



Iascach Intíre Éireann  
Inland Fisheries Ireland

# BOARD OF INLAND FISHERIES IRELAND

**Meetings Report of November 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2022**

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

# BOARD MEETING – November 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2022

---

## 1. OPENING REMARKS

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 – October 19<sup>th</sup> Meeting Minutes

**Papers distributed:** 2.1.1 Draft Board Meeting Minutes 19 October; 2.1.2 Draft Board Meeting Report 19 October; 2.1.3 Draft Board/DECC Meeting Minutes 25 October.

**MOTION:** Approval of draft October 19<sup>th</sup> Board meeting minutes and report

**MOTION:** Approval of draft October 25<sup>h</sup> Board/DECC meeting minutes

Matters Arising

There were no matters arising.

### 2.2 Board Meeting October 19<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 Arising from October 19<sup>th</sup> Meeting

It was agreed that actions addressed in the CEO's Report are noted and verbal reports would be provided later on the agenda. The list of aged actions will be reviewed by the Chair and CEO to establish which can be progressed/closed.

### 2.3.2 Report from M. McGuire Intrinsic Management [A01:10]

**Papers distributed:** 2.3.2 Work undertaken by Intrinsic Management\_Q1 2022

Following a commitment to follow-up with and obtain a report of the work completed by Intrinsic Management (services procured on foot of a recommendation from the 2021 Board Effectiveness Evaluation), the Chair provided an outline of her meeting with Mary McGuire, Principal.

**MOTION:** Approval of completion of project work initiated by Intrinsic Management with additional work on Recommendation 92 (repeated at 112)

## 3. CEO'S REPORT

### 3.1 CEO's Report

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

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

The CEO responded to queries in relation to:

National Inland Fisheries Forum (NIFF)

Members discussed the recent NIFF meeting (November 14<sup>th</sup>). The CEO stated that interesting presentations were provided by the Office of Public Works (OPW) and Dr Ciara O'Leary (Senior Research Officer, IFI) and Declan Cooke (National River Habitat Development Manager, IFI).

Fish Farm Insurance - Veterinary Services

Head of Research, Dr Cathal Gallagher joined the meeting via video link and briefed members on engagement with IFI's recently appointed veterinary service providers and IFI's insurance provider. He provided assurances to the Board that the Fish Farm Manager was monitoring matters and anticipated early resolution. Dr. Gallagher responded to queries regarding the previous veterinary service provider; whether other State agencies had encountered the issue; and the likelihood of the matter being resolved satisfactorily.

#### Fish Farm Project Steering Group

Referring to the papers distributed to members (under item 7.2) Dr. Gallagher informed members of the progress on the new Fish Farm project, with a provisional notification to be posted on the eTenders website, and that IFI would be meeting with the consultant within the Office of Government Procurement (OGP). He clarified that the building of the housing for the new fish farm infrastructure would be a standard construction project and that there is an expert element for the Recirculatory Aquaculture System (RAS) which would require an international tender process. The Head of Research was thanked for his presentation and left the meeting.

The CEO responded to further queries on the balance outstanding on the Salmon Conservation Fund and the Transpoco Pilot Programme (to improve fuel efficiency).

- Action(s):**
- 3.1** Chair requested a report on the membership of the NIFF
  - 3.2** TOR for New Fish Farm Project Steering Group is reviewed

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

##### **4.1 Management Accounts and Executive Summary – September 2022**

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

**Presenting:** Head of Finance Director, P. Doherty

P. Doherty was admitted to the meeting. He responded to a query raised in relation to development costs (running under budget). He reported on the application for capital funding to the Department; headline expenditure such as legal and professional and vehicle hire; and funds at bank. The Head of Finance stated that the pay funding gap remains a significant cashflow risk in light of the public sector pay restoration measures and the non-inclusion of increments paid (costing circa €300k). Members discussed interaction with Department representatives on addressing the matter. P. Doherty briefed members on the status of internal audits and working with the OCAG on completion of its work in relation to IFI's 2021 Financial Statements. He was asked to have the cost savings introduced to hand in any discussions with the Department regarding increasing pay funding. P. Doherty responded to a query regarding funds available from the Salmon Conservation Fund and confirmed that current year licence sales are not included.

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

##### **5.1 Q3 Business Plan 2022 Update**

**Papers distributed:** 4.2.1 Q3 Business Plan – Narrative Update; 4.2.2 Q3 Business Plan – Dashboard

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

The CEO provided an overview of the Q3 Business Plan reporting (narrative and dashboard). He highlighted that Operations and Research organisational reviews were outstanding, that the review of Human Resources would be presented at the December Board meeting and the setup of the Habitat Specialisation Unit has commenced. He stated that tenders for a funding expert failed to identify a suitable candidate and that the Projects Management Office is reviewing funding avenues. Members discussed the possibility of considering private service providers in outsourcing this work, where learnings could be accumulated. He outlined issues with planning/land owner consent in the South Western RBD and also the issues with introducing Body Worn Cameras (BWCs). The CEO stated that will head up the Habitats function for a further 6 months.

