



Iascach Intíre Éireann  
Inland Fisheries Ireland

# BOARD OF INLAND FISHERIES IRELAND

**Meetings Report of April 27<sup>th</sup>, 2022**

This is the report of the meetings of the Board of IFI which took place in April 2022.  
This report provides an outline of agenda items raised at this meeting.

# BOARD MEETING – April 27<sup>th</sup>, 2022

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## 1. OPENING REMARKS

The Chair welcomed attendees to the meeting. In response to a request for declarations of conflicts of interest with matters on the agenda, one declaration was noted.

## 2. CONSENT AGENDA

### 2.1 Board Meeting – March 30<sup>th</sup>, 2022 – Draft Minutes and Meeting Report of March 2<sup>nd</sup>, 8<sup>th</sup> & 30<sup>th</sup>

**Paper(s) distributed:** Draft meeting minutes of March 30<sup>th</sup> and meeting report of March 2<sup>nd</sup>, 8<sup>th</sup> and 30<sup>th</sup>.

**MOTION:** **Approval of draft minutes – March 30<sup>th</sup> Board meeting and March 2<sup>nd</sup>, 8<sup>th</sup> and 30<sup>th</sup> meetings report, pending advised edits to the March 30<sup>th</sup> minutes to be finalised by email.**

Matters Arising

There were no other matters arising.

### 2.2 Board Meeting – March 30<sup>th</sup>, 2022 – Resolutions and Status on Actions Arising

**Paper(s) distributed:** March 30<sup>th</sup> Resolutions Listing; March 30<sup>th</sup> Actions Arising

**Action(s):** Noted by Board members.

### 2.3 Other Items of Note

**Correspondence:** 2.3.1 Ballisodare Fishing Club [24 March 2022]

**Presenting:** CEO, F. O'Donnell

The CEO noted the report provided by the WRBD (Ballina) Director included in his 'CEO's Report', which provided members with an account of events raised in the letter. He acknowledged the concerns of the club, and stated that further engagement would be necessary, establishing whether an appropriate assessment was undertaken for the changes implemented and the merit of drafting a fisheries management plan for the fishery.

**Action(s):** **2.3** Secretary to acknowledge letter from stakeholder  
**2.4** WRBD Director to engage further with Ballisodare Fishing Club

### 2.3.3 IFI Climate Action Mandate

**Paper(s) distributed:** Climate Action Mandate for April 2022

**Presenting:** CEO, F. O'Donnell

**Action(s):** Noted by Board members.

## 3. CEO'S REPORT

### 3.1 CEO's Report

**Paper(s) distributed:** CEO's Report - April 2022

**Presenting:** CEO, F. O'Donnell

The CEO responded a query regarding the progression of responding to the report of bullying (December 2021) stating that the Head of HR was working on the matter and that an update would be provided to the Board at the next Board meeting. Engagement with the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) was commended.

A discussion on IFI's engagement with the ESB ensued, with the CEO commenting that political support would be necessary to make progress in addressing risks to fish and eel stocks.

The CEO responded to a query regarding his engagement with the National Parks and Wildlife Service (NPWS), stating that it would be important to do so from the Habitats Directive perspective in alleviating planning related delays. He commented that he had received a request from the NPWS in relation to supporting the monitoring of the presence of White-Tailed Eagles by IFI staff while out in the field. He added that the recruitment of a Chief Ecologist is a priority and may need to be reviewed by the Strategic HR Sub-committee in advance of approval by the Board.

In response to a comment on the level of work progressed with respect to development projects reported in the CEO's report, the CEO stated that the in-stream window to access fisheries opened from 1 June to the end of September. A discussion ensued on accessing EU LIFE Programme<sup>1</sup> funding, where the CEO confirmed that a dedicated resource for accessing grant funding had not yet been recruited following two attempts to tender for the service. It was noted that IFI had previously delivered projects under the EU LIFE Programme (Mulkear and CAISIE).

Reference was made to the previous CEO's aspiration of ensuring the cost neutrality of the Galway Fishery. A request for a report on the financial standing of this cost centre was requested. Also, a request was made regarding how much has been spent so far on the various reports regarding the development of Aasleagh Lodge and cottages.

**Action(s):**               **3.1** To provide a copy of minutes of meetings between IFI and the ESB  
                                  **3.3** A request for a report on the Galway Fishery cost centre was requested.

#### **4. FINANCIAL SUMMARY PRESENTATION**

##### **4.1 & 2 Draft Annual Report 2021 and Chair's Comprehensive Report to the Minister for 2021**

**Paper(s) distributed:** Draft Annual Report 2021; and Chair's Comprehensive Report to the Minister for 2021

**Presenting:**               CEO, F. O'Donnell

A discussion ensued on the disclosures within the Chairman's Comprehensive Report to the Minister. Two non-material edits were advised.

