

## **Gordon Brown**

Thank you. I hope you enjoyed lunch free. I can't imagine what the Bill is going to look like, but there we are. I want to move on. We have three sessions this afternoon; one an up-date. The first one, possible future management structures. Second slot on *GS* and third slot, future of the forum, assuming you want it to continue at all.

The first session though is going to be presented by Andrew Wallace, who is well-known to most of you and the consultants APEM and Keith Hendry.

So, without further ado, I am just going to hand over to Andrew, thank you.

## **Management Structures**

### **Introduction - Andrew Wallace Association of Salmon Fishery Boards**

Good afternoon ladies and gentleman. Just before we start, I would just like to echo the words of the minister this morning, on behalf of the fisheries sector, in terms of congratulating Jane Wright on her MBE. I personally thought she should have been made a Duchess, but MBE it is and we should all learn to curtsy, but Jane, thank you for all your incredibly hard work over the years; the thousands of miles; the endless meetings. I would have thought thousands of pounds you have spent. All for nothing, and its very, very rewarding to see you rewarded in that way. So, well done you.

So anyway.

(Jane Wright speaks without microphone so unable to make out what is said)

Applause

Thank you Jane.

Right. I am not going to be terribly long, you'll be glad to hear, but I'm just going to give a brief background to these discussions that we have been having about future management structures and you're now all familiar with the system that we have in place for having these discussions. I'm just going to go over those very briefly, because we've obviously got these big plenary group, plenary forum sessions, which I think are a very useful place to download; and we have this steering group, about which you've heard and which has done really quite a lot of work over the past few months; and then we have this small sub- group, which consists of myself and Ron Wood SFCA, IFM in form of Alastair Stephen, the ASWF in the form of George Holdsworth and we are hoping to add Sarah Bayley from RAFTS to that group and we were charged, rather specifically, with looking at this- developing the ideas of management structure on behalf of the steering group.

But, again, before we perhaps pursue that, I would also like to add to some of the speakers that have, or people in the audience today, our thanks to the Executive for putting together such an effective process at allowing difficult issues to be debated and coming up with sensible solutions. I think it's been a particularly inspiring way to deal with controversial issues.

On the subject of the Bill, we have seen, really, the main content of the bill this morning and, you'll see from that and the supporting documentation, that two key issues have been left really out of this. One is the question of management structure for the future, which I know has been a burning question for some years and, of course, the whole issue of access has been largely parked but addressed, to an extent, in the review of protection orders and there are problems with this. Because, of course, many of the issues that we are dealing with under this current Bill are very much inter-twined with management structures and, with access arrangement, there is a very, very complex way of inter-relationships between all these things and this has been a problem that's undoubtedly affected our discussions; but there is a *Real Politic* and a practicality about this process and so these two issues have been left for discussion at another time.

So, I think, really one of the things that we concluded is that some form of change to the management structures that govern our fisheries is desirable. The extent to which that change might manifest itself is a big question and I think the other thing probably, as a first principle, that we have all agreed to, is that we need to build on the existing strengths of the current system because we have inherent strengths in our current system as well as weaknesses.

I think the other thing the group, as a general rule, has supported, is that any change should be evidence-based; that there should be good solid evidence of a problem if we are going to embark on possibly quite radical reform of these structures and so those, I think, are the key working principles that we have adopted.

So, we, as a group, were charged with really doing some of what I call some blue sky's thinking. I wouldn't say it's been very blue, but slightly sort of greyish sky's and we have looked at this idea, which I presented at the last forum meeting, about the sort of various options that might be available to us, varying from the status quo; i.e. doing nothing, through to the concept of expanded fishery boards - a parallel structure to deal with this all species management issue, these unitary structures that we have heard about this morning and will hear more about this afternoon.

The idea of some form of centralised approach, such as they have in south of the border, nationalisation or indeed the concept of stimulated evolution which, I think, is an interesting concept that has come up and was actually brought to the floor by Ron Woods SFCA. At the last meeting, we presented this SWOT analysis, looking at all these various options and looking at their strengths and weaknesses and I think it would be fair to say that the idea of a unitary structure was the one that seemed to be favoured.

In a theoretical sense, there is obviously the devil in detail but, in a theoretical sense, and I think perhaps we may have made a slight mistake with the use of the word unitary, which I think seems to be associated with local authorities and that may not be an altogether good thing. But it's the idea of a single body, dealing with these responsibilities, and I think there is another area of confusion and that is; do we mean unitary, as in managing all species or do we mean unitary as in unitary/single organisation dealing with the sort of tasks and

responsibilities that are currently dealt with? A plethora of organisations, such as fisheries trust and liaison committee and what have you, and I think that we need some clarification on that and we had a bit of a first stab at what a unitary catchment-based organisation like this would actually do; and we agreed that monitoring and research, clearly currently the responsibility of the trusts, but clearly very important and the whole question of enforcement is obviously vital - a neglected area.

