



Iascach Intíre Éireann  
Inland Fisheries Ireland

# BOARD OF INLAND FISHERIES IRELAND

## Meeting Report of October 20<sup>th</sup> 2021

This is the report of the meeting of the Board of IFI which took place in October 2021.  
This report provides an outline of agenda items raised at this meeting.

# BOARD MEETING – October 20<sup>th</sup>, 2021

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## 1. OPENING REMARKS

The Chair welcomed members to the meeting. Three members were in attendance via ZOOM and one apology was reported. In response to the Chair's request for declarations of conflicts of interest with matters on the agenda, no conflicts of interest were declared.

The Chair briefed members on recent correspondence with the Department regarding; the National Inland Fisheries Forum (NIFF) and the Corporate Plan 2021-25. The Chair also raised the recent review of the Dormant Accounts Fund disbursement through IFI's Education & Outreach initiative and stated that the Board had taken its decision to halt this activity for valid reasons and sought assurance that this would be adequately communicated by the CEO. In response to a query regarding River Basin District Directors interaction with the Board, it was noted that RBD Directors had previously been invited to ARC meetings to present on risks identified and that this would recommence. The Board agreed that there is merit in engaging with all levels of management in providing it with the necessary assurance regarding operations of the organisation.

## 2. CONSENT AGENDA

### 2.1 Board Meeting – September 16<sup>th</sup>, 2021 – Draft Minutes and Report

The **draft minutes of the meetings and meeting report** were approved.

#### Matters Arising

Matters raised by members included: the Owenmore/Ballynahinch Fishery funding application; correspondence from SIPTU and L. Ree Access for All distributed at the September Board meeting; vehicle usage monitoring; and the capacity to analyse telematics reporting; and the potential of measuring the outcome of eco-driving training in relation to fuel economy.

#### Owenmore/Ballynahinch Fishery Funding Application - Ecological Rationale

Item 9.5 on the agenda was raised at this point and Dr Paddy Gargan joined the meeting to brief the members on the fishery from a scientific and ecological viewpoint. Dr Gargan stated that it was proposed to develop catchment wide plans of works, commission environmental assessments, and to identify relevant planning requirements. He stated it was envisioned that works would be delivered over a five-year (plus) period on a catchment-by-catchment basis. Dr Gargan was thanked for his contribution and left the meeting.

### 2.2 Board Meeting – September 16<sup>th</sup>, 2021 – Resolutions and Status on Actions Arising

The resolutions listing and status on actions arising from the September 16<sup>th</sup> Board meeting were distributed with the meeting papers and noted.

### 2.3 Other Items of Note

#### 2.3.1 Climate Action Mandate Update

The '*Climate Action Mandate for June to September*' paper distributed with the papers was taken following item 4.3 on the agenda and discussed by the Energy Performance Officer, P. Doherty.

## 3. CEO'S REPORT

### 3.1 CEO's Report - October 2021

The '*CEO's Briefing Note to the Board for September 2021*', was distributed with the meeting papers and taken as read. The CEO briefed members in respect of: his meeting with the Game Angling Federation; progression of the organisational review; the launch of the Corporate Plan 2021-25 and

lease arrangements at Aasleagh Lodge and cottages. The Board proposed optimising opportunities for open communication within the organisation with a view to sharing good operational practices.

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

##### 4.1 Management Accounts and Executive Summary – August 2021

The 'Management Accounts and Executive Summary for August 2021' were distributed with the meeting papers. P. Doherty joined the meeting. Matters discussed related to budget variances; capital expenditure in line with the Corporate Plan, matured liabilities at year end and obligations in relation to remitting unutilised funds to the Department. The Chair of the ARC stated that the organisation would be considering the tighter funding climate in drafting its 2022 budget. P. Doherty added that unclaimed budgeted subsistence had contributed to variance against budget and that the Finance team would monitor variances.

