

Realt Na Mara Shellfish Ltd.

Cromane Lower, Killorglin, Co. Kerry

Phone- 0877465707/ 0879241211

Email- realtnamarashellfish@hotmail.com

07/02/2017

Deirdre Morgan

Secretary to the Independent Review Group

Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine

National Seafood Centre

Clonakilty

Co. Cork

Re: Submission to the Independent aquaculture licence review group.

As a rural business based in Cromane, Killorglin Co. Kerry, We have a direct interest in Aquaculture, mainly producing mussels and oysters. We welcome the announcement by Minister Michael Creed TD of the establishment of the Independent Review group. In Castlemaine Harbour the delay in licensing is a major issue. It is impediment to the development of jobs and exports in the shellfish sector in our locality.

It is a fact that 66% of oyster production occurs in counties with higher than the national average level of unemployment (source: IFA documentation) and this is important source of rural employment.

Many of the fishermen have returned to the fishing with a strong cohort of younger individuals as a result of the downturn in the construction and this trend has continued with the development of aquaculture activities.

The area has built a small but growing economic base. Further economic activity is generated through equipment purchases, fuels and the multiplier effect of the local spend. The multiplier effect to the local economy is estimated at 1.4 (source: IFA documentation) which indicates that every 1 Euro generated through direct sales, a further 0.40 cents is spent in the local economy.

Our business is the third generation of aquaculture in the production of shellfish in Castlemaine harbour. At the moment we have two full time and two part time employees. Oyster production has a significant economic value to our business with over 30 tonnes exported in 2016. In order to expand and meet market demand we need licences granted. A Further Appropriate assessment of Castlemaine Harbour is necessary to allow consideration of further licensing for aquaculture production.

The industry needs clarity; it needs to know how long the licensing process will take place from start to finish. This industry needs a properly managed licence system.

When is the appropriate assessment going to be done in Castlemaine harbour again? Could the last appropriate assessment be over lapped in Castlemaine Harbour to speed up progress?

Can the local businesses assist the application process by engaging appropriate professional expertise to carry out an appropriate assessment of the relevant Areas?

- We need Definite timelines**
- Licences should have a minimum of 20 years**
- More experience of the business within the department itself**

The licensing system is perceived not only the greatest challenge facing the sector at the current time, but also a major barrier to growth. The licensing problem has direct and indirect implications for oyster producers due to the uncertainty regarding the future. These are just some issues that need to be addressed and we have been waiting for action in this area for far too long.

Please do not hesitate to contact us for further input.

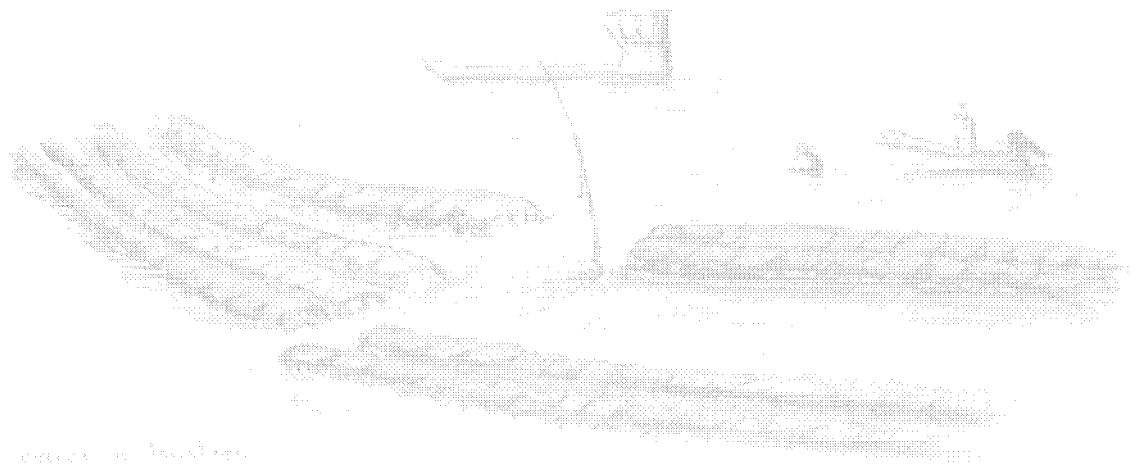
Regards

Emmet Casey

0877465707

Micheal Sugrue

0879241211



The picture is a halftone.

It shows a coastal scene.

