

BIM EMFAF Work Programme Project Report 2023

BENEFICIARY:	Bord Iascaigh Mhara
PROJECT REFERENCE NUMBER:	23/KGS/STS-BG011-BR117
NAME OF PROJECT:	Seafood Sustainable Schemes (Aquaculture)
IMPLEMENTATION PERIOD:	1 st January to 31 st December 2023

Project Scope

Standards and certifications are a key mechanism for aquaculture producers and businesses wishing to translate requirements, both product and process specifications, to other parts of the supply chain. The main goals of this project were to maintain the premium position of Irish seafood production in the marketplace.

The main goals of this project were:

- Continued alignment of accreditation of BIM's current Certification Quality Aquaculture (CQA) certification schemes, prestigious certification to MSC Scheme and compliance of organic salmon and mussel sector to Organic Certification.
- Maintained premium position in the marketplace.

Objectives

The principal objective of this project is to support the production of high-class farmed Irish seafood and to differentiate aquaculture products in the marketplace through quality, organic and eco certification and labelling.

Outcomes

Seafood certification is key to maintain market access both nationally and globally. The strategy of differentiating Irish seafood through the use of internationally recognised sustainability credentials has been a key objective for BIM in recent years.

BIM continued to maintain the governance and operation management of Certified Quality Aquaculture (CQA) Assurance Programme. Withdrawal of the contractor for management of third-party certification in February 2023 meant that there was a need to recontract for the services, and it had an impact on standards, certification, accreditation, and benchmarking. As NSF were the only Certification Body for the CQA Programme, this left the CQA Programme with no other Accredited Certification Body and hence the ISO 17065 Accreditation lapsed. As a result of this, BIM took the decision to not continue with the GSSI benchmarking process. BIM is now formally engaged with the international Certification Body, LRQA, and the CQA Programme is managed in alignment with ISO 17065. 19 organisations showed a commitment to rejoin the CQA Programme in 2024.

CQA team meetings were held relating to the management and operation of the CQA Programme including the CQA Internal Review Meetings, and reports were issued for CQA Internal Audit, CQA Annual Management Review.



BIM holds MSC certification for both Rope and Bottom Grown Mussel sector in Ireland. During 2023, Ireland's Bottom Grown Mussels & Ireland's Rope Grown Mussels continued to retain (MSC) Certification. There are currently 37 MSC Certified Rope Mussels Members and 47 Bottom Mussel Members (combined ROI & NI).

Organic products remain a key market segment for Irish aquaculture, with BIM assisting companies to achieve and retain accreditation to EU Organic Standards, as well as other third-party certifications including BIM's CQA, GlobalGAP, ASC and RSPCA Freedom Foods.

Summary of Project Spend

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Total Approved Costs	€197,317
Total Eligible Expenditure	€193,280
EMFAF Eligible Expenditure	€96,640
Exchequer	€96,640

Report by: Vera Flynn

Date: February 2024



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an Aontas Eorpach

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