

CLYDE
INSHORE FISHERIES GROUP

Chairman: Dr Billy Sinclair

22nd July 2010

Dear Howard,

I read with interest each month the COAST newsletter and the items that are presented there. We in the Clyde need to have our ongoing interests publicised broadly to allow the wider audience a good understanding of what we are collectively trying to achieve, both locally and Nationally.

A central theme in many of the articles in the Newsletter is that of COAST, promoting the current situation with regard to the Inshore Fisheries industry within the Clyde. The inshore fishing industry within the Clyde is a traditional fishery and one which has a long history within the coastal communities of the region and beyond. As with many such inshore fisheries across the UK and across the world, inshore fishing is changing, for a wide variety of reasons, both legislatively and at the ecosystem level. The Clyde inshore fishing industry is no different and as such, these changes and the auspices under which they are operating in something which I feel the need to clarify to your members, supporters and readership -

While the Inshore Fisheries Groups (IFGs) in Scotland are still in their infancy and continually developing towards their full capacity and potential, they have been specifically designed to allow inshore fishermen the opportunity to contribute to the ongoing development of an economically viable and sustainable fishery within the Clyde. The Clyde IFG, as with all other IFGs around Scotland, is such that, our representatives are drawn from fishermen's associations and also allow for membership from non-affiliated fishermen working in the commercial inshore sector.

Clyde IFG is tasked, among other things, with producing a Local Management Plan for commercial fisheries within the Clyde, which will be tied intrinsically with the Higher Level Objectives set out in the Strategic Framework Directive of 2005. Once this local Management Plan has been developed by the IFG, it will be submitted for approval by the IFG Advisory Group member organisations. The Advisory Group is comprised of organisations such as Scottish Natural Heritage, Marine Scotland-Science, Clyde Enforcement Group, Royal Society for the Protection of Birds, Scottish Sea Angling Conservation Network among others. These groups will address the proposals put forward from the IFG Executive Committee in the Management Plan and appraise them in terms of their validity, effectiveness and agreement with the HLO's. The Management Plan also calls for wider community engagement and discussion, such that other organisations, bodies and individuals are aware of what is being proposed and can comment on the plan etc.

Recent editions of the COAST Newsletter have suggested that the voice of COAST should be an integral part of the process of conservation and development of the Clyde marine resource. As Chair of the Clyde IFG, I think that organisations such as COAST should play a proactive role in the continued development of the Clyde and its related fisheries. As such, I would like to reaffirm that my earlier invitation to you, for COAST to join the Advisory Group for the Clyde IFG, is still open should you wish to take it up, thereby giving

COAST a voice at the most appropriate point in the overall process of fisheries development within the Clyde.

I look forward to the future where a healthy vibrant Clyde is supporting not only a commercial viable and sustainable inshore fishing industry, but also a rich and biodiverse marine environment which can safely be enjoyed by all.

Best wishes

Billy

Dr Billy Sinclair, Chair – Clyde IFG