



CORPORATE PLAN 2016-2020





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Foreword

I am honoured to introduce Inland Fisheries Ireland's (IFI) Corporate Plan for the years 2016 to 2020. This plan sets out clearly the key priorities for the organisation over the next five years and more importantly provides a schedule of key performance indicators which allow progress to be measured and outcomes to be identified. Strategic planning is about identifying how an organisation will get from point 'A' to point 'B' and importantly it is also about identifying the resources required to get there. This plan has been prepared with the underlying assumption of some stability and no dramatic reductions in staff numbers or operational budget. It is my belief, as Chairman, that the plan is realistic and achievable.

Recently there has been an increased focus on business risk and particularly risk identification, assessment and mitigation. Reflecting this focus the key strategic risks which might hinder the delivery of the measures contained in the plan have been identified. Clearly there are multitudes of risks at all levels throughout the business which might impact on the delivery of a particular objective. However, this plan identifies what IFI believe are the most important risks. As well as an increased focus on risk, there has been a significantly increased focus on the governance within the wider public sector over the last number of years. The State Agency sector has traditionally been good at conformance, which is the application of the rules and procedures. However, we have to improve general performance, which is being accountable to the citizen for the money we get and delivering tangible outcomes. To reflect this and also to adopt best practice in Corporate Plan implementation, accountability for each of the measures has also been set. While people throughout the organisation may be responsible for the delivery of elements of the plan, the persons accountable have been clearly identified for each measure.

In terms of the overall work of IFI, this will not change significantly from year to year, as the agency has the same core responsibilities as set out in statute. Section 7(1) of the Inland Fisheries Act 2010 identifies the principal function of IFI as the protection, management and conservation of the inland fisheries resource. This plan breaks the roles of IFI down into five distinct areas: Fish, Habitat, Stakeholders, Our People and Corporate Management. The plan sets out clearly what the organisation is going to deliver in each of these areas over the coming five year period, and how it will be measured.

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The Fish element of this plan is about focusing on the protection and conservation of freshwater fish species. It is about ensuring that we have the most up to date protection services utilising modern technology in the most efficient manner possible to protect the resource. It is about ensuring IFI have the best available scientific information to underpin management decision making and advice. This plan also puts a much greater focus on fish habitats and their development, as without appropriate habitat development fish populations will not thrive. IFI will progress this element of the Corporate Plan primarily through the implementation of the National Strategy for Angling Development (NSAD), a clear strategy aimed at improving fisheries habitat and infrastructure over the next five years. Implementation of the NSAD will deliver tangible increases in the number of domestic and tourist recreational anglers leading to significant economic benefits in rural communities where much of the angling takes place. Increasing communication with stakeholders and highlighting the role of IFI to wider society is a key deliverable in this plan, as is working closely with the angling stakeholders to improve the governance of the sector. All of the measures identified in this plan are going to be delivered by IFI staff. They are a loyal, resilient and efficient group of people and have over the last five years demonstrated their willingness to adopt new work practices and procedures, and adapt to the ever changing external environment. This plan recognises that without investment, the staff will not be able to deliver. The Corporate Management objective which mirrors closely the objectives of our parent Department, the Department of Communications, Climate Action and Environment (DCCAE), has also been included in the plan. This objective sets out the framework in which our work will be achieved, taking account of the financial and governance requirements of a public sector body. As Chairman I am excited by this plan and I look forward to working closely with stakeholders in its delivery over the next five years.

Fintan Gorman
Chairman of Inland Fisheries Ireland



Introduction

I am delighted to bring you the second corporate plan of Inland Fisheries Ireland for the period 2016 – 2020. This is an exciting time for the agency as we are now in a period of relative stability and recovery and can start the process of building on the successes of the last five years. While the establishment of IFI coincided with the worst economic recession the state has ever seen, and undoubtedly impacted on the resources of the agency, there were a significant number of achievements over that time. IFI has spent in excess of €5 million on fisheries development over the last five years both in terms of undertaking projects directly and also through awarding grants via the Salmon Conservation Fund and the Midlands Fisheries Fund. While this is significant, a more sustainable and continuous stream of funding is required. Over the period IFI has also increased the amount of funding provided to angling clubs and federations through development grants and sponsorship. IFI has also been directly involved in sponsoring a number of key international angling competitions. Following the completion of the 2012 survey of recreational angling in Ireland, IFI has a clear understanding of the overall value of the angling resource and the positive return made by angling to rural communities. This information has fed into the development and promotion of angling undertaken by IFI. The number of anglers (including tourists and Northern Irish anglers) has also increased over the period from 406,000 in 2012 to 446,000 in 2014. Equally, IFI has never been more involved in protecting the resource. An average of approximately 23km of illegal nets were seized between 2012 and 2014, and given the changed dynamic of the commercial salmon and eel fisheries, greater numbers of smaller nets are being seized than heretofore.

IFI staff have also made significant changes and adopted new work practices and technologies to partially mitigate against the decrease in staff numbers over the last five years. Thus, staff are now routinely using kayaks, all-terrain vehicles (ATVs), quads, bikes on fisheries patrols, and while on patrol, they are utilising equipment such as spotting scopes, night sights, thermal imaging equipment, and mobile phone apps to assist them in their work. IFI has also invested in its fleet, as to effectively deliver a fisheries protection and development service, staff must have the ability to access difficult places safely. IFI staff are also readily identifiable with the introduction of standardised work-wear in 2012. The level of professionalism of the IFI staff has increased significantly over the life of the last plan. Recognising the changes in staff numbers, IFI has also rationalised its property portfolio and are well on the way to having fewer, better equipped operational locations.

