



Fanad
08th Feb 2017

To The Independent Review of Aquaculture Licencing,

My name is Sean Begley and I was born here in Fanad, Co Donegal, grew up and went to school here in Fanad, got married and am raising a family here in Fanad. I have been working with Marine Harvest since 1988 – 29 years, working locally and spending locally. I am also a small part time farmer with small holding like many others in the company and am very dependent on an off-farm income given the current situation within the agriculture sector at the moment.

Fanad is the second most northerly part of Ireland, a small peninsula with a strong community spirit and sense of pride, pride in our football teams, Gaelic & Soccer – across all ages, pride in our community games and youth club teams, pride in our local festivals, pride in our community centres which are lit up every night of the week with activities for young and old. To have an active and vibrant community like this you need to have people, and to have people you need to have something to keep them in the community and not on the bus to Dublin or the plane to New York.

Local indigenous industry is the key to all this.

Marine Harvest Ireland is such an industry - formally Fanad Fisheries it was set up in 1979 and since then has grown and now has operations in South Donegal, West of Ireland and Southwest of Ireland as well as here in Fanad giving much needed employment and injecting much needed revenue into to small rural communities along the western seafront. I think of the schools, shops, pubs, hotels, filling stations and all the other spin-off businesses that have stayed afloat as a direct result of an industry like Marine Harvest.

Marine Harvest operate in the most pristine water conditions along the coast, producing a top quality product that is sold here in Ireland along with being exported across Europe and further afield. Best practice in any type of farming, be it land or sea, is following whereby a field or a site is left without "crops" for a period. With the limited sites that are available to Marine Harvest this is very difficult – trying to grow a generation of fish to market size and have the site emptied and fallowed for the next generation. More sites is the solution to this and would help to implement the Departments own regulations on site fallowing.

It is encouraging to see this Independent commission in place and maybe it will see the granting of further licences in the aquaculture industry and in doing so help to keep my community alive along with all other small communities along the west coast.

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Sean O Beaglaorich

