

NORTH LANARKSHIRE COUNCIL

REPORT

TO: ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE	Subject: REPORT OF THE COMMON FISHERIES POLICY REVIEW GROUP
From: DIRECTOR OF PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT	
Date: 3 SEPTEMBER 1996	Ref: SC/LMcW

Introduction

This report is provided for information. In 1995 the Government established a group to review the Common Fisheries Policy. The Review Group has now completed its work and their findings were published on 24 July 1996. A copy of the report and correspondence from the Scottish office has been forwarded to the Chief Executive from COSLA. COSLA are seeking responses from local authorities highlighting any concerns they have.

The Common Fisheries Policy

The Common Fisheries Policy (CFP) is designed to conserve fish stocks and ensure a sustainable future for those stocks and the communities which rely upon them. It has been criticised by the Review Group for failing to halt the decline of fish stocks. Indeed, it is claimed that the industry now faces endemic problems of over-fishing, reducing profitability and associated socio-economic and environmental problems.

The Review Group is not advocating retreat from the CFP. Rather, it proposes reform and recognises that the CFP provides the legal and institutional framework in which the proposed objectives can be achieved in co-operation with other European nations.

Management of fish stocks is a long-term activity. A major review of the CFP will take place in 2002 and the Review Group appears to be working towards having an input into this review.

Relevance to North Lanarkshire

As North Lanarkshire is a landlocked authority with no fishing fleet, the significance of the CFP is not easily identifiable. There are 3 major pillars of the CFP:

- The Conservation Regime
- The Structural Regime
- The Marketing Regime

It is the Marketing Regime that has most relevance to North Lanarkshire.

North Lanarkshire has several fish and food processing companies which rely to varying extents on the supply of fish and fish derived products. However, of these, a number of the companies depend on farmed fish for supplies which does not seem to be effected by the CFP.

The Review Group has put forward the following proposed changes to the CFP:

- The Government should secure changes to the EU system of reference prices to provide a more accurate reflection of discounted market prices for frozen fish, in line with the approach used for fresh fish imports: and to reflect better the variety of sizes and qualities of frozen fish.

- The Government should secure Commission proposals to reduce import duties on species and presentations in which the Community is not clearly self-sufficient.
- The Government should invite the Commission to simplify the carry-over premium arrangements for the temporary withdrawal of fish from the market.
- The industry should consider the corporate marketing of catches by producer organisations to improve continuity of supply and product quality as compared with the current auction system.

Without having any particular expertise within the Economic Development Unit regarding the CFP, it appears that the above proposed changes to the CFP may benefit those North Lanarkshire companies that depend on fish or fish derived products.

A copy of the Review Group's report on the CFP is held in the Economic Development Unit.

Recommendation

That the Council agree the contents of this report and agree to a memorandum being sent to the Chief Executive for his submission to COSLA, outlining these points.



 Stanley C Cook
Director of Planning & Development