



**Central Fisheries Board**

An Príomh-Bhord Iascaigh

**Report to the Minister for Communications, Marine  
and Natural Resources**

**From the**

**Central Fisheries Board**

**On its activities during 2006 and those of each Regional  
Fisheries Board and Fisheries Cooperative Society**



**Fisheries Ireland**

Our Natural Heritage

**December 2007**

**Mission Statement**

To ensure that the valuable natural resources of inland fisheries and sea angling are conserved, managed, developed and promoted in their own right and to support sustainable economic activity, recreational amenity and job creation.

**The Fisheries Boards**

The Fisheries Boards are the statutory agencies responsible for inland fisheries in Ireland and operate under the aegis of the Department of Communications, Marine and Natural Resources.

The principal functions of the Central Fisheries Board are to:

- Advise the Minister for Communications, Marine & Natural Resources on policy relating to the conservation, protection, management, development and improvement of inland fisheries;
- Support, co-ordinate and provide specialist support services to the seven Regional Fisheries Boards; and,
- Advise the Minister on the performance by Regional Fisheries Boards of their functions.

The seven Regional Fisheries Boards have responsibility for conservation, protection, development, management and promotion of inland fisheries in their regions. They have a duty to co-ordinate and co-operate in the delivery of a national fisheries service, observing principles of sustainability, biodiversity and the conservation of all species in inland water ecosystems.

### **Central Fisheries Board Members**

Mr. David Mackey (Chairperson)

Ms. Mary Bohan

Mr. Paddy Byrne

Ms. Paula Carroll

Mr. Eamon Cusack

Mr. Éamon de Buitléar

Mr. Myles Kelly

Mr. Naul McCole

Mr. John Henry McLaughlin

### **Senior Management Team**

John O' Connor      Chief Executive Officer

Dr Ciaran Byrne      Director of Field Services

David Byrne      Director of Promotion and Marketing

Kieran Murphy      Director of Human Resources

Nuala O'Byrne      Director of Finance and ICT

**Table of Contents**

Chairman’s Statement.....5  
Comment of Chief Executive Officer.....8

**Central Fisheries Board**

Research and Development.....10  
Field Services..... 31  
Promotion and Marketing.....35  
Human Resources..... 42  
Finance / ICT.....46

**Regional Fisheries Boards/Fisheries Co-Operative Societies**

Eastern Regional Fisheries Board / Eastern Fisheries Co-Operative Society .....51

Southern Regional Fisheries Board / Southern Fisheries  
Co-Operative Society.....58

South Western Regional Fisheries Board / South Western Fisheries  
Co- Operative Society.....69

Shannon Regional Fisheries Board / Upper and Lower Shannon Fisheries  
Co-Operative  
Societies.....79

Western Regional Fisheries Board / Western Fisheries Co-Operative Society ...89

North Western Regional Fisheries Board / North Western Fisheries  
Co-Operative Society.....95

Northern Regional Fisheries Board / Northern Fisheries Co-Operative  
Society.....104

## **Appendices**

- Appendix 1.** Fisheries Development & Surveys Undertaken in 2006.
- Appendix 2.** Pollution Control & Water Quality Report for 2006.
- Appendix 3.** Fish Stocking Report for 2006.
- Appendix 4.** Fishing Licences and Board Managed Fisheries Report 2006.
- Appendix 5.** Protection & Surveillance Report 2006.
- Appendix 6.** Staffing Report 2006.
- Appendix 7.** Regional Fisheries Board Members 2006.
- Appendix 8.** Details of Angling Licences Purchased in Each Regional Fisheries Board in 2006.
- Appendix 9.** Details of Commercial Fishing Licences Issued in Fishery District in 2006.
- Appendix 10.** Commercial and Angling Salmon Catches in each Fishery District in 2006.
- Appendix 11.** Commercial and Angling Sea Trout Catches in each Fishery District in 2006.
- Appendix 12.** Water Samples Processed by the Central Fisheries Board Laboratory for each Regional Fisheries Board in 2006.
- Appendix 13.** Graph of the Water Samples Processed by the Central Fisheries Board Laboratory for each Regional Fisheries Board in 2006.
- Fig 1.** Pie chart of the Commercial and Angling Salmon and Sea Trout Catch by Engine in 2006.
- Fig 2.** Pie chart of the Disposal of Salmon Caught by Drift and Draft nets in 2006.
- Fig 3.** Pie chart of the Nationality of Anglers who Purchased Salmon Fishing Licenses in 2006.

## **Chairman's Statement**

Chairman's report regarding the assessment of internal financial controls of the Central Fisheries Board as is required under paragraph 10.2 (iii) of the code of practice for the governance of State bodies

On behalf of the Central Fisheries Board, I hereby acknowledge that the Board is responsible for ensuring that an appropriate system of internal financial control is in operation within the Board.

I am satisfied that the systems which the Board has in place, are reasonable and appropriate for the Board's circumstances having regard to its size. However, the systems do not, and cannot, provide absolute assurance against material error.

The Board has adopted the Code of Practice for the Governance of State Bodies. All Regional Fisheries Boards have adopted the Code also.

The Board members are aware of and are fully compliant with the provisions of the Standards in Public Office Act 2001, and the Code of Business Conduct.

The Board has an audit sub-committee whose duties include:

- to approve a charter for Internal Audit which clearly defines its mission, authority, roles, responsibilities and other reporting relationships
- to consider the draft annual internal audit plan
- to monitor the implementation of the plan
- to protect the independence of the Internal Audit function
- to review significant findings and the recommendations of the Internal Audit and to monitor action taken by management to resolve any issues that have been identified
- to monitor the performance of the Internal Audit Function
- to request special reports from the Internal Auditor as considered appropriate

- to advise and make recommendations to the Board on any matters pertaining to the Internal Audit Function, that the committee considers necessary
- to communicate with the Board and management in relation to any significant shortfalls in the business control and/or risk management environments that come to their attention
- to consider the findings and comments of the Comptroller and Auditor General
- to review any value for money reports that are undertaken by the Board

The chairperson of the audit sub-committee reports to the Board.

The Board takes the major strategic decisions and meets at regular intervals to monitor performance and plans. The executive management only act within the authority delegated to them by the Board to give effect to Board policy and decisions. The Board's professional advisors are available for consultation by the Board as required.

Legal matters were progressed having regard to professional advice procured by the Board.

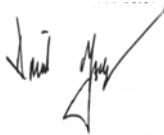
A detailed procedures manual has been prepared and management exercises close supervision over all significant transactions. Major sources of income are subjected to overall reconciliation and, where possible, staff duties are appropriately divided taking account of the risks involved and the limited number of staff. The following specific procedures are in place in order to provide effective financial control: -

- 1 Formal procedures are in place for the purchase of all goods and services, for approval of invoices in respect of goods and services and authorization of payment in respect of goods and services. Procedures in this regard have been strengthened from time to time and recommendations emerging from internal audits have been implemented.
- 2 Monthly accounts are presented to the Board. The Board operates a computerised accounting system, which is capable of providing a wide range of financial and accounting information.

- 3 Budgets are prepared in respect of each year and monthly statements of income and expenditure are produced to facilitate comparison with budgeted figures.
- 4 The Minister appointed a new Chairman and Board in July 2005 and a new audit committee has been established. A firm of Auditors has been engaged to provide an internal audit service to the Board.

With reference to section 10.2 of the Code, I wish to report the following position in relation to the Board.

