

## Supporting Networking in the Inshore Fisheries Sector

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### Project Outline:

The Inshore Fisheries Forums provide a platform for the sector through which to engage with state and other actors with an interest in the inshore sector. They also allow the sector to be directly involved in the ongoing implementation of the Inshore Fisheries Strategy. Through industry participation with the forums it is intended to build capacity for the sector to represent itself more effectively through direct training of forum members and through availing of upskilling opportunities afforded by participation in the forums process thus facilitating the sector to develop champions. Progress in this regard is demonstrated by the fact that the National Inshore Fishermen's Association has applied for recognition as an Inshore Producer Organisation and it is anticipated that this development will enable the gradual exit of BIM from the direct support of the initiative and a reversion to a participatory role in the deliberations of the RIFFs and NIFF.

### Project Objectives:

This will be achieved by the Inshore Fisheries Forums addressing the following issues:

- Participating in the implementation of the Inshore Fisheries Strategy.
- Develop and facilitate implementation of policies and initiatives relating to the sustainable management of inshore fisheries within six nautical miles, consistent with national and EU policies concerning fisheries management, sustainable development and protection of the marine environment.
- Provide formal engagement opportunities between inshore fishermen and other marine stakeholders and to bring issues of importance to the sector to the National Inshore Fisheries Forum (NIFF).
- Provide input to the development of national policies or positions which concern or affect inshore fisheries management, particularly the ongoing introduction of a Marine Spatial Planning (MSP) Framework and the development of Offshore Renewable Energy (ORE).
- Facilitate the development of measures designed to enable local fishermen, other fishermen who rely on local waters for their livelihood, and other persons with an interest to contribute to inshore fisheries management policies.
- Facilitate the development of management measures for wild bivalve fisheries.
- Facilitate the classification of wild bivalve fisheries.

### Expected Benefits:

- Increased awareness, participation and engagement of industry in existing representative structures/forums across a range of challenges that will impact the sector such as resource competition, climate action, and sustainability.
- Improved and more effective representation of the sector through regular communication with industry members and relevant State agencies.
- Improved industry engagement in policy making through active participation in consultations. In 2022 the most pressing are anticipated to be inshore decommissioning, the hook and line mackerel fishery and the management of brown crab.
- Enhancement of the function of existing, collective structures to strengthen cohesion in the sector.
- Increased capacity to facilitate the formation of new collective structures in the sector. Better awareness of supports for collective organisations.

**Projected Cost:** €120,000