This plan is about setting out the key deliverables for the organisation over the next five years. While the conservation and protection of the inland fisheries and sea angling resource will always remain to the fore, the methodologies used to deliver on our goals and the specific focus will change. It is in this context I would like to paint a brief picture of what 'success' will look like. IFI has come a long way since its establishment but the next five years will be highly innovative, securing greater efficiencies through the smarter use of ICT to deliver better information and outcomes to the customer. Whether this is the ability to complete a grant application process entirely online or use better management information systems to target more effective and efficient protection of the resource.

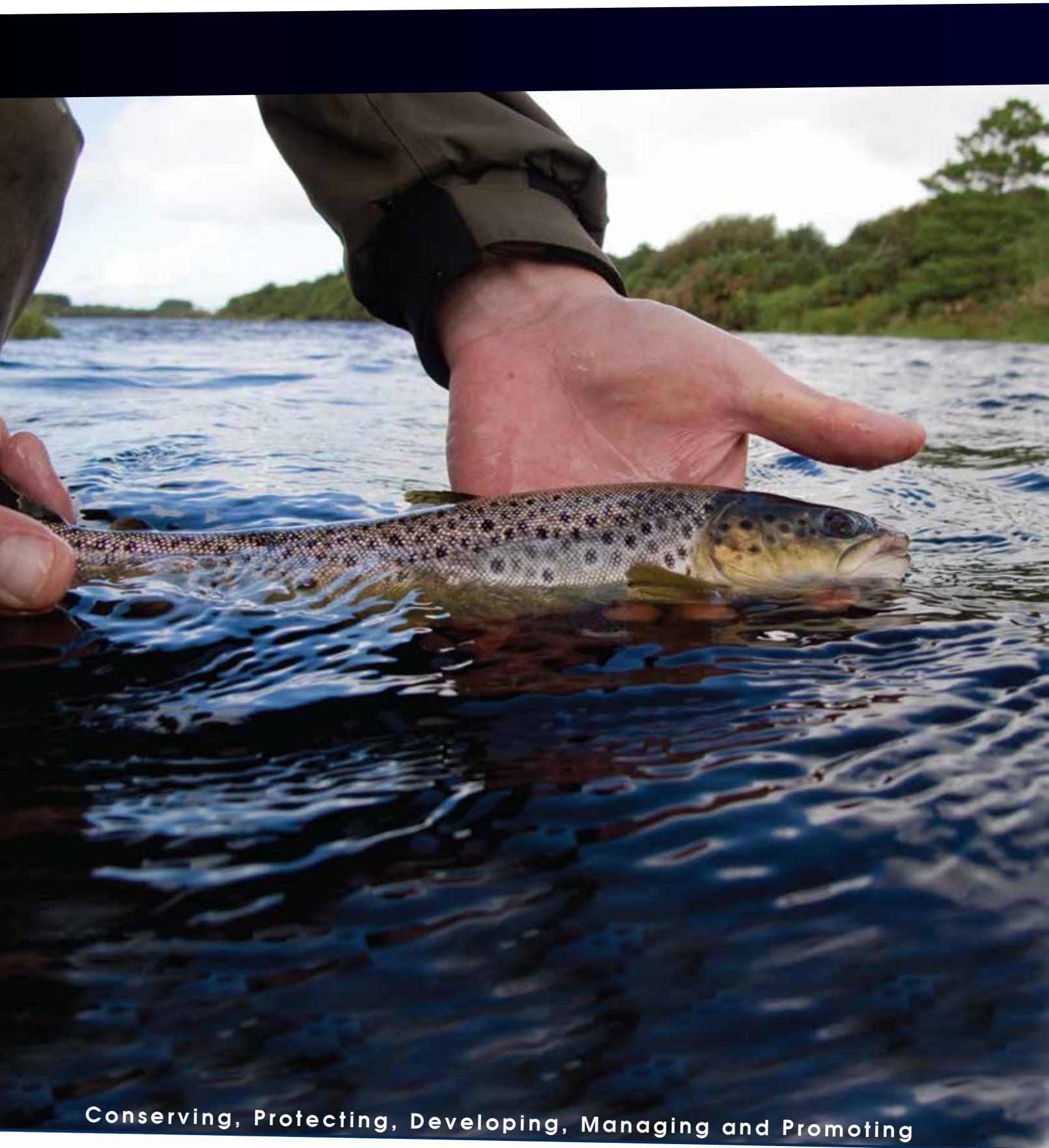
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IFI will focus on streamlining and standardising processes, and to the largest extent possible, digitising them to ensure easy access for staff and stakeholders. This will require significant resource inputs into the ICT area over the course of this plan.

Angling is at a turning point, it requires considerable financial input to further develop the resource. IFI, through the National Strategy for Angling Development will identify how this investment should be undertaken to generate the best return on investment. With appropriate financial inputs, a return to the 'highs' in the number of visiting anglers seen during the late 1990's (post the Tourism Angling Measure (TAM) Programme), 173,000, is entirely achievable. Success will also involve fundamentally improving our communications both within and outside of the organisation. IFI will focus on improving our understanding of the information needs of different individuals and groups and delivering on this through internal and external communications strategies. This will necessitate increasing the resources allocated to this area. Development is, and will continue to be, a core part of the role of IFI, what will change over the next five years is how we will deliver this service. IFI will take a more business focused approach to development works through the streamlining of development processes and also through the use of external service providers for larger scale contracts. IFI will improve the organisations performance by continuing to focus on the core tasks as identified by the Board and exiting from non-core activities. IFI will also improve performance by providing necessary training to staff and by improving internal communication and changing organisational culture. The changes and developments undertaken over the life of this plan will be undertaken within the framework of the governance requirements of State agencies as identified in the Code of Practice for the Governance State Bodies and other key documents, such as the Public Sector ICT Strategy.