- 5 There were no commercially significant developments affecting the Board during the year. The Board did not establish any subsidiaries, participate in joint ventures or acquire shares.
- 6 The Board has complied with all appropriate procedures for financial reporting, internal audit, procurement and disposal of assets and has complied with all relevant tax legislation.
- 7 Government policy on the pay of the Board's Chief Executive Officer and all employees is being complied with.
- 8 Government guidelines on payment of directors' fees are being complied with; no fees are paid to ordinary members of the Board.
- 9 As of now, there have been no significant post balance sheet events. The Board's accounts for 2006 have yet to be audited by the Comptroller and Auditor General and, therefore, the Board can only provide draft accounts at this time.
- 10 It is my understanding that the Guidelines for Appraisal and Management of Capital Expenditure Proposals are not relevant to the activities of the Board for the year 2006.



---

David Mackey, Chairman, April 2007



## **Comment of the Chief Executive Officer, Mr John O' Connor**

This report sets out what the Central and Regional Fisheries Boards and the Fisheries Cooperative Societies have been engaged in over the past year to advance the management of the inland fisheries and sea angling sectors in Ireland.

In 2006 the Central and Regional Fisheries Boards developed and agreed a three year rolling Performance Contract with the Department of Communications, Marine and Natural Resources. This performance contract sets out what service the Boards will provide to the Minister, the Inland Fisheries sector and to its own staff, over the three year period. It also sets out the services the Department will provide to the Fisheries Boards. A simplified reporting format on which the Fisheries Boards will report regular progress in relation to the contract was agreed with the Department of Communications Marine and Natural Resources.

In the area of corporate governance the Boards have adopted the Government's Code of Practice for the Governance of State Bodies. The Code of Conduct has been signed by all Central Board members and has been placed on the CFB website. A Code of Conduct for employees has been finalised in partnership with the Trade Unions. This code for employees covers the employees of all eight Boards. Under the Towards 2016 agreement the Fisheries Boards have developed a comprehensive and challenging modernisation programme and are in the process of implementing this programme.

The Central Board moved to new accommodation within the Swords Business Campus during 2005. Most staff are now located in these offices. Work continued on the development of a new laboratory and the procurement of suitable warehousing. We wish to express our thanks to the Minister, his officials, OPW and our Chairman and Board, for their help in advancing this.

The Board continued in 2006 with its programme of policy development. Sectoral policies were advanced on carp, brown trout and coarse fish with the latter two completed and scheduled for submission to the Minister in 2007. A comprehensive review of the

Boards' Human Resource Management policies is at an advanced stage. This review is being advanced on a partnership basis with the staff and unions.

The Boards continued, in 2006, to manage and implement the Minister's decisions on salmon management. While many stakeholders had input into advising the Minister on his salmon management strategy, the critically important job of implementation on the ground is the sole responsibility of the Regional Fisheries Boards with co-ordination and specialist support from the Central Board. This is a very ambitious and important initiative and the Regional Boards must be complemented on the manner in which they have worked with the sector in ensuring it is such a great success.

During the year, 753,200 brown trout, 295,441 rainbow trout together with 4,000 carp were reared at our fish farms at Roscrea and Mullingar. These were stocked out to over 100 customers and angling centres all around the country during the year. The Board continues to provide coordination, research and development and specialist support services to the regional boards. The Board provided a comprehensive report on its research and development activities during 2006 and this report is available on our website [www.cfb.ie](http://www.cfb.ie) The Board is also working with the Marine Institute, Waterways Ireland, EPA, Dúchas, ESB and our colleagues in Northern Ireland to advance priority projects. These projects cover areas such as the Water Framework Directive, salmon and sea trout genetics, development of our canals, support for flood relief schemes and the impact of hydro schemes on fish movements.

Finally, I would like to thank the Chairman, David Mackey, Board members and staff and our colleagues in the Department of Communications, Marine and Natural Resources, for their continued cooperation.



---

John O'Connor, Chief Executive Officer, April 2007

## **Central Fisheries Board**

### **Research and Development**

The 2006 Business Plan which included an agreed Central and Regional Fisheries Boards national research programme reflecting the national and regional research priorities was delivered on time and within budget. In addition to the national programmes the Board also provided scientific inputs and support to other agencies and bodies in 2006.

The Research and Development Division has four principal functional areas: provision of an advisory service, fish stock assessment, national obligations under two key European Directives – the Water Framework Directive (WFD) and the Habitats Directive, and the fisheries environment and biodiversity programme.

Under the National Fish Stock Assessment Programme a range of studies dealing with many different species were undertaken including monitoring conservation and transitional waters fish species. The marine sports fish tagging programme also continued. In 2006 significant advances were made by the CFB, (the agency nominated for monitoring fish species in the governing legislation), with regard to the management and delivery of the Water Framework Directive (WFD). In consultation with the Regional Fisheries Boards an extensive, fully costed WFD fish monitoring programme was developed and submitted to the Department of Communications Marine and Natural Resources for funding.

The Irish legislation for the implementation of the Habitats Directive identifies the Minister for Communications Marine and Natural Resources, along with the Minister for the Environment, as having a role in undertaking investigations on the status of qualifying fish species. This task has been advanced by the CFB, working closely with the National Parks and Wildlife Service.

Externally funded research collaborations continued in 2006. For example, one project with European partners, was conducted on salmon genetics. This project assessed the impact of drift nets on the mixed stock salmon fishery at sea. Funding was also secured

for the extensive Waterways Programme. The ESB funded Fish Entrainment in Thermal Power Stations study was completed in 2006. In another initiative the impacts of different invasive species (fish and macrophytes) were intensively studied in 2006 in several discrete watercourses.

The research staff of the CFB produced a number of publications in 2006 including several scientific papers, a book on river rehabilitation techniques and a draft brown trout policy document. As well as internationally funded project collaborations three additional short-term collaborations dealing with fish in transitional waters, fish in the intertidal zone and a satellite tagging programme for eels were delivered in 2006.

## **1 National Inland Fisheries Research, Development & Advisory Service**

### **2 National Fish Stock Assessment Programme**

- National Brown Trout Programme
- Dynamics of Fish Populations in Irish Waters
- National Coarse Fish & Pike Programme
  - i) Waterways Ireland
  - ii) Status of Coarse Fish in Selected Watercourses
- National Conservation Fish Programme
- National Marine Sports Fish Programme
- National Salmon, Sea Trout & Eel Programme
  - i) Survey Programme
  - ii) Catch and Release Salmon Programme
  - iii) Wetted Area Update
  - iv) National Salmon Stock book
  - v) Salmon Scale Collection Programme
  - vi) National Eel Database
  - vii) Ferox trout Study - Tracking of ferox trout to determine spawning location on the Lough Corrib Catchment
  - viii) National Salmon Genetics Programme
- Irish Specimen Fish Committee
- National Transitional Waters Fish Programme

### **3 European Directives - National Obligations**

- Water Framework Directive
  - i) Waterways Macro invertebrate Sampling
  - ii) Ecological Classification Using Fish in Lakes (NS Share) - Year 2 of 3
  - iii) EPA funded METRIC project
- Habitats Directive

#### **4 National Fisheries Environment and Biodiversity Programme**

- Fish Kills
- Laboratory Services
- Fish Stocks and Water Quality
- Waterways Water Quality Monitoring Programme
- Environmental Drainage Maintenance Programme
- Lamprey & Crayfish
- National Aquatic Plant Management & Invasive Species Programme
  - i) Invasive Riparian and Aquatic Plants Species in the River Slaney
  - ii) *Eloдея nuttallii* in Carrigadrohid Reservoir
  - iii) Waterways Aquatic Weed Control Programme
  - iv) Status and distribution of Chub (*Leuciscus cephalus*) in the River Inny
  - v) *Lagarosiphon major* in Lough Corrib
  - vi) Public Awareness
- National Salmonid river rehabilitation Programme
- Fish Entrainment in Thermal Power Stations

#### **5 International Collaborations**

#### **6 Publications / Books**

## **1 National Inland Fisheries Research, Development & Advisory Service**

- Provided scientific & technical advice to the Minister, CFB & RFBs as requested.
- Developed draft national policies for brown trout and coarse fish. The draft Wild Brown Trout Review was prepared and includes the views of all participants, including the RFBs.
- Represented the Minister and the Boards on national and international working groups and committees (e.g. NASCO, EIFAC, EWRS, NSTAG, NEA GIG for Transitional Waters fish, RBD Working Groups for WFD, DCMNR Committees, SSC of the NSS).
- Developed and delivered agreed National Research Programme (NRP)
- Secured funding and resources for NRP and other research programmes (research contracts, STAGIAIRE, external contracts etc). Two Stagaire posts were secured (1) to digitise lake trout survey data for long term dataset analysis and (2) to compile data for reporting the status of salmon to the EU for the Habitats Directive.
- Delivered administrative function for inland fisheries brief (e.g. annual report contributions, business plan, and summary report on 2006 projects).
- Provided advice per statutory functions.

