

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.
09/02/2017

Ref: Independent Review of Aquaculture Licencing Process

Dear License Review Committee Members,

Thank you for taking time to read my submission as I express my views on why the Aquaculture Licencing Progress needs to be reviewed to speed up the process. My name is Pauric Mc Gettigan, I am from [REDACTED] county Donegal. I started working in Marine Harvest Ireland as a summer job and have been working there full time for the last 10 years. I am currently the site manager for the Inver bay site.

The full potential of an aquaculture industry can be seen in the Norwegian aquaculture industry which is a highly profitable industry while also employing 6,000 people directly and over 20,000 indirectly (fishiers.no website). This could be comparable to Ireland as Norway has a similar population although they have more coastline the industry is more technically advanced which means less manual labour and less jobs. A speedier licence process would mean extra licences which would mean a massive job boost to the aquaculture but also to other industries such as boat building, transport, hospitality and fishing, which we regularly work with. We use wild caught wrasse as cleanerfish during the summer so we work together with local fishermen. This is a valuable income to the fishermen which would otherwise only have a limited number of other uneconomical species to fish. We have many other fisherman looking to get into wrasse fishing but we do not need more until we get extra farms.

The jobs would be a combination of skilled and unskilled work. MHI also provides summer jobs which greatly helped me during my school time. We regularly get visits from students both from Ireland and abroad to look at our sites due to Ireland's good reputation as having a pristine environment.

This would be a major jobs boost to rural communities like my home in Fanad. Many of the jobs, if not all, that extra licences would bring to the industry are in rural areas along the west coast from Donegal to Cork. These would be a great benefit and would allow more people to stay in their areas like I was able to which also allow other industries to grow and provide services to tourism etc. The aquaculture industry is a source of employment in areas which would otherwise not be sustainable for other large scale industries. Marine Harvest Ireland also support my local community greatly not only with jobs but also by supporting my GAA club and several of the local community centres. To improve the sustainability and provide more consistent employment extra licences would also be very valuable as currently we have 4 months free every two years due to the 1.5 year cycle of the salmon at sea.

I hope this review will change the current licensing process and allow Ireland to have a fair opportunity to grow its aquaculture industry in line with other European industries and harvest fish in the manner which our colleagues in other countries like Scotland or Norway do. I know that if we had more robust licences that didn't take as long to process, my colleagues and I would have more work which is what we want. Thank you for taking the time to read my submission and I look forward to hearing from you in the future.

Your sincerely,

Pauroic Mc Gettigan

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Pauroic Mc Gettigan', written in a cursive style.