I look forward to working with the staff of IFI, the Department of Communications, Climate Action and Environment (DCCAE), the Minister and the Board of IFI to deliver on this challenging mandate and ensure that the fisheries resource is in a better place at the end of this plan.

Dr Ciaran Byrne
Chief Executive Officer



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Our Vision is:

To provide an accessible and sustainable, world class, inland fisheries resource for all

Our Mission is:

To ensure the valuable natural resources of Inland Fisheries and Sea Angling are protected, conserved, managed, developed and promoted to enable them achieve their full potential

Our Core Values are;

People, Dignity, Integrity, Respect, Professionalism,
Communication, Stewardship



External Analysis



The macro economic climate in Ireland has improved significantly in recent years, the economy has returned to growth and the public finances are continuing to improve. Other macroeconomic indicators are also pointing toward an end to the recessionary period with unemployment levels down and a range of other consumer related indices demonstrating a return of confidence to the Irish economy.

From the State Agency perspective, there have also been significant changes over the lifetime of the last corporate plan, which will have profound and lasting impacts on this and future corporate plans developed by IFI. The Public Sector in Ireland has never been more lean, accountable or responsive than it is now, nor has it faced as many challenges.

The specific challenge for Inland Fisheries Ireland (IFI) over the next five years is to be able to progress in this new landscape. It is to ensure there is a greater focus on delivering outcomes for the customer, greater efficiency, transparency, openness and accountability, all of which have been identified as key measures in the Public Sector Reform Plan (2014 – 2016).

From a broader perspective, Irish society has changed. There are more people who are more educated than ever before. People are more aware of their surroundings and the environment they live in. We are living in an information age where social media has revolutionised networks and how business is conducted.

It is no longer acceptable or appropriate to adopt a BAU (Business As Usual) approach to our core tasks and objectives. IFI has to seek ever more efficient and effective ways of delivering public services and also be able to report on outcomes in a manner which is open and accessible to the citizen.

It is in this context that the IFI Corporate Plan 2016 – 2020 was developed. IFI have considered the Public Service ICT strategy which sets out a roadmap for agencies to deliver better outcomes and efficiency through innovation and the use of ICT. IFI have also incorporated the guiding principles for a State Agency as set out in the Code of Practice for the Governance of State Bodies. The Department of Public Expenditure and Reform have mapped out how the reform of our public services will continue to be a core part of the strategic response to ongoing economic challenges through the Public Service Reform Plan 2014 – 2016. In terms of transparency and accountability, we have significantly enhanced Freedom of Information (FOI) legislation, new Data Protection legislation, Protected Disclosure legislation and IFI has, since its establishment, come under the remit of the Ombudsman. All of this is aimed at increasing the accountability and transparency of the public sector and giving the citizen more confidence in their public services.



External Analysis

From an environmental perspective, the world is also changing. Climate change is manifesting itself ever more upon us, we are experiencing more severe weather events than ever before and these events can have severe impacts on human and fish populations. Climate change predictions for Ireland indicate a move towards milder wetter winters and warmer drier summers (EPA – Regional Climate Model Predictions for Ireland, 2006), all of which impact directly on fisheries habitats and fish populations. Additionally the changing demographic of Irish society means that there is uneven population growth throughout the country with the east predicted to grow significantly more than other regions. This is already leading to greater demands on water resources and infrastructure, and this demand will continue to grow into the foreseeable future. IFI also have to be cognisant of the development plans and policy changes in other sectors, such as Food Harvest 2020 and the National Strategic Plan for Sustainable Aquaculture Development, and how these might impact the fisheries resource.

The country as a whole also has significant environmental targets to achieve under a range of international conventions and legislation such as the Water Framework Directive (WFD), Habitats Directive, the Convention on Biodiversity (CBD) and the binding EU 2020 Climate Strategy. All of these have implications for the environment and how we manage it.

The inland fisheries and sea angling sectors have also experienced change, and will continue to do so on a scale never seen before. Some of this change will be driven by the changing environment, warmer waters will make Ireland a more attractive and hospitable place for a greater range of non-native invasive species, some of which will arrive by accident while others will be deliberately introduced. Aquatic Invasive Species (AIS) have the potential to be environmental 'game changers' in the short to medium term. Yet Ireland has yet to work out a clear policy response to this threat. The increasing mobility of our people and the increased number of visitors to this country will only serve to accelerate the rate of introduction of AIS if appropriate border controls and regulations are not introduced.

Fish stocks have also changed. We have seen declines in wild salmon populations and some sea trout populations are still under threat. Within the coarse fishing sector there have been changes in population structure and abundances. In many cases, species prevalence has not changed but relative abundances have. In sea angling, more warm-water species are being recorded from Irish shores, a phenomenon which is possibly related to milder sea temperatures.