## **2 National Fish Stock Assessment Programme**

### **• National Brown Trout Programme**

Brown trout lake fishery assessment – Surveys were carried out on Loughs Sheelin, Ennell, Conn, Arrow and Lough Gill (Co. Kerry) to determine the status of trout and other fish populations. Lough Gill is a lagoon in which water quality has improved dramatically in recent years leading to a resumption of the trout fishery. Management recommendations are being formulated for each fishery based on the results.

A book / training manual on the enhancement of salmonid rivers was completed, printed and circulated to the Regional Fisheries Boards in 2006. Over 500 copies of this book were also sold to members of the general public.

The first draft of a book on Irish brown trout was completed in 2006. The book will deal with the biology, ecology and management of river and lake brown trout. Many photograph images which were required to enhance the text were collected during the year and the book is expected to be completed in 2008.

The aerial photographic programme for river catchments continued with the assistance of the Air Corps and was extended to all of the major lakes – half of these water bodies were photographed in 2006. The majority of Ireland's major estuaries were also photographed from the air in 2006 as an aid to the National Transitional Waters Fish Programme. All of the quality shore sea angling venues from Donegal south to Kerry and north along the east coast to Dublin were photographed at the behest of the Marketing Division (CFB).

- **Dynamics of Fish Populations in Irish Waters**

This three year project, which is designed to examine if interactions occur between fish populations in Irish lakes, commenced in 2005, and continued through 2006. An extensive field work programme continued on a wide variety of lakes. Data on phytoplankton, zooplankton and macro invertebrates has been compiled. Many trout and cyprinid fish samples have been collected with three objectives in mind:-

- a) Dietary analysis - utilization of stable isotope carbon and nitrogen ratios from fish flesh samples to assess the location of different age groups and fish species in the food chain
- b) Genetic analysis of trout stocks from the Corrib System to establish the status and extent of sub-populations
- c) Genetic analysis of cyprinid stocks (roach, bream and roach/bream hybrids) to look at relationships within and between these fishes

- **National Coarse Fish & Pike Programme**
  - i) Waterways Ireland**

During 2006 fish stock enhancement operations were conducted at nine locations along the waterways network. While the majority of the fish stocked were tench (> 500 kg), other species introduced included roach, roach x bream hybrids, rudd and perch. During one of these stocking operations, more than 20,000 juvenile roach were introduced to the Grand Canal in the vicinity of Sallins.

In late 2006 a number of fish rescue operations were conducted on the Royal Canal and Grand Canal - Barrow Line to facilitate routine dredging and ongoing restoration works. Current protocols adopted ensure that minimal damage to fish stocks occurs as a result of these maintenance operations. Mitigation measures, involving the use of a variety of dredging strategies, were trialled in the Grand Canal in 2006. Their effectiveness will be closely monitored in future years.

In 2006 electric fishing operations were conducted on sections of the Grand Canal in Co. Kildare and in suburban Dublin areas in order to determine the fish stock status of these fisheries. In addition, gill-net surveying was undertaken on the Shannon-Erne Waterway at Lough Garadice, St. John's Lough, Kiltybarden Lake, Lough Muckro's & Lough Marave. Both sets of surveys revealed healthy stocks of fish throughout. This was especially marked for bream in the lakes of the Shannon-Erne Waterway.

Seasonal variation in the use of canal cuts by fish on the River Barrow Navigation was investigated using newly developed netting techniques.

During 2006, the use of acoustic telemetry to investigate the movements and behaviour of coarse fish was continued in locations on the River Barrow Navigation and the Shannon-Erne Waterway. On the latter, the study area was expanded to include Lough Garadice, where four pike and 18 bream were tagged with acoustic transmitters.



During 2006 the number of angling guides to the waterways network was extended to 12. Four new guides were produced, covering major angling centres at Lough Scur on the Shannon-erne Waterway, Monasterevan on the Barrow Line and Prosperous and Tullamore on the Main Line of the Grand Canal.

## **ii) Status of Coarse Fish Stocks in Selected Watercourses**

In 2006 the status of coarse fish stocks was assessed in a number of watercourses throughout the Regions. The primary objectives of these surveys were to ascertain the current stock status in the lakes and rivers being examined, to compare this with that present in similar fisheries in the country and to formulate guidelines that would aid in the overall management of the fisheries. The lakes examined included Lough Bridget (Co Clare), Lough Ramor (Co Cavan), Inniscarra Reservoir (Co Cork) and River Shannon (Portumna and Rooskey to Lough Forbes).

### **• National Conservation Fish Programme**

Investigated status/presence of smelt in Slaney (ERFB), Blackwater (SRFRB), Bandon and Ilen (SWRFB); Selective programme for adult shad in four SACs (ERFB & SRFRB), Bandon & Ilen (SWRFB) completed; Trials, only, with shad egg sampling on R. Barrow (SRFB) completed; Completed lamprey spawning and distribution studies in Erne catchment (NRFB)

### **• National Marine Sports Fish Programme**

This programme was revitalised in 2006 and work was undertaken to determine trends in distribution, abundance and/or life history of selected species including bass, flounder, smoothhound, three species of mullet and gilthead bream to further our understanding and provide scientific information for managing these fisheries. Work included desk studies, direct sampling and some tagging of fish. These species currently (or may in the future) offer valuable shore angling opportunities and it is important to understand their ecology. The occurrence of exotic species like golden grey mullet and gilthead bream signal change in the coastal fish fauna which requires to be monitored to assess the rate of expansion of these species.

- **National Salmon, Sea Trout & Eel Programme**

- i) Survey Programme**

Surveys were conducted in several salmon catchments including the Lackagh, Gweebarra, the Owenea and the Eske in Co. Donegal to assess the status of salmon populations and to advise the NRFB on any remedial works that are required to maximise salmon smolt output in these channels. Electrofishing monitoring work was carried out on the Mulkear and Currane catchments to compare juvenile stocks levels with previous years. Surveys of fish densities and habitat condition were commenced on the Owenmore River (Co. Kerry), a productive salmon and sea trout fishery, and the Argideen River (Co. Cork), a productive sea trout fishery to provide data to develop habitat restoration or enhancement programmes.

- ii) Catch and Release Salmon Programme**

Radio-tracking study to determine the survival of salmon following catch & release by angling.

Because of the new salmon angling regulations being introduced for the 2007 season, a number of salmon rivers will be open for catch & release salmon angling only. No previous studies have been undertaken in Ireland on the success of catch & release and the subsequent survival of released salmon. This project was undertaken to provide data on the success of catch & release in Irish rivers and to provide confidence for the use of the method. The results obtained from the project on the survival of salmon after catch & release will be important in assessing the effectiveness of the practice and the mortality associated with catch & release in Irish rivers.

In September 2006, 21 salmon were tagged on the Owenmore river in Mayo and 15 salmon on the river Feale in Kerry. Radio-tracking over the October to January period indicated that all 21 salmon moved upstream and survived to spawn on the Owenmore while 14 of 15 fish moved upstream and survived to spawn on the Feale. The overall survival rate of released salmon was 97%. The high rate of survival of released salmon

will give confidence that the method of catch & release is effective as a salmon conservation measure.

