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Salmon Watch Ireland

In this issue we are delighted to note that our complaint to the EU regarding Section 19(A)4 of the Fisheries Act 1997 has finally appeared to have had some effect.

This section of the Fisheries Act 1997, which allowed the continuation of salmon farming in Ireland without having to face proper environmental examination is in the process of being removed from legislation. This is a good result in that legal cover for salmon farms is being removed unless they go through a thorough environmental assessment and there are no escape clauses which allow continuation of unlicensed farms. It would certainly be our intention to contest the renewal of these licences which have continued to exist only through reliance on this flawed legislation.

We will also be examining some interesting data from BIM regarding aquaculture production in 2023 which was substantially down by 22% on 2022.

Section 19 A (4)- Fisheries Act- To be repealed and deleted from Irish Legislation

The offending section of the Fisheries Act allowed salmon farmers to continue operating if they had filed a valid renewal application. They were allowed continuing operations but only under the terms and conditions of their extant license. This was a temporary arrangement brought in in 2006 by the Irish state in consultation with the EU to allow continuation of operations at salmon farms pending adequate conservation objectives being put in place by the Irish state which complied with the Birds Directive and Habitats Directive.

This has now been in operation for over eighteen years and these extant licences have been operating with cover from this legislation but will no longer enjoy this protection.

It is certainly alarming to see how successive governments have sanctioned amendments to licence terms and conditions over the years in direct contravention of their own legislation.

 **SALMON WATCH IRELAND**
"Dedicated to the restoration of salmon abundance in Ireland"

Interesting Project in France



NASCO Conference Cardiff Wales June 2025



The “Birds Case” Progress Reports NPWS



Complaint Salmon Watch Ireland



It is essential that all interested parties involve themselves in the public consultation process regarding the renewal of these licences and make a submission on each application going forward.

It is noteworthy that five applications for renewal have been submitted this past month, and we will be making a submission on same. The following link will allow you to examine the documentation involved and make a considered submission. The publication dates are 19th February, and submissions must be lodged by 15 April 2025.

[Public Consultations Salmon Farms 19 February 2025](#)

We have also included some background information on our complaint and the Irish response to the Birds Case (Which led to Section 19 A (4) being inserted into Irish Legislation) to the EU. These are interesting documents and should be read in conjunction with this update. The links to these documents can be found in the newsletter margin.

All Other Legislation Spring Session 2025		
Title of Bill	Purpose of Bill	Status of Bill
Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine		
Control of Horses Bill	To simplify and modernise the Control of Horses Act 1996, ensuring a cohesive national approach to enforcement powers around detention, notice and release of stray horses seized by local authorities, and related issues.	Heads in preparation.
Fishery Harbour Centres (Amendment) Bill	To amend the Fishery Harbour Centres Act 1968 for the purpose of subsuming the current receipts and payments funding mechanism into the Department's Vote, setting aside the need for a separate financial Account. This follows the recommendations of a high-level working group (Financial Reporting and Financial Management Review Group) tasked with the examination of the report of the Comptroller and Auditor General's 2014 report on financial management and reporting in the Fishery Harbour Centres.	Heads in preparation.
Fisheries (Aquaculture) (Amendment) Bill	To amend the Fisheries (Amendment) Act 1997 in order to update, modernise and streamline aquaculture licencing in the State; to bring 1997 Act into compliance with EU legislation (including the Birds and Habitats Directives); to delete section 19A (4) on foot of public commitments and repeated commitments to the EU Commission.	Heads in preparation.



Streamscapes

Great Resources



BIM Annual Report – Aquaculture 2024

The report which describes the output of aquaculture in 2023 is a highly significant document which demonstrates the complexities and wide range of aquaculture activities carried out in Ireland.

As expected, we are more concerned in relation to open cage salmon farming and as such the report is highly informative and demonstrates the volatility of production levels principally concerned with climate related factors and the re-emergence of high levels of disease.

The following figures from the BIM report are informative and note a continuing reduction in profitability. We have always strongly suggested that the issue of increasing sea surface temperatures will in time make the industry unsustainable from an economic and biological perspective.

Extract from BIM Annual Aquaculture Report

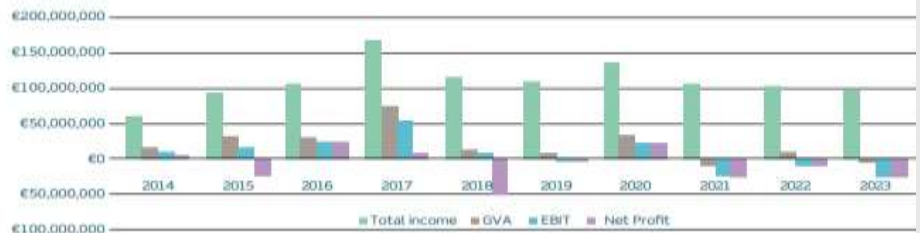


Figure 9: Penned salmon 10-year economic performance trend to 2023

National 2023			
Tonnes Sold:	9,289	Total Employed:	229
Sales Value ('000s€):	94,754	Production Units:	16
North		Southwest	
Tonnes Sold:	2,925	Tonnes Sold:	0
Total Employed:	101	Total Employed:	12
Production Units:	8	Production Units:	1
Northwest		South	
Tonnes Sold:	1,325	Tonnes Sold:	1,829
Total Employed:	35	Total Employed:	23
Production Units:	2	Production Units:	2
West			
Tonnes Sold:	3,212		
Total Employed:	58		
Production Units:	3		



Figure 10: Map of combined salmon output volume (tonnes) and employment by NUTs iii regions in 2023

[Link to Full BIM Report](#)