

BIM EMFAF Work Programme Project Report 2022

BENEFICIARY:	Bord Iascaigh Mhara
PROJECT REFERENCE NUMBER:	22/KGS/STS-BG010-BR056
NAME OF PROJECT:	Invasive Alien Species
IMPLEMENTATION PERIOD:	1st January to 31st December 2022

Project Scope

Invasive Alien Species (IAS) pose a significant threat to marine environments, native biodiversity and habitats including those upon which aquaculture operations rely. Their introduction is linked to the increasing globalisation of trade and travel and the threat is further compounded by climate change. Aquaculture is a vector for alien species and globally has been linked to their introduction and spread. IAS can impact upon aquaculture stock, and the normal functioning of the sector.

Their association with aquaculture movements also presents a risk to the public perception and reputation of the sector. 2022 was the fifth year that BIM provided active support to the aquaculture sector to help manage the risks associated with Invasive Alien Species. The BIM IAS project continues to deliver important baseline data for the Aquaculture sector. This can help to inform best practice in stock movements and ensure that the sector actively contributes to risk minimisation. At a wider level the project helps to ensure that biosecurity measures are proportionate to risk and manageable for the aquaculture businesses. Education is an important component and awareness has been raised through targeted training, conference presentations and direct support in the development of farm scale Biosecurity Plans.

Objectives

The objectives of the IAS project are to support the aquaculture sector to be proactive in addressing Invasive Alien Species to minimise risks and ensure the sustainability of their operations. This is to be achieved through the retention of an Alien Species Advisor and continuation of the IAS & Aquaculture Working Group facilitated by BIM to co-ordinate IAS actions across agencies and Government Departments.

Outcomes

- Surveys in fourteen aquaculture bays and four additional mussel seedbeds to contribute to the baseline species register and ongoing monitoring. (Shellfish Associated Species Inventory (SASI) Surveys).
- Presentation and practical training session as part of the Rope Mussel workshop jointly hosted in Westport by BIM and IFA Aquaculture.
- A subgroup of the IAS and Aquaculture Working Group was established to support DAFM to progress IAS risk assessment and biosecurity planning requirements for aquaculture licence holders.
- Contributions to and oversight of Risk Assessments for aquaculture activities. Support was provided to aquaculture businesses to complete these for a number of scenarios: to support industry in early decision making on whether to pursue a particular movement (pre-assessment); to support DAFM



decision making for certain shellfish movements; to support certification requirements or help achieve management system targets; and to guide responsible business practices.

Summary of Project Spend

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Total Approved Costs	€83,517
Total Eligible Expenditure	€83,333
EMFAF Eligible Expenditure	€41,666
Exchequer	€41,666

Report by: Grainne Devine

Date: February 2023



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an Aontas Eorpach

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