

Sustainability Standard Programme

Project Outline:

Following the production of an initial draft, BIM is now seeking to work with Bord Bia to understand the logo/branding opportunities and then to finalise and operationalise an accredited certification standard which delivers meaningful volume of products while allowing Irish producers to differentiate themselves. In parallel BIM needs to maintain existing standards until the new standard is in place. The project encompasses several workstreams as follows:

- Formation of technical advisory committee
- Final technical development of the standard
- Operationalising the standard and achieving accreditation to ISO 17065
- Preparing industry for uptake of this accredited, certified standard
- The control and operation of the RSS Programme in transition to the new standard

BIM has reviewed their current suite of standards and identified the need to develop a universal standards programme which would cover the value chain from primary handling (vessels, farms, first point of sale and processors) to processing for all sectors. The standard should have a modular design, initially covering traceability, quality, food safety, social responsibility, and sustainability, but allowing for the addition of modules in the future. The standard needs to be designed with accreditation in mind. A matrix approach is required so that each applicant's obligations are clear depending on their place in the supply chain.

Project Objectives:

- Formation of Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) in order to progress the standard development, at TAC comprising of stakeholders from industry, relevant state bodies and interested NGOs must be set up. The task of the TAC will be to guide the development of the standard, advise on any amendments and approve the final standard.
- This work by the TAC encompasses the technical development phase of the standard which will need to be in line with market requirements whilst also addressing traceability, quality, food safety, social responsibility and sustainability.
- On completion of the standard development, the next phase of the project is to commence the accreditation process with INAB to achieve the ISO 17065 accreditation. A certification body to audit to the new standard will be sought at this time and the preparation of industry to ensure a smooth transition from the existing CQA and RSS standards will commence.

Expected Benefits:

- Market access maintained for Irish seafood.
- Branding of Irish seafood in line with other protein sources.
- Harmonisation of standards for Irish seafood.

Projected Cost: €129,848