He raised the challenging employment market and the difficulty attracting talent, where salary negotiation is not an option. A discussion ensued on alternatives to cash incentives for recruitment of new staff. In a response as to whether the organisation conducts exit interviews, the CEO stated that some leavers did not want to do exit interviews. In respect of diversity the CEO stated that it is difficult to attract females into field service roles but that there were a significant proportion in IFI's environment areas. The CEO confirmed that most of those leaving the organisation are leaving for better conditions. A discussion ensued on attracting applicants through messaging in terms of protection and conservation.

#### **6. RISK MANAGEMENT - UPDATE**

### **6.1 Corporate Risk Register 10.28**

**Paper distributed:** 6.1 Corporate Risk Register 10.28

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

The amended Corporate Risk Register was taken as read and members discussed the need to review the Board's risk appetite.

## **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 Ballybane, on November 16<sup>th</sup> (M. McGreal, S. Coady and F. O'Donnell). He described the nature of the building (having taken photos); it is a warehouse/stores building of approximately 1000ft<sup>2</sup>, with a tool room in the rear, and an office and toilets upstairs. He stated that this building has been replaced by a fit for purpose building, fitted out to IFI requirements in Claregalway. He outlined an estimate expected sales value and recommended sale of this property asset.

**Rationale:** The Board accepted the Property Sub-committee Chair's verbal presentation.

**MOTION:** **Approval of placing IFI's old base at Ballybane on the property market for sale**

### **7.2 New IFI Fish Farm Project Steering Group Meetings Update**

**Paper distributed:** 7.2.1 FFPSG Terms of Reference; 7.2.2 Fish Farm Project Plan; 7.2.3 FFPSG July 19<sup>th</sup> Approved Meeting Minutes; 7.2.4 FFPSG August 19<sup>th</sup> Approved Meeting Minutes

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

Dr Gallagher presented on this matter under item 3.1 earlier in the meeting.

## **8. ITEMS FOR APPROVAL**

### **8.1 Angling Access Project Proposal - Decommited Funding**

**Paper distributed:** 8.1.1 Proposed Access Project - Decommited Funds - November 2022

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

The CEO presented on this paper, stating that following a visit to Donamon, Suck Valley, Co. Roscommon where the health and safety risk to members of the public and the risk to IFI was noted (due to algal slip hazard on aging wooden angling stands), he was supportive of this proposal. [Approximately half of the stands are already upgraded]. It was noted that staff deployment had been depleted on the R. Suck, it was requested that the Head of Operations look into this.

**Rationale:** The Board accepted the merits of the recommendation by the Executive and presentation by the CEO.

**MOTION:** **Approval of the Donamon All-Access Angling Facility Proposal**

### **8.2 Sponsorship Fund 2023**

**Paper distributed:** 8.2.1 Sponsorship Programme Proposal - 2023

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

The CEO introduced this item, stating that annually the Board is presented with the decision to allocate funding (€30k) of funding to tourism interests, angling organisations, community groups and other bodies promoting fisheries awareness, novice angler initiatives and events in rural areas. The Board proposed introducing independence in disbursing the fund and updating the proposal document accordingly.

**Action(s):** **8.1** Independent appointee to decision making group for Sponsorship Fund

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

**MOTION:** **Approval of the 2023 IFI Sponsorship Fund (€30k)**

### **8.3 State Fishery Permit Price Proposal**

**Paper distributed:** 8.3.1 Permit Recommendations 2023

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

Members discussed the paper submitted and the CEO confirmed that IFI is still in contract talks with the ESB .

**Rationale:** The Board was satisfied with the recommendation presented.

**MOTION:** **Approval of changes proposed to State Managed Fisheries Permit Prices 2023**

#### **8.4 Licence Distributor**

**Paper distributed:** 8.4.1 SWRBD Licence Distributor Proposal

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

The CEO responded to members questions raised regarding appointment procedures.

**Rationale:** The Board was satisfied with the backup provided with this recommendation.

**MOTION:** **Approval of the appointment of a new Salmon & Sea Trout Rod Licence Distributor in Waterville**

### **9. Management Assurance**

#### **9.1 Monthly Protection Plan Review September & October 2022**

**Paper distributed:** 9.1.1 & 9.1.2 Monthly Protection Plan Reviews for September & October 2022

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

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

#### **9.2 Climate Mandate – October 2022**

**Paper distributed:** 9.2.1 Climate Mandate October 2022

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

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

### **10. Any Other Business**

Meeting dates for 2023 were adopted.

This concluded the business of the meeting.