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Some of the change experienced in the sector will also be driven by the stakeholders. Ireland had the highest birth rate of any of the 27 EU countries in 2012 (ESRI, Perinatal Statistics Report), yet the age profile of domestic anglers is increasing and due to expanding urbanisation more young people are moving away from traditional country leisure pursuits. This must be addressed in order to continue growing the sport of angling. From a visiting angler perspective, Ireland is now competing on a world stage and the value proposition and the unique selling point must be right in order to compete with countries such as USA, Canada, Norway and Russia and other 'local' European destinations. With this in mind, one of the biggest challenges to face IFI in the coming five years will be to reinvigorate the sector. Angling in Ireland is worth €836 million to the economy and supports upwards of 11,000 jobs. The challenge is to maximise the potential of the resource while at the same time ensuring that our environmental stewardship leaves the inland fisheries and sea angling sectors in a better position than we found them.

This corporate plan represents a very positive opportunity for IFI as for the first time since its establishment the agency can proceed with a degree of certainty. IFI now have an understanding of the staff allocation which will be made available to the organisation into the future, however, financial resources are less clear. Resources will be focused in a transparent and accountable way at the key areas prioritised in the plan, and resources going into non-core areas will be redirected.

All of the challenges and opportunities embraced by IFI in the coming five years will be done in the context of being a modern, efficient, open, transparent and accountable State Agency. IFI has a strong commitment to self-assessment and improvement, consistent with the principles of Public Service Reform.



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High Level Objective 1 - Fish



To ensure that Ireland's fish populations are managed and protected to ensure their conservation status remains favourable. That they provide a basis for a sustainable world class recreational angling product, and that pristine aquatic habitats are also enjoyed for other recreational uses

Ireland has a unique biogeographic location as an island nation on the shoulder of North-western Europe. As a result of its location, it is relatively species poor with only 13 native freshwater fish species and 15 other introduced species. Coupled with this Ireland has an abundance of lakes and rivers spread right throughout the country; almost 2.5% of the land mass of Ireland is covered in water. Fish and fisheries are an important part of Irish culture and heritage.

IFI is the custodian of this important resource for the people of Ireland and the focus of the organisation for the lifetime of this plan is to ensure that fish stocks are protected and conserved. From the IFI perspective, protection includes not only the 'traditional' concept of illegal fishing and poaching but protecting the resource from any threat to the core objective of maintaining and improving the conservation status of fish stocks. Conservation means having a clear understanding of fish populations, where they are and how they are performing. If you do not know what you have and where it is, it will be difficult to conserve and protect. In the modern age conservation is also about understanding the potential impacts of climate change and how it might impact on fish populations and whether these fish populations can act as indicators for changes in the wider environment.

In addition to this, fish are an important part of the natural biodiversity of the country and the health status of fish stocks act as a barometer for the health of the wider environment. Ireland derives a significant portion of its Gross Domestic Product (GDP), approximately €3.5 billion, from tourism. Tourism supports 170,000 jobs right throughout all parts of the country. Having pristine waters and healthy fish stocks is part of the overall unique selling point for Ireland as a tourist destination and there is an indirect linkage between protecting the resource and the continued growth of our tourism product. The Irish Tourism Industry Confederation (ITIC) report 'Protecting the Irish Environmental Landscape: A Critical Issue for Irish Tourism' identifies this relationship. Ireland also has a range of obligations in respect of fish under a number of European Directives, such as the Habitats Directive, Water Framework Directive (WFD) and Eel regulations and other agreements such as the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD). These Directives and agreements set out in some cases prescriptive targets for how we manage our fish populations (eel regulations). In other cases they identify programmes which will help to improve the status of various fish species and populations, such as the actions contained in the National Biodiversity Plan which will underpin Ireland's obligations towards the CBD. This objective will be achieved by delivering on two key strategies.



High Level Objective 1 - Fish

Protection

The first strategy is to implement a focused, coordinated and standardised fisheries protection service which utilises best international practice and available technologies. This will be undertaken, not in isolation, but as part of the State's wider environmental enforcement role and this will enable existing synergies and efficiencies to be further developed. During the life of this corporate plan IFI will focus on utilising ICT technology to support and enhance the consistent delivery of protection services and enable clearer reporting of outcomes.

Conservation

Over the lifetime of this plan IFI will significantly enhance its understanding of all fish populations through a combination of extracting more value from existing datasets and using modern data modelling and surveying techniques to inform and populate information gaps. A critical part of conservation is informing and educating stakeholders, and IFI will enhance its use of relevant media to inform both staff and the wider public of the conservation status of fish stocks. Also embracing stakeholders through the medium of citizen science is increasingly important in terms of data collection and recording. IFI will explore the use of such programmes to assist in improving our understanding of fish populations. Climate change is possibly one of the greatest threats facing the wider environment, and it could significantly impact on fish populations and structure in the medium to long term. Climate change research is underpinned by having an understanding of the subtle changes in population dynamics and environmental variables over an extended period of time. IFI will continue to use its research and long term data sets to map any changes in fish populations related to climate change.

IFI will also take a proactive role in the conservation of vulnerable fish stocks by utilising relevant legislation or other means to ensure these populations are preserved. IFI will be an active and willing participant in the coordinated response to the threat posed by aquatic invasive species and will work with the agency with statutory responsibility for the management of aquatic invasive species, the National Parks and Wildlife Service (NPWS).

Enablers & Risks

The greatest enablers to delivering on these strategies is having appropriate resources both in terms of funding and also staff to deliver on them. Similarly the greatest risk is insufficient resources to be able to deliver an effective service and also not having modernised fisheries legislation which is fit for purpose. Considering the potentially catastrophic impacts of aquatic invasive species, and invasive species generally, failure to deliver a clear, whole of Government policy response to this threat may result in costly and possibly irreversible damage to the environment. The new EU Regulation on the prevention and management of the introduction and spread of invasive species (EU 1143/2014) also places direct legal responsibilities in this regard and this beholds a co-ordinated strategy spearheaded by the responsible agency. This whole of Government approach should include, but not be limited to agencies such as IFI, the National Parks and Wildlife Service, Waterways Ireland, the ESB, Local Authorities, the EPA and also a number of the key Government Departments.