We believe fisheries development is this whole business of the economy of fisheries, which I think we could all do a lot more on and the whole question of regulation, applying regulations and implementing statutory functions and, of course, the whole question of managing access and whether you would like to draw that into the management structures, for which there is currently no precedent actually at the moment. The whole access arrangement sits very much outside the management structure. So, anyway, as I said, the devil is unquestionably in the detail. Much more work is needed on this. There is no doubt about that and there are really quite fundamental questions, which I think demand that we take this issue very seriously and we proceed with a certain amount of caution.

One of the key issues is the scale at which these bodies might operate and we've heard everything in the discussions, ranging from something much more akin to, say, a local authority approach. Big, regional bodies, right the way through to a highly-devolved structure, such as the one we've got now and everything in between and I think the scale of resolution at which these bodies operate is a very, very fundamental point and I suspect there will be quite big differences of opinion on them.

The issues of funding was alluded to early on and I think we have been banging on about this amongst ourselves for a long time and that is we cannot change anything without more money. Where that source of money comes from is very much up for debate, but I'm afraid the issue of rod licensing or things like area permitting, combined with public sector funding, are subjects we will have to have a look at if we are going to fund additional services to the freshwater sector.

I think it is fair to say that the salmon sector, which currently raises about three million pounds a year, through the assessment system, probably twice that spent by proprietors, is still itself under a certain amount of financial stress, given the task that it has in front of it; and there is very little prospect, over and above what we are doing already, to effectively cross-subsidise all these others areas of work and I think that is an important issue and there are further points about the whole question of representation and accountability; the exact sort of powers that these organisations would have and the relationships with these bodies with their public sector and how these bodies are represented and these are all fundamental points which I think are going to need a certain amount of discussion.

So, it was really at this point, after we hit a bit a glass ceiling really, that we felt that we really needed to do two things. I think one was; check that the people within this steering group and this working group were actually on the right track and we had some signals from the previous forum meetings. But, clearly, there is quite a lot of work going on effectively. It's not behind closed doors, because all the minutes are on the web, but amongst a fairly small cabal of people. So, I think it's important that we bounce these ideas off a wider audience and the second point is, of course, it's quite possible that we've missed things and that a fresh view of the world we could usefully profit from and it was with that in mind that we decided to get an independent and impartial person in from the outside, to just sort of look at this

thing with a totally [sort of] fresh pair of eyes and that person comes in the form of Keith Hendry here, from APEM, who is going to report to us today.

Now, we haven't actually seen the work that he's produced, over and above what you've got in the hand-outs here, and we certainly haven't had a chance to discuss it but he's actually broken ground on this one and is going to allow us now to think a bit more laterally about some of the options for the future. I'm also reliably informed that Keith is, actually, a black belt in judo, so I strongly suggest you agree with him. Thank you very much.

### Keith Hendry APEM

So, Scottish Freshwater Fisheries Management; an Investigation into New Structures. So, just to remind you all, I'm sure you don't need reminding, the District Salmon Fishery Boards systems; you manage your own catchments, make decisions about management within those catchments, within the remit of the law, implement management action and have been aided in that management action by the development of the Trusts. But Salmon and Sea trout are the only species currently covered by the law.

So, the current study; what were the objectives?

First of all, to investigate potential new structures for the management of Freshwater Fisheries in Scotland and to canvass opinion from all you present here, via your organisations and representatives as to what you think, what form you think that new structure or structures should take and the way that I did this was to undertake a questionnaire-based interview with some twenty organisations representing a variety of both public and private fish-related bodies and user groups across Scotland.

Now, this is a whistle-stop tour of the results of that consultation, which mirror almost identically the SWOT analysis that was done by the Steering Group, which was very reassuring because it was the same people we talked to.

First thing; in terms of retaining the positive aspects of the current system, local involvement, controlled financially by those involved. Very good for salmon and sea trout, where it works well. Trusts work something that is very close-guarded and regarded with enthusiasm and voluntary input and so on. So, some significant aspects of the current system people would wish to retain, but the negative side of things; Salmocentrics are concentrating on just those two species. Fragmented, there are some seventy-odd organisation involved in fisheries. The area coverage can be patchy, particularly where there are problems. Poor memberships which isn't necessarily representative and so on. Duplication of effort; sure, these are things you have heard before.

