

**To:**

Independent Review of Aquaculture Licensing  
c/o Deirdre Morgan – Secretary to the Independent Review Group  
Department of Aquaculture Food and the Marine National Seafood Centre  
Clonakilty  
Co.Cork



**Sender:**

Andrew & Patrick O'Leary  
[REDACTED]

Clare Island  
Westport, Co. Mayo

Clare Island, 08.02.2017

**Ref: Independent Review of Aquaculture Licencing Process**

Dear Licence Review Committee Members,

Thank you for taking time to read our submission. Our names are Patrick and Andrew O'Leary. We live on Clare Island and we are contracted in by Marine Harvest Ireland for the last 17 years. We are employed in the area of boat hire. I, Patrick, have worked on the fish farm off Clare Island since 1988. I, Andrew, joined the business in 2004.

Marine Harvest Ireland has operations all down the west coast of Ireland, from Donegal to Kerry/Cork.

We are from a coastal, rural community, namely Clare Island off the Mayo Coast and salmon farming has supported our area for the past four decades which has been a life line to our local community and economy. It has enabled us, Patrick and Andrew, to raise our families on Clare Island. The steady employment on the fish farm here has not only ensured that our family could live on Clare Island and have a regular income, but has enabled several other families in the community to do the same. Therefore the fish farm off Clare Island is of utmost importance for this community. Industry and community surrounding aquaculture also benefited such as tourism, the community centre, the national school and library.


We are pleased that you are in the process of reviewing the current aquaculture licensing system because from our point of view, procedures can be improved. When Marine Harvest Ireland and similar salmon production companies apply for a licence, we have no idea when the application might be processed and therefore how employment opportunities will develop in the future (or may be even lost).

In the long run, if the industry is allowed to flourish, not only the local communities but also the country, namely the exchequer would profit significantly. We believe that

there is great growth potential in aquaculture in Ireland and it could be of even greater significance to rural coastal communities than it is now. We hope this review will allow Ireland to have a fair opportunity to grow its aquaculture industry in line with European best practice.

This review should result in a licence which is fit for purpose and allows our company to grow and harvest fish in the manner which our colleagues in other countries do. I know that if we had more robust licences, my colleagues and us would have more work which is what we need.

Sincerely,



Patrick O'Leary

(Patrick & Andrew O'Leary)