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Strategy	Performance Indicators	Main Risks	Outcome	Accountable Persons
Implement a focused, coordinated and standardised fisheries protection service which utilises best international practice and available technologies	<p>Increases in the number of prosecutions and fines leading to a decrease in the incidence of illegal fishing</p> <p>Increase the use of ICT in fisheries protection</p> <p>Implement Standard Operating Procedures (SOP) for fisheries protection to ensure consistency of service delivery</p> <p>Digitise all protection 'transactions' (e.g. fines, seizures, court proceedings)</p> <p>Educate stakeholders on the cost and impact of illegal fishing</p> <p>Develop MOU's with other enforcement agencies for example SFPA, An Garda, EPA & NPWS</p>	<p>Not having sufficient resources to deliver an efficient fisheries service</p> <p>Not having appropriate legislation to deliver a modern fisheries service</p> <p>Inability to reduce the age profile of staff</p>	Improved protection of the fisheries resource and enhanced customer satisfaction with the protection services provided by IFI	<p>Head of Operations</p> <p>River Basin District Directors</p>



High Level Objective 1 - Fish

Strategy	Performance Indicators	Main Risks	Outcome	Accountable Persons
Enhanced understanding of the conservation status of fish populations, and use this information to support better fisheries management	<p>Deliver on all of Ireland's national and international obligations in respect of fish</p> <p>Increase the use of data modelling and other techniques (citizen science) and decrease the use of lethal survey techniques</p> <p>Increase the number of scientific papers and the amount of data accessible on IFI's website</p> <p>Develop and implement IFI's invasive species policy in conjunction with a national multi agency response</p> <p>Review current salmon management policies to reflect the current conservation status of the species</p> <p>Develop MOU's with other national & international partners</p>	<p>Not having sufficient resources to execute efficient fisheries management</p> <p>Not having appropriate legislation to effect modern fisheries management</p>	<p>Having relevant up to date information to support conservation, fisheries management, the provision of policy advice, Ireland's national and international reporting obligations and the requirements of the National Strategy for Angling Development</p>	<p>Head of Research & Development</p> <p>Head of Operations & RBD Directors</p> <p>Senior Research Officers</p>

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Ireland's Inland Fisheries & Sea Angling Resource



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High Level Objective 2 - Habitats



To develop and improve fish habitats and ensure that the conditions required for fish populations to thrive are sustained and protected

Fish do not live in isolation, nor should they be managed in isolation. They live in water and this waterbody whether a river, lake, canal, or coastline is part of the wider ecosystem, or fish habitat. To focus on fish alone would be folly, as to thrive fish need the right habitat both in terms of the physical habitat structure and also water quality. These two requirements are inherently linked and the absence or decreased quality of either one will not support optimum fish population levels. Thus having pristine habitat with poor water quality or vice versa may adversely impact on fish populations. Additionally, many species of fish require different habitat types for different stages of their development.

Ireland has an abundance of freshwater and inshore marine habitat, however, there have never been more demands placed on this habitat and primary amongst them is the demand for water. Clean water is not only important for fish populations to flourish, it is a key economic driver for the Irish economy. The impacts of climate change and also the changing demographics in Irish society are having, and will continue to have, profound implications on the demands for water, all of which can impact on fish populations. Some of the biggest challenges to fish populations come from poorly managed or maintained municipal water systems. There have been fundamental changes to how Ireland manages and delivers water to its citizens, with the establishment of Irish Water. The planned capital investment in municipal water systems will likely have a positive impact on some fish populations. There are also significant challenges from the agricultural sector and planned developments here will have to be closely monitored from an environmental standpoint. Additionally the long term data sets maintained by IFI can, and will, have an important part to play in understanding climate change and the impacts it may have on fish populations.

Changes to agricultural practices, the development of civil infrastructure and the development of industry and housing can, and do, have impacts on the physical fisheries habitat. To optimise fisheries for recreational angling, maintenance, repair and development of habitat is required. The amount of repair and maintenance required on a fishery is very much a feature of the type of waterbody and its location, with heavily modified water bodies and those in urban areas often requiring most work. Fisheries habitat must be viewed as an asset in much the same way as a private company views its assets, failure to properly service and maintain the asset will lead to sub-optimal performance and decrease the value of the asset. Similarly failure to properly service and maintain fisheries habitat will lead to decreasing fish populations and directly impact on the conservation status of our fish stocks and the potential returns from recreational angling and commercial salmon fishing. IFI has both direct and indirect roles to play in fisheries habitat development.



High Level Objective 2 - Habitats

The direct role is through the habitat development works undertaken by IFI itself and the voluntary groups working with IFI. These works are undertaken with the express intention of maintaining and developing fisheries habitat to enhance fish populations for the benefit of recreational angling and commercial salmon fishing. The agencies indirect role in habitat enhancement is through IFI's status as a statutory consultee for various development projects, plans and licensing processes. In this role, IFI has a chance to positively influence the development work undertaken by others to improve fish habitats and stocks. This high level objective will be achieved by delivering on the following strategies;

Water Quality

IFI will take a proactive role in the enforcement of the environmental elements of the fisheries, water pollution and other relevant acts, while supporting the delivery of better water quality and water infrastructure. In addition IFI will work with other sectors such as, but not limited to, the forestry and agriculture sectors to ensure other potential impacts on water quality and fisheries habitat are minimised or eliminated.