But, in terms of the fundamental question; do you agree with the need for a fundamental review of fisheries management in Scotland? Universally, well not universally, almost the vast majority of people are saying; yes, we think that things have to change and there has to be a change in the way fisheries are managed.

The second question was; is a Unitary Body the way forward? And, again, the vast majority of the organisations said; yes, a Unitary Body, or a group of Bodies, with the responsibility for managing freshwater fish is, indeed, the way forward.

So, let's just explore the areas of agreement from this analysis.

First of all, as I have said, change is needed. There is a great desire to retain the good and positive aspects of the current system. To make sure that legislation and the protection afforded by fisheries management covers all species in all waters. In order for that to happen, points have been made, very strongly, that we can't expect the private sector to pick up the tab, where you have got species that have got no recreational or commercial value. So, therefore, there has to be public funding, which take us into the direction of partnership working. Where there is public funding, we have to have accountability and audit trails for public funds and we have to resolve the issues of fragmentation and geographic scale. And I've deliberately put a question mark at the end of that one, because that's the area that there is a lot of disagreement over.

If we just explore that a teensy bit further. Again, in terms of the majority of people, the respondents, we had roughly forty per cent of people said we should manage on a catchment basis, but that should include an over-arching umbrella organisation. The SFCC springs to mind. Something to impart good practice and so on and consistency and, then again, another significant group saying; no, it should be regionally managed, but again the majority of the regions, with some kind of central or structural hub over the top of it.

So, it's by no means clear-cut, in terms of what you want and I think, to certain extent, that's going to have to be dictated by a broader understanding of how the systems might work. So, a fundamental point about that scale is that, at catchment level, local management and decision-making is favoured. So, despite the fact that we might be looking for larger management regions, the actual decision-making process has got to be at the catchment level, but, again, universal agreement, more or less, the number of organisations needs to be reduced and co-ordination between them improved.

So, sticking on this area of fragmentation and geography, I use the word 'boards' here, that could mean anything; units of management, anything you like, agencies. The majority of people said they wanted to see a big reduction in the number of organisations we currently have. If we take the number of District Salmon Boards, there are over forty of them. So, reducing that to less than twenty-five, but the majority of people suggested ten as the most popular choice. So, ten regions for management. That doesn't necessarily mean disbanding the existing Salmon Board system, or force them to merge, but in terms of units, which respond to a national body or to SEPA and SNH. It's ten organisations that have been identified as the most sensible and that, of course, mirrors exactly the number of organisations that have been put forward by SEPA for the Water Framework Directive. Could be a coincidence, you say, but that is what the majority of people are telling me. This is a reflection of the responses that have been received from those interviews and questionnaires.

I would just like now to go through some basic management principles and again these are things which I am going to look at for all the management models that I am going to present to you There are going to be four of these. The first is that management and regulation for fisheries in Scotland should be kept separate. Now, that's different to the system in England

and Wales, where the regulator, the Environment Agency, also undertakes fisheries management. In Scotland, you have a separate system, where the District Salmon Boards undertake management and the regulators, primarily SEPA and SNH, are distinct and there is universal support for maintaining that separation between management and regulation.

In terms of the scale of management, whether it should be local or national in terms of management from the centre, overwhelming support for a federal model of management. So, in other words, devolving decision-making within a national framework to locally-based organisations, regions or areas. So, locally-delivered decision-making and management, within a national framework; that's what you have been saying.

That means public and private partnerships, particularly if we are talking about public funding coming into this.

That leads us on to the management modelling bit of this. Now, I have to say that this is incredibly dull, so do forgive me for going through this, but it is quite important to understand the different management models that I am going to be putting forward.

It's the principle of co-management. This isn't management theory. This is observation of how public and private organisations inter-act with each other. This delightful diagram here shows the relationship between a centralised and a decentralised management model and, if we have an example of a centralised model, that would be the Environment Agency at one end of the spectrum and a user-group-based system, a decentralised model, at the top end of the spectrum. We can see public sector influences in white, private sector influence in yellow. So, as we move from a public-dominated system to a private-dominated system, you can see we go through various stages of interaction between the two sets; the private and the public sector.

Now, these have been identified by the management gurus of this particular discipline. I won't go through them all individually. I'll whistle through them actually, because I am going to be short of time. But what we are fundamentally interested in is that, moving from presentation of ideas and advisory groups influencing decisions right the way through to a situation where the private sector operates and undertakes management, but within the framework of the law and that is the current system we have in Scotland. It's not saying that the current District Salmon Boards make the law. They don't; they operate within the law.

