



Iascach Intíre Éireann
Inland Fisheries Ireland

BOARD OF INLAND FISHERIES IRELAND

Meeting Report - 30 April 2025

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

BOARD MEETING – 30 April 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. Two apologies were noted.

1.2 Minutes of the meetings of 28 March 2025

Papers distributed: 1.2.1 DRAFT Board Meeting Minutes 28 March 2025_Private 1.2.2 DRAFT Board Meeting Minutes 28 March 2025

RESOLUTION: Approval of the draft **minutes of the Board meeting of 28 March.**

Matters Arising: No matters were raised.

1.3 Actions & Resolutions from previous meetings

Papers distributed: 1.3.1 Board Meetings Actns Arising_2025@28 Mar 2025; 1.3.2 Board Meetings Resolutions_2025 @28 Mar 2025

Papers were taken as read and noted. The Deputy CEO updated members on the outcome of the case against Tirlán regarding a pollution incident in Co. Cavan, confirming the Judge applied the Probation Offenders Act 1907, and that prosecution costs and expenses were paid. She noted that the case had been reported in the national media. The Deputy CEO confirmed that a recruitment process for a Chief Risk Officer would commence as soon as possible. The Board encouraged progression of the an MOU with the Marine Institute.

1.4 CEO's Report/Main Board Report

Papers distributed: 1.4.1 Board Report April 2025

Presenting: Deputy CEO

Paper was taken as read. An overview of matters raised in the Board Report was provided, comprising: the Performance Delivery Agreement Annex B Performance Metrics; reporting IFI's decarbonising activities; correspondence from Minister Darragh O'Brien TD, the forthcoming implementation of an EU regulation banning lead in fishing tackle; and IFI's innovative use of ArcGIS (available on the [IFI Open Data Portal](#)) achieving an award from [esri ireland](#). The Deputy CEO outlined outcomes on a selection of environmental court cases reported. The Head of Research & Development briefed members on the changing regulation of Ireland's pollack fishery, part of a move to a wider ecosystem multiple species approach to conservation under the International Council for Exploration of the Seas (ICES). A discussion ensued on resourcing future additional responsibilities assigned to the organisation via the optimisation of appropriate funding schemes. In relation to the European Maritime Fisheries and Aquaculture Fund (EMFAF), the executive indicated that funding applications must be submitted through a Departmental route (i.e. IFI's parent Department or the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine (DAFM)). It was agreed by members that these matters are discussed with the new Minister when he meets with the Board. The Deputy CEO closed her presentation with reference to the financial highlights and the resolution of an issue with SEPA payments.

1.5 Governance & Risk Report

Papers distributed: 1.5.1 Governance and Risk Report Q1 2025

Presenting: Deputy CEO

Paper was taken as read. The Deputy CEO presented the highlights of the Governance & Risk Report which included the appointment of IFI's Head of Internal Audit (HIS), (Forvis Mazars); the further development of IFI's Anti-fraud and Anti-corruption Policy; external and internal audits including the OCAG Special Audit. She drew the Board's attention to the summary status of audit recommendations and informed members that a recommendation tracker was being developed. In response to a query, the Board confirmed that the supplementary pension summary of payments is to be retained in the report.

The Head of Operations notified members of the approval and issuing of commercial salmon licences in line with the 'Control of Fishing for Salmon (Amendment) Order 2025'. He responded to queries in relation to environmental screening. Other queries responded to related to: the facilitation of a PhD student; safeguarding compliance; and acknowledgment that Circular 01/2025, in relation to the management and maintenance of accommodation would be applied by IFI as best practice.

2. Strategy and Planning

2.1 Strategic Plan 2026-2030 Update

The Deputy CEO confirmed that an extension of the EY project management services was leveraged to project manage the remaining work in relation to IFI's strategy development. The Chair CPSG confirmed his satisfaction for the remaining work on the strategy to be co-ordinated by EY.

3. Sub-Committee Presentations / Recommendations

3.1 Audit & Risk Committee (ARC) – not raised in this meeting.

3.2 Human Resources Sub-Committee (HRSC) – not raised in this meeting.

3.3 Property Sub-Committee (PSC)

Papers distributed: No papers.

Presenting: Chair of PSC

The Chair of the Property Sub-committee sought arrangements for an alternative member of the Board to step in to take the place of the Staff Representative during the period of her acting-up.

