



Consultation Document

Consultation on the draft Fisheries Natura Plan (FNP) for Cockle in Dundalk Bay 2021 - 2025 and associated Appropriate Assessment documents

Purpose of the Consultation

The purpose of this consultation is to seek your views on the draft Fisheries Natura Plan (FNP) for Cockle in Dundalk Bay 2021-2025 and associated Appropriate Assessment documents.

The draft Fisheries Natura Plan (FNP) for cockle in Dundalk Bay, developed and submitted by the Fisheries Committee of the Dundalk Local Advisory Committee (LAC), follows on from previous 5 year plans. The aim of the plan is to ensure a fishery that is sustainable, minimises ecosystem impact and further develops on from the previous plans.

The Appropriate Assessment report has been prepared by the Marine Institute in keeping with the European Union (Birds and Natural Habitats) (Sea-fisheries) Regulations 2013.

Background Information

Appropriate Assessment of Sea-Fisheries in Natura 2000 Sites

- [Council Directive 92/43/EEC of May 1992](#) on the conservation of natural habitats and of wild fauna and flora, directed that *"the preservation, protection and improvement of the quality of the environment, including the conservation of natural habitats and of wild fauna and flora, are an essential objective of general interest pursued by the Community"*
- This Habitats Directive led to the establishment of Natura 2000 sites which are selected by member states and the European Commission based on strict scientific criteria. They fall under two headings –
 - Special Protection Areas(SPAs) for birds as specified by the Birds Directive
 - Special Areas of Conservation(SACs) for species other than birds as well as habitat types, as specified by the Habitats Directive
- [SI 290 of 2013, European Union \(Birds and Natural Habitats\) \(Sea-fisheries\) Regulations 2013](#) provides for the submission of a Fisheries Natura plan (FNP) where the Minister is satisfied that a sea-fishing activity has the potential to impact on the conservation objectives of a Natura site. The FNP must undergo assessment in keeping with the obligations of the Habitats Directive.

Dundalk Bay Cockle FNP & Natura 2000 sites

- Dundalk Bay contains both a SPA (birds) and a SAC (habitats & species).
- The draft FNP for cockle in Dundalk Bay, developed and submitted by the Fisheries Committee of the Dundalk Local Advisory Committee (LAC) follows on from previous 5 year plans. The Marine Institute has prepared a review of the Fishery Natura Plan 2016-2020.



- The FNP sets out the terms under which a cockle fishery can take place, such as the minimum biomass of cockles required for the fishery to open and minimum catch rates. It also specifies operational restrictions for participants in the fishery, such as minimum landing size of cockles, a cap on the total daily catch and the specification of gear which can be used in the fishery.
- The Appropriate Assessment Report, prepared by the Marine Institute under section 5(2) of SI 290 of 2013, assesses the potential ecological effects of the proposed FNP and on designated habitats and species in the Dundalk Bay SAC and SPA. It also examines the potential effects on the site of the operation of two fisheries simultaneously – these being Razor clam and Cockle.
- The Appropriate Assessment report makes the following findings in the case of the 2 fisheries examined:
 - Hydraulic dredging for cockles: The activity can proceed, as described in the FNP, on the basis that habitat effects are insignificant or short lived.
 - Interaction between Hydraulic dredging for Razor Clams and Hydraulic dredging for Cockles: The two fisheries are spatially distinct and therefore in combination, effects are not significant.
 - Effects of cockle fishing on waterbirds are assessed as non-significant given that no change in marine communities have occurred during the period 2008-2020, or are likely to occur during the FNP 2021-2025.

Consultation Document

This Consultation Document requires a response from you to the questions provided. The Consultation Document has two parts. These are:

- Part 1 - Tell us about you
- Part 2 - Give us your views.

Submissions will be accepted:

- Online: The consultation can also be completed online [here](#).
Please note: - The survey will not operate correctly using Internet Explorer. To participate in the survey you should use a different browser.
- by email to: inshore@agriculture.gov.ie (with the subject line “Draft FNP for Cockle in Dundalk Bay 2021-2025”), or
- by post to: Draft FNP for Cockle in Dundalk Bay 2021-2025
Marine Programmes Division
Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine
National Seafood Centre
Clonakilty, Co. Cork P85 TX47

The closing date for responses is: close of business on Friday, 18 June 2021.



Freedom of Information

All submissions and comments submitted to the Department for this purpose are subject to release under the Freedom of Information (FOI) Act 2014 and the European Communities (Access to Information on the Environment) Regulations 2007- 2014. Submissions are also subject to Data Protection legislation. Personal, confidential or commercially sensitive information should not be included in your submission and it will be presumed that all information contained in your submission is releasable under the Freedom of Information Act 2014.

Data Protection

The Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine is collecting this data for the Consultation on the draft Fisheries Natura Plan (FNP) for Cockle in Dundalk Bay 2021 - 2025 and associated Appropriate Assessment documents. This data will be processed in accordance with the EU General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR EU 2016/679), the Data Protection Acts 1988-2018, the Freedom of Information Act 2014 and the DPER Consultation Principles and Guidance. Any additional personal data received as part of your submission will not be processed, shared, or retained and will be destroyed upon receipt. Publication to the Departments website of personal data associated with submissions will only take place where permission is received to do this. Further information on Data Protection can be found on our website <https://www.gov.ie/en/organisation-information/ef9f6-data-protection>

Privacy Statement

The Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine is committed to protecting and respecting your privacy and employs appropriate technical and organisational measures to protect your information from unauthorised access. The Department will not process your personal data for any purpose other than that for which they were collected. Personal data may be exchanged with other Government Departments, local authorities, agencies under the aegis of the Department, or other public bodies, in certain circumstances where this is provided for by law.

The Department will only retain your personal data for as long as it is necessary for the purposes for which they were collected and subsequently processed. When the business need to retain this information has expired, it will be examined with a view to destroying the personal data as soon as possible, and in line with Department policy.



Part 1 – Tell us about you

1. I am making this submission:

- ☐ On my own behalf ☐ On behalf of an organisation/group

2. I am a:

- | | |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Fisherman | <input type="checkbox"/> Political representative |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Representative of fishermen association | <input type="checkbox"/> Representative of an environmental NGO |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Representative of state body | <input type="checkbox"/> Representative of trade association |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Scientist / technical expert | <input type="checkbox"/> Other (please specify) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Member of general public | |

3. My contact information is:

Name	
Address	
Phone number (optional)	
Email address (optional)	

Part 2 – Give us your views

Q1. Please give us your views on the draft Fisheries Natura Plan (FNP) for Cockle in Dundalk Bay 2021-2025 and associated Appropriate Assessment documents

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Bia agus Mara
Department of Agriculture,
Food and the Marine