

Ref: Independent Review of Aquaculture Licencing Process

Dear Licence Review Committee Members,

Thank you for taking time to read my submission which I will keep brief and to the point. My name is Nigel Teape, I am employed as the Laboratory Manager in the Rinmore processing plant located in the Fanad peninsula Co. Donegal. A position I have held for the last 27 years and it is a company that I have enjoyed working for over that time.

Marine Harvest Ireland is a Donegal based operation that has sites all down the west coast of Ireland, from Donegal to Kerry/Cork and has been very successful over the years.

However, one thing that has always struck me is the opportunity for growth in the industry that is being missed over those years. Aquaculture has helped support the Fanad area for the past forty years or so and has been the backbone of the local community by creating employment (both directly and indirectly) and allowing people and their families to remain and work in the area. The service industries surrounding Aquaculture have also benefited from the success of Marine Harvest such as hotels, shops, garages, transport, community centres as well as local sporting clubs, GAA etc.

The review of the current licencing system has come as great news as over the years I have been all too aware of the missed opportunity for growth in the industry, employment in rural areas and increased exports of a healthy sustainably product. The licencing system that exists at present just doesn't work and when an application for a licence is made the process can take years and still have no final decision. An example of this would be the application for a licence to operate a site at Shot Head in Co. Cork. This application was made in 2011 and there is still no decision.

I would therefore ask your committee to examine and resolve the issues which have prevented the aquaculture industry from expanding for over the past 20 years. Should more resources be needed, can you please recommend that these resources be found as a matter of urgency? If the industry is allowed to flourish, the exchequer will have a significant return from any such redeployment of resources. This country has the opportunity to build a thriving, sustainable, environmentally responsibly aquaculture sector which will create both direct and indirect economic benefits.

Sincerely,


03/02/17