Physical Habitat

IFI will take a direct leadership role in actively promoting the management and maintenance of our fish habitats to improve conservation status and recreational angling opportunities. This will be done by prioritising the work in accordance with best scientific and socio economic advice and the available resources. Governance processes will also be streamlined to enable other stakeholders engage in such works. IFI will also focus on training staff and supporting key players on effective in-stream development works, bankside management and facilitating stakeholders in applying for funding. Barrier removal has been identified as a relatively low cost and high impact way of improving the status of waterbodies under the Water Framework Directive and can also significantly improve some fish stocks by opening up additional habitat. In this regard IFI will work with relevant agencies to identify and prioritise barriers which will deliver the most significant fisheries benefits.

Through IFI's indirect role in fisheries habitat development, it will be an enabling organisation that will seek to use its influence to derive additional fisheries habitat gains from projects, plans and developments being undertaken in other sectors, as well as partnering on strategically beneficial development projects.

Enablers & Risks

The main risks to advancing this objective are failing to secure adequate funding to implement the National Strategy for Angling Development which provides for substantial investment in fisheries habitat development work and failing to successfully use ICT to streamline the grant application process. The 1959 (Consolidated) Fisheries Act is deficient in its protections of habitats. This legislation focused on 'the fish' almost exclusively. Provision of new modernised fisheries legislation is critical to ensuring that both fish and habitats receive adequate protection.

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Strategy	Performance Indicators	Main Risks	Outcome	Accountable Persons
IFI will enforce the Fisheries and Water Pollution Acts and support other agencies to improve water quality	<p>Refocus IFI's internal environmental resources to maximise our contribution to this sector</p> <p>Increase the number of environmental prosecutions</p> <p>Identify and digitise all key environmental processes</p>	Not having a new Fisheries Act provides less protection for fish and habitats	Improved water quality and compliance with environmental legislation	<p>Head of Operations</p> <p>RBD Directors</p>



High Level Objective 2 - Habitats

Strategy	Performance Indicators	Main Risks	Outcome	Accountable Persons
<p>IFI will promote the management and maintenance of our fish habitats to improve conservation status and increase recreational angling opportunities</p>	<p>Fund and deliver the National Strategy for Angling Development</p> <p>Enhance other available funds such as the Salmon Conservation Fund and Midlands Fisheries Fund</p> <p>Provide advice on riverine conservation and restoration to a wide range of stakeholders</p> <p>Identify a sustainable fund for ongoing fisheries development</p> <p>Restructure current fisheries development processes within IFI to ensure we are an enabling organisation</p> <p>Develop SOPs for development works and digitise the key processes</p> <p>Complete a national barriers risk assessment</p> <p>Develop MOUs with the National Parks and Wildlife Service and other relevant agencies</p>	<p>National Strategy for Angling Development is not optimally funded</p>	<p>Improvement in the overall quality of fisheries habitat and conservation status of fish populations</p>	<p>Head of Business Development</p> <p>Head of Operations</p> <p>RBD Directors</p>
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Ireland's Inland Fisheries & Sea Angling Resource



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High Level Objective 3 - Stakeholders



To grow the number of anglers and ensure the needs of IFI's other key stakeholders are being met in a sustainable conservation focused manner

Recreational angling generates a significant positive return to the Irish economy, is worth approximately €836 million and supports in excess of 11,000 jobs. A large proportion of the money earned from, and jobs supported by recreational angling, is done so in small rural communities and much of it stays in the community in which it is generated. Ireland has a large recreational angling community, with almost 7.6% or 273,000 (Ref: IFI commissioned Millward Brown Omnibus Survey 2014/2015) of the population taking part in the sport in any given year. Despite this, there are some weaknesses in the sector, most important of which are the increasing age profile of the angling community and the failure to engage significant number of young anglers. This is possibly as a result of increasing urbanisation, a general move away from or disconnect from rural leisure pursuits by young people, and the increasing competition with other sports and activities. The inland fisheries and sea angling sector also has a wide and diverse range of stakeholders and this has increasingly complicated angling perspectives and expectations. Despite these factors there are many significant positives for the sector, not least the willingness of people to get involved, the fact that it is a sport which can be practiced at a range of skill levels at almost any age, and developing angling also creates significant opportunities for other rural recreational activities such as hiking trails and blueways. In addition to the 7.6% of the population actively participating in recreational angling, there are a wider group of IFI stakeholders who enjoy the aquatic resource for its intrinsic benefits - this is where IFI's role as stewards of the environment comes into play. IFI recognises its role as custodians of the aquatic resource for the enjoyment of this and future generations.

From the tourism angling perspective, Ireland is only one of a range of destinations competing for the same visitor. Therefore our unique selling point and value propositions have to be correct. Studies have shown that anglers from our main angling market, the UK, are extremely price sensitive. Some of the external factors determining visitor numbers to Ireland are beyond IFI's control. However, due to the combined effects of the reduction in VAT for the hospitality sector to 9%, the increased competitiveness and favourable currency exchange rates, Ireland has again become a very popular destination. It is imperative that structures are put in place to ensure this increase in general tourism translates into an increase in angling tourism. This will be done by addressing the issues which act as barriers to entry to angling while also addressing the demand side and ensuring Ireland has the angling products and structures anglers want. IFI also has a range of other sectoral stakeholders including but not limited to commercial salmon fishermen, non-governmental organisations and other agencies, all of which have an interest in the environmental space which IFI inhabits. Therefore it is important that a strong clear and consistent message is delivered so that stakeholders both understand and value the diverse range of activities being undertaken by IFI. The following core strategies will be used to promote this high level objective.