### **iii) Wetted Area Update**

The wetted area model was updated for natural rivers model and data was extracted from OPW drained river datasets

### **iv) National Salmon Stock book**

Salmon river index data was provided (redd counts, juvenile estimates etc) for the National Salmon Stock Book.

### **v) Salmonid Scale Collection Programme**

Salmon and sea trout scales were collected from a range of catchments nationally as part of a long-term stock characterisation study;

### **vi) National Eel Database**

Data was compiled from archive data from historical survey records for the National eel recovery plan.

### **vii) Ferox trout Study - Tracking of ferox trout to determine spawning location on the Lough Corrib Catchment**

The study aims to determine the spawning locations of ferox trout in the Lough Corrib catchment and provide information on their biology to contribute to the conservation of this important species in the long term.

Ferox trout are large lake trout known to be genetically separate from the normal brown trout stock. They have stayed genetically isolated with regard to spawning since the ice age 12,000 years ago. These fish are being heavily exploited by angling and little is known of their biology or spawning locations in major Irish lakes. A radio telemetry project began in 2005 to tag ferox trout in Lough Corrib in an attempt to determine spawning locations with a view to protecting the stock for the long term.

Of the 16 fish tagged in 2005, six were recorded in spawning rivers, the Cong river recording four fish. In winter 2006, 20 tagged fish (15 from 2006 and 2 from 2005) were recorded in the Cong river. One fish was also recorded in each of three other rivers, the Falimore, Cross and Black rivers. From the findings to date, the Cong river has been shown to be the primary spawning location of ferox trout in Lough Corrib and this river will be targeted for conservation measures to protect this important trout species.

#### **viii) National Salmon Genetics Programme**

As part of an ongoing salmon management programme salmon spawning areas in the majority of salmon rivers, as identified by RFB staff, were identified and mapped. This information is being used for various projects including sampling site selection for stock assessment and genetic sampling. In 2006 two salmon genetics projects were progressed.

Work continued in 2006 on a European Union funded INTERREG project, the *Atlantic Salmon Arc Project (ASAP)* which aims to identify important individual salmon stocks genetically in countries across Europe. Samples of juvenile salmon were taken from 63 Irish river stocks in 2006. The Atlantic Salmon Arc Project (2004-2007) will provide a river-specific baseline which will facilitate improved management of Irish salmon stocks in the future.

The Pilot Project, which is an NFME initiative, designed to determine the extent to which certain identified inshore fisheries exploit salmon from different rivers (i.e. mixed stock fishery), was undertaken during the 2006 commercial salmon fishing season. The ultimate aim of the project was to determine, through genetic population discrimination, the composition of stocks in 21 pilot areas so as to inform the management decisions that would be made for the 2007 salmon season and into the future.

- **Irish Specimen Fish Committee**

Since its foundation in 1955 the ISFC has ratified over 21,000 specimen fish which includes many Irish record fish. This is one of oldest long-term datasets on fish in Ireland. A total of 489 claims were received in 2006. 449 were ratified including four new Irish

records. The new records were for gilthead bream, golden grey mullet, torsk and trigger fish. These species are relatively recent additions to the list of eligible species and gilthead bream, golden grey mullet and trigger fish are exotic species generally associated with warmer waters. The ISFC website [www.irish-trophy-fish.com](http://www.irish-trophy-fish.com) has all of the details for 2006 specimen and record fish and much historical information also.

Two new awards were introduced in 2006. The Dr Michael Kennedy Award for the best specimen mullet of the year and the Failte Ireland sponsored Best International Specimen of the Year Award. The Kennedy Award acknowledges his dedicated research interest in the mullet species and his excellent contribution to angling and the ISFC. On the international angling stage Dutch anglers caught 10% of all specimens taken in Irish waters in 2006 followed by UK anglers with 9% reflecting the importance of overseas anglers to tourism to Ireland.

The CFB actively supports the activities of the ISFC recognizing the importance of verification and publicizing the capture of large rod caught fish in Irish waters from a scientific and angling promotion perspective.

- **National Transitional Waters Fish Programme**

Spring and autumn survey on Boyne estuary (ERBFB) completed; Autumn surveys on estuaries of Bandon, L. Gill lagoon (SWRFB) and Moy (NWRFB) completed; continued to share Datasets with EU Northeast Atlantic (NEA) working group on fish in estuaries; Trials with trawling as standard sampling technique undertaken; Salt marsh sampling with Environment Agency UK

### **3 European Directives – National Obligations**

- **Water Framework Directive**

Active involvement at RBD committees and involvement with other EU member States in Working Groups - Membership of committee involved in the development of a Canal Classification Tool; Involved in steering committee aimed at developing mitigation measures for artificial and heavily modified waterbodies; Committee and steering group

member of All Island Invasive Species Group; Committee member of UKTAG for Invasive Species. Represented CFB on the Shannon River Basin District Freshwater Morphology POMS Study. This group has funded CFB to undertake a six month statistical analysis of fish data from drained rivers to quantify the impacts of drainage on salmonid stocks and the relative effectiveness of enhancement programmes in the restoration of fish stocks in these channels.

#### **i) Waterways Macro invertebrate Sampling**

Macro invertebrate sampling was carried out for the first time in May and September of 2006. A total of 35 sites were sampled on both occasions, including 15 Royal Canal and 20 Grand Canal sites. The results from these analyses will aid in the development of a Canal Classification Tool that is required under the Water Framework Directive. Processing and identification of the samples collected in May was completed in December 2006 and processing of the September invertebrate samples will be completed in April 2007.

#### **ii) Ecological Classification Using Fish in Lakes (NS Share) - Year 2 of 3**

This 3-year project was set up to develop an ecological classification tool based on fish in lakes to facilitate implementation of the Water Framework Directive. The North South Shared Aquatic Resource (NS SHARE) project will strengthen inter-regional capacity for environmental monitoring and management at river basin district level. Donegal County Council is the lead public authority and the project is funded through INTERREG IIIa. The CFB, in association with TCD and with assistance from the Northern and the Eastern Regional Fisheries Boards, was contracted to develop a classification scheme for lakes using fish.

Fourteen lakes were surveyed by the Boards in 2006 bringing the RoI total to 53 lakes; the Agri-Food and Biological Science (AFBI) unit of DARD have sampled 30 lakes (83 lakes surveyed in total). All fish samples retained during these surveys have been examined for growth characteristics. The data sets are currently being processed. The project is scheduled for conclusion in August 2007.

### **iii) EPA funded METRIC project**

This project was undertaken jointly with the Marine Institute. It examined three of the quality elements required for WFD in Coastal and Transitional Waters – phytoplankton, benthic invertebrates and fish. The fish component was delivered by CFB for Transitional Waters. Working with the individual RFBs, a total of 13 estuaries and 4 lagoons were surveyed for fish in September –October 2006. Selected material was compiled for placement on CFB website, with approval of EPA. Developed standardised fish sampling methodologies for Transitional Waters. Project delivery took place in Q1 2007.

- **Habitats Directive**

Database development under Business Plan Item 2 above; Contributed to 6 yearly status reporting of Annex 2 Fish species to EU.

The Habitats Directive lists Atlantic salmon, three species of lamprey, 3 species of shad and pollan as qualifying fish species. The Irish implementing legislation identifies the Minister for Marine, along with the Minister for Environment, as having a role in undertaking investigations on the status of qualifying fish species. This task has been advanced by CFB, working with National Parks and Wildlife Service, over the past five years. In turn, CFB has been assisted by the RFBs in undertaking programmes of work to meet this task. In addition, the RFBs have, at the request of CFB, worked closely with commercial netmen operating in inshore and estuarine waters and who would encounter by-catch such as shad, smelt and lamprey in their netting. In several estuaries the netmen have retained material of importance (shad, smelt, lamprey) arising as by-catch. This material is a very important source of biological and ecological information and contributes baseline data of fundamental importance in relation to the Water Framework Directive and the Habitats Directive.

