



Iascach Intíre Éireann
Inland Fisheries Ireland

BOARD OF INLAND FISHERIES IRELAND

Meeting Report - 28 March 2025

This report provides an outline of agenda items raised at this meeting.

BOARD MEETING – 28 March 2025

1. Administration and Monthly Reporting

1.1 Agenda Adoption /Conflicts of Interest Declaration/ Adherence to Confidentiality

The agenda was adopted and no conflicts in respect of matters on the agenda were declared by members. The confidential nature of matters to be raised was agreed.

1.2 Minutes of the meetings of 26 February 2025

Papers distributed: 1.2.1 DRAFT Board Meeting Minutes 26 Feb 2025_Private; 1.2.2 DRAFT Board Meeting Minutes 26 Feb2025

RESOLUTION: Approval of the draft **minutes of the Board meeting of 26 February 2025.**

Matters Arising: No matters were raised.

1.3 Actions & Resolutions from previous meetings

Paper(s) distributed: 1.3.1 Board Meetings Actns Arising_2025@26 Feb 2025 updated by ELT 18th March meeting; 1.3.2 Board Meetings Resolutions_2025 @26 Feb 2025

These papers were taken as read and noted. The Deputy CEO briefed members on legal advice on the competent authority for AAs, a matter which it can decide to reserve or delegate to the executive. It was confirmed by members that as it is not currently reserved as a matter for decision by the Board, it continues to be a delegated function.

1.4 CEO's Report/Main Board Report

Papers distributed: 1.4.1 Deputy CEO Report March 2025

Presenting: Deputy CEO

Paper was taken as read. The Deputy CEO briefed members on outputs of the staff day; innovation (**HLO7**) activities; efforts to identify a new Chair of the National Inland Fisheries Forum (NIFF); and an update regarding a recently concluded court case (Tírlán). The Head of Research & Development provided a briefing on matters raised within the Board Report: NASCO stressor analysis - research identifying principal stressors on salmon stocks, developing urgent and transformative actions; funding awarded to FLOW – IFI being a partner accessing €1.2m for research addressing declining water quality (within cross-border catchments) and Riverwood – Integrating Trees and Large wood into river restoration approaches in Ireland.

The Deputy CEO presented on the OCAG Special Audit.

2. Strategy and Planning

2.1 Strategic Plan 2026-2030 Update

Papers distributed: 2.1.1 IFI Working Document for the Draft Strategic Plan V0.3

The Chair of the Corporate Plan Steering Group (CPSG) reported on the actions taken to date on the development of the strategy working document and the areas of focus of the group. He stated that the Department of the Environment, Climate and Communications (DECC) strategy 2024-2025, 'Le Chéile', has provided insights. The next stages of developing the strategy were outlined.

A discussion ensued comprising: the need to commence stakeholder consultation in early course; the inclusion of behavioural and socio-economic science; planning for all species within IFI's remit; communicating the urgency of action /strategic objectives. The Chair thanked the group for its work.

3. Sub-Committee Presentations / Recommendations

3.1 Audit & Risk Committee (ARC)

Papers distributed: 3.1.1.1 IFI Gov and Int Control Statement 2024 CAG Draft (AB)(Board Approval); 3.1.1.2 IFI 2024 Financial Statements C&AG Draft (AB)(Board Approval); 3.1.1.3 DRAFT Review of Systems of Internal Financial Control SIFC 2024); 3.1.2 DRAFT 2024 Chairman's Comprehensive Report to the Minister; 3.1.3 DRAFT Internal Audit Report RIB Fleet Review 2022; 3.1.4 IFI Final Draft 3 Year Internal Audit Plan 2025-2027; 3.1.5

DRAFT IFI Internal Audit Charter–Fortis Mazars; 3.1.7 DRAFT IFI ARC Terms of Reference V4.4; 3.1.9 DRAFT updated IFI Financial Authority & Payment Approval Levels Policy - Mar 2025

Presenting: Deputy Chair of ARC

Papers were taken as read. The ARC Deputy Chair provided a summary of the papers reviewed by the ARC on 24 March comprising: the suite of 2024 Financial Statements with adjustments applied; IFI's 2024 Statement on Internal Control; and the Internal Audit review of systems of internal financial control. She thanked the Finance team for producing the reports. She reported that the Committee went through the accounts, and amendments advised by the ARC are contained within the most recent version of the financial statements distributed to the Board. She stated that the Committee was satisfied to recommend the draft 2024 Financial Statements for approval.