**Action(s):**               **4.1** Feedback provided by members is to be applied to the draft annual report prior to submission to the parent Department by the April 30<sup>th</sup> deadline.

**Rationale:**               Following deliberations, members were satisfied with the draft 2021 Annual Report and draft 2021 Chair's Comprehensive Report to the Minister.

**MOTION:**               **Approval of the draft Annual Report 2021 pending amendments advised**

**MOTION:**               **Approval of the draft Chair's Comprehensive Report to the Minister for 2021**

#### **5. VITAL FEW**

##### **5.1 Habitats Development Programme**

**Paper(s) distributed:** Habitats and Conservation Funding for 2022

**Presenting:**               Dr Michael Millane (RO) (SCF 22-150)  
                                  Jane Gilleran (FEO), Catherine Hayes (Insp) (SCF 22-142)

##### **SCF 22-0150 - Salmon Conservation Limit Attainment 2022-2025**

M. Millane was admitted to the meeting and provided a detailed presentation on the scope and purpose of drawing down this funding and the work packages involved. M. Millane responded to queries regarding the engagement of a contractor to oversee the coordination of surveying and the national nature of surveys conducted. M. Millane left the meeting.

**Action(s):**               No specific actions were recorded.

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<sup>1</sup> The LIFE programme is the EU's funding instrument for the environment and climate action.

**Rationale:** Members discussed the potential of this work being conducted by IFI's Research Division and were satisfied to approve the project to the end of the 3-year cycle.

**MOTION:** **Approval of SCF 22-0150 - Salmon Conservation Limit Attainment 2022-2025**

**SCF 22-0142 - Annacotty weir fish passage improvement works - Planning phase**

J. Gilleran and C. Hayes were admitted to the meeting and provided a presentation on nature of the fishery being protected; environmental pressures; and the tracking of stock numbers using the fish counter. They discussed the vulnerability of stocks caught at the weir and the options for addressing this. J. Gilleran responded to a query regarding ownership and the heritage status of the weir. She also stated that stakeholder engagement is a significant and challenging aspect of this barrier mitigation. The CEO commented that it was not fully clear as to the agency which would be responsible for overall responsibility for barrier removal, acknowledging that it is a very resource intensive process. J. Gilleran and C. Hayes left the meeting.

**Action(s):** No specific actions were recorded.

**Rationale:** Members were satisfied that this planning phase should commence using Salmon Conservation funding.

**MOTION:** **Approval of SCF 22-0142 - Annacotty weir fish passage improvement works - Planning phase**

**5.3 ALAB Legal Advice**

**Paper(s) distributed:** Draft Letter from Byrne Wallace – Amendments to proceedings draft

**Presenting:** Head of Operations, Greg Forde

G. Forde was admitted to the meeting and provided a presentation on the requirement to amend the Judicial Review proceedings. The amendment related to the issuing of a foreshore license which needs to take the public interest into account. He stated that there appears to be no evidence as to how the decision to issue the foreshore license was formed. He responded to queries raised in relation to apportioning the legal costs.

Assurance was sought by the Board that there is a clear indication of agreement with this cost apportioning approach from IFI's Parent Department. [G. Forde remained to present item 9.1]

**Action(s):** **5.1** Obtaining confirmation of support of parent Department

**Rationale:** Members were satisfied that the amendment to proceedings is progressed.

**MOTION:** **Approval of Byrne Wallace – Amendments to proceedings draft**

**6. RISK MANAGEMENT - UPDATE**

**6.1 Corporate Risk Register 10.23**

**Paper(s) distributed:** Corporate Risk Register 10.23

**Presenting:** Chief Risk Officer, F. O'Donnell

**Action(s):** Noted by Board members.

**7. STRATEGIC UPDATE**

**7.1 IFI Review of Business Development Function – Quarter 1 2022**

**Paper(s) distributed:** Business Plan Narrative and Dashboard

**Presenting:** CEO, F. O'Donnell

The CEO presented on the updated Business Plan 2022 for quarter 1. He responded to queries in relation to IFI's body worn camera programme; incorrect use of Salmon Rod Licenses carcass tags issued and the implementation of new licensing software.