A Status Review, with reporting back to the EU, is required of Ireland in 2007 and CFB is working closely with NPWS in contributing to this review. Data sets on salmon status are currently being collated into a comprehensive database in CFB (see above). Similarly,

CFB has collated its most recent lamprey data sets and has passed these to NPWS. This includes information on the Erne catchment, compiled with the NRFB in the 2004-06 period, partly under the National Research Programme.

Survey work to complement Directive requirements is listed above under National Programmes for Salmon and for Conservation Fish.

#### **4 National Fisheries Environment and Biodiversity Programme**

- **Fish Kills**

In 2006 the Regional Fisheries Boards environmental staffs reported a total of 34 fish kill incidents. This shows a reduction relative to 2004 and 2005 when 43 and 45 (respectively) such events were recorded. The 2006 incidents, based on investigations conducted by the staff were attributed as follows:

Agriculture – 5; Industry – 2; Local Authority – 7; Eutrophication – 5; Other (various causes) – 10; Unknown – 5.

The acid mine leachate on the Avoca River accounted for half the kills allocated to the ‘other’ category.

- **Laboratory Services**

In 2006 4,382 samples were analysed in the laboratory for nutrients and various other parameters. The monthly breakdown per Region is presented in Appendices 12 & 13. The long-term monitoring programme of major fisheries lakes was continued in L. Sheelin and several lakes in the L. Erne system. The yearly average total phosphorus value increased in many lakes. However, most lakes showed little perceptible change relative to previous years. However, Lough Sheelin and Lough Arrow again showed lower average and maximum chlorophyll values; water clarity was also good in both these lakes, which are now heavily colonised by zebra mussels. A dramatic reduction in planktonic algal crops was also evident in Lough Conn. The zebra mussel is responsible for these reductions. Total phosphorus levels remain elevated in these lakes and new manifestations of enrichment are anticipated (e.g. growths of rooted plants and attached



filamentous algae. A number of lakes in the Upper Erne system are also monitored in this programme and the zebra mussel also appears to be now in L. Oughter.

- **Fish Stocks and Water Quality**

This EPA ERTDI project (2000-MS-4-m1) was set up to research possible associations between fish communities in rivers and EPA water quality ratings (Q values). Fish and habitat variables for 519 river locations (374 project generated and 145 archival datasets) were evaluated. A relationship was demonstrated for the proportional abundance (species composition) and Q values. A draft report was reviewed by the EPA and this report will be published in 2007.

- **Waterways Water Quality Monitoring Programme**

Water quality monitoring of the Royal and Grand Canals, the Shannon-Erne Waterway and the River Barrow Navigation involved three surveys carried out in February/March, July/August and October/November. A total of 219 water samples were taken and analysed from this waterways network. These included samples from the main canal and river channels and from those feeder streams that may impact conditions on the main channels. Water quality was generally good. The exception, however, was the Barrow Navigation, where nutrient and bacteriological levels were frequently elevated. In addition to the above water quality monitoring, 5 sites in the Grand Canal Basin were monitored on a weekly basis for total and faecal coliforms throughout 2006.

- **Environmental Drainage Maintenance Programme**

Year 5 of 5 year OPW funded study completed. This included scientific studies of maintenance impacts on coarse fish populations, tree cover and water celery management. A training programme on environmentally-sensitive maintenance strategies was developed and rolled-out to over 250 OPW field staff with follow-up site visits to in excess of 60 machine crews. Pre-maintenance walkover surveys were conducted on several channels annually with OPW and RFB personnel to identify requirements and opportunities for implementing environmentally-friendly maintenance strategies.

- **Lamprey & Crayfish**

Ongoing study for OPW on channel maintenance impacts delivered. Six quantitative study sites were established for crayfish in 2006. This project also contributed to development of distribution database for both target groups. This data was, in turn, made available to National Parks and Wildlife Service in context of compiling Status Reports for EU under Habitats Directive.

- **National Aquatic Plant Management & Invasive Species Programme**

Non-native invasives are species introduced deliberately or accidentally outside their natural range, where they have the ability to establish themselves, invade, out-compete natives and take over new environments. Invasive species have a major impact on biodiversity and can cause significant irreversible environmental and socio-economic impact at genetic, species and ecosystem levels.

- i) Invasive Riparian and Aquatic Plants Species in the River Slaney**

The aim of the project is to assess the status of invasive alien plants species, both aquatic and riparian, on the main channel of the River Slaney, between Baltinglass and Enniscorthy. Japanese Knotweed (*Fallopia japonica*), Himalayan Balsam (*Impatiens glandulifera*) and Giant Hogweed (*Heracleum mantegazzianum*) are invasive riparian species prominent along many Irish watercourses. These three plants have been recorded along the banks of the River Slaney. Communication with personnel from the National Parks and Wildlife Services (NPWS) suggested that the aggressive invasive submerged plant, Nuttall's Pondweed (*Elodea nuttallii*), was also present in the River Slaney. Because of the risk to biodiversity and habitat on the River Slaney, the project undertook to determine the distribution of each of these invasive species and to assess the risk to the integrity of the river corridor.

Japanese Knotweed, Himalayan Balsam and Giant Hogweed were recorded along the surveyed sections of the River Slaney. Of these three invasive riparian plants, Himalayan balsam was the dominant species. No Nuttall's Pondweed was recorded in the stretch of river examined.

The current extent of the infestation by these non-native invasive plants is worrying, but their potential to ultimately totally overgrow the channel, on both banks, has extremely serious management ramifications.

### **ii) *Elodea nuttallii* in Carrigadrohid Reservoir**

In 2005 CFB biologists learned of the presence of Nuttall's Pondweed, an aggressive submerged invasive plant species, in Carrigadrohid Reservoir. A preliminary reconnaissance revealed extensive populations of the invasive plant in the shallower upper section of the Reservoir. The reservoir was surveyed in August 2006. Large areas of the upper reservoir and feeder rivers were totally overgrown with the weed. As a direct consequence, hectares of water are unfishable and are unavailable for any water-based leisure pursuit. The volume of weed present must also pose a threat to water supply (through pipe blockage) and to fish health (through deoxygenation).

### **iii) Waterways Aquatic Weed Control Programme**

Aquatic plants play a fundamental role in the functioning of aquatic ecosystems. However, excessive growth can have negative ecological impacts and prevent access to and use of the amenity by a diverse range of end users. In 2006 an Agreed Aquatic Weed Control Programme was developed to facilitate navigation and amenity use, while preserving habitat diversity and function. Particular attention was paid to the distribution, abundance and impact of two non-native invasive plant species: New Zealand Pigmyweed (*Crassula helmsii*) and Nuttall's Pondweed (*Elodea nuttallii*) in the Grand Canal. The former species remains relatively localised in its distribution, although small populations were documented west of Lock 21 in late 2006. Populations of Nuttall's Pondweed are expansive in the Grand Canal and these are impacting adversely on native plant species. Work in 2007 will focus on developing management strategies for both species. During the summer trials to assess the relative efficacy of two aquatic herbicides were conducted on designated sections of the Grand Canal.

#### **iv) Status and distribution of Chub (*Leuciscus cephalus*) in the River Inny**

Prior to 2001 there were no reports of chub being present in any waters in Ireland. In 2001 and again in 2004 an angler reported catching chub in a section of the River Inny. On neither occasion were live specimens retained for authentication. In 2005 a live, angler-caught chub from the river was formally identified. Because of the risk to biodiversity and to the community composition of indigenous fish species in the river, the project undertook to determine the status of its distribution in the Inny. An electric fish survey was conducted during summer 2006. During the survey a total of 17 chub were captured. All were taken from one relatively short (c. 0.8km), shallow (0.5m) and moderately fast flowing section of river. The fish ranged in fork length from 15 to 41 cm and in age from 3+ to 6+ years old. A more complete survey will be conducted in 2007.

