

## Hinkley Point C Update and Future D&S IFCA Involvement Discussion

- A new build nuclear power station; Hinkley Point C (HPC), was given consent in 2013 and is currently being built on the Somerset Coast
- D&S IFCA is not a statutory consultee in the permitting and licensing of Hinkley Point, nor does it have any formal advisory role regarding fish and fisheries
- However, because of the placement of the HPC in the Severn Estuary European Marine Site and the direct take of extremely large volumes of cooling water from the estuary resulting in a significant level of fish kill, D&S IFCA has an interest in its design and operation
- The Severn Estuary is also an important nursery area for many commercial and recreational species
- In recognition of this D&S IFCA officers were permitted by NNB GenCo/ EDF energy to join the HPC Marine Technical Forum in 2013
- The role of the Marine Technical Forum (MTF) is to facilitate good environmental regulation of HPC & associated developments. Membership of the MTF is generally limited to environmental regulators (the MMO and the EA) and the statutory conservation agencies (NE and NRW)
- D&S IFCA attends MTF meetings 2-3 times a year and generally contributes to consultations on design of HPC which relate to fish as part of a joint Defra-family response
- Membership of the MTF allows the IFCA to have insight into the design process of the fish protection measures and ensure high priority commercial and recreational species are considered in sufficient detail
- Some concerns remain among Authority members about the level of fish kill and the ability of the fish protection measures to mitigate some of the risks
- Additional concerns have been raised about the appropriateness of the design of HPC, in particular that it takes water from the estuary, in a European Marine Site such as the Severn Estuary
- Involvement in Hinkley Point C outside the framework of the MTF would require additional officer time and resource
- Therefore a meeting was held between Authority members and D&S IFCA officers to discuss the most appropriate way for D&S IFCA to interact with Hinkley Point C in the future

*The following approach was discussed and generally agreed on:*

- IFCA officers should retain membership on MTF as it allows the IFCA a direct way to influence the design of fish protection measures
- Regulatory framework for fish protection exists and is being followed, with excellent input from EA, MMO and NE
- Issues that currently fall outside of the scope of the MTF such as the lack of co-ordination between fisheries stock assessments and assessments of large-scale infrastructure & the lack of an ecosystem approach to fisheries management to be explored and developed within existing and future work streams.
- Interests and concerns of Authority members concerning issues which lie outside of the IFCA's remit or relate to activities which have already successfully passed through the regulatory framework are best dealt with by those members outside of their IFCA roles

- A HPC focused task and finish group will be set up to allow for more detailed discussions between IFCA officers and Authority members which are not possible in quarterly meetings
- This HPC task and finish group will report regularly to the full Authority
- A more detailed update report on HPC and recommendations on IFCA involvement are to be put to Authority in March 2018