



## **Minutes of the 425<sup>th</sup> NESCS Council Meeting, 15<sup>th</sup> January 2016**

The meeting took place in The Clock Tower, Department of Education and Skills, Marlborough St, at 10 am.

**Attendance:** John Shaw (Chair), Cecil Beamish (Dept of Ag), Anna Davies, Seamus O'Donohoe, Edmond Connolly, Brid O'Brien, Seán Healy, Karen Murphy, Mary Daly, Seán Ó Riain, Oisín Coghlan Michael Ewing, Karin Dubsky, Gavan O'Leary, Mary Walsh, Owen Ryan, Simonetta Ryan, Tony Donohue, Ian Talbot, David Hegarty, , John Murphy, Edgar Morgenroth, Shay Cody, Frank Allen and Seamus O'Donohoe.

**Secretariat:** Patrick Bresnihan, Rory O'Donnell, Larry O'Connell, Anne-Marie McGauran, Jeanne Moore, Helen Johnston, Noel Cahill and Richard Holland.

**Apologies:** John Murphy, Danny McCoy, Edgar Morgenroth, John McCarthy, Michael O'Sullivan, James Doorley, Siobhan Egan, Tom Parlon.

**1. Minutes of the Meeting of December 2015** were approved.

### **2. The Dynamics of Sustainability and Local Development: Aquaculture**

The Director explained that NESCS work on sustainable development is proceeding on two fronts: analysis of the interaction of environment, society and economy at the level of national policy and study of how these interactions occur in specific contexts. Dr Patrick Bresnihan introduced his paper aquaculture. The themes identified include: the environmental risks that impact on aquaculture production and the ways these have been addressed by industry and the state; conflicts over aquaculture developments and the way decisions are made about the allocation and use of the foreshore; the challenges of market-led development for a sustainable aquaculture industry and the possibility of more diverse economic models.

The Council welcomed the paper. Dr Cecil Beamish, of DAFM, outlined the relative infancy of aquaculture compared to the fisheries in Ireland. Since the EU is the largest seafood market in the world, there is real potential for Ireland. The discussion focused on the role of science in decision-making; the importance of involvement of communities and the need for greater vision for coastal communities; the challenge of creating integrated economic and social solutions for rural Ireland; appropriate support to small enterprises such as those in the Wild Atlantic Way Seafood Trail; the challenges faced by the sector to date, including licensing, disease and climate change; the importance of transport access to markets; recognition that an industry dominated by one firm may not be the only option; and the role of Environmental Impact Assessments. Some concerns were raised over the timing of the research, with multiannual funding schemes recently announced that set the course for the sector. Some questioned whether food security provides a rationale for growth in the aquaculture sector when environment factors are taken into account. The Council noted the broader relevance of the paper. Regulation should take less attractive development paths off the table and support the emergence of business models that meet broad economic, social and environmental goals. In closing, the Chair noted that will go to written procedure.

**3. Any other business:** The next meeting was set for Friday, 19<sup>th</sup> February 2016.