process. DECC reported good engagement with the Department of Housing, Local Government & Heritage (DHLGH) and the commitment to take inland fisheries views on board as the process is rolled out
 - A draft chapter document on Conservation and Habitats was prepared
- Protection
- Access & Coaching
- Species Specific Policy & Stock Management
- Governance & Funding
- Inland Fisheries Management Regimes (January 2022 meeting)

In addition to the above priority issues identified in initial meetings by members, ACCI also considered other issues as they arose over the course of the year, including:

- Designated Salmonid Waters Bye-law under the Programme for Government, *Our Shared Future* (now being progressed as IFI's Western Lakes Management Plan)

- Response from Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine (DAFM) re 6NM limit – Court judgement awaited
- IFI proposals to re-establish the National Inland Fisheries Forum (NIFF)
- IFI Pike policy review – IFI Senior Management Team (SMT) reviewing policy document before submission to ACCI
- IFI corporate plan presented to ACCI
- IFI meetings with Waterways Ireland (WI) – access issues and weed control
- Access issues on Greenways – DECC / IFI liaising with DHLGH
- Donegal County Council's Fisheries Committee sought an open discussion on a limited mixed stock salmon fishery off the Donegal Coast
- ACCI to put forward a submission paper on the River Basin Management Plan (RBMP) to the National Water Forum (NWF). This paper will promote the view that all the action points in the RBMP, are broader than fisheries extending to the entire ecosystem. Public Consultation opened 28 September 2021 and closes 31 March 2022
- Irish Charter Skippers Association (ICSA) COVID-19 Issues & Costs - DECC advised that a detailed proposal was put forward regarding a funding scheme to support charter skippers due to COVID-19 restrictions - a response is awaited
- Bait collection is permitted in Special Areas of Conservation (SAC's) and Marine Protected Areas (MPA's) and to be recorded as a MPA category

Programme for 2022

- ACCI will continue meeting on a monthly basis
- DECC intends to submit draft policy papers at meetings. These will form the basis of the planned policy statement on inland fisheries. The first draft policy paper on the impacts of climate change and water quality was submitted at the January meeting