

BIM EMFAF Work Programme Project Report 2022

BENEFICIARY:	Bord Iascaigh Mhara
PROJECT REFERENCE NUMBER:	22/IFCS/STS-BG010-BR050
NAME OF PROJECT:	Supporting Networking in the Inshore Fisheries Sector
IMPLEMENTATION PERIOD:	1st January to 31st December 2022

Project Scope

The inshore fisheries sector has historically been poorly organised and fragmented. The Inshore Fisheries Forum Initiative provides a platform for the sector to engage with state and other actors that have an interest in the inshore space and seeks to develop the capacity of the sector to not only sustain but enhance its contribution to coastal communities.

The intent has always been to use the establishment and initial facilitation of the Inshore Forums to build capacity in the sector such that it is ultimately able to take its place at the table with the representatives of the larger vessels in the fleet in establishing robust self-sustaining representative structures for the sector. This has been a slow process. However, the development and publication of the Inshore Fisheries Strategy 2019-2023 in 2019 marked a major milestone in charting that path which is expected to require BIM facilitation for at least the duration of the strategy. The RIFFs completed a renewal process in Q1 2020 which was complemented with the provision of externally provided governance training to facilitate members to better participate in the Inshore Forums process and engage with those they represent in the sector. The value of these developments became apparent in the role played by the NIFF in the Seafood Task Force established to mitigate the effects of Brexit in 2021.

A project on developing a digital literacy syllabus for the sector made good progress in 2022 with a 'ready to use' lesson plan completed by the end of 2022 and ready for incorporation into the national literacy syllabus in the first quarter of 2023. A further project on conducting a census of the inshore sector also made good progress in the last quarter of 2022 with the provision of a service provider to look at the existing data on the inshore sector, identify data needs and gaps, provide a baseline profile and initial specification for a comprehensive inshore census to be rolled out in 2023.

Objectives

The Inshore Fisheries Forums will:

- Participate in the implementation of the Inshore Fisheries Strategy.
- Develop and facilitate implementation of policies and initiatives relating to the sustainable management of inshore fisheries within six nautical miles, consistent with national and EU policies concerning fisheries management, sustainable development and protection of the marine environment.
- Provide formal engagement opportunities between inshore fishermen and other marine stakeholders and to bring issues of importance to the sector to the National Inshore Fisheries Forum (NIFF).
- Provide input to the development of national policies or positions which concern or affect inshore fisheries management, particularly the ongoing introduction of a Marine Spatial Planning (MSP)



Framework and the development of Offshore Renewable Energy (ORE) particularly through the work of the OREDP II Advisory Group and the Seafood-ORE Working group.

- Facilitate the development of measures designed to enable local fishermen, other fishermen who rely on local waters for their livelihood, and other persons with an interest to contribute to inshore fisheries management policies.
- Facilitate the development of management measures for wild bivalve fisheries.
- Facilitate the classification of wild bivalve fisheries.

Through industry participation with the forums, it is intended to build capacity for the sector to represent itself more effectively through direct training of forum members but also through availing of upskilling opportunities afforded by participation in the forums process thus facilitating the sector to develop champions. It is hoped that this increase in capacity will see the establishment of an Inshore Producer Organisation and eventually obviate the need for State support.

Outcomes

Brexit Inshore Fisheries Business Adjustment Scheme

The Brexit Inshore Fisheries Business Adjustment Scheme opened at the beginning of 2022. The NIFF and RIFFs noted that the eligibility reference period of the scheme was limited from January to June 2020 which would exclude a number of inshore fishers who primarily fish from June to December due to the species fished. Accordingly, NIFF made a number of submissions to Minister McConalogue on this issue.

Common Fisheries Policy Review Group

In February NIFF were invited by the Minister to nominate representatives from the NIFF to the Common Fisheries Policy Review Group. Eamon Dixon, NIFF Chair and John Menarry, Vice Chair were nominated to represent NIFF on this group. NIFF representatives attended five meetings of this group in the period March to May 2022.

Hook and line Mackerel Fishery

NIFF sent formal request to the Minister seeking a review of the Hook and Line Mackerel Policy on 10th March 2022. This followed the circulation of the DAFM Hook and Line Mackerel discussion paper prior to the QMAC meeting on 22nd February and the formation of a working group of representatives of the NIFF, IIMRO, ISWFPO, KFO, SFPA and the DAFM to explore what measures work the best and bring forward management suggestions for 2022. After three meetings of this sub-group the Minister approved the new management arrangements for the 2022 under 15m hook and line mackerel fishery. NIFF assented to the new management arrangements to allow the hook and line mackerel fishery to open on 1st May for the 2022 season only, with a review of the measures to take place after the fishery closed for 2022.

Additional Inshore Sector Support Scheme

NIFF wrote to the Minister in June requesting a new support scheme for the inshore sector to help inshore fishers overcome the increasing difficulties they face in trying to keep their business viable.

NW (Via South, VIIb, c) Herring Fishery

NIFF and NW RIFF wrote to Minister McConalogue in August 2022 requesting a review of the NW Herring Policy. As the Minister was satisfied that there were sufficient changed circumstances to justify a review of the 2012 Herring Policy in relation to the quantity of Herring set aside from the southern North-West Herring quota (Herring 6A South), for vessels in the inshore fleet that are not part of the ring-fenced group, the Minister announced a Public Consultation on the matter in February 2023.



