

## BIM EMFAF Work Programme Project Report 2023

<b>BENEFICIARY:</b>	Bord Iascaigh Mhara
<b>PROJECT REFERENCE NUMBER:</b>	23/IFCS/STS-BG011-BR099
<b>NAME OF PROJECT:</b>	<b>Inshore Fisheries Strategy Implementation – Hook and Line Mackerel Domestic Market Investigation</b>
<b>IMPLEMENTATION PERIOD:</b>	1 <sup>st</sup> January to 31 <sup>st</sup> December 2023

### Project Scope

The hook and line mackerel fishery has been sporadically prosecuted by the inshore sector over the past two decades against an allocation of 400t from the national quota. In the early 2000s the fishery was primarily in the south east out of Dunmore East where three vessels, including a number of ex Cornish fishers familiar with the fishery in the UK, worked with the Dunmore East Co-op and supported by BIM to market the line caught fish to the Dublin market daily with considerable success. Unfortunately, the demand collapsed and with it the fishery apart from sporadic local sales. Since that time, the centre of the fishery has shifted to the northwest, specifically north Mayo and over the past 10 years in particular it has increasingly become a seasonal alternative to lobster and brown crab from late May to July and has resulted in considerable investment in fishing gear and handling equipment to maintain a high quality catch. Despite this expansion however the allocation of 400t was never fully utilised and it was not until 2020 that it was reached when the fleet caught 584t over a five week period. The 400t allocation was once again exceeded in 2021 when the fleet caught 1182t. The majority of the catch went to the fresh market with local Killybegs processors reopening lines to process the fish for fresh retail, however prices achieved were relatively low given the quality of the product and the unavailability of fresh mackerel from other sources at this time of year. In 2022 a total of only 160t has been taken so far for reasons which are unclear at this time. The low volumes meant insufficient fish were available for the processors to reopen and most was sold at poor prices.

In consultation with Bord Bia it is proposed to engage an external service provider to profile the Irish hook and line mackerel fishery and to investigate and examine potential seasonal domestic retail and food service market for a high quality line caught product from this fishery around Ireland. The investigation will examine *inter alia*, the potential availability, processing capacity, food service and retail demand and marketing and promotion. Fresh mackerel are not available from any other source at this time of year.

### Objectives

- To develop a clear profile of the Irish hook and line mackerel fishery in collaboration with NIFF and IIMRO.
- Assess the potential seasonal domestic market demand for products from this fishery.
- Examine available processing capacity and the route to market in light of the above.

### Outcomes

Following consultations with Bord Bia, HK & A Consultants were engaged to carry out the study. They examined the available current and historic information on the fishery and developed a plan to examine the route to market through consultation with all involved stakeholders. This was done through structured



interviews with fishers, buyers, processors, retailers, and consumers. The draft findings were presented to BIM and DAFM and the final draft report is now in the process of being finalised.

### Summary of Project Spend

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Total Approved Costs	€27,675.00
Total Eligible Expenditure	€27,675.00
EMFAF Eligible Expenditure	€13,837.50
Exchequer	€13,837.50

Project Partners: Bord Bia

Report by: Ian Lawler

Date: February 2024



Rialtas na hÉireann  
Government of Ireland



Arna chomhchistiú ag  
an Aontas Eorpach

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