

Internal note - LINK meeting with SEPA 11 September 2017.

Attending for LINK: Lloyd Austin (Convener of Governance Group), Bruce Wilson (Vice Convener of Economics Group), Dawn Purchase (Leader of Aquaculture Subgroup) Craig Macadam (LINK trustee, Leader of Wildlife Subgroup), Alice Walsh.

SEPA: Bob Downes (Chair), Terry A'hearn (CEO), David Harley, Head of Ecology and Scot Mathieson.

Relations with Business, compliance strategy and aquaculture.

Sectoral growth agreements – business must be way beyond compliance to enter these. Aiming to do more of public sector partnerships, like city deals.

Charging scheme is out to consultation – pushback from smaller hydro operators.

Aquaculture: SEPA spends more time on it than any other sector. Discussion included:

LINK's view on the unsustainability of the industry and LINK's particular concerns

Dawn explained how Norway's approach is stronger than it is here in terms of moving towards closed containment/offshore/aquaculture free zones, discussed other international examples.

Current [consultation on DZRs](#), it would be **useful for SEPA to have our broad views** in response to that (by 30 September). Asked for **LINK's Aquaculture Vision of the Future**.

SEPA is working out full compliance schedule, will be doing more monitoring for DZR sites, modelling a more strategic joined up approach across the public agencies.

LINK's view that they need to be seen to be cracking down. Terry agreed, will be judged on what they do.

In the pre-meeting we thought to press them for some public statement on squaring Scotland's growth strategy with One Planet living. Replied it is not SEPA's place to tell people what kind of economy it wants, though it can say how many planets are needed. Lloyd encouraged them to get into the Good Food Nation debate and be more explicit about the costs of aquaculture.

Brexit and WFD, CAP etc

SEPA – Bob said there is a clear line that current standards are to be at least maintained, as the starting point. SEPA is looking more closely at key issues and where they need to get stuck in. No thinking on post CAP yet. Lloyd explained the extensive liaison at GUK and Links levels, and with ScotGov and Ministers, and breadth of positions worked out amongst the NGOs, including the governance gap when recourse to EU court is gone, and influence of eNGO networks on the EU negotiating side.

When the time comes for more detailed thinking on what will replace CAP, we asked them to liaise with us. Agreed that definition of public goods will be crucial and a shared agenda will be good. Bob mentioned food security arguments some will be putting for no support for the uplands, which Bruce noted for need for counter arguments within the wider land management matrix.

We raised **nitrogen** and our ask for a compulsory nitrogen budget in the Climate Act, and discussion of how land use is largely unaddressed in climate terms, peatlands excepted.

NEN: SEPA is engaged, sees the potential and how its work relates to habitat restoration and RBMP targets. Scot will share its response to SNH's consultation on it. Will be at the 26 Sept workshop.

Terry mentioned its new power to enter enforcement undertakings, and possibility of linking to a list of things which LINK could contribute to, for an erring business to support as part of its reparations. Lloyd linked this to the whiskey industry which has good practice on water energy and waste, and some expansion into peatlands work through the Peatland Programme, and now drawing their thinking to using their heft to drive more sustainable supply chains (barley).

Circular economy: not in the programme for government, and no intelligence to offer. Speculation that the Deposit return scheme is the main act, and hope from Bob that it means more practical action as legislation is not necessary.

City region deal for Stirling: SEPA is very pleased with what it has been able to do with the Stirling deal, and how it got the local authority to raise its vision to be the first city to live within one planet means. Discussion of the barrage (SEPA feeling is the proposal will fade away). Lloyd said its time for formal objections to it. Dundee is next on their list for early discussions.

Environment Law centre: Lloyd explained LINK's work here, end point will be the prospectus. Terry asked if we will be looking for some resources, so door slightly open.

The innovation panel: Terry thanked us for putting forward a rep (Matthew) to the steering group and noted it was a meeting between Mathis Wackernagel and the head of Stirling council that had led to bolder thinking on that city deal. These were the kind of catalyst effects the programme aimed for.

All were happy with how the meeting went. Terry and Bob asked for another in **6 months**, and understand it will be with those leading on the agenda issues for LINK.

Scot is the contact point for LINK issues.

AW 12 September 2017.