

## BIM EMFAF Work Programme Project Report 2023

<b>BENEFICIARY:</b>	Bord Iascaigh Mhara
<b>PROJECT REFERENCE NUMBER:</b>	23/KGS/DIS-BG011-BR056
<b>NAME OF PROJECT:</b>	<b>Industry Working Groups</b>
<b>IMPLEMENTATION PERIOD:</b>	1 <sup>st</sup> January to 31 <sup>st</sup> December 2023

### Project Scope

BIM has been actively encouraging more synergy between aquaculture producers by bringing them together to work on common themes that affect their businesses. This has proved extremely successful in the oyster growing sector. BIM has actively brought oyster producers who are packing and exporting Irish oysters together. All these producers have also been certified to the Bord Bia standard of Origin Green. This group of certified Origin Green oyster packing companies have been working as an industry group, Irish Oyster Packers Group (IOPG), under the auspices of BIM for four years. The IOPG have found the forum an extremely positive endeavour. BIM act as secretariat for the group and assist in coordination with other State organisations such as Bord Bia, SFPA, FSAI and the Marine Institute. The group, through formal and informal meetings, exchange technical and trade information. As the projects have developed the working groups have been driven further by industry and the level of input from BIM has reduced.

### Objectives

BIM proposes to continue using a project-based model to drive further collaboration within the aquaculture industry. The overall objective is to provide a forum for the oyster, salmon, and mussel farming sectors to harness the support of State organisations in an effective and efficient manner. It also meets the needs of the National Strategic Plan for Sustainable Aquaculture (NSPSA) in terms of creating a framework for cooperation that brings together public authorities, industry, researchers, and educators, both at national and regional/local levels. This framework should include the development of innovation clusters for sustainable aquaculture.

BIM will continue to run and support the Irish Oyster Packers Group in terms of conducting meetings and workshops. A total of four meetings are planned each year.

The development and networking within the 'Next Generation' of oyster growers was established in 2022. The objective is to drive synergies in operators from different growers who are likely to be leaders in the Irish oyster industry in the coming years. Four meetings and workshops around collective themes are run each year to drive this synergy.

The work of the Irish Oyster Packers Group has proven to be very beneficial for all members and based on this success similar type structures for other sectors of the seafood industry.

### Outcomes

During 2023 the Irish Oyster Packers Group (IOPG) met on four occasions. In addition to focused industry meetings, a workshop was also conducted to look at overall development of the Irish oyster industry and how to improve logistics and market access in Europe.



IOPG have been working with ZLV Fish Auctions in Belgium to look at new and innovative ways of dealing with Brexit challenges to logistics and accessing the EU market. A partnership has now been set up with ZLV Fish Auctions to assist in direct sales to EU customers of Irish oysters. This has proved to be extremely successful for the participating companies in 2023. Both companies developed new customers and entered new markets as a direct result of this initiative.

*Norovirus* results and analyses were sent to all members of the IOPG on a weekly basis by the Marine Institute. This *Norovirus* study is part of another BIM EMFAF funded project and has proven to be extremely beneficial to the IOPG and their customers.

The 'Next Generation' oyster farmers was established in 2022 and have had four in-person meetings and workshops in 2023. In addition, over 10 online information and collaboration sessions were held with the group.

### Summary of Project Spend

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Total Approved Costs	€50,000
Total Eligible Expenditure	€47,211
EMFAF Eligible Expenditure	€23,606
Exchequer	€23,606

Report by: Richard Donnelly

Date: February 2024



Rialtas na hÉireann  
Government of Ireland



Arna chomhchistiú ag  
an Aontas Eorpach

Co-Funded by the  
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