P. Doherty briefed members on the tender process in relation to the fitout of the Claregalway base. He confirmed that a tender for internal audit services would be conducted in Q4 using the OGP framework. He responded to queries regarding: unutilised funding held by the organisation; car hire costs; trailer repair costs and laptop procurement.

##### 4.2 Revised Capital Expenditure Request – Vehicle Purchase/PV Panels

A document titled 'Revised Capital Expenditure Request Vehicles/PVs', was distributed with the meeting papers and discussed in detail. Matters considered were; supporting climate change mitigation actions including the installation of charging points and BIK implications in installing domestic units. P. Doherty briefed members on range; vehicle BIK exemption, and the advantage of installing Photo Voltaic panels at IFI bases where EV chargers are installed. **The recommendation to raise capital spend to include 12 extra EVs (Kia eNeros) and PV installations** was approved.

##### 4.3 Expenditure L. major Removal Contract and Jute matting

A document titled 'Briefing Note – L. major Removal Contract' was distributed with the meeting papers. The paper summarised the costings in relation to weed removal at Lough Corrib from 2019 to 2021 and forecasted costs for 2022. Members considered the need for continued Departmental funding of this initiative. Also discussed was the requirement to procure a boat in delivering this operation. The Board noted the Lagarosiphon Research Lough Corrib Report (LARC) (2018-2020). **The recommendation to continue the contract with L. major removal (subject to available funding) and to procure the necessary jute matting** was approved.

##### Climate Action Mandate 2021

The Board discussed the actions being taken by the organisation to reduce energy consumption and CO<sub>2</sub> emissions. Matters raised were; IFI's increasing fuel consumption and the need to take corrective action; vehicle fleet management and use; and the effective use of the telematics system. Members discussed the desirability of moving to energy efficient buildings and consideration of disposal where ratings cannot be improved. The Board welcomed the extensive use of drones for gathering intelligence and bikes/eBikes for patrols.

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

##### 5.1 Corporate Plan 2021-2025

The CEO confirmed that the official launch of IFI's Corporate Plan 2021-2025 would follow the laying of the plan before the Oireachtas.

## 6. RISK MANAGEMENT - UPDATE

### 6.1 Corporate Risk Register 10.20

The 'Corporate Risk Register 10.20' was distributed with the meeting papers. The CEO reported that changes made by the SMT were reported to the ARC where feedback was provided. Members discussed the newly added risks and provided further feedback. The CEO confirmed that IFI's employee headcount was a major constraint. The concept of apprenticeships was raised. The Programme for Government 2020 indicates a provision of financial support to organisations in developing such an initiative. The risk of fraud and inappropriate use of resources was discussed in terms of the challenge in detecting this.

## 7. STRATEGIC UPDATE – CEO's Presentation

The CEO reported that an 'All Ireland Scientific Workshop on Salmon and Eels' is proposed for January 2022 in county Fermanagh.

## 8. BOARD COMMITTEE CHAIR REPORTS

### 8.1 Audit & Risk Committee Meeting – October 6<sup>th</sup>, 2021

The draft minutes of the ARC meeting of October 6<sup>th</sup> were distributed with the meeting papers and were noted. A discussion ensued on level of staffing and expertise required to effectively disburse Dormant Accounts Funding and provide assurance.

#### 8.1.2 Internal Audit Review – Energy Usage

A document titled 'Internal Audit Review – Energy Usage' was distributed with the meeting papers. Members noted management responses and **the recommendations of the review of energy usage were adopted.**

### 8.2 Property Sub-committee Meetings – (September 22<sup>nd</sup> and October 14<sup>th</sup>, 2021)

The draft minutes of the Property Sub-committee meetings of September 22<sup>nd</sup> and October 14<sup>th</sup> were distributed with the meeting papers. With reference to Committee site visits and detailed discussions with the relevant RBD Directors, the Chair of the Committee presented the following recommendations to the Board:

- **Claregalway Base fitout – proceed to commence works** - approved.
- **Youghal Base – payment of the balance of purchase cost and tendering process for fitout to commence** - approved.