3.4 Governance Review Steering Group (GRSG) – not raised in this meeting.

3.5 Corporate Plan (Strategy) Steering Group (CPSG)

Presenting: Chair of the CPSG

The Chair of the Corporate Plan (Strategy) Steering Group presented to members on the progress of the formulation of the strategic plan. Providing an outline of progress to date. It was confirmed that stakeholders would be provided with an outline strategy document for consideration as part of the consultation process. The Board sought clarity on the nominated staff member responsible for coordinating the project management of the strategy drafting process, liaison with EY and the ongoing staff interaction in relation to the strategy development. A discussion ensued on the timelines for environmental screening, public consultation and the forecast time for ultimate Board approval and submission to the Minister. Further discussion ensued on proactive engagement with Departmental and State agency stakeholders, inviting their representatives to meet to discuss their views on IFI's next 5-year strategic objectives. The Deputy CEO stated that the 2026 Business Plan, being prepared in Q3 2025, will reference the draft strategy, cautioning that it would not be sufficiently detailed in relation to restructuring. The Chair of the HR Sub-Committee added that the Sub-Committee's 2025 work programme includes consideration of the impact of strategic priorities on IFI's Workforce Plan.

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

Presenting: Chair of the WGIPPS

The Chair of the WGIPPS presented on the status of the formulation of the paper. He brought members through the stages of the drafting process, which included a workshop (29 April) of national and international experts whose contributions would inform the deliberations of the working group. He referenced the benefits of the preparation work for the forthcoming NASCO meeting and the open session taking place in Cardiff, which will also inform proposed actions in relation to salmon. He stated that there were two remaining meetings of the working group in advance of the consideration of the draft report by the Board at its June meeting.

4. Stakeholder Update

4.1 National Inland Fisheries Forum (NIFF)

The Deputy CEO presented the statutory context, background, membership and current status of the National Inland Fisheries Forum (NIFF). She highlighted the fact that the position of NIFF Chair is currently vacant and that the most recent cycle, which commenced in 2022, will cease shortly. Following a brief discussion on the sequencing of next steps, it was agreed that the new Chair is appointed, the Terms of Reference of the NIFF is reviewed (ensuring clarity of purpose and to include a new Members Code of Conduct) and notified to the Minister/ Department.

5. National Barriers Mitigation Programme

Paper distributed: 5.1.1 NBMP_01.03.09_002 Programme Update 2024, Workplan Budget 2025 and Governance Arrangements_I02

Presenting: Deputy CEO

Paper was taken as read. The Deputy CEO presented an outline of this comprehensive paper outlining governance arrangements within the Barriers Mitigation Division. She highlighted the challenges and risks (p15), particularly the recruitment issues. It was proposed to raise a number of these challenges with the funding Department. Members discussed matters raised in the paper: staffing, project work cited and the organisation's responsibilities in relation to hydromorphology. The Board commended the level of detail of the paper and the assurance it provides.

The Board notes the Programme update for 2024 with work plan and budget for 2025, along with governance arrangements in place for the Barrier Mitigation Division.

6. Items for Approval

6.1 Capital Expenditure – Heavy Towing Vehicles – Change in resolution

Paper distributed: 6.1.1 Purchase of Heavy Towing Vehicles Contract Award - April 2025

Presenting: Deputy CEO

Paper was taken as read. The Deputy CEO informed members that the expenditure proposal was before the Board in December, but due to a procurement issue that arose and the contract was awarded to a different supplier, with a consequential increase in costs.

RESOLUTION: Approval of the **contract award for 9 heavy towing vehicles**

6.2 Contract Framework Vision Equipment

Papers distributed: 6.2.1 Vision Equip- February 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 following Framework contracts for the supply and delivery of **vision equipment and the provision of spotting scopes and associated accessories.**

6.3 Habitats & Conservation Disbursal of Funding 2025

Papers distributed: 6.3.1 Habitats & Conservation Funding Application Outcome 2025 - April 2025

Presenting: Head of Operations

This paper was taken as read. The Head of Operations responded to members' concerns regarding the independence of awards made to projects for delivery by Inland Fisheries Ireland. He outlined the membership of the technical panel and the Development Funding Oversight Group (DFOG).

