

## **Preliminary Seed Mussel Survey of Rosslare, Long Bank and Lucifer Bank – April and May 2015**

**Vessel:** MV T'Burke (BIM), Skipper John Murphy, Survey Officer Nicolas Chopin

**Equipment:** 400 kHz side scan sonar, 1 meter dredge and underwater camera.

**Area surveyed:** South Shear, west side of the Holdens Bed, west side of the Long Bank from the West Long Buoy to the North Long Buoy and the north side of the channel between the Long Bank and the Lucifer Bank.

### **Survey summary:**

- South Shear (Rosslare): There was no known seed mussel settlement last year in the South Shear; but as part of the preliminary survey, the area was checked. 7 tows were made following features seen on the side scan sonar data. No seed or spat was found, a short drift with the underwater camera showed that the seabed is mainly empty razor clam shells with clean pebbles and very little sand cover. The sand seems to have washed from the rocks in the south part of the channel.
- West side of the Holdens Bed: The side scan sonar was deployed in the area and four tows were made with the dredge but no seed or spat was found. The ground is very level, with few razor shells and stones.
- West side of the Long Bank: the side scan sonar was deployed in two areas along the Long Bank where last year's seed bed was located. Few empty mussel shells were found in the dredge but the content was mainly old oyster shells, razor shells and starfish. 18 tows were made between the two areas.
- Lucifer Bank (North): Seed mussel historically settles in this area, but no known seed settlement was found there last year. 6 tows were made in the surveyed area following marks from the side scan sonar, but only stones, oyster shells and dead man fingers (*Alcyonum digitatum*) were found in the dredges.

### **Recommendations:**

It is still too soon to have a good idea about the 2015 seed mussel settlement, larvae monitoring on the southeast coast showed that good amounts of D-Larvae (3 to 4 weeks old) were still in the water column in mid-May. Spawning took place late this year due mainly to low water temperature (9 to

11 degrees Celsius at the end of May). It seems that starfish are already well established everywhere in the southeast.

Additional surveys will take place at these locations in advance of the scheduled opening.

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Notes for the map:

TR stands for Tow Rosslare (including Wexford Harbour approaches)

Dgd stand for dredge

# Preliminary Seed Mussel Survey Map - April and May 2015 - BIM

