



Iascach Intíre Éireann  
Inland Fisheries Ireland

# BOARD OF INLAND FISHERIES IRELAND

## Meetings Report of October 19<sup>th</sup>, 2022

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

# BOARD MEETING – October 19<sup>th</sup>, 2022

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## 1. OPENING REMARKS

IFI Chair, Prof. Frances Lucy welcomed members to the meeting. In response to the Chair's request for declarations of conflicts of interest with matters on the agenda, no conflicts were declared. The agenda was adopted, and the Chair provided a reminder to members regarding the maintenance of confidentiality regarding Board papers, discussions, and decisions.

## 2. CONSENT AGENDA

### 2.1 Board Meeting – September 7<sup>th</sup> and October 14<sup>th</sup> Draft Minutes and September Draft Report

**Papers distributed:** 2.1.1 Draft Board Meeting Minutes of September 7<sup>th</sup>; 2.1.2 Draft Board Meeting Report of September 7<sup>th</sup>; 2.1.3 Draft Board Meeting Minutes of October 14<sup>th</sup>

**MOTION:** **Approval of draft September 7<sup>th</sup> Board meeting minutes and report**

**MOTION:** **Approval of amended draft October 14<sup>th</sup> Board meeting minutes**

#### Matters Arising

Members discussed the procurement of consultancy services as outlined in the October 14<sup>th</sup> meeting minutes. In response to a query in relation to the status of a previous governance support project, the Board Secretary provided an update on this matter.

### 2.2 Board Meeting – September 7<sup>th</sup>, 2022 – Resolutions and Status on Actions Arising

**Papers distributed:** 2.2.1 Board Meeting Actions Arising, 2.2.2 Board Resolutions

Actions discussed included:

- Potential for IFI as a competent authority for fish under the Habitats Directive
- Board document management solution

## 3. CEO'S REPORT

### 3.1 CEO's Report

**Paper distributed:** 3.1 CEO's Report – October 2022

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

The CEO responded to queries in relation to: a stakeholder meeting on water abstraction proposals and associated risks; the outputs of recent IFI research on the impacts of fry translocation; the risk associated with an historical agreement struck by IFI; and interaction with the ESB.

## 4. FINANCIAL SUMMARY PRESENTATION

### 4.1 Management Accounts and Executive Summary – August 2022

**Papers distributed:** 4.1.1 Executive Summary; 4.1.2 Management Accounts and Development Costs for August 2022:

**Presenting:** Finance Director, M. Martin

M. Martin joined the meeting and responded to queries in relation to capital expenditure targets being met and the deficit reported in the Management Accounts attributing it to higher costs and anticipated that the full 6% public sector pay restoration would be implemented by 2025. The Board expressed satisfaction with the presentation of the accounts and the benefit of the budget recasting exercise completed mid-year. He also responded to a query regarding the Salmon and Sea Trout license conservation funds collected and held by IFI. He then left the meeting.

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

### 4.2 Vehicles Procurement

**Papers distributed:** 4.2.1 Vehicle Procurement Further Information for Decision; 4.2.2 Approved Electric Vehicles Strategy V1; 4.2.3 Board Cap Ex Appraisal – Electric Vehicles (EV); 4.2.4 Business Case Purchase of Towing 4x4s

**Presenting:** Head of Operations, B. Fox, Field Services Manager, M. Cusack

B. Fox and M. Cusack joined the meeting. M. Cusack brought members through the key aspects to consider in making their decision regarding expenditure on 9 diesel 4x4 vehicles and 12 electric vehicles. In relation to towing vehicles, the key criteria outlined were utilisation, mileage, safety challenges, technological progress (trailer sway control and pre-collision systems), emissions, parts supply and investment cost. The Field Services Manager briefed members on supply chain issues and expected delivery times. He added that EV towing vehicles were in development but were not yet appropriate to meet the logistical needs of IFI.

