



Iascach Intíre Éireann
Inland Fisheries Ireland

BOARD OF INLAND FISHERIES IRELAND

Meeting Report - 11 December 2024

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

BOARD MEETING – 11 December 2024

1. Standard Business

1.1 Administration and Monthly Reporting

1.1.1 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.

1.1.2 DRAFT Minutes of the meetings of 30 October and 20 November 2024

Papers distributed: 1.1.2.1 DRAFT Board Meeting Minutes 30 October 2024_Priv Session_Chair Reviewed; 1.1.2.2 DRAFT Board Meeting Minutes 30 October 2024_Chair Reviewed; 1.1.2.3 DRAFT Board Meeting Minutes 20 November 2024_Private Session_Chair Reviewed

RESOLUTION: Approval of the draft **minutes of the Board meeting of 30 October**

Matters Arising

There were no matters arising.

1.1.3 Actions & Resolutions from previous meetings

Papers distributed: 1.1.3.1 Board Meetings Actns Arising_2024@3 December 2024; 1.1.3.2 Board Meetings Resolutions_2024 @30 October 2024

Papers were taken as read and noted.

1.1.4 CEO's Report/Main Board Report

Paper distributed: 1.1.4. Deputy CEO Report December 2024

Presenting: Deputy CEO

Paper was taken as read. The Deputy CEO provided a presentation on the highlights which included actions as a result of the new SMT operating model, as approved by the Board in October, which were the transfer of staff within Finance & Corporate Services Division (Angling Advisor Team and the Research and Development Division (Roscrea and Cullion Fish Farms to the Operations Division. He referenced the renaming of the SMT to the Executive Leadership Team (ELT) and communication of this to staff later in the month. The Deputy CEO also provided updates in relation to: stakeholder engagement; recruitment to the National Barriers Mitigation Programme (NBMP) team and the building of governance structures supporting the delivery of the NBMP; the second clearance report on the Special Audit (pending management responses and review by the ARC) and the salmon catch advice. A discussion ensued on the need to convene a meeting of the working group on salmon policy.

The Head of Research & Development provided a verbal update which referenced the North Atlantic Salmon Conservation Organisation (NASCO) 10-year strategic plan and a range of the actions planned.

1.1.5 Strategic Issues Paper (Implementation Support Team)

Papers distributed: 1.1.5.1 Strategic Issues Paper - December 2024; 1.1.5.2 Report on implementation of EY Review Report Recommendations 09.12.2024 – IST; 1.1.5.3 EY_Status update report on Governance Review_Recommendations_281124

Papers were taken as read and noted. The Implementation Support Team (IST) presented an update on the implementation of the recommendations of the EY Governance Review. He stated that this is an iterative process, and for some recommendations the implementation will be ongoing, and needed to remain on the agenda. The IST highlighted that implementing recommendation 1: 'Clear definition and agreement of the strategic remit of Inland Fisheries Ireland' (75% complete) would be fully complete following the delivery of the new IFI strategy (2026-2030) at the end of 2025. He added that recommendation 11 would be fully implemented when the assurance framework is complete. The importance the assurance that EY brings to this work was emphasised and their work was

acknowledgement. A discussion ensued on the historic governance issues and the current and future sources of assurance for the Board. The Chair suggested that the Board has to place its trust in the SMT and that risk must be a recurring and standing item at SMT meetings. Transparency of decision making (rationale) and the importance of effective and timely communication within the organisation was discussed. The Chair expressed the Board's gratitude to S. Neely and T. Barry who have completed the scope of their work.

Strategic Issues paper

The Deputy CEO presented the Strategic Issues paper. Feedback from members comprised: that the strategic issues would link IFI's primary functions and that the Board should be briefed on the drafting of new fisheries legislation.

1.1.6 Governance and Risk Update

The Governance and Risk Update is next due following the end of Q4.

1.2 Sub-Committee Update

1.2.1 Audit & Risk Committee (ARC)

Papers distributed: 1.2.1.1 Board Finance Report 2024 - Dec 2024; 1.2.1.2 IFI 2023 Annual Financial Statements FINAL; 1.2.1.3 Pay & Non-Pay Budget 2025 Report - Dec 2024; 1.2.1.4 Striking Rates for 2025 Dec 2024; 1.2.1.5 Permit Prices 2025 Dec 2024; 1.2.1.6 DRAFT Updated Matters for Decision of the Board V3.6_Fisheries Management; 1.2.1.7 ARC Meeting Minutes 2 Sept 2024_APPRVD 16 Oct 2024

Presenting: Chair of ARC

Papers were taken as read. A report of the ARC meeting (9 December) was provided and comprised: reporting the ARC's review of the Board Finance Report Q3, 2024; meeting with representatives of the Office of the Comptroller and Auditor General (OCAG), reporting an unqualified external audit of the 2023 Financial Statements with no material issues reported and the Committee's review of the draft Budget for 2025. The ARC was recommending all matters it reviewed for approval.