## 9. ITEMS FOR APPROVAL

### 9.1 Habitats and Conservation Projects Funding 2022

A document titled 'Habitats and Conservation Funding 2022', was distributed with the meeting papers. Members noted the recommendation that **funding is to be made available to eligible applications for the Midland Fisheries Fund (€50k) and the Salmon and Sea Trout Rehabilitation, Conservation and Protection Fund (€1m) for 2022.** This was approved.

### 9.2 Proposed Changes to National Strategy for Angling Development Funded Projects

A document titled 'Proposed Changes to National Strategy for Angling Development Funded Projects', was distributed with the meeting papers. Projects for consideration for extension/additional funding were;

- NSADF-17-0031, Restoration and Enhancement of Angling Facilities catering for Game & Coarse Anglers in Mallow Town [\[extension of deadline\]](#)
- NSADF-19-0223, Feasibility study for the development of a centre of excellence for angling on Lough Derg and County Clare in Killaloe. [\[extension of deadline\]](#)
- NSADF-20-0238, New pier and slipway at Clonmacken Lake [\[extension of deadline\]](#)

- NSADF-17-0119, Angling access upgrades at the Roach Pond Cong [[extension of deadline](#)]
- NSADF-17-0118, Restoration of Breakwater in Lough Gill, Co. Sligo [[additional funding](#)]

The Board discussed the risk associated with these recommendations and the Board's previous proposal to introduce a sunset clause. **It was agreed for projects to be extended to the end of September 2022, [final extension] and that a report on progress would be provided in advance of Board meetings.** This was approved.

### 9.3 Proposal for Continuation of ESRI Research Programme

A document titled '*Proposal for Continuation of ESRI Research Programme*', was distributed with the meeting papers, recommending a multi-year collaboration with the ESRI. Members discussed the potential of this research being conducted in-house; the quality of the presentations resulting from previous research output; the independence and high regard for the work of the ESRI and the costs associated with the research. The CEO stated that a more effective use of such funds may be to hire resources to research the value of salmonid stock valuation/ natural capital. It was agreed to defer a decision on the matter to a later meeting to determine the benefit accrued and value for money from previous research.

### 9.4 Proposed Angling Access Project

A document titled '*Proposed Angling Access Project*', was distributed with the meeting papers. Following discussion of the recommendation to re-allocate decommitted NSAD funding (€60k) to the Clonmacken Lake project, a **more detailed report on the proposed construction of the slipway was requested.** A decision on the matter was deferred to the November meeting.

### 9.5 Owenmore/Ballynahinch Catchment Management 5 Year Plan (SCF-21- 0123)

Earlier in the meeting, Dr. Paddy Gargan presented on the scientific background to this project. The Board discussed the approval of the tranche of projects (in which this proposal was included – June 30<sup>th</sup> 2021) and the governance process (assessments at RBD, panel and oversight group level). Queries raised at the June Board meeting were responded to and the Board recognized the ecological merit of the proposal and the fact that it is line with IFI's strategy. It was agreed to revisit the proposal.

### 9.6 Classification on Board Request (A03-09) September Board Meeting

A document titled '*Classification on Board Request (A03-09) September Board Meeting*', was distributed with the meeting papers. This paper was noted.

## **10. MANAGEMENT ASSURANCE**

The following documents were distributed to members serving as assurance on activities undertaken as part of the delivery of the business plan for 2021.

### 10.1 Habitats and Conservation Report to End September 2021

### 10.2 Structures, Commercial, Education & Outreach Projects Report – September 2021

### 10.3 Monthly Protection Plan Review – August 2021

### 10.4 Mobile Support Unit Protection Report – August 2021

### 10.5 Applied Research Programme – 2021

### 10.6 Brown Trout Research Strategy 2021-2023

### 10.7 Design Guidance for Fish Passage on Small Barriers – August 2021

## **10 AOB**

There were no matters raised under this item.