**Action(s):** Noted by Board members.

## 8. BOARD COMMITTEE CHAIR REPORTS

### 8.1 Audit & Risk Committee Meeting Minutes (21 March)

**Paper(s) distributed:** ARC Meeting Minutes 21 March 2022 [Approved by email]

**Presenting:** ARC Chair, B. Orbinski -Burke

B. Orbinski-Burke provided a verbal update on the ARC meeting of March 21<sup>st</sup>. She referred to the meeting with the new Internal Auditors and the discussion on the 2022 Audit Programme, would be presented to the Board for approval in due course. She stated that the committee had discussed security of Board and committee paper distribution and archiving. Ms Orbinski Burke reported that further work on organisational risk would be completed. She reported that Lynda Connor of IFI Clonmel, Director of the Southeastern RBD met with the committee and provided assurance on the focus of delivery of the Corporate and Protection plans. Ms Connor had also commented that her area of concern was the delivery of development projects where increased resources and expertise were needed. It was noted that the Chair of the ARC and the Head of Finance met with the Office of the Comptroller & Auditor General on March 22<sup>nd</sup> regarding the Statement of Internal Control (SIC) for 2021.

**Action(s):** Noted by Board members.

### 8.2 Property Sub-committee Meeting April 7<sup>th</sup>

**Paper(s) distributed:** Property Sub-committee minutes

**Presenting:** Property Sub-committee Chair, M. McGreal

M. McGreal provided a verbal update on the Property Sub-committee meeting which of April 7<sup>th</sup> in Sligo. He reported on the site visit and unsuitable nature of the property at Union Hall, Ballisodare and the subsequent visit to view another property in Sligo Town. A formal decision was taken by the sub-committee not to progress the Union Hall building and to pursue an alternative option. The sub-committee Chair reported leaking through the roof at the Claregalway building. He stated that IFI continued to seek to purchase the Cornamona building. Also reported was the cost of floor treatment the Claregalway base. The Chair stated that with respect to the facilities in Roscommon, €475k was the estimate cost and that this matter has been deferred to P. Doherty.

## 9. ITEMS FOR APPROVAL

### 9.1 Commercial Salmon License Applications 2022

**Paper(s) distributed:** Commercial Salmon License Applications 2022

**Presenting:** Head of Operations, G. Forde

G. Forde presented the recommendations. He drew attention to the allocation of licenses in the Southwest and following an explanation of the circumstances, requested that the granting of the final license be referred to the Head of Operations and the CEO. G. Forde left the meeting.

**Action(s):** **9.1** G. Forde and the CEO shall award the final commercial salmon license in the Southwest

**Rationale:** Members were satisfied with the recommendations presented by the Head of Operations.

**MOTION:** **Approval to refer the award of a license in the Southwest to the CEO and Head of Operations**

**MOTION:** **Approval to grant Commercial License Applications for 2022**

### 9.2 Outdoor Recreation Infrastructure Scheme (ORIS) Funding Application 2022

**Paper(s) distributed:** ORIS Funding Application 2022

B. O'Connor was admitted to the meeting. He provided an overview of the proposed scope of work planned, pending the success of applying for grant funding under the ORIS. He confirmed that hiring contract staff to conduct the work was part of the application, as the ORIS funding will cover the work and materials. Members commended the paper and presentation.

**Action(s):** No specific actions were recorded.  
**Rationale:** Members were satisfied with the recommendations put forward by B. O'Connor.  
**MOTION:** **Approval of application for grant from the ORIS fund**

### **9.3 Hire Vehicles**

**Paper(s) distributed:** Seasonal Vehicle Hire Proposal

A discussion ensued as to whether the proposed expenditure of circa €80k for vehicle hire had already been included in the forecasted budget.

**Action(s):** **9.2** P. Doherty to report on whether vehicle hire already accounted for in 2022 Budget approved on March 8<sup>th</sup>.

**MOTION:** **Approval of expenditure on Seasonal Hire Vehicles for 2022 Season**  
Withdrawn.

## **10. Management Assurance**

### **10.1 Monthly Protection Plan Review**

**Paper(s) distributed:** Monthly Protection Plan Review – February 2022

**Presenting:** CEO, F. O'Donnell

**Action(s):** Noted by Board members.

### **10.2 National Seizure Report 2021**

**Paper(s) distributed:** National Seizure Report 2021

**Presenting:** CEO, F. O'Donnell

The Board commented on high the level of activity being delivered in relation to habitat and development work, and that there is also a lot of protection being delivered which is evidenced in the seizures report for 2021. A significant amount of staff fisheries protection experience has contributed to this success.

**Action(s):** Noted by Board members.

## **11. AOB**

### **Fish Farm Working Group**

The Chair proposed the convening of a meeting of the Fish Farm Working Group.

### **National Inland Fisheries Forum**

The Chair reported that he had engaged with the Chair of the NIFF in setting up the first meeting of the next iteration of the Forum.

**Action(s):** **11.1** To arrange to convene a meeting of the Fish Farm Working Group  
**11.2** To send out invitations to representative groups to nominate one of their number to become member of the NIFF and to arrange to convene a meeting of the NIFF.