



WATER QUALITY SPECIAL

# IFA Aquaculture Summer / Autumn 2013

IFA Aquaculture

IN THIS ISSUE

## IFA HIGHLIGHTS COUNTY COUNCILS' ROLE IN COASTAL WATER QUALITY

A new study by the EU confirms that investment by water authorities and local councils in the UK of over £47 million Stg has produced a marked fall of 12% in e.coli levels at shellfish waters.

Similar work has not yet been carried out in Ireland and ISA members have been concerned that at particular production areas sewage outfall is largely ignored despite legally binding rulings won by the Association against the Irish government.

With the new emphasis on averaging our risks over 3 years of monitoring, ISA was keen to know how seriously coastal councils were taking their responsibilities. The Executive Committee of ISA has produced a league table for 2012 and 2013 (see page 2) of performance by councils, meanwhile the responses from local authorities have been slowly returning and giving a patchwork picture of the reaction by individual councils to the requirement to protect and improve the areas where we grow our seafood.

### Questions

IFA Aquaculture explained in writing earlier this year to each council that the organisation wanted full consumer and industry confidence and remained concerned at the impact on our members of uncontrolled, badly planned or poorly

monitored waste water treatment sites. *"We are well aware of pressure on budgets for infrastructural development, but improved monitoring and enforcement is still a necessary and legal requirement. We would appreciate if you could inform IFA Aquaculture of the actions your authority is taking to improve the situation in your area, including sanitary surveys, identification of all septic tank outfalls which may impact on water quality, monitoring of storm water and sewage outfalls from towns and villages around the coastline and plans in place to address falling water quality where relevant."*

Detailed responses have been received at the time of going to press from **Clare, Wexford, Cork** and **Galway** local authorities for which industry is grateful. Their responses are available to all paid-up ISA members by contacting the Association office.

Acknowledgements were received from **Mayo** and **Louth** Councils.

No information or acknowledgement was received from **Donegal, Sligo, Limerick, Kerry** or **Waterford**. Members will be raising this failure to engage with the shellfish sector

*League Tables: Page 2*



### Aquanor 2013 report

As the service sector for aquaculture overtakes the Norwegian gas industry, the Minister announces 45 new salmon licences.

Page 4



### Joining the R&D dots in Kinsale

IFA Aquaculture hosts the Euroshell workshop in Kinsale to try to leverage better R&D information for shellfish producers on August 28<sup>th</sup> to examine ways to better inform shellfish producers of R&D activity. More information from IFA Aquaculture at [anndunne@ifa.ie](mailto:anndunne@ifa.ie)

An initiative with EU researchers and shellfish industries to improve the application of new technology and research at ground level in industry, input and ideas are sought from Irish producers and players in R&D.

# STRATEGIC FORCE

## Fisheries Fund Consultation

In the wake of the European Commission's Aquaculture Strategy published in May and the agreement on the CFP reforms which is being finalised, national talks on the new Maritime & Fisheries Fund (EMFF) are being set up around Europe, the EMFF is the proposed new fund for the EU's maritime and fisheries policies for the period 2014-2020. In line with the ambitious reform of the common fisheries policy (CFP), the Fund will help fishermen in the transition to sustainable fishing, and support coastal communities in diversifying their economies. It will finance projects that create new jobs and improve quality of life along European coasts. The new Fund will be used to co-finance projects, along with national funding. Each Member state will be allocated a share of the total Fund budget and then Member States will then draw up operational programmes, specifying how it intends to spend the money allocated.

As part of its preparations, the Department of Agriculture, Food & the Marine is



*FEAP Members on top of Howth Hill, - a pan-continental industry worth €2 billion overlooking Dublin Bay!*

launching a consultation process on the Seafood Development Programme and submissions are invited from interested parties on this document, which is being drafted over the coming months.

This consultation exercise will inform the preparation of the Seafood Development Programme. A further consultation will then be carried out which will give interested parties the opportunity to comment on the draft Programme document when it has been prepared. This second consultation is likely to be held towards the end of 2013.

Consultation with industry on the National Operational Plan for aquaculture to be submitted to Brussels will be led by BIM, beginning in September 2013

## CONSULTATION DOCUMENTS

<http://agriculture.gov.ie/fisheries/marineagenciesprogrammesdivision/futureseafooddevelopmentinireland2014-2020/>

# SHELLFISH WATERS LEAGUE TABLES 2012 & 2013

2013								2012								
County Council	Total Classified Areas	Class A 2013	Class A Seasonal 2013	Class B 2013	Class C 2013	Points	Points diff 2012/13	Weighted Points	County Council	Total Classified Areas	Class A 2012	Class A Seasonal 2012	Class B 2012	Class C 2012	Points	Weighted 2012
Clare	11	7	1	3	0	29	3	0.88	Mayo	21	13	2	5	0	53	0.84
Mayo	21	11	3	7	0	53	0	0.84	Clare	11	4	4	3	0	26	0.79
Galway	22	8	4	10	0	52	1	0.79	Donegal	18	3	3	15	1	42	0.78
Cork	23	9	0	14	1	52	2	0.75	Louth	9	6	0	3	1	21	0.78
Louth	8	6	0	1	1	17	-4	0.71	Galway	22	9	5	7	0	51	0.77
Kerry	9	1	1	7	0	19	2	0.70	Cork	23	7	3	13	1	50	0.72
Donegal	18	3	2	13	1	36	-6	0.67	Kerry	8	1	0	7	0	17	0.71
Sligo	7	0	0	7	0	14	0	0.67	Sligo	7	0	0	7	0	14	0.67
Waterford	5	0	0	5	0	10	2	0.67	Limerick	2	0	0	2	0	4	0.67
Limerick	2	0	0	2	0	4	0	0.67	Wexford	7	2	0	4	1	11	0.52
Wexford	7	2	0	4	1	11	-2	0.52	Waterford	6	1	0	4	1	8	0.44

