

Independent Review of Aquaculture Licencing Process

My name is Joseph Gibbons. I have worked in the Aquaculture Industry for 31 years. This industry has given me the choice to remain Living in the area (Coastal and Rural) that I love with my family. A lot of the friends I had at school had to emigrate against their wishes (forced to immigrate) because of the lack of work.

Aquaculture is been suffocated to death in Ireland by the lack of understanding and the lack of vision from the Officials that are meant to lead and develop the industry.

The Situation

- Back log of over 600 Aquaculture Licence Applications, not moving
- More Licence applications awaiting decision now than in 2011

Potential

- Up to 2000 jobs from Aquaculture Production and Processing Product
- Additional half a Billion in export revenue
- Copper fasten the Irish Organic in the world Market

Bottle Necks

- No focus on processing licence application
- Too busy trying to penalise genuine operators when the problem are created by the non-activity in Licencing by DAFM
- Public and private Investment of €60 million has been lost in the past five years due to delays in producing licences, badly needed investment that would support Rural communities
- This complete lack of any progress in Licencing has turned away very interested foreign investors in the Irish Aquaculture while Irish Individuals are just giving up

Solutions

- Only one Office should have control over Processing Aquaculture Licences not several Departments and Bodies as is now the case. (listed on last page)
- Set up an Aquaculture Licencing section in the Office of the new Department of Rural development
- Employ experts to Administer Aquaculture licence Applications in an appropriate time frame with guidance from the Marine Institute and BIM

Facts

- Successive Ministers have failed to make progress in Licencing. Every time they are overwhelmed with the "you cannot do that Minister" line, successive Ministers have fallen by the way side without issuing a single Aquaculture Licence

Yours Sincerely

Joseph Gibbons 03/02/2017

Joseph Gibbons

Aquaculture Industry needs a one stop shop for Licencing

Jobs, Profitable, Healthy Food, Exports, Income for people & state
Social cohesion, keep schools and young people in work and in the areas
The Sea is a natural resource that is underutilised

Current Licencing Structures threatens ability to attract investment

Licences are out-dated (Equipment and practices have changed)
Expired Licences are not allowed to be renewed or reviewed
New Licences have been impossible to Pursue

There is no timelines set for Processing licences
Lack of accountability / No time lines set

Government policy is pro Aquaculture but
Some Agencies are actually hampering development
Some Departments are NOT aligned
No real or meaningful Development plan or Strategic Aim

Aquaculture requires uniform licenses that encourage best farming and
Environmental practices to enable competitive production and future
development

Current Legislation needs to be updated and put into Action

The people in Authority needs to understand and trust the industry

Marine Harvest Ireland is a strong and well-resourced company that want to
create more jobs and value creation, but needs the support to do so

Aquaculture Industry needs a one stop shop for licencing

Department of Communications, Energy and Natural Recourses

AFMD, Aquaculture Foreshore Management Division

IFI, Inland Fisheries Ireland

NPWS, National Parks and Wildlife Services

MI, Marine Institute, Fish Health, Benthic Surveys, Licencing

BIM, Board Iasc Mhara

Board Bia,

IFA, Irish Farmers Association

County Councils (Irish water) Piers, Land Planning, Outflow applications, discharges

EPA, Environmental Protection Authority, effluent discharge licences, waste management

Food Safety Authority

SFPA, Seafood Fisheries Protection Authority