Board members were notified that a new Internal Auditor has been appointed and the ARC is recommending the new Internal Audit Charter and Internal Audit Programme (3 years). Following a recruitment process, the Deputy Chair stated that the ARC is recommending the appointment of a co-opted member of the ARC. The Deputy CEO presented the edits proposed to the Financial Authority & Payment Approval Levels as reviewed by the ARC.

RESOLUTION: Approval of the following matters:

Draft Annual Financial Statements 2024 for submission to the C&AG (Inc. Board Members Report, Governance Statement and Statement on Internal Control)
Draft Internal Audit Report - Review of Systems of Internal Financial Control (SIFC) 2024
Draft Chairman's Comprehensive Report to the Minister 2024
Draft Internal Audit Report – Review of the RIB Fleet 2022
Draft Internal Audit Plan 2025-2027
Draft Internal Audit Charter – Forvis Mazars 2025
Appointment of co-opted member, Patrick Kivlehan, to the Audit & Risk Committee
Draft updated Audit & Risk Committee Terms of Reference 2025
Amendment to the Financial Authority & Payment Approval Levels

The following documents were noted by the Board: Uninsured Vehicles Queries Raised and related papers and approved minutes of the ARC meeting of 24 February 2025.

The Deputy Chair of the ARC raised the need for governance oversight of the National Barriers Mitigation Programme, the mechanism for which will be considered by the ARC. The Deputy CEO outlined the output of her meeting with the Department of Housing.

The Deputy Chair reported on the ARC's review of the 'Uninsured Vehicles Queries Raised', responding to the investigation report received from DECC regarding uninsured vehicles. The Deputy Chair stated that the ARC has been provided with sufficient information from the Executive.

Risk Management – Report by Chief Risk Officer

Papers distributed: 3.1.12.1 IFI Board Key Risks Report - March 2025; 3.1.12.2 IFI Risk Management Policy_V5 DRAFT for ARC March 2025; 3.1.12.3 Corporate Risk register V11.6; 3.1.12.4 DRAFT ERC workplan 2025 agreed by ERC 2025 03 13; 3.1.12.5 DRAFT ERC Terms of Reference V1.0 for ARC approval

Presenting: Chief Risk Officer

The Deputy Chair of the ARC presented the Committee's review of IFI's risk management policy and registers available. She stated that further work would be completed on the Board Risk Report and Corporate Risk Register.

RESOLUTION: Approval of the following matters:

Draft updated IFI Risk Management Policy V5
Draft Executive Risk Committee (ERC) Workplan 2025
Draft Executive Risk Committee (ERC) Terms of Reference 2025

3.2 Human Resources Sub-Committee (HRSC)

Papers distributed: 3.2.1.1 HRSC Board Paper on Candidate Booklet for CEO Competition March 2025;
3.2.1.2 DRAFT for DECC consultation - Candidate Info Booklet_CEO Designate_IFI_March_2025; 3.2.1.3 DRAFT Template contract for CEO of a NCSB - IFI March 2025

Presenting: Chair of HRSC

These papers were raised during under the Board's session without the executive.

3.3 Property Sub-Committee (PSC) - Not raised in this meeting.

3.4 Governance Review Steering Group (GRSG)

Paper distributed: 3.4.1.1 DRAFT reviewed IFI Governance Steering Group Terms of Reference; 3.4.2.1 Approved Minutes of Gov Review Strng Group Meeting - 10 Feb 2025

Presenting: Chair of GRSG

The minutes of the GRSG meeting were taken as read and noted. The Steering Group Chair outlined the discussions by members of the Group in terms of its evolving purpose.

RESOLUTION: Approval of the draft reviewed **IFI Governance Steering Group Terms of Reference**

3.5 Corporate Plan (Strategy) Steering Group (CPSG)

Paper distributed: 3.5.1.1 Corporate Plan Steering Group - EY Working Document comments;
3.5.2.1 Approved Minutes of CPSG Meeting 21 February 2025

Presenting: Chair of the CPSG

The Chair of the Corporate Plan (Strategy) Steering presented to members under item 2.1 of the agenda.