Industry is well aware of changes in the microbiological monitoring and classification in recent years and the longer-term review of three years' data for each site upon which to base its status. A sub-committee of the Molluscan Shellfish Safety Committee meets annually to review the data and recommendations compiled by the SPPA and, along with ISA representing shellfish farmers the FSAI, MI and BIM, confirms the status and looks at spikes and trends which can be confirmed or withdrawn as part of the decision making process based on further information. Having built up a clearer picture using this new system, proposals have been put forward to reduce the amount of samples from bays, particularly where long term trends remain steady. For industry this means "A" status as "B" or "C" can always be improved. Our goal of real-time classification remains unachieved and the fullest possible protection for both consumer and farmer is being denied as long as the aquaculture site licencing system continues to be unworkable and unresponsive to the needs of industry for relaying areas and to grant sites for final grow out with "A" sites given priority. The above tables show that, while improvements are being made, much work is needed to continuously improve water quality in many counties important for shellfish production. The weighted points system indicates the actual performance of a county versus the maximum possible (A classification in every bay). **Points are awarded as follows: A = 3 points, Seasonal A and B = 2 points and C = minus 3 points**



## AquaNor report

### THE PREMIER TRADE SHOW WAS DOMINATED BY TECHNOLOGY, CONFIDENCE AND CO-OPERATION ON ISSUES OF MUTUAL CONCERN

At the opening of **Aquanor 2013**, Minister Lisbeth Berg Hansen announced that 45 new licences of approx. 800 tonnes standing biomass each would be issued in 2013 to add to the licences offered to industry in 2012. This commitment by the Norwegian government is recognition of the importance of aquaculture and comes as the downstream sector servicing Norwegian salmon companies (feed, marine, engineering, fuel, etc.) overtakes the Norwegian gas industry in terms of employment in 2013.

Fish farming is a more serious business than ever, and while many predicted that trade shows such as Aquanor would fizzle out with the development of large multinationals, the continued success of mid and small sized companies combined with the essential feedback of operations staff on purchases means Trondheim needs all its new hotel rooms to house the army of salmon farmers descending for the biannual get together.

Technology investment reflected growing confidence and industry security with the emphasis on efficiency, maximum feed usage and minimum waste, safety and scale. Cages and well boats today dwarf even the wildest dreams of a decade ago while innovations in cleaning, disinfection, biomass measurement and robust plug and play pumping and delivery systems make this sort of scale possible. The buzzwords at the 2013 show were sea-lice and RAS – very rarely in the same breath. As an economic factor, sea lice is an issue in both hemispheres and has been identified as a key cost variable making the difference between profitability and disappointment. Technology rather than treatments were high on the agenda with companies showing innovative products such as lice “zappers”, well boat filtration units, barge treatment systems and renewed efforts to make wrasse a more viable option. One company well known in the mussel business was in attendance purely to seek interest in its shellfish growing technology as a multi-trophic lice solution. Recirculation systems were also in abundance with new players from other tech sectors showing an interest. There was a general level headed approach to RAS with the consensus that it could not be a viable alternative to cage rearing for market but some closed

containment units aimed specifically at post smolt transfer to sea to boost early marine growth caught the interest of many.

Side meetings proved just as valuable for attendees with many attending events during the show such as certification and standards meetings, updates on Canadian fish farming, PD vaccines and management and the International Salmon Farmers’ Association.

The PR event of the show was not just the announcement by the Minister and the talk of when Norway would reach 2 million tonnes of farmed salmon but also the launch of the “Global Salmon Initiative” by the top 15 multinational companies, including Marine Harvest, Leroy, SALMAR, Grieg, Norway Royal, Scottish Sea Farms and Multi-Export among others. The GSI commitment to certifying all farms to Aquaculture Stewardship Council standards by 2020 caught the media attention and the general move towards co-operation at CEO level among the farms representing 70% of global output reminded some old hands of the way representative associations worked 20 years ago when the MD would attend all the meetings. The success of the initiative depends on the support of governments and the crucial retail sales sector to promote ASC and achieve customer buy in to make this expensive and considerable commitment work for the benefit of the whole industry.

IFA Aquaculture attended a number of meetings around the show during our brief stay in Trondheim and spoke with many companies who were hungry for news from Ireland. The general view was of amazement at the ignorance of anti-aquaculture protestors voiced in recent media stories, particularly given that issues such as those on lice, feed and nutrients from farms raised during the debate in the last year in



Ireland have long been dealt with and the industry is regarded rightly as scientifically, economically and environmentally sustainable around the world.

**During the three days spent in attendance and travel to the show, Norway exported the equivalent of the entire Irish annual salmon production.**

#### FOR MORE INFORMATION



Home of The **Irish Salmon Growers’ Association**,  
**The Irish Shellfish Association**

#### Irish Representative:

Federation of European Aquaculture Producers;  
European Mollusc Producers’ Association;  
International Salmon Farmers’ Association.

#### IFA Aquaculture

Irish Farmers’ Association  
Irish Farm Centre  
Bluebell  
Dublin 12

Ph + 353 (0) 1 4508755

Fax +353 (0) 1 4551043

Mob +353 (0) 86 2454402

Email richieflynn@ifa.ie

Web www.ifa.ie (Sectors: Aquaculture)



Donegal oyster farmers Des Moore, Conor Reid and Willie Britton pictured at the ISA AGM in Galway