High Level Objective 3 - Stakeholders

Angling Development

IFI will enhance the use of social and economic data to understand and respond to factors which influence angling participation rates. Using the information learned from socio economic analyses, IFI will work with the angling sector to encourage young people to take up angling by making it more relevant and accessible for all. IFI supports an 'angling for all' ethos by ensuring that all sectors of society can participate in recreational angling. IFI will actively promote Ireland as an angling tourism destination and try to ensure that the angling products on offer are aligned with visitor expectations. IFI will also work with other groups and agencies to improve the professionalism of the sector and reform the governance structures so they are relevant to the majority of participants and capable of delivering for the sector.

Communication

A core part of the success of any business is being able to communicate clearly with stakeholders. IFI will develop a comprehensive communication strategy which will identify the key stakeholder groups and their information needs. IFI will enhance its openness, transparency and accessibility to the customer by developing an enhanced customer charter and stakeholder engagement process, while also providing more information on its websites.

Enablers & Risks

The greatest enablers for this objective are to adequately resource the National Strategy for Angling Development and enhancing the governance of the recreational angling sector. Both of these elements are linked together and it will be difficult to successfully deliver one without the other. The greatest risk to advancing this objective is maintenance of the status quo. The challenges facing the sector, such as the increasing age profile of anglers and wider environmental challenges are too great to be met with a business-as-usual response.



Strategy	Performance Indicators	Main Risks	Outcome	Accountable Persons
Develop the recreational angling sector to maximise its potential	<p>Fund and deliver the National Strategy for Angling Development</p> <p>Grow the number of recreational anglers</p> <p>Increase the use of socio economic data in policy formulation and regulation</p> <p>Develop and implement an angling tourism marketing strategy</p> <p>Increase the governance and professionalism of the sector</p>	<p>National Strategy for Angling Development is not optimally funded</p> <p>Inability to improve the governance of the sector</p> <p>Inability to capitalise on current tourism trends and deliver for the sector</p>	<p>Increased participation in recreational angling supported by clear governance structures for the sector</p> <p>Increase in the number of visiting anglers from key markets</p>	<p>Head of Business Development</p> <p>Senior Management Team</p>
Increase the awareness of the inland fisheries and sea angling sectors	<p>Develop and implement a communication strategy</p> <p>Develop and implement an enhanced customer charter and stakeholder engagement process</p>	<p>Insufficient resources to fully implement a communications strategy</p>	<p>Increasing the awareness of fisheries issues amongst wider group of stakeholders</p>	<p>Head of Business Development</p>



Conserving, Protecting, Developing, Managing and Promoting

High Level Objective 4 - Our People



We will invest in our people to achieve operational excellence and become one of the best places to work

IFI is a people organisation, our success is entirely down to our staff and their commitment to delivering a modern, lean and efficient fisheries service. Simply, without the commitment of its staff, the inland fisheries sector would not be in the place it is in now. However, there are significantly fewer staff than ever before, and there has never been more focus on the work or the outcomes delivered by IFI than in the present day. To put the reduction in staff numbers in context, between 2009 and 2014 the full time staff complement reduced from 440 to 298 people. There is a need to unify the corporate culture in IFI to ensure we can deliver on the challenging mandate we will face over the course of this corporate plan.

There are two elements to this objective, one is the 'hard' structures and processes in place which will facilitate the continued improvement in performance. While these are critical to communication, information transfer and efficient working within the wider organisation, they in themselves have very little effect or influence on the 'soft' factors which influence organisational culture. The 'soft' factors which are so important in defining a good organisational culture are the creation of empowerment and authority, increasing leadership capability at all levels of the organisation, developing a strong sense of the internal and external customer and increasing and improving effective communication and collaboration. It is the successful combination of both sets of factors which will ensure the organisation is performing optimally. Over the life of this plan IFI will strive to become one of the best places to work and be recognised as a performance driven organisation, one which delivers on all of its objectives to the highest standards within its resource allocation. This objective will be delivered on by the following key strategies.

Our People

Our greatest strength is our staff and over the life of this plan we will develop their teamwork and leadership capability right across the organisation, through a combination of formal training and personal development programmes. Recognising the importance of our staff, we will continue the process already started of supporting good performance, through the performance management and development programme. We will also develop a system of formally recognising exceptional achievement. To ensure that relevant information is shared and common goals are identified, a comprehensive internal communications strategy will be implemented. This will include internal reporting on the annual business plan and consolidating all of the organisation's policies and procedures in an easily accessible internal database. Planning for future challenges is an important part of the strategic process, and to ensure we are best placed to deliver on the challenges, we will implement a formal succession plan and knowledge capture programme. IFI will become one of the best places to work by using clear policy guidelines and procedures to empower staff, and by supporting innovation and developing leadership skills at all levels in the organisation.



High Level Objective 4 - Our People

Safety is of paramount importance to IFI and our objective is to be one of the best places to work. So it is not only about ICT and other systems and processes but ensuring that there is a safety culture embedded right throughout the organisation. The work undertaken by our staff is inherently risky and even with the correct equipment and training can be hazardous. We will build on and develop the existing safety programmes over the life of this plan.

Our Systems

To underpin staff performance we will develop and upgrade ICT infrastructure to ensure our systems facilitate shared working, increased communication and maximise the return from existing data currently in the organisation. We will strive to digitise our key processes, centralise information storage, eliminate duplication and develop staff accessible databases. This will be done while meeting our obligations under data protection, freedom of information and other relevant legislation.