OK, so the proposed unitary fisheries body or bodies; what are going to be the common features amongst the models we are going to explore?

Well, first of all, if we just look at what they might do. They will collect data on fish, fisheries and their habitats. They will collate, analyse and supply information on the status of all fish species and their habitats. They will undertake fisheries management, exportation, stocking, looking at predators, habitat etc, enforcement and then undertake research on a local and management-orientated basis. That's very different to the function of FRS and then, if appropriate, raise funds. So, these features are going to be common to all of the management models that I am going to put forward shortly.

The second common feature is that some form of umbrella body; if we are going to look at regionalisation or devolved management to a local level, then we have to have some kind of format, within which fisheries management is going to undertake, so that they have common

reporting, common standards and so on, to go upwards to our regulators and, from a European legislation point of view, to satisfy those requirements.

So, I am going to call this national body a Fisheries Authority, just to give it a name so that we can separate it, rather than talking in numbers. It doesn't matter what it is called, but we have an umbrella body that's responsible for overseeing management. It's going to be common to all the models, so it's a central hub, if you will. It would provide high level liaison with SEPA and SNH and government, would develop guidelines for management, based on national policy and legislation. So, in other words, within the framework of the law and will formalise monitoring-reporting standards. So, in other words, very similar to function, if not identical, to our SFCC on that one.

Then, again, a common feature to all of the models is the development of fisheries action plans and those fisheries action plans we will go into a little bit more detail in the next slide, but basically allow an audit route for actions, so that public monies can be followed through in terms on what the monies are spent on.

So, in all of these models, we are going to have fisheries action plans and the fundamental reason behind that, making these plans a statutory requirement for all rivers, is that, if we are looking at regionalisation, perhaps merging of boards or some high level representation, then a common feature from the discussions that I have had is that smaller rivers are very worried about being swamped by their larger neighbours. Having fisheries action plans, whereby it's laid out that monitoring requirements, management requirements and so on, which are linked back to funding on an auditable cycle of say six years, that would help to protect those smaller proprietors or smaller rivers in terms of preventing them being swamped by larger neighbours.

So, fisheries action plans would cover all fish species and their habitats, assess the status of all fish species and habitats, define management actions and report on progress. We are suggesting an audit on a six-year cycle, which fits in roughly with SEPA and SNH requirements for reporting back to Europe on their cycle for the habitats directive and the water framework directive.

And then, moving on to the next common feature, which is the role of the fisheries trusts; fisheries trusts have been very important in terms of fisheries management in Scotland and the idea is to retain them and the independence of fisheries trusts but not to include them in the new structures. So, being maintained allows the flexibility that we currently have, where it is appropriate to have trusts and local people want them, for those trusts to be maintained. One of the common points made to me was that they provide, not only local involvement, but also an independent voice, in terms of local management. It's also important that they maintain their charitable status and access to funding that could not otherwise be accessed by other bodies and then that they provide a very significant role in habitat restoration and that should be a maintained role in education as well and then contribute, if necessary, to management actions locally, via the umbrella bodies.

Looking at potential funding sources for, again, the whole range of models that we are going to consider; we have the private system, currently, with the fisheries assessment or levy. There is also the possibility of a permit, or day ticket tax, and a service charge or supporting rate. Now, there is very little support for these first two. Fisheries assessment, people are generally saying; yes, it works. Let's keep it. From the public sector, we have grant in aid

with possible linking of grant in aid for fisheries-related work from SEPA and SNH for the habitats directive or water framework directive and then rod licence - an individual rod licence. We have put up here the figures that the Environment Agency charge, roughly, for trout and coarse fish and salmon in England and Wales and we have used those figures later on in the presentation to model the income that we think could be accrued from that source.

Finally, a tagging system; carcass tagging system, something that was recommended by the English equivalent of the Salmon and Freshwater Fisheries Review, but was considered to be inappropriate unless a similar system was adopted in Scotland and that is something we would like to explore later on.

So, four possible management models are going to be proposed. They are all based on the co-management continuum, with different levels of public and private sector interaction. They range from a public sector-dominated scenario to a private sector-dominated scenario.

Now, the first one is what we call a Regional Fisheries Agency and I am using words like agency and authority and so on to try and link them with ideas in your mind. It doesn't really matter what they are called, but this is a new public body that has a centralised structure. In order for this to function, the District Salmon Boards would need to be disbanded and that would require new legislation. There would be ten fisheries agencies, operating under guidance from the National Freshwater Fisheries Authority. If you remember that umbrella body, and funding would be primarily from the private sector, grant in aid and the rod licence, possibly with a fisheries assessment maintained in some form.