#### **v) *Lagarosiphon major* in Lough Corrib**

Invasive species are spreading rapidly and threaten to destabilise fish communities and aquatic habitats in Ireland. *Lagarosiphon major* is recognised as a particularly aggressive invasive species. This species was recorded in Rinneroon Bay, Lough Corrib, in 2005. The plant was probably present in the lake for between 6 and 10 years, but had remained undetected until then. In 2005 the plant occupied up to 12 hectares of the 20 hectare bay. In 2006 the plant was recorded in 24 separate locations (up from 8 in 2005), and appeared to be spreading towards the shallower lower lake.

In 2006, a series of trials aimed at developing a suite of methods to control *Lagarosiphon major* in Lough Corrib was undertaken. These included the use of weed cutting boats, herbicides, hand pulling using scuba divers and light occlusion using Geotextile.

#### **vi) Public Awareness**

In order to create awareness among the public of the ecological, environmental and social dangers associated with non-native invasive species, a calendar that portrays, photographically, the principal invasives that currently infest our waters was produced. The calendar was developed in order to appeal to a wide and diverse audience, and to create an awareness of the invasive species problem to groups and agencies, such as:

primary & secondary schools, Universities, libraries, garden centres, angling clubs, cruiser hire companies, Fisheries staff, NPWS staff, Waterways Ireland staff, River Basin Districts, Government Departments, etc. Some 10,000 copies have been distributed.

- **National Salmonid River Rehabilitation Programme**

Provided planning and advisory service as required

- **Fish Entrainment in Thermal Power Stations**

A three year study began in spring 2004 to investigate salmon smolt entrainment/Impingement at six ESB estuarine Thermal Generating Stations. The study was continued at smolt migration time in spring 2005 and spring 2006. Results indicated that while a wide range of estuarine fish species were entrained at stations, very low numbers of salmon smolts were encountered over the period of the study.

## **5 International Collaborations**

CFB convened a one-week workshop for colleagues of the Northeast Atlantic (NEA) Geographic Information Group (GIG) involved in studies on fish in Transitional Waters for WFD. This took place in the Gweebarra and Swilly estuaries in Donegal and was facilitated by the NRFB. The workshop was intended to permit an on-the-ground intercalibration of the sampling gears for fish in use in individual member states. Five member-state groups took part – UK, Northern Ireland, France, Belgium and RoI - each bringing their own sampling gears.

Steve Colclough, Marine Fisheries Policy Advisor in the UK's Environment Agency, is currently pioneering sampling for fish species in sensitive inter-tidal shallow-water areas of mudflats and saltmarshes. He has demonstrated the importance of these endangered intertidal areas to juvenile age classes of bass, mullet and other species of angling importance. Loss of such areas, particularly when happening on a large scale in major port development, has knock-on effects in reducing production of adult fish. Steve visited Ireland in July 2006 at the invitation of Central Fisheries Board. He gave a presentation on his work covering the WFD – Transitional Waters fish background, the ecology of the

key fish species and habitats and leading on to the economic and socio-economic implications both of failure to protect these habitats and also of the benefits that can accrue when ecological requirements are incorporated into major construction works in estuaries. This was attended by personnel from the Marine Institute, National Parks and Wildlife Service, River Basin Districts, by post graduate students from TCD and UCD as well as by staff from the Regional and Central Boards. In addition, Steve brought with him series of sampling devices and nets he has been testing in salt marsh areas. Visits were made to two locations – Bull Island in the Liffey – Tolka estuary and Baltray – Beaulieu salt marsh on the Boyne estuary - where the gear was deployed and used to sample on the rising tide. Staff from CFB involved with estuarine and marine fish took part along with post-graduate students and colleagues from Marine Institute and DOE Northern Ireland.

CFB and WRFB collaborated with scientists from the Danish Institute for Freshwater Research and the Norwegian Institute for Fisheries Research in an eel satellite tagging study to investigate the spawning location of European eels using satellite technology. The spawning location of eels at sea has never been found and this project aims to track eels in the Atlantic Ocean using satellite technology to gain information of migration and spawning location. Large eels were fitted with miniature satellite tags on their seaward migration. The tags record depth, temperature and light on the eel migration route across the Atlantic. Different tags are programmed to pop-off at differing time periods up until April 2007. The objective is to track the migration route across the Atlantic and see if the final tags pop-off in the Saragossa Sea next April. If so, the tags will float to the surface and connect with the Argus satellite which will download the data on depth etc and give a GPS position of the tag. A research vessel is scheduled to be in the Saragossa Sea in April and if a tag is registered in the area, the vessel will trawl in the area to try and catch spawning eels. This information would be crucial to understanding the reasons for the collapse of European eel stocks.

## 6 Publications (Papers / Books / Referenced Reports)

Caffrey, J.M., Dutartre, J., Haury, J., Murphy, K.J. and Wade, P.M. (editors). *Macrophytes in Aquatic Ecosystems: From Biology to Management*. Springer Publishers, Dordrecht. 263pp.

Caffrey, J.M., Monahan C., and Tirenay D. (2006). Factors influencing the distribution of aquatic plant communities in Irish Canals. *Hydrobiologia* 570. 133-139

Caffrey, J.M. and Monaghan, C. (2006). Control of *Myriophyllum verticillatum* L. in Irish canals by turion removal. *Hydrobiologia* 570, 211 – 215.

Caffrey, J.M. (2006) Non-native freshwater plants in Ireland. Proceedings of 14<sup>th</sup> International Conference on Aquatic Invasive Species. Key Biscayne, Florida. May 2006. Abstract.

Gargan, P.G., Roche, W.K., Forde, G.P. and Ferguson, A. (2006) Characteristics of sea trout (*Salmo trutta* L.) stocks from the Owengowla and Invermore Fisheries, Western Ireland, and Recent Trends in Marine Survival. In G.S.Harris and N.J. Milner. Sea Trout: Biology, Conservation and Management. Fishing News Books, Blackwells Scientific Publications, Oxford, UK.

Gargan, P.G., Poole, R, & Forde, G. (2006). A Review of the Status of Irish Sea trout Stocks. In G.S.Harris and N.J. Milner. Sea Trout: Biology, Conservation and Management. Fishing News Books, Blackwells Scientific Publications, Oxford, UK.

King, J. J. (2006) The status and distribution of lamprey in the River Barrow SAC. *Irish Wildlife Manuals, No. 21*. National Parks and Wildlife Service, Department of Environment, Heritage and Local Government, Dublin, Ireland.

King, J. J. and Roche, W. K. (In Press) Aspects of anadromous Allis shad (*Alosa alosa* Linnaeus) and Twaite shad (*Alosa fallax* Lacepede) biology in four Irish Special Areas of

Conservation (SACs): status, spawning indications and implications for conservation designation. *Hydrobiologia*

## **Central Fisheries Board**

### **Field Services**

The Field Services Division delivered against its key targets outlined in the 2006 Business Plan. The National Programmes dealing with fisheries protection and salmon and seatrout tagging for which the division has operational responsibility were delivered on time and in line with budgets. Three key policy documents which will enhance the conservation measures in place for brown trout, coarse fish and carp were advanced, and these efforts will culminate in the submission of reports in relation to these species in 2007.

A number of key value for money (V.F.M.) initiatives introduced in 2005 were continued in 2006. These resulted in significant benefits accruing to the Central and a number of the Regional Boards, the most significant of which was the fleet purchase scheme from the Governments Supply Agency.