3.6 Working Group on the development of an IFI Position Paper on Salmon (WGIPPS)

Paper distributed: 3.6.2.1 Approved Minutes of WGIPPS Meeting 7 February 2025; 3.6.2.2 Approved Minutes (by email) of WGIPPS Meeting 13 March 2025

Presenting: Chair of the WGIPPS

The Chair of the WGIPPS presented on the current status of the development of the position paper. He acknowledged receipt of information regarding the precautionary principle, and he responded to queries in respect of the format of a planned workshop at the end of April. Following a discussion of how the NIFF and Department would be engaged in the drafting process, a workshop with the NIFF was recommended.

4. Stakeholder Update

4.1 National Inland Fisheries Forum (NIFF)

Recruitment of a Chair of the NIFF was raised under item 1.4 of the agenda.

5. National Barriers Mitigation Programme

Paper distributed: 5.1.1 NBMP_01.03.07_001 Dungloe Construction_I01; 5.2.1 NBMP_01.03.08_001 Reelin River Construction_I01

Presenting: Deputy CEO

These papers were taken as read. The Deputy CEO provided an outline of the requirements and responded to queries raised. The Board was satisfied with the presentation provided.

RESOLUTION: Approval of the tender and appointment of Contractor for the Detailed Design and Construction of fish pass improvements at Dungloe fish counter and weirs.

RESOLUTION: Approval of the appointment of an Engineering Consultant and Contractor to design, tender and construct a reinforced concrete box culvert at the Reelin River, Ballybofey, Co. Donegal.

6. Items for Approval

6.1 National Maintenance Contract Tender

Papers distributed: 6.1.1 National Maintenance Contract Tender Board Report March 2025

Presenting: Deputy CEO

This paper was taken as read. The Deputy CEO presented on these papers and responded to queries raised. The Board was satisfied with the presentation provided.

RESOLUTION: Approval of the procurement of a **National Facilities Management maintenance tender.**

6.2 Telematics Services Tender

Papers distributed: 6.2.1 DRAFT Board paper Telematics March 2025

Presenting: Deputy CEO

This paper was taken as read. The Deputy CEO presented on these papers and responded to queries raised. The Board was satisfied with the presentation provided.

RESOLUTION: Approval of the progression to **procurement of telematics service**.

6.3 IFI's Vehicle Hire Contract

Papers distributed: To be provided.

Presenting: Deputy CEO

The Deputy CEO outlined the overspend on the current vehicle hire contract and the anticipated cost of the next contract. The Board was satisfied with the verbal assurance, anticipating a follow-up paper supporting the request.

RESOLUTION: Approval of the **Vehicle Hire Contract**.

7. Items for Noting

7.1 National Fisheries Protection Plan 2025

Paper distributed: 7.1.1 National Fisheries Protection Plan 2025 - March 2025_Final Draft

Due to the absence of the Head of Operations, it was agreed to take this paper at the April meeting.

7.2 Brown Trout Bye-laws on L. Arrow

Paper distributed: 7.2.1 Briefing Note - Brown Trout Bye-laws on L Arrow - March 2025

Paper was taken as read and relates to the discussion earlier in respect of competency for appropriate assessments. It was deemed unnecessary to raise.

7.3 Presentation on the impacts of Aquaculture on Salmonids

It was agreed that this presentation would be provided at the seminar being organised by the WGIPPS.

8. Key Reporting

Not raised in this meeting.

9. Policies

Not raised in this meeting.

10. Governance Plans

10.1 Review of Governance Year Planner – Board

Papers Distributed: 10.1.1 Review of Governance Year Planner - March 2025 (Board)

This paper was taken as read and noted.

10.1 Review of Governance Year Planner – Executive - Not raised in this meeting

10.3 Board Effectiveness Review

Paper distributed: 10.3.1 DRAFT IFI Board Effectiveness Review 2024 - Report March 2025

Presenting: Board Secretary

This paper was taken as read. The Board Secretary provided an outline of the outputs of the review. A discussion ensued comprising: the need for the Board to understand both its conformance and performance; visibility of the embedding of the 11 recommendations of the EY Review by tracking.

RESOLUTION: Approval of the draft **Board Effectiveness Evaluation Report recommendations 2024**.

11. AOB

No matters were raised under AOB.