



INVER CO DONEGAL IRELAND

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SUBMISSION RE: INDEPENDENT REVIEW OF AQUACULTURE LICENSING PROCESS **To Whom It May Concern**

We, the above, Eany Fish Products Ltd., have been successfully farming salmon and sea trout in Inver Bay, Co. Donegal since April 1988. We were one of the pioneers of the industry in the southwest area of Donegal.

- During that period we had a few difficult years experiencing higher than normal mortalities mainly due to natural causes. 2003 was particularly difficult as a large number of fish died due to the polluting effect of dredge spoil from Killybegs Harbour being dumped in the outer limits of Inver Bay. There were also the effects of algae bloom and high concentrations of jelly fish in inshore waters which compromised the stock during the warm summer months.
- In general the industry has been successful and we developed our company, we bought property to expand, built a private pier and added to our facilities including the erection of a packing shed, food store, office, canteen, toilets, large forecourt and built a private road entering the premises.
- Inver Bay is also a prominent inshore fishery which continues to thrive with various species – mainly sprat, herring, mackerel, lobster, shrimp and potted prawn. I have been chairman of The Inver Traditional Inshore Fishery for the past seven years working in close cooperation with the fishermen.
- Inver Bay and the River Eany (which drains into the bay) had always been a good wild salmon and sea trout fishery but like many other rivers and bays around Ireland and the UK, both stocks have declined over the years. The fish farming industry has been targeted mainly by angling groups and the fishery boards as the cause of this decline in the wild fish stocks but this is completely unfounded. The run of eels in the River Eany which were once abundant have declined along with brown trout in our small fresh water tributaries. It begs the question as to why the same decline in these species has taken place on Ireland's east coast where there are no fish farms located.
- Our current Aquaculture Licence expired in July 2010 and we applied for renewal in March 2010 (Ref: No: T12/96). We received no communication from the licensing authority other than an acknowledgement of receipt of the application (Copy enclosed). To date no progress appears to have been made and this uncertainty has proved stressful as well as adding to a negative perception of an industry which is the mainstay of so many coastal communities.
- It is extremely important that these aquaculture licences be renewed immediately in view of the importance of the industry in local communities which generates employment both on the farms (general workers, harvesting, fish testing etc.) and in spin off industries; processing, net manufacturing and transport, all of which the local community depend upon.

Signed: Willie Ward – Managing Director, Eany Fish Products Ltd, Inver, Co. Donegal