Determination on the Need for Appropriate Assessment of draft fisheries Natura plan for Mussel Seed (*Mytilus edulis*) in the Irish Sea 2018-2023

The Minister for Agriculture, Food and the Marine received a draft fisheries Natura plan for Mussel Seed (*Mytilus edulis*) in the Irish Sea 2018-2023 in September 2017. If implemented, the plan covers mussel seed fishing in the Irish Sea in the period 1 January 2018 to 31 December 2023. It sets out the arrangements for the Irish Sea mussel seed fishery, including surveys, reporting, monitoring, etc.

Having regard to guidance from the European Commission and existing case law, the Minister has determined that the plan may have significant impacts on Natura 2000 Sites and therefore Appropriate Assessment is required in advance of determining whether or not the plan may take place.

An Appropriate Assessment report has been prepared by the Marine Institute under regulation 5(2) of SI 290 of 2013, the European Union (Birds and Natural Habitats) (Sea-fisheries) Regulations 2013. The Appropriate Assessment report and appendices including the fisheries Natura plan itself will be published for a period of public consultation of one month. Additionally the Minister for Housing, Planning and Local Government, the Minister for Communications, Climate Action and Environment and the Minister for Culture, Heritage and the Gaeltacht will provided with opportunity to make representations on the proposed fisheries Natura plan and the assessment report.

Following the receipt of any representations or submissions and in conjunction with the outcome of the Appropriate Assessment, with due consideration to the Minister’s obligations under SI 477 of 2011 European Communities (Birds and Natural Habitats) Regulations 2011, the Minister will make a determination whether or not to adopt the fisheries Natura plan.

For further information see: [http://www.fishingnet.ie/sea-fisheriesinnaturaareas/](http://www.fishingnet.ie/sea-fisheriesinnaturaareas/)

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