RESOLUTION: Approval of the **projects to a value of €771,294.58 for disbursement to applicants as outlined.**

6.4 Financial Management System – Tender Pre-approval

Papers distributed: 6.4.1 Financial Management System Approval to go to Tender Board Paper; 6.4.2 FMS Business-Case; 6.4.3 FMS Competitive Procedure Document (CPD) (DRAFT); 6.4.4 FMS Pre Qual Questionnaire (DRAFT)

Presenting: Deputy CEO

The Deputy CEO presented the paper on the tendering for a new Financial Management System. A member of the Board provided the name of a suitably experienced independent professional who may be in a position to assist with the project.

RESOLUTION: Approval of the **tendering for a Financial Management System**

6.5 Research – FLOW Project

Papers distributed: 6.5.1 FLOW project funding - April 2025

Presenting: Head of Research & Development

The Head of R&D confirmed that IFI had been successful in its application for funding to the PEACEPLUS Programme. The project relates to "Water Quality and Catchment Management: prioritising cross-border, collaborative approaches to sustainable catchment management incorporating nature-based solutions to facilitate improvements in freshwater bodies status and development of best practice approaches to catchment management and interventions in cross-border catchments". A discussion ensued on resourcing such initiatives in line with IFI's objectives.

RESOLUTION: Approval of the acceptance of **funding of €1.118m from the PEACEPLUS Fund** to deliver the IFI work commitments as part of the Flow project

6.6 Operations – CALM Project

Papers distributed: 6.6.1 CALM project funding - April 2025

Presenting: Head of Operations

The Head of Operations presented paper. The Board was satisfied with the presentation.

RESOLUTION: Approval of the acceptance of funding of **€1.4m from the PEACEPLUS Fund** to deliver the CALM project in the Glyde Catchment.

7. Items for Noting

7.1 Letter of Representation

Paper distributed: 7.1.1 Letter of Representation 2024 Financial Statements

Presenting: Deputy CEO

This paper was taken as read and noted with no queries were raised.

7.2 Development Projects Progress Report Q1 2025

Paper distributed: 7.2.1 Development Projects Progress Report for Q1 - April 2025

Presenting: Head of Operations

This paper was taken as read and noted with no queries were raised.

7.3 Terms of Reference Executive Leadership Team (ELT)

Paper distributed: 7.3.1 Terms of Reference - Executive Leadership Team -Final Reviewed by ELT

Presenting: Deputy CEO

The Deputy CEO presented this newly created document. The Board advised on in-person meetings matters for inclusion on the ELT agenda: Health & Safety, the Oversight and Performance Delivery Agreements (OA and PDA) with IFI's parent Department and organisational culture.

8. Key Reporting

8.2 Oversight Agreement (OA) / Performance Delivery Agreement (PDA) Statistics 2025

Paper distributed: 8.1.1 2025 Business plan Q1 update for April Board meeting

Presenting: Deputy CEO

The addendum to the OA and PDA regarding the Barriers Mitigation Division metrics was noted.

8.4 Annual Report & Accounts

Paper distributed: 8.3.1 IFI-annual-report-24-v6_22.04.2025

Presenting: Deputy CEO

Feedback was provided in relation to the inclusion of reference to the EY governance review in the report. Members commended the improvements made to the report.

RESOLUTION: Approval of the draft **Inland Fisheries Ireland - Annual Report 2024.**

9. Policies

8.1 Annual Policy Review

Paper distributed: 9.1.1 Terms of Reference of the Board of IFI V2 - 2025 DRAFT

Presenting: Board Secretary

The Secretary provided a brief overview of the rationale for amendments made to the document.

RESOLUTION: Approval of the **reviewed Terms of Reference of the Board of IFI.**

8.2 Changes/Updates – in line with delegation scheme - Not raised in this meeting.

10. Governance Plans

10.1 Review of Governance Year Planner – Board

Papers Distributed: 10.1.1 Review of Board Governance Year Planner - April 2025

Paper was taken as read and noted.

10.2 Review of Governance Year Planner – Executive

Papers Distributed: 10.2.1 Draft ELT Workplan 2026 - version 2 amended

Paper was taken as read and noted.

11. AOB

A copy of the paper regarding tendering for Vehicle Hire Contract included in the pack referred to at the March Board meeting was noted.

The Chair notified the meeting of the resignation of A. Cawley from the Board . Thanks and good wishes were extended.