The Field Services Division is also responsible for reporting performance against business plans on behalf of the Board and for coordinating the inputs of the Regional Fisheries Boards in this regard. A simplified set of reporting criteria was agreed with the Department, which led to the signing and implementation of a service level agreement, the first quarterly report on this agreement will be produced in early 2007.

### **National Fisheries Protection Service**

The Boards protection staff coordinated the protection and conservation programme operated by the Regional Fisheries Boards, the Naval Service, An Garda Síochána and the Air Corps. The Naval Service provided 64 patrol days for fisheries protection in 2006



and the Air Corps provided a total of 49 fisheries protection and pollution control flights.

### **Boards Large Patrol Vessels (LPV's)**

The Board operates two large patrol vessels (LPV's), An Bradan Beatha, and An Cosantoir Bradan both of which operated around the coast during the 2006 salmon drift and draft netting seasons. Details of the patrols undertaken in 2006 are outlined in the table below.

### **Details of the LPV, Naval and Air Corps Operations during 2006.**

| <b>Action</b>                           | <b>2006</b> | <b>2001-2005 Average</b> |
|---|-------------|--------------------------|
| No. of LPV Patrol Days                  | 308         | 307                      |
| No. Miles on Patrol                     | 17350       | 15694                    |
| No. Sightings / Checks                  | 870         | 810                      |
| Length of Net Seized (Yards)            | 7500        | 9142                     |
| No. Prosecutions                        | 13          | 19                       |
| <br>                                    |             |                          |
| No. Naval Patrol Days                   | 64          | 58                       |
| Length of Net Seized (Yards)            | 4000        | 4050                     |
| <br>                                    |             |                          |
| No. Air Corps Maritime Flights          | 18          | 14                       |
| No. Air Corps Helicopter Flights        | 15          | 14                       |
| No. Air Corps Pollution Control Flights | 16          | 15                       |

An Garda Síochána Provided a total of 64 patrol days in support of the above programme in 2006.

### **Wild Salmon and Sea trout Tagging Scheme**

Now in its sixth year, the Wild Salmon and Sea Trout Tagging Scheme was again successfully implemented, monitored and enforced by the Central and Regional Fisheries Boards.

The Board published the 2005 angling and commercial salmon catch statistics in early 2006. The coordination and collection of the statistics on salmon and sea trout exploitation is a key fisheries management tool aimed at contributing to the long-term sustainability of these species. The main findings are as follows:

### **Commercial 2005**

- The total catch of salmon by all engines in 2005 was 143,541 fish. This represents a 15.5% decrease on the comparative figure for 2004 (169,808 fish) and 44.7% of the 2001 figure (259,475 fish).
- The Total Allowable Catch (T.A.C.) of the salmon and sea trout (over 40cm) provided for the commercial sector in 2005 was 139,900 fish. The total reported catch was 122,044 fish, which was 12.8% below the T.A.C.
- In 2005, drift nets accounted for 70.52% of the total salmon catch, anglers took 15.58%, draft nets took 11.66% while the remaining 2.24% was taken by other engines.
- 65% of the drift net catch and 39% of the draft net catch was sold through licensed salmon dealers, while 5.7% of the drift net catch and 16.24% of the draft net catch was accounted for by domestic consumption.

### **Angling 2005**

- 28,738 angling licenses were sold in 2005, which was a 6.7% decrease on those purchased in 2004.
- Successful efforts to encourage the return of angling logbooks continued. 62% of all logbooks were returned to the Regional Fisheries Boards, compared with 58% in 2004, 57% in 2003, 52% in 2002 and 43% in 2001.
- Anglers from 40 different countries held rod licences in 2005. 58.7% were from the Republic of Ireland, 14.6% from Northern Ireland, 13.4% from the UK, 3.4% from France, 3.1% from Germany and 1.91% from USA.
- The River Moy in County Mayo again provided the largest number of salmon to the rod in 2005, with a catch of approximately 6,675 fish.

Full details on commercial and recreational salmon and sea trout catches can be found in the 2005 Wild Salmon and Seat Trout Statistics report.

### **Fish Farms**

The Board's fish farms, located in Roscrea and Mullingar, had another successful year in 2006. The farms stocked out in excess of one million fish in 326 stockings, (753,200 brown and 295,441 rainbow trout) to the Regional Fisheries Boards' managed lakes, angling club waters and to private angling operations.

These stockings provide vital support to the Regional Fisheries Boards and the recreational angling industry in developing and promoting angling tourism.

The River Nore Pearl Mussel (*Margaritifera margaritifera*) conservation project which started in the Roscrea fish farm in 2005 continued in 2006. This is a collaborative programme with the National Parks and Wildlife Service (N.P.W.S) and the National Roads Authority (N.R.A.). The project is to develop techniques to protect this listed species under the Habitat's Directive, and to facilitate the construction of the M7 / M8 road development in the vicinity of Durrow Co. Laois.

### **Value for Money**

In 2006 the Board continued its vehicle replacement programme using the fleet purchase scheme operated by the Governments Supplies Agency. This facility was also extended to the Regional Fisheries Boards and a number of them availed of the opportunity to purchase vehicles at favourable terms. On average savings of 25% were achieved on the vehicles purchased and this provided the opportunity to utilise available funds to the maximum, and increase the number of aging vehicles replaced. 52 vehicles were purchased under this scheme, saving the Central and Regional Fisheries Boards approximately €360,000.

### **State Fisheries**

The Board successfully leased 68 fisheries to 44 angling clubs and associations.

## **Customer Service**

As part of the Boards continued commitment to customer service in 2006 a Customer Charter printed in Irish and English was developed through the partnership, modernisation and Sustaining Progress process. Staff training on the implementation of the Customer Charter was delivered to all staff by the training officer and the Boards customer service officer. This training took one day to complete and covered all aspects of the Central Fisheries Board Customer Charter. In addition, a number of measures were taken to make our customers aware of our obligations under the customer charter.

## **Central Fisheries Board**

### **Promotion & Marketing**

#### **Marketing and Angling 2006**

The Central and Regional Fisheries Boards completed and agreed the Angling Tourism Marketing Strategy 2007-2010 with Failte Ireland and Tourism Ireland in December 2006. An implementation committee has been set up consisting of members from Failte Ireland, Tourism Ireland, the Central and Regional Fisheries Boards, the Marine Institute and Shannon Development.

The Board advanced its proactive programme to develop the tourist angling product in Ireland. Research and development continued on a number of specialised angling techniques for species such as bass and sea trout as well as for new species including gilt head bream and golden grey mullet which are now found in Irish waters and are of great interest to anglers. These developments will provide marketers with new and exciting products with which to promote Ireland as a first class tourism destination.

In 2006 the Central Fisheries Board in conjunction with Tourism Ireland and Failte Ireland, attended a number of targeted angling promotions in the UK, France, the Netherlands, Belgium and the USA, and actively promoted Ireland as a leading tourist

fishing destination. Overseas promotions attended included Salon des Peches Sportifs in France, NEC in the UK, Visma and Utrecht in Holland and Kortrijk in Belgium. Attendance at these shows has enabled the Central Fisheries Board to further assess the market potential in each market and develop product offerings for specific target groups and segments in each of these markets. This will enable us to grow market share in each of the markets and will result in an increase in visitor numbers and economic and social benefits. It also assists with the development of shoulder and off peak business and addresses the issues of regional spread and rural and coastal development. A new calendar of events will be developed by the Central and Regional Fisheries Boards for 2007 and subsequent years which will deliver on the goals and objectives as set out in the Angling Tourism Marketing Strategy 2007-2010.

Promotions attended in Ireland during 2006 included the Ireland Angling Show, the Young Scientist Exhibition, the National Ploughing Championships, the World Casting Championships at Carton House, Markree Castle Gamefair and the Agriculture and Food Show in Kildalton. Attendance at these shows allowed the Central and Regional Fisheries Boards to communicate with a number of target audiences including , game, coarse, sea and pike anglers, young people including children and students, the agricultural community, other government agencies, the industry and the general public. These events allowed the Boards to communicate with these audiences in a positive and interactive manner.

