

[REDACTED]

From: James Callaghan [REDACTED]
Sent: 07 February 2017 20:12
To: aquaculturereview
Subject: Marine Harvest aquaculture licence

4/2/2017

Ref: Independent Review of Aquaculture Licencing Process

Dear Licence Review Committee Members,

Thank you for reading my submission in support of the Aquaculture licence application from Marine Harvest.

I am James Callaghan from [REDACTED] Fanad. I have worked for Marine Harvest for 24 years. I am currently working in the net repair shed at Scraggy Bay, on the banks of Lough Swilly, maintaining the netting for the salmon cages.

Marine Harvest has operational sites along the west coast of Ireland, in isolated and disadvantaged communities from Donegal to West Cork and these have been essential economic and social lifelines for these areas.

I am from such a coastal, rural community in Fanad and salmon farming has supported mine and many other families here for the past four decades. Aquaculture has enabled me to stay in my local area, where my roots go back many generations, and to keep the community alive by providing ongoing employment for families. There are many local businesses supplying goods and services to this community and Marine Harvest which also provide much needed employment. Marine Harvest also funds a number of social and sporting initiatives, these make an important contribution to the appeal of Fanad as a place to live and work.

I am pleased that you are reviewing the current aquaculture licencing system as I do not think it is working well. When Marine Harvest Ireland applies for a licence, we have no idea when the application will be processed. Our company applied for a licence for a site at Shot Head, Bantry Bay, West Cork in 2011 and there is still no final decision on the application.

I would ask your committee to examine and resolve these issues which have held our industry back for over 20 years. If more State resources are needed, can you recommend these resources are found as a matter of urgency? If the industry is allowed to flourish, the state should achieve a significant return on its investment, both financial and social, in keeping these fragile traditional communities economically viable.

There is scope in this country for a thriving aquaculture sector, with direct and indirect economic and social benefits. Surely an island nation on the Western rim of Europe has scope to grow a thriving blue economy, specifically in this case for salmon farming, which we strive to carry out in an environmentally responsible manner? We hope this review will allow Ireland to have a fair opportunity to grow a robust aquaculture industry, in line with European best practice.

We hope this review should result in a licence that allows the company to grow and harvest fish with the same effectiveness as our colleagues in other countries. I am convinced that if we had a better, more efficient licencing protocols, my colleagues and I would have more work both now and in the future , for the sake of the present workforce and for the future of young people in our area.

Sincerely,

James Callaghan