The Executive responded to queries in relation to the capacity of the Barriers Mitigation Programme (BMP) to meet its capital expenditure forecast, the inclusion of overheads and the notification of the Department of Housing of IFI cashflow constraints.

A discussion ensued on the paper proposing a permit price adjustment on State fisheries. Members deliberated on the support of a conservation ethos . The Chair of the recently formed Working Group on the development of a Position Paper on Salmon stated that the group would be meeting in January to develop its Terms of Reference with a view to reporting the outcome of its work to the Board in May 2025. Following these discussions the Board decided to extend a message regarding IFI's principle of conservation, discouraging the harvesting of fish and resolved to set the permit price increase originally proposed at 25% on state fisheries to an increase of 100%. It was suggested that where revenues increase, these will be ring fenced for a specific conservation education initiatives or socially disadvantaged cohort. The Board was satisfied with the presentations and robust discussions and resolved the following matters:

Summary of ARC Recommendations:

RESOLUTION: Approval of the following matters:

Final (audited) Annual Financial Statements for 2023
Pay & Non-Pay Budget 2025
Striking the Rates for 2025
Permit Prices 2025 increase of 100% on State owned fisheries
DRAFT Matters for Decision of the Board V3.6 approval

1.2.2 Human Resources Sub-Committee (HRSC)

Papers distributed: 1.2.2.1 HRSC Meeting Minutes 9 September 2024_APPRVD 18 Nov 2024

Presenting: Chair of HRSC

The HRSC Chair updated members on the recent HRSC meeting with the appointment of the Deputy Chair and an overview of the HRSC workplan for 2025. He stated that the Head of HR provided a presentation on IFI's TOIL liabilities and the Sub-Committee acknowledged that TOIL is no longer available under the Haddington Road Agreement and needed to be addressed within IFI. Acting up arrangements within the organisation are being reviewed.

1.2.3 Property Sub-Committee (PSC)

Papers distributed: 1.2.3.1 CapEx Fish Counter - WRBD Corrib Dec 2024; 1.2.3.1a CapEx Fish Counter - WRBD Corrib Dec 2024; 1.2.3.1b Addendum Following Property Sub-committee Meeting Vaki Fish Counter; 1.2.3.2 CapEx Fish Farm loader Dec 2024; 1.2.3.3 CapEx Electrofishing Equipment Tender December 2024; 1.2.3.4 Electrofishing Servicing Tender Dec 2024; 1.2.3.5 Enniscorthy property Dec 2024

Presenting: Chair of PSC

The PSC Chair outlined the Sub-Committee's review of the 2024 and 2025 Capital Plans, stating that capital categories would be developed and noted that the 2025 plan is ambitious. She provided a brief overview of each of the projects seeking investment and reported that the Sub-Committee was recommending their approval. The Board was satisfied with the papers as presented.

Summary of PRSC Recommendations:

RESOLUTION: Approval of the following matters:

Purchase of a VAKI Counter at the Salmon Weir in Galway
Purchase of a new telescopic handler for Roscrea Fish Farm.
Commencement of procurement competition to establish an Electrofishing Equipment Framework .
Award of the contract to Electro Fishing Servicing Ltd for servicing and maintenance.
Options for Enniscorthy property purchase
Expenditure for the provision of Personal Watercraft (PWCS) & Double PWC Trailer .

1.2.4 Governance Review Steering Group (GRSG)

Paper distributed: 1.2.4.1 GRSG Mtg Mins 14 October_APPRVD 15 Nov 2024;

Paper was noted and the Chair indicated that the matters to be discussed were raised under 1.1.5 on the agenda.

1.2.5 Strategy Steering Group (SSG)

Papers distributed: 1.2.5.1 Strategy CPSG update to Board December 2024; 1.2.5.2 SCHEMATIC-INPUTS TO SP V1

Presenting: Chair of the CPSG

The Chair of the Strategy Steering Group briefed members on the schematic 'Crafting the new IFI Strategic Plan (2026-2030)'. Feedback was provided from attendance at three staff strategy workshops where internal communication was identified as a recurring theme. Meetings with the Board and members of the National Inland Fisheries Forum are to be arranged by the Project Manager (EY). It was also suggested that EY provide a briefing note on the staff workshops and the cultural issues that arose.