A key feature would be, as in England and Wales, there would be advisory committees, but without any executive power. So, that's at the bottom left-hand corner, if you remember. This is just an illustration of what that might look like in terms of how it interacts with Government. That's the umbrella body, the National Freshwater Fisheries Authority, and we have SEERAD government at the top; the Fisheries Research Service and then interactions with SEPA. That's common to all the slides. This is the bit that's slightly different. Ten organisations, a Regional Fisheries Agency, with Government-appointed officers, who make executive decisions with an advisory committee, but which has non-executive powers and the trusts sitting outside.

So, just to go through the points again. The District Salmon Fishery Boards are disbanded, that requires new legislation. It would be publicly funded and these new agencies would undertake both management and enforcement. So, quite a radical shift from what we have at the moment.

On that spectrum of co-management, where does this sit? No surprise; bottom left-hand corner. So, it is predominately public sector-dominated. OK, so that's our first model.

Going on to the second model, this is. I have called it a Regional Fisheries Board, or a system of Regional Fisheries Boards and, again, I have used the word boards quite deliberately.

Under this model, the District Salmon Fisheries Boards are retained, but their remit is extended to cover all species. So, legislation as it sits, but extended to cover all freshwater fish species. Having said that, because we are talking about larger management units, ten or thereabouts, regional management units feeding back up to government, the District Salmon

Fishery Boards would be encouraged to merge and become multi catchment-based organisations, where it is appropriate for the smaller bodies.

Ten regional offices, all autonomous, so each regional board operates as it would wish to do so, independently, but operating under guidance from that umbrella body, using fisheries action plans or the umbrella body, using fisheries action plans, for the catchments under its control, to determine how money is spent or at least make sure that the public money is spent in a way that they would wish to be spent to cover these species that have no commercial or recreational interests. So, additional funding would be required for that from the public sector, grant in aid, rod licence and the existing fisheries assessment maintained.

So, what we have here is a system which is privately managed, as present, but publicly accountable in terms of the public funds that would be put into it. And that is more or less what it looks like. A bit at the top, exactly the same as the previous slide That's the same for all four models. This is the Regional Fisheries Board. It has an executive committee, with full executive powers, and the District Salmon Boards that sit within that region elect the executive committee. The Trusts, as currently, sit outside of it.

So, just to go through the main features again. The District Salmon Boards would be maintained under this model. Legislation would be modified to include all freshwater fish. There would need to be wider committee representation because of the public funds. I think that's undoubted, and then encouraging the boards to merge, to form larger organisations which, from a public funding perspective, would be more efficient and effective than they are now.

So, where does it sit? Right at the top of our decentralised management model. So, predominately controlled by the private sector, but with slightly more public sector involvement.

So, moving on to the third of our models. I have called this one a Council; a Regional Fisheries Council and in this model, again, we have retained the District Salmon Fisheries Boards, but with modified powers. We have restricted the powers of the boards to enforcement. So, the management role goes, but the enforcement role is maintained. In order to undertake the management, we have a new equivalent public body, or a mirror body I have called it, which sits within the region, side by side with the District Salmon Boards, with the responsibilities for management of all freshwater fish species and the reporting of that management.

Again, we have ten regions, each with a local committee, but wider representation than at present, to represent that public funding which is going to come in. But it maintains executive power. So, it is local representation, as we have at the moment, but wider local representation; people from other fisheries sectors, riparian owners, local councils and so on, and is controlled totally by that local region.

Continuing on with three. We would have our ten regional offices, again operating under guidance from the umbrella body and that guidance is given in the form of the fisheries action plans. So, there are rules for each catchment, specific objectives which have to be followed through and achieved and we have funding, again from the public and private sector, grant in aid, rod licence and the fisheries assessment is maintained, but again, crucially, that public sector funding, the grant in aid and the rod licence are controlled by making sure that we

comply with the requirements of those fisheries action plans on an individual catchment basis.

So, this management model combines both public and private sector involvement. And there's the model. Again, top bit similar. Regional Fisheries Council, with an executive committee, locally elected. The District Salmon Board sits within it, or possibly a group of District Salmon Boards for the smaller catchments and mirror organisations sitting alongside, which is made up of publicly-appointed people, officers from the local authority departments, so the District Salmon Board system is maintained. Legislation will still have to be modified, removing the management powers from the District Salmon Boards and putting those into the public side of the equation. Wider committee representation and public/private partnership to a greater degree than previously.