With respect to electric vehicles (EVs), the key criteria outlined were climate action targets, infrastructure, total cost of ownership, recycling/recovery targets and investment cost. In response to concern expressed regarding the incongruent optics of purchasing diesel vehicles, a discussion ensued on a flexible tender design permitting withdrawal from Internal Combustion Engine (ICE) purchase when alternative EV options are available. The CEO emphasised that the organisation is on path to an 80/20 model in order to achieve climate targets by 2030. The Head of Operations proposed a 3-year tender cycle incorporating annual board approval. It is anticipated that the annual capital investment necessary is circa €500k over the next 8 years, due to the fact that 70% of IFI's emissions arise from its vehicle fleet. M. Cusack and B. Fox left the meeting.

**Rationale:** Following a review of papers submitted and a detailed presentation by M. Cusack and B. Fox the Board assessed the recommendations for progressing IFI's multi-year investment strategy for vehicle replacement (with ICE (where necessary) and EV (where appropriate)).

**MOTION:** **Approval of capital expenditure on IFI's vehicles fleet as outlined: €507,600 (ICE towing vehicles) and €542,259.41 (9 SUV & 3 saloon EVs)**

#### **4.3 IFI Internal Audit – Draft Terms of Reference for Watercraft Fleet Review 2022**

**Papers distributed:** 4.3.1 Draft Terms of Reference for Watercraft Fleet Review 2022

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

A discussion on ensuring the effectiveness of the watercraft fleet review ensued and it was agreed to narrow the scope of watercraft to RIBs used for protection operations and to widen the timeframe to the almost 4-year period of 2019 to date.

**Rationale:** Following a detailed discussion on the nature of assurance required by the fleet review amendments were agreed.

**MOTION:** **Approval of amended draft Terms of Reference for Watercraft Fleet Review 2022**

#### **4.4 Presentation on National Barriers Programme - Update**

**Papers distributed:** 9.6 National Barriers Project Update – Presentation Slide Deck

**Presenting:** Head of Research & Development, Dr Cathal Gallagher

C. Gallagher joined the meeting via Zoom. He presented on the progress made to date on IFI's Barriers Assessment Project. He outlined the deliverables of the project; integration and evolution of barrier assessment tools; programme of barrier surveys; development of catchment-based prioritisation matrix; research and monitoring programme to evaluation impact of barriers and the effectiveness of management approaches and the coordination with Local Authorities (LAs), Transport Infrastructure Ireland (TII), the Office of Public Works (OPW) and Rail Network Ireland on incorporating barrier assessment and mitigation into their maintenance cycles. He stated that the EU has exerted significant pressure on Ireland in order to address risks to hydromorphology impacting fish stocks. He stated that IFI will be funded €276k per year to 2026 to complete the assessment project. Dr. Gallagher presented the statistics regarding barriers with 72k potential barriers recorded of which 10k are barriers to fish migration. He stated that IFI has been identified as the lead agency in terms of this significant work, having built expertise from its partnership on the AMBER project<sup>1</sup>. The Head of Research and Development indicated that IFI would engage with other partners across the EU for expertise. He stated that a submission to run the barrier mitigation programme has staff requirement, based regionally, alongside a capital

<sup>1</sup> [AMBER - Adaptive Management of Barriers in European Rivers](#)

programme for the benefit of fish stocks migration and ultimately biodiversity. The CEO cautioned that the organisation would not proceed in the absence of such funding. Dr Gallagher responded to queries in relation to his presentation. The Chair thanked Dr Gallagher, noting the beneficial cross-agency work and anticipated the reporting of further progress in due course.

#### New IFI Fish Farm Project Steering Group

The Head of Research and Development remained to brief the members on the formation and first meeting of the New IFI Fish Farm Project Steering Group. He also referred to the existing stakeholder group for the development of the fish farm, of which the CEO is chair. He clarified this group will oversee the delivery of the new IFI fish farm and will act as a support to the project team.

## 5. VITAL FEW

### 5.1 Update on the Submission to Department regarding Funding

**Papers distributed:** 5.1 Submission to Department regarding Funding

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

The CEO briefed members on the status of this submission for funding.

### 5.2 Communications in relation to the S18(3) Review Report

**Papers distributed:** No papers were distributed for this item.

**Presenting:** Chair, F. Lucy

On October 14<sup>th</sup> the Board met to consider the S18(3) Review Report, a discussion in relation to communication ensued.

## 6. RISK MANAGEMENT - UPDATE

### 6.1 Corporate Risk Register 10.27

**Paper distributed:** 6.1 Corporate Risk Register 10.27

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

The CEO outlined the changes to the Risk Register.

