

Independent Review of Aquaculture Licencing
C/O Deirdre Morgan
Independent Review Group
Dept. Of Agriculture, Food and the Marine
National Seafood Centre
Clonakilty,
Co. Cork

Patrick Shovelin



February 3rd, 2017

Dear Chairperson,

Thank you for taking time to read my submission to your aquaculture licence review process.

I have been working in the aquaculture industry for over 27 years, producing salmon in Donegal. I am one of the few graduates remaining from the now defunct Aquaculture course in Letterkenny, Co. Donegal the demise of which is directly related to the demise of our aquaculture industry in Ireland.

I consider myself fortunate to have been able to make a living for so long in my home place and to be able to rear my young family in Donegal where there are few other opportunities for decent, well paid work. During my time working for the main salmon producer in Ireland, it has always been the plan to grow and develop this business further and employ many more. However, the industry is now a shadow of its former self with less than half the salmon produced today compared to 20 years ago. All of which is related to the impossibility of getting any new licences to produce food from the sea. Why is so hard to do?

If it is a case of not having enough personnel in place to rule on licence applications, surely resources could be redeployed within the Department of Agriculture, Food and Marine (DAFM) given the dwindling numbers in Irish agriculture. It makes no sense whatsoever that we are missing a golden opportunity for economic growth because we cannot process applications quickly enough. It's time for some new ideas to resolve this issue for once and for all.

I couldn't imagine a farmer with fields of grass being unable to source cattle to graze them; somebody somewhere would surely step up to the plate and present a solution. Can DAFM suggest solutions for the current non-functioning system?

The time for action is now, I appeal to you to do something to help develop and grow Irish aquaculture and allow people like me to live and work in the North West of Ireland.

Yours Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Patrick Shovelin".

Patrick Shovelin