1.3 Stakeholder Update

1.3.1 National Inland Fisheries Forum (NIFF)

Paper distributed: 1.3.1 NIFF Meeting Minutes - 12 September 2024

The minutes of the September NIFF meeting were noted.

1.4 Items for Approval

1.4.1 Legal Services Contract

Paper distributed: 1.4.1 Legal Services Contract December 2024

Presenting: Deputy CEO

Paper was taken as read. The Deputy CEO provided a verbal presentation on this matter. The Board noted the paper and was satisfied with the presentation.

RESOLUTION: Approval of the contract **awards for legal services to** Fieldfisher Lot 69, Byrne Wallace Lot 70 (1) and Beauchamps Lot 70 (2) respectively.

1.4.2 Legal Case Bandon Flood Relief Scheme

Paper distributed: 1.4.2 Legal Case Costs - Bandon Flood Relief

Presenting: Deputy CEO

Paper was taken as read. The Deputy CEO briefed members on this matter. The Board noted the paper and was satisfied with the presentation.

RESOLUTION: Approval of **direct negotiation with parties to finalise costs** to mitigate the risk of incurring additional costs.

1.4.3 Public Consultation – Introduction of bag limit for brown trout Loughs Conn & Cullin

Paper distributed: 1.4.3 Proposal to Consult intro bag limit LC&C Dec 24

Presenting: Acting Head of Operations

Paper was taken as read. The Acting Head of Operations responded to queries on this paper and following a proposal from the Board, agreed to amend the consultation documentation (increasing the size limit). He clarified that a national bag limit would require supporting scientific advice.

RESOLUTION: Approval to proceed to **public consultation for the introduction of a bag limit of 4 brown trout in all rivers and lakes in the Moy Catchment including Loughs Conn and Cullin**

1.4.4 NBMP Establishment of Consultant E&E Services Framework

Paper distributed: 1.4.4 NBMP_01.03.03_001 Consultant E&E Services Framework_I02

Presenting: Deputy CEO

Paper was taken as read. Board members were satisfied with the paper provided. The Board recommended that the framework is setup for as long as possible, but no less than 3 years, and the Consumer Price Index (CPI) should inform annual rate increases over the period.

RESOLUTION: Approval of the establishment of a **multi-party framework for consultant engineering and environmental service providers**

1.4.5 Sponsorship Programme Proposal

Paper distributed: 1.4.5 Sponsorship Programme Proposal 2025

Presenting: Head of Finance & Corporate Services

Paper was taken as read. Board members were satisfied with the presentation provided.

RESOLUTION: Approval of the **Sponsorship Programme for 2025**

1.4.6 Supply and Delivery of Fish Food to IFI Fish Farms

Paper distributed: 1.4.6 Supply of Fish Farm Fish Food Contract

Presenting: Head of Research & Development

Paper was taken as read. Board members were satisfied with the presentation provided.

RESOLUTION: Approval of the purchase of **fish food from supplier Le Guessant**

1.4.7 Fanure Fish Farm Solar PV Project

Paper distributed: 1.4.7 Fanure Solar PV Project - December 24

Presenting: Head of Finance & Corporate Services

Paper was taken as read. Board members were satisfied with the paper provided.

RESOLUTION: Approval capital expenditure on the **Fanure Fish Farm Solar PV Project**

1.4.8 Cap Ex LED Lighting Lake Drive

Paper distributed: 1.4.8 Cap Ex LED lighting Lake Drive - December 2024

Presenting: Head of Finance & Corporate Services

This paper was taken as read. Board members were satisfied with the paper provided.

RESOLUTION: Approval of capital expenditure for **LED lighting for Lake Drive, Citywest**

1.5 Items for Noting

1.5.1. Wild Salmon & Sea Trout Statistics Report 2023

Paper distributed: 1.5.1 Wild Salmon and Sea Trout Statistics Report 2023

Paper was taken as read and noted. Members agreed that this was a very important report.

2. Strategy & Planning

Not raised in this meeting.

3. Key Reporting

Not raised in this meeting.

4. Policies

Not raised in this meeting.

5. Governance Plan

Not raised in this meeting.

6. AOB

The Board thanked the Executive for its efforts during the year.