## 7. BOARD COMMITTEE CHAIR REPORTS

### 7.1 Property Sub-committee Meeting Report

**Paper distributed:** No papers were provided under this item.

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

The Chair of the Property Sub-committee apprised members of the site visit to IFI's property at Louisburgh, Co. Mayo under item 8.3.

### 7.2 IFI Fish Farm Working Group (New IFI Fish Farm Project Steering Group) Meeting Report

**Paper distributed:** No papers were provided under this item.

**Presenting:** Chair, F. Lucy

During his presentation under item 4.4 the C. Gallagher presented on the recent formation of this oversight and advisory group.

## 8. ITEMS FOR APPROVAL

### 8.1 IFI Habitats & Conservation Funding

**Paper distributed:** 8.1 Habitats & Conservation 2023 Funding Proposal

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

The CEO introduced this item, stating that annually the Board is presented with the decision to approve the opening of the scheme for the Midlands Fishery Fund (€50k) and the Salmon and Sea Trout Rehabilitation, Conservation and Protection Fund (€1m). The paper distributed outlines the nature, scope and limitations of the grants approved for each scheme and the governance structure in the disbursement of these funds.

**Rationale:** The Board accepted the paper and presentation by the CEO.

**MOTION:** **Approval of the 2023 Habitats & Conservation Funding Proposal**

**8.2 Recommendations Arising from Aasleagh Lodge Feasibility Study**

**Paper distributed:** 8.2.1 Recommendations of Feasibility Study - Aasleagh Estate for Decision;

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

The CEO provided a brief outline to the content of the proposal. Matters raised were: the timing of the proposal as the Board awaits the outcome of the internal review of the Aasleagh Cottages lease arrangements; the level of financial investment and the need for a contingency plan. The CEO stated that this asset was under utilised and that he believed funding would be available for the development following the planning stage.

**8.3 Sale of Louisburgh Property**

**Paper distributed:** 8.3 Louisburgh Site Visit and Proposal to Sell

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

The Property Sub-committee Chair, M. McGreal presented on this item, outlining the nature of the property and its operational status as presented by the executive. The CEO added that of the 3 acres, 1 acre would be retained maintaining access to the fish counter on the Bunowen River.

**Action(s):** No further actions recorded.

**Rationale:** Following review of the documentation and the report of the Property Sub-committee Chair, the Board was satisfied with the recommendation.

**MOTION:** **Approval of placing a portion of the IFI property at Ballyhip, Louisburgh on the market for sale.**

**9. Management Assurance**

**9.1 Monthly Protection Plan Review August 2022 & 9.2 Development Projects Progress Report Q3**

**Paper distributed:** 9.1 Monthly Protection Plan Review August 2022

9.2 Development Projects Progress Report Q3

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

These papers were taken as read and noted by Board members.

**9.3 Climate Mandate – September 2022**

**Paper distributed:** 9.3 Climate Mandate September 2022

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

This paper was taken as read and noted by Board members.

**9.4 Presentation on 10 RBD Pro Development Projects**

**Paper distributed:** 9.4 Analysis of Rivers of SWRBD under State Control where Habitat Restoration is Required

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

The CEO led a discussion on the possibility of identifying other types of development projects than barrier mitigation. He proposed a habitat assessment. The CEO indicated that he would liaise with the Head of Operations and RBD Director in establishing the course of action to be taken.

**9.5 Presentation on 10 RBD Pro Development Projects – B. O'Connor**

**Paper distributed:** 9.5 IFI 10 RBD Development Projects - Presentation Slide Deck

**Presenting:** Programme Director, Barry O'Connor

B. O'Connor joined the meeting. F. Lucy extended the appreciation of members for the significant workload from planning to delivery of these development projects. The Programme Director presented on the pipeline projects which will be completed. He responded to queries in relation to the location of development projects and the reason why some projects could not be completed in 2022. He attributed the success of project delivery to all staff involved including local operational teams.

**10. Any Other Business**

It was agreed that an agenda for the Board's meeting with the Department (October 25<sup>th</sup>) would be shared with members at the earliest opportunity.

Approved