So, just to reinforce what we are talking about in terms of the District Salmon Board involvement with this model; its enforcement. So, we are removing management and that's going to be done by the mirror body. So, District Salmon Board enforcement, management being undertaken by the mirror organisation. And where does that sit on our management continuum? Well, it's moving down one; down from the Regional Fisheries Boards; with greater public sector involvement.

So, now, the final model, you will be relieved to hear. This is one I have called Regional Fisheries Service. Under this model, the District Salmon Fishery Boards would be disbanded, again requiring new legislation. Ten regions, each with a local committee with wider representation; again with the public and private sector, riparian interests, local authority interests, local fishery interests. But, again, crucially it maintains executive power so makes the decisions within the framework of the law. That framework is provided by the National Freshwater Fisheries Authority, through the ten regions, again, and funding from the public sector, the private sector, grant in aid, rod licence and again maintaining that fisheries assessment in some form. Again, combining public and private sector involvement.

In terms of this model, again you can see the top structure is exactly the same. An executive committee, locally elected, but instructing officers beneath it, employed by the region to undertake management and so, on their behalf, with the Trusts, again, sitting outside. District Salmon Boards disbanded, new legislation and wider committee representation. Those are the main features. And where does this one sit? There's a nice gap there, slightly on the public side of co-operation, so we are moving in this direction, towards the agency model.

OK, now, those are our four models; moving from a centralised public sector organisation to a decentralised District Salmon Fishery Board system and, in terms of the ones that we think have best chance of progressing, are somewhere in the middle here.

If we are talking of significant injection of public funds to cover all freshwater fish species and manage things in a manner in which the value of fisheries to Scotland would necessitate, in my view, then that greater involvement of public sector funds has to have accountability. So, we are looking at something, somewhere in the middle, between a system which has a greater or lesser degree of public sector involvement.

OK, so two suggested models that we are going to put forward for consideration. The first one is the Regional Fisheries Council, which is that decentralised or private sector-

dominated system with an Executive Committee, maintaining the District Salmon Board system and model four, a Regional Fisheries Service, more public sector-based, but again with executive power and that's the essential difference between this type of system and the system we have in England and Wales, is that the committee basically has executive power. Now, there are examples of this in Scotland, where it does actually work and the Tweed is the notable example, which is somewhere along that line of continuum that we see in the middle there.

OK, so going back to the original analysis; these are the responses that we saw from the questionnaire and would either of these two systems satisfy them when we go back and look at them in terms of local involvement? Yes; to control financially by those involved by a greater or lesser degree, depending on which model you take and so on.

If we look at the negative aspects, then again, we can tick all those boxes. We deal with the salmocentric issues, the fragmentation, area coverage and so on. So, in terms of the issues that were given to us, that needed to be addressed, then either of these two models would satisfy those issues.

However, none of this is going to happen without funding. So, where would we go to for funding and how would things be funded? Well, the figure that we have been given, the recent economic analysis, which I understand from this morning is probably a gross underestimate, a hundred and thirteen million pounds is the value of angling to Scotland per annum with very, very little public support, certainly public sector support should I say, to support that very important contribution, not only to the Scottish economy, but also to rural areas.

So, public sector funding would certainly appear to me to be essential, in order to take that further, make Scotland that destination for angling tourism and maximise its potential that we heard about this morning.

Now, in terms of our potential sources, the rod licence. If we used the England and Wales funding models and, when I say model, I don't just mean the cost of the rod licence. I also mean the number of licences that have been sold to juniors, visiting anglers, the eight-day permits, the one-day permits. Based on a total of a hundred and fifty thousand anglers in Scotland, which, I understand, is a very conservative estimate, we would get four million pounds a year income from that source.

If we could assume, and I think it would be reasonable to assume, that the public sector matched the income that came from the fishery levy, that's roughly three point five million pounds from grant in aid, then we would start to see some significant amounts building up and, to put that into context, if you look at the grant in aid that SEPA and SNH get every year, we are talking about a figure in excess of seventy million pounds annually to support these two organisations.

On average, between the two of them, seventy four per cent of their funding comes from the public sector. So, asking for something in the region of three million pounds, for an industry which supports a hundred and thirteen million pounds worth of additional monies that are coming into the region, would not appear to me to be out of the question. If we applied that seventy four per cent figure to the combined income of the rod licence and the levy, then we

would have a figure of twenty million pounds. A huge amount of money, but a very significant resource and industry in the country.

So, private sources, the fishery levy, the fishery assessment or the levy as it is commonly known, three point five million pounds. So, if we combine public, private and individual monies, we would come to a figure of around about eleven million pounds, if we assume that we have four million pounds from a rod licence, three point five million pounds from grant in aid, could be more, but we will assume that for the minute, and then the existing rod levy we've got eleven million pounds of income.

