

10 February 2017



Co. Mayo

To whom it may concern,

We make this submission from the perspective of having recently received a license to farm rope mussels in Clew Bay, Co. Mayo. The application for this license took almost twelve years to process. Such a lengthy time period for processing of the license application could not be considered acceptable in a correctly functioning system which properly values coastal marine resources. While various state agencies have previously unveiled plans and policies outlining a vision of sustainable development of Irish marine aquaculture resources, the current inadequacy of the licensing system continues to impede growth in the sector.

We believe that the functioning of the licensing system could be improved by the following:

- Introduction of statutory time limits for processing of license applications (as with the planning system for land based developments)
- Increased level of knowledge and expertise regarding aquaculture operations among the licensing body staff.
- Review of best practice in other EU jurisdictions (e.g. Scotland) and consideration of how elements of such practice could be incorporated into the Irish aquaculture licensing context.
- Publication of specific guidance for Appropriate Assessment of aquaculture operations in Ireland.

Sincerely yours,

Conor Ryan & James Ryan