Enablers & Risk

The greatest enabler for this objective is the support of staff for the development of both the 'hard' factors such as ICT processes and in the 'soft' factors such as unifying the organisational culture. One of the greatest risks to this objective is that IFI will suffer further significant financial cuts or a recruitment embargo and find it difficult to maintain momentum on the core planned objectives resulting in unplanned emergency 'fire-fighting' dominating our activities. As IFI is a people organisation, other significant risks include the rising age profile of our staff and consequent inability to carry out core operational duties and the loss of corporate memory through retirements.

Conserving, Protecting, Developing, Managing and Promoting



Ireland's Inland Fisheries & Sea Angling Resource



High Level Objective 4 - Our People

Strategy	Performance Indicators	Main Risks	Outcome	Accountable Persons
Facilitate staff to develop their maximum potential	<p>Improve leadership capability at all levels of the organisation</p> <p>Enhance performance management throughout the organisation</p> <p>Implement knowledge capture and succession plans</p> <p>Develop and implement a corporate communication strategy</p> <p>Formal recognition of excellence and high achievers</p> <p>Increase investment in training, PPE and relevant technology ensuring staff are best equipped to do the job</p>	<p>Additional reductions in staff numbers</p> <p>Inability to carry out core tasks due to age profile</p>	<p>Delivering enhanced outcomes for stakeholders and providing improved job satisfaction for employees</p>	<p>Chief Executive Officer</p> <p>Head of Human Resources</p> <p>Senior Management Team</p>
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Strategy	Performance Indicators	Main Risks	Outcome	Accountable Persons
Develop ICT systems and processes to enable maximum organisational efficiency and resilience	<p>Having a single site IT system with appropriate backup and disaster recovery in place</p> <p>Digitise the top 10 IFI processes</p> <p>Implement a centralised electronic data storage and archiving system</p> <p>Increase the use of ICT in field operations</p> <p>Enhance internal communication using appropriate technology</p>	<p>Insufficient funding or expertise to deliver core ICT requirements</p> <p>Threats from external agents such as hackers, viruses, malware impacting on ICT systems</p>	Measured increases in operational efficiency throughout the organisation	Head of Finance ICT



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High Level Objective 5 - Corporate Management

IFI will promote a culture of value for money and continual evaluation of its performance in a measurable, transparent and accountable manner

One of the significant positives to emerge from the recent recessionary period was the focus on reform, on doing things differently. Much of this work was driven by the reform section of the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform. A number of plans and strategies have been produced, such as the Public Sector Reform Plan, the Public Sector ICT Strategy, the Vision for Change in the Civil Service and the accountability framework identified there. Also the establishment of the Office of Government Procurement and the focus on external service delivery and senior public service training will all improve the overall performance of the public sector. One of IFI's key metrics will be the outcomes delivered for the sector relative to the inputs. This objective mirrors the corporate management objective in our parent Department's Statement of Strategy because it is as relevant to IFI as a public benefit entity, as it is to our parent Department.

Enablers & Risk

The greatest enabler for this objective is successful embedding of an enhanced organisational culture which focuses on value for money and delivering excellence to the customer. The greatest risk to achieving the objective is further reductions in staffing and budget making it significantly more difficult to achieve all of our governance requirements. Additionally, failure to implement new modernised fisheries legislation will impede the success of this measure.



High Level Objective 5 - Corporate Management

Strategy	Performance Indicators	Main Risks	Outcome	Accountable Persons
Implement the Public Service Reform Agenda while continuing to support & develop staff	<p>Performance against measurable targets as set out in Service Level Agreement with our parent Department</p> <p>Compliance with exchequer allocation</p>	Further reductions in staff and budget	IFI continues to deliver on key business priorities with appropriate resources	<p>Chief Executive Officer</p> <p>Senior Management Team</p>
Manage IFI's budget in full compliance with financial procedures and support business decision making with relevant financial information	<p>Completion of two internal audits per year</p> <p>Adherence to Department expenditure guidelines</p>	Poor financial controls leading to overspend, fraud or misuse of assets	Full compliance with all financial procedures and audit plan as agreed by the Audit Committee and approved by the Board	Head of Finance / ICT
Continue cost reduction programme in all areas of the business and drive value for money analyses in areas of the business which can yield greater efficiency	<p>Demonstrable monetary savings over the life of the corporate plan</p> <p>Cessation of non-core activities which are not adding value to the strategic operations of IFI</p>	<p>Not having the correct information to support appropriate decision making</p> <p>Stakeholder dissatisfaction with changes to the provision of services</p>	Reviews of all cost drivers with non-core areas of the business being repositioned	<p>Chief Executive Officer</p> <p>Head of Finance / Senior Management Team</p>

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Strategy	Performance Indicators	Main Risks	Outcome	Accountable Persons
Reduce the organisation's energy use in line with public sector targets	Organisations energy usage decreased by 20% by 2020	Insufficient funding to upgrade facilities	Compliance with the annual report requirement and the national public sector management programme	Chief Executive Officer Senior Management Team
Adhere to all of the provisions of the Code of Practice for the Governance of State Bodies	Achieving positive outcomes in any audits undertaken Number of instances of non-compliance with reporting requirements		All reporting requirements as identified in Code of Practice for the Governance of State Agencies are met Robust corporate governance practices are put in place	Chief Executive Officer Senior Management Team Corporate Governance Officer