OK, what do we do with it? Well, if we think about this in terms of staffing and what could be achieved in terms of providing a Scottish Fisheries Service of some description, one of those two models with our eleven million pounds if we take the public sector employment costs, average employment costs, or average salary then, with the on costs, that comes to about fifty thousand pounds. It's actually an awful lot cheaper within the trusts movement. Some of the people I have spoken to could house and feed someone for a lot less than that, but I think that, in the context of a professional national service, we ought to be looking at public sector funding rates. So, from an average of fifty thousand pounds, in terms of the employment cost, accommodation costs etcetera, we might be looking at somewhere .....(Tape ended).

Keith Hendry continuing – I don't want to be overly bureaucratic. Say, twenty people in the National Fisheries Authority and then perhaps twenty staff in each region. So, two hundred in total in each region. However, one of the issues that was raised was that people want to determine locally how their management is implemented and what structure should be applied locally. So, there is no reason why, with fisheries action plans in place, each region could not be autonomous and decide how it was going to organise itself.

To summarise for you. First of all, it would appear to be extremely important to maintain the private sector and voluntary sector vigour and enthusiasm, which is one of the major features of the Scottish system and would be a great pity to lose. Executive decision-making powers are also considered to be vital to those involved and should be retained in some form. However, broader representation and accountability are essential, particularly if we are looking for public sector funds and that audit trail for public sector funds would come through the fisheries action plan route.

So, where do we go to next? Well, first of all feedback. For those of you who managed to stay awake through that, then we will, perhaps, be able to get some feedback from you now.

There is also a copy of the presentation available at the front desk and Mabel McDowall, from SEERAD, has offered to distribute copies to anyone who is interested.

We want to refine some of these management models in the light of feedback and perhaps further investigate, certainly, the tagging scheme and rod licence, then make recommendation to the Minister.

So thank you very much indeed for listening.

**Gordon Brown**

Andrew could I ask you to join us for a few minutes?

Thought-provoking stuff there and I am sure that we could take the rest of the afternoon to debate it but I am afraid we can't. We have eight minutes for a few questions, that's all, then we have to move on.

So, we will do that first, but I think, obviously, you will have lots to think about and in a sense that is what the Forum and the Steering Group is about. The Steering Group next meets in March and this whole issue will need to return to the Steering Group.

We are clearly not going to be able to take many questions today, so I would encourage you to speak to your representatives on the Steering Group and to make your views known to them. I think that we still have a chat room on our Executive web-site, is that right, which you can find and post your thoughts there as well. So, just a few minutes, probably, for three or four questions and then we must move on.

## Questions and Answers

### **Doug Brown – River Kelvin**

I work with SEPA, once a week at least, and have been working with them for at least the last ten years or more and they have not a penny to spend. But to get staff on board for fish kills and pollution – they haven't got the staff. They come along and do simple water sampling and go away and say, "sir, your fish are dead". That's the end of story. They cannot follow up. They work hand-in-glove, along with the water department. I meet with them – we have lunch. We are all very good friends but as far as SEPA and the Scottish Water are concerned, in the catchment area.... interruption by ??? With your rod licence, we would need to pay twenty thousand pounds to cover our membership (interruption not decipherable)

In five years and the membership on the river Kelvin would need to pay a hundred thousand pounds. You are joking. You are joking. We would not do it. You would need to send in the FBI (interruption not decipherable)

### **Gordon Brown**

Keith, do you want to respond?

### **Keith Hendry**

Certainly, as far as SEPA is concerned, I think the figure, from memory, is somewhere in the region of fifty-eight million pounds for the income with eleven hundred employees, something of that order. So, I cannot speak for the efficiency of SEPA. What I was doing was trying to compare the emphasis that was put on water and water management and the wider responsibilities of SEPA, as well as the number of people they have and compare that with fisheries. I think fisheries is very much the poor relation there and that should change.

### **Alastair Stephen – Institute of Fisheries Management**

Keith, I am slightly confused by the role of the Trusts in the future and how they fit in from a funding point of view and also, from a resource point of view, what they will actually do. How does that fit in with your structure?

### **Keith Hendry**

The analogy really is the situation that we have in England and Wales, where we have fisheries management, largely undertaken by an organisation, The Environment Agency, yet we have a thriving and flourishing Trust movement. I believe the income is something like ten million pounds in the past five years. They are focusing on habitat management by and large and I would suggest that the Trust movement should be very much encouraged, and retained, but that the flexibility of keeping it outside the unitary body, to my mind, is a very positive thing. This is something that has been mentioned to me by people both inside and outside the Trusts.