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Offshore Renewable Energy (ORE)

- NIFF held their first meeting in March 2022 with Justin Moran, Wind Energy Ireland and Paul Kelly, RWE Renewables to discuss issues that the NIFF had with rapid development of ORE in Irish coastal waters.
- NIFF held their second meeting on 21st June 2022. Robert McCabe, new Chair of the Seafood-ORE working Group, joined the NIFF meeting to hear the NIFFs concerns on the rapid development of ORE projects around the coast before the first meeting of the Seafood-ORE Working Group taking place on 20th July 2022.
- The Seafood-ORE Working Group held its first meeting on 20th July 2022. The Seafood-ORE Working Group, chaired by Robert McCabe, held five meetings before the end of 2022 to formulate guidelines for communications between the ORE sector and seafood sector. Members of both the NIFF and RIFFs attended and fully participated in these meetings during 2022 and are keen for further involvement in this Working Group going forward.
- RIFF-ORE Worksop, Talbot Hotel, Carlow (November 2022). The rapid development of ORE off the Irish coast is and has been causing considerable concern amongst fishers both inshore and offshore. Due to the pandemic, it was not possible to hold in-person workshops for a considerable time however as things opened up it was decided that the RIFF workshop for 2022 would be on Offshore Renewable Energy. This workshop had speakers from the Department of Environment, Climate and Communications setting the scene on the targets for ORE development, projects applied for to date and the consent systems. This was followed by speakers from the UK outlining international experience from both a fishers/industry and ORE perspective with examples of best practice lessons learnt and co-existence and co-location. The morning session examined the Irish experience to date of engagement between ORE and the seafood sector. The afternoon focussed on assessing potential impacts on the seafood sector due to ORE with speakers from both Ireland and the UK. A talk on the Seafood-ORE Working Group and on the community benefit funds led into a discussion on all the topics addressed during the day with engagement between the RIFF members, Government departments and the ORE sector. The workshop proved to be a success and the RIFF members have requested a further update workshop in 2023.

Ministerial Meetings

The NIFF held their final meeting of 2022 with Minister McConalogue online on 16th December 2022. Members outlined their request to the Minister for a new inshore support scheme, discussed the hook and line mackerel 2022 season under the new management arrangements and the establishment of the Brown Crab Working Group. The Minister gave an update on the 6nm appeal and welcomed the new fishing opportunities in the spurdog fishery as well as discussing inshore decommissioning and off registered tonnage.

The continued pressure being felt by the sector due to the difficult economic conditions resulted in declining activity on the part of the RIFFs during much of 2022. However, the ORE workshop held for the RIFFs in November 2022 has reinvigorated the appetite of the RIFFs for engagement as well as their active participation in the Seafood-ORE Working Group.

RIFF Meetings held in 2022:

South-East RIFF: 06.12.2022

West RIFF: 07.03.2022, 16.08.2022 & 07.12.2022

North-West RIFF: 22.03.2022, 24.06.2022 & 18.11.2022

North-East RIFF: 22.04.2022 & 04.10.2022



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South-West RIFF: 06.07.2022

North RIFF: 12.04.2022

National Inshore Fisheries Forum Meetings: 16.03.2022, 21.06.2022, 28.07.2022 & 16.12.2022

Seafood Taskforce subgroup on inshore supports attended by Eamon Dixon, NIFF Chair: 14.02.2022

Quota Management Advisory Committee meetings attended by John Menarry: 18.01.2022, 16.02.2022, 22.02.2022 (Planning Meeting), 22.03.2022, 24.04.2022, 19.05.2022, 21.06.2022, 19.07.2022, 21.09.2022, 19.10.2022, 18.11.2022 & 15.12.2022.

QMAC Hook and Line Mackerel Sub-group attended by John Menarry: 28.02.2022, 11.03.2022 & 28.03.2022

Consultative Committee of Stakeholders on Brexit meetings attended Eamon Dixon, NIF chair: 02.03.2022.

CFP Review Group meeting attended by John Menarry and Eamon Dixon: 10.03.2022, 22.04.2022, 09.05.2022, 25.05.2022 & 09.05.2022

Update meetings of fisheries representatives with Minister McConalogue attended by Eamon Dixon and John Menarry: 23.02.2022, 06.07.2022, 23.09.2022 & 20.10.2022

SFPA Consultative Committee Meetings attended by Eamon Dixon: 14.02.2022, 09.03.2022, 22.04.2022 & 26.05.2022

Irish Fisheries Science Research Partnership (IFSRP) meetings attended by William Walker: 28.04.2022

Second Mission Atlantic Stakeholders Meeting: 15.06.2022 & 16.06.2022

NW Herring Stakeholders Meeting attended by John Menarry, Gary Kennedy and Eamon Dixon: 25.08.2022

Crab FIP meeting attended by Eamon Dixon: 08.12.2022

Update meeting on Alternative bait for whelk project with AMT and BIM attended by Eamon Dixon: 02.09.2022 & 07.10.2022

MSP Advisory Group Meeting: 26.07.2022

OREDP II Advisory Group Meetings attended by Liz Goff and Gus O'Donovan: 30.03.2022, 04.05.2022, 22.06.2022, 26.07.2022, 06.10.2022 & 29.11.2022.

Seafood-ORE Working Meetings attended by various NIFF and RIFF members: 20.07.2022, 28.09.2022, 26.10.2022, 23.11.2022 & 19.12.2022.

Seafarers Conference in NCFI attended by Liz Goff: 04.03.2022.



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Summary of Project Spend

Summary of Spend	
Total Approved Costs	€80,000
Total Eligible Expenditure	€55,937
EMFAF Eligible Expenditure	€27,968
Exchequer	€27,968

Report by: Denise Maloney & Ian Lawler

Date: February 2023



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