### **Alastair Stephen**

Just seeing this for the first time, I am slightly concerned that there may be conflicts in the future. If we get to the stage where we have this implemented, you may have an Irish situation where you get two sets of biologists, in the same area, doing similar things and you may actually have a duplication of effort.

### **Keith Hendry**

I would suggest that you shouldn't have duplication. If you have an accountable Fisheries Management Service, there should be no need for biologists to be doing parallel work in the Trusts.

### **Alastair Stephen**

As long as that's made clear.

### **John Prince - Closeburn Castle Fishings**

Two points here, Keith. There is quite a lot of labelling of fisheries assessments. Quite frankly, the current system is a shambles, as it is completely subjective. So, if you are going to make that one of your fundamental points for future funding, we need a much better assessment system across Scotland. Secondly, your audit on a six-year cycle could get quite interesting if it is based on performance. Presumably you would give lots of money to the ruffe population because they are growing and, as the salmon go to sea and disappear, you would get less money.

### **Keith Hendry**

No. What I meant was the performance of that region, in terms of achieving the objectives within its fisheries action plan. Monitoring, for example; providing monitoring data on salmon or lampreys or whatever it is, for example. If money comes through one of these dotted lines from SEPA then, providing that data in the form it's required for SNH, then that type of requirement, that would be the audit trail.

### **Unidentified speaker**

Two very simple questions; why should angling receive any public funding and what possible benefits could angling receive from it?

### **Keith Hendry**

An industry that is worth a hundred and thirty million pounds, to my mind, does justify significant public sector involvement, particularly those aspects of it where we have failure, for example on the west coast. I mean, to my mind, the decline of sea trout populations on the west coast of Scotland has been a very confused situation in terms of the management there and I think that it needs a strong public sector response. In terms of how angling could benefit from public sector involvement, I think there are lots of external pressures on angling from outside of the angling fraternity and a strong angling sector, which is firmly rooted within the economy, is going to be more robust and able to withstand those external pressures.

### **Anthony Steel - Annan DSFB**

I have a very small little bit, which I manage on the river Annan, and the whole purpose of fishery boards co-operation is that I am mutually co-operating with my neighbours because the fish run up the river that works between the two of us. I can see no mutual co-operation where I move in with other catchment areas and I urge you to stick to the catchment area basis. I can see, if you go down this route, you losing all the voluntary input that comes in from so many people helping on a catchment by catchment basis, because we all know that we are helping each other on a river. All that would go if you have this, and I see it as really an extra two hundred and twenty-two jobs, you said twenty at the hub and another two hundred at the regional level. I am sorry. I see it as jobs for the boys, a real waste of money and, if you really expect anglers to pay rod licences for it, I think you must be in cloud cuckoo land. I'm sorry.

### **Keith Hendry**

I think that is a statement, isn't it?

### **Gordon Brown**

Thank you Andrew – thank you Keith – I'm going to guillotine it there.

You have given us a lot to think about and you can see this by the reaction of the audience.

There are seriously a great deal of issues and sensitivities that will surround this issue as we discuss it. What I would stress to you is that this is the first exposure that we have had to some forward thinking and it is the first time that we have had any discussion of it. There will be lots more discussion and other opportunities in the months to come about what the future form of fisheries management in Scotland should look like. I would just reiterate again that the Steering Group meets in March and it would be very interesting for the Steering Group members to hear back from you, so that they can bring their views to that March meeting, but you will hear more of this I assure you. Thank you gentlemen.

I am conscious of the time and I am going to move swiftly on.

We take a change of tack here entirely, and I would like to welcome Arthur Griffiths, who is at the podium just now. Arthur is the *Gyrodactylus salaris* (*Gs*) task force leader and I am delighted to have recruited him for a period of months to this work. Arthur is a former senior vet with the State Veterinary Service. He had a very significant part to play in the most recent outbreak of foot-and-mouth disease, so I was very pleased to recruit him to come in and lead this important piece of work on *Gs*.

When I came to this job, two and a half years ago, one of the first actions that I took was to raise the priority on the *Gs* issue. I said at a Tweed Foundation meeting, and got a bit of stick for it, that I did not think that the Executive was prepared, or indeed any of us were prepared, for *Gs*, either in terms of preventative measures or, heaven forbid, if the parasite was ever introduced into Scotland.

Arthur and his task force are addressing these issues and, as well as being grateful to you, Arthur, I am grateful to the task force and those on it for the sterling work that they are doing to a pretty tight timetable. We are going to hear from Arthur now, get an up-date and hopefully there will be a few minutes at the end for some questions as well – Arthur.