Press and media coverage was targeted during the year and included national newspapers, radio and a number of overseas publications.

The new Coarse and Pike conservation byelaws were introduced by the Minister during the year and there was a broad welcome by anglers and the media. These byelaws were translated into many languages on all the Fisheries Boards websites and there are plans for high copy editions of these byelaws to help educate our many different nationalities to enjoy and conserve our coarse and pike fishing.

The Irish Angling Update was produced regularly during the angling season with angling reports being supplied from the Regional Fisheries Boards and other angling sources. It was circulated to Tourism Ireland offices worldwide, Irish and foreign angling journalists, angling tour operators and the tourist angling trade in Ireland. It continues to be an important part of the CFB Website. A new catch of the week award scheme was launched in conjunction with the RTE radio 1 programme Seascapes. Pictures of each weekly winner were published on the RTE and CFB websites weekly together with a weekly slot on the radio programme announcing the weekly winners and giving details on the captures,.

### **Sea Angling**

The 2006 sea angling season was good with favourable weather conditions for deep sea fishing especially in July and August. Visitor numbers were up slightly on the previous year.

Four Irish Records was broken in 2006 in the sea fish category. Three of these records were fish associated with the warmer temperatures and are only recorded in recent years. The first record a golden grey mullet of 1.191 kgs. was taken by Noel Lane in Cork Harbour. The second fish was a trigger fish of 2.54 kgs. taken by Bob Moss at Sleah Head in Co. Kerry. The third warm water fish was a gilthead bream of 1.673 kgs. taken by Tony Tate from Yorkshire in Cork Harbour. The other record fish was a torsk of 4.858 kgs. taken at Co. Donegal by Jan de Bakelaar from the Netherlands.

Sea angling was good with all the usual species available. Blue shark catches were down on 2005 and remain low, giving cause for concern. 2006 will be remembered as a good year for Bass fishing with a significant increase in catches due to the ongoing conservations measures. Other notable species recorded in better numbers were specimen coalfish especially in west Cork and Blonde Ray especially in Cork Harbour.

### **Sea Angling Logbook and Marine Sport Fish Tagging Programme**

Arrangements were made to ensure the successful continuation of the Sea Angling Logbook and Marine Sport fish Tagging Programmes following the retirement of Peter Green. These schemes provide the Central and Regional Fisheries Boards with important scientific and marketing information. The 2006 results for both programmes are provided below.

### **Sea Angling Logbook Statistics 1978 - 2006**

The number of charter skippers who completed an angling logbook in 2006 was 104, the same number as the previous year. The number of rod days was 40,827. Ireland accounting for 57%, followed by the Dutch at 18% and the UK at 17%.

### **Marine Sport Fish Tagging Programme**

Over 70 charter skippers and a few dedicated anglers took part in the 2006 Marine Sport Fish Tagging Programme. Over 1,200 were tagged and released including blue and porbeagle shark, tope, common skate and ray. Since 1970, a total of 38,896 sea fish have been tagged and released including 17,740 blue shark. This programme is now the largest of its kind in Europe and the second largest in the world after the USA.

### **Sea Angling Promotion**

The Board developed a number of promotional programmes for visiting journalist programmes who visited most regions. These programmes kept Ireland to the forefront of the sea angling tourism industry. Almost fourteen full colour features have appeared with much column space being devoted to the development of small boat angling and saltwater fly-fishing. These “newer” products are creating a lot of overseas interest and look set to become established as future mainstream attractions.

The text for two new angling sea angling guides was produced for the Northern and Southern Regional Fisheries Boards. These guides are being designed in house by the Central Fisheries Board and they will be printed in 2007.

### **Pike and Coarse Angling Promotion**

A film was made by a well known Pike angler from the UK, Paul Gustafson on the best of Irish Pike fishing in the lakes in the Cavan area was assisted with staff from the CFB and the NRFB. DVD's were produced and the 45 minute programme was recently screened several times on the Setanta sports channel. Several well known English angling journalists were invited in and assisted in several coarse fishing trips to lakes and rivers. Many articles in the weekly British angling press along with several articles in prominent angling magazines highlighted the improvement in Irish coarse catches despite some negative editorials in the British press in previous years.

### **Coarse and Pike Angling**

Roach and Roach Bream hybrid catches continue to dominate coarse fish catches recorded by home and visiting anglers. In September 2006, an angler fishing the Virginia Angling Festival recorded over 200 lbs of Bream in a day on Lough Ramor. 2006 will be remembered for better Bream fishing particularly on the River Suck and in some of the Cavan lakes. It was another fruitful year for tench fishing with many specimens recorded particularly in Ballyhoe Lake near Drumconrath. The River Barrow continued to fish well for specimen perch.

It was an excellent year for Pike fishing with fish to over 40 lbs. recorded. Throughout the year, the Rivers Suck, Inny, Barrow and Shannon regularly produced fish over the specimen weight of 20 lbs. The Irish Federation of Pike angling clubs reported another good year with very good competitions for Pike at most venues throughout the country.

### **Game Angling**

2006 was a season of contrasting features in Game Angling.

### **Salmon**

The 2006 season opened on 1<sup>st</sup> January and started off reasonably well with a fair run of spring salmon. Catches in the late spring were generally poor although salmon were reported from around the country, taken on the rod on a daily basis. The grilse run was



fairly satisfactory on rivers such as the Moy and the Munster Blackwater, but there was very poor grilse fishing on many fisheries during much of the season. The decrease in the numbers of rod caught Salmon is causing concern on many fisheries throughout the season.

### **Sea Trout**

As in previous years, sea trout runs, with a few notable exceptions, were very poor. Lough Currane produced some reasonable fishing at times including two fish over 10 lbs. including a new record fish for the lake. English visitor Stephen Bullock caught a fine specimen of 5.124 kgs. on fly in April. A good number of specimens Sea Trout over 6 lbs. were recorded from the lake.

### **Brown Trout Loughs**

Lough Mask again performed best of the great Western Loughs. The Mayfly season was sporadic due to a mixture of very cold weather along with normal temperatures on most of our big Trout fisheries except for Loughs Ree and Derg, which produced some good trout fishing. There was some very good buzzer fishing on many Loughs particularly on Lough Corrib in the early season. The trout fishing on the Midland lakes of Sheelin, Ennell and Owel and Loughs Conn and Arrow in the west was generally poor through out the season. The midland lakes produced some better fishing at the last two weeks of the season in late September and early October.

### **Brown Trout Rivers**

Water and weather conditions were reasonably favourable throughout the season. The fishing was on a par with previous seasons, it was marginally better on a number of rivers in the state. Elsewhere the River Boyne and tributaries and the River Liffey provided good sport with many sizable trout. On these two rivers, many anglers are now practicing catch and release. The fishing on the River Suir showed a great improvement in 2006 with better sized fish reported from many stretches.

## **Recruitment**

Following the retirement of Peter O'Reilly and Peter Green from the service two angling adviser posts were advertised and filled through open competition. The successful candidates have brought a new range of skill and experience to the Board that will complement the current skills base.

## **The Central Fisheries Board Strategic Plan 2007-2010**

The Boards CFB Strategic Plan 'Achieving Environmental Sustainability, Economic Prosperity and Quality of Life' was developed in 2006 and will be submitted to the Minister in 2007.

## **NDP Submission**

An NDP Submission document on behalf of the Central and Regional Fisheries Boards was developed. This document was submitted to the Department for approval in December 2006.

## **Education**

The Central Fisheries Board further advanced the Something Fishy Schools Programme in association with the Regional Fisheries Boards and the Blackrock Education Centre.

# Central Fisheries Board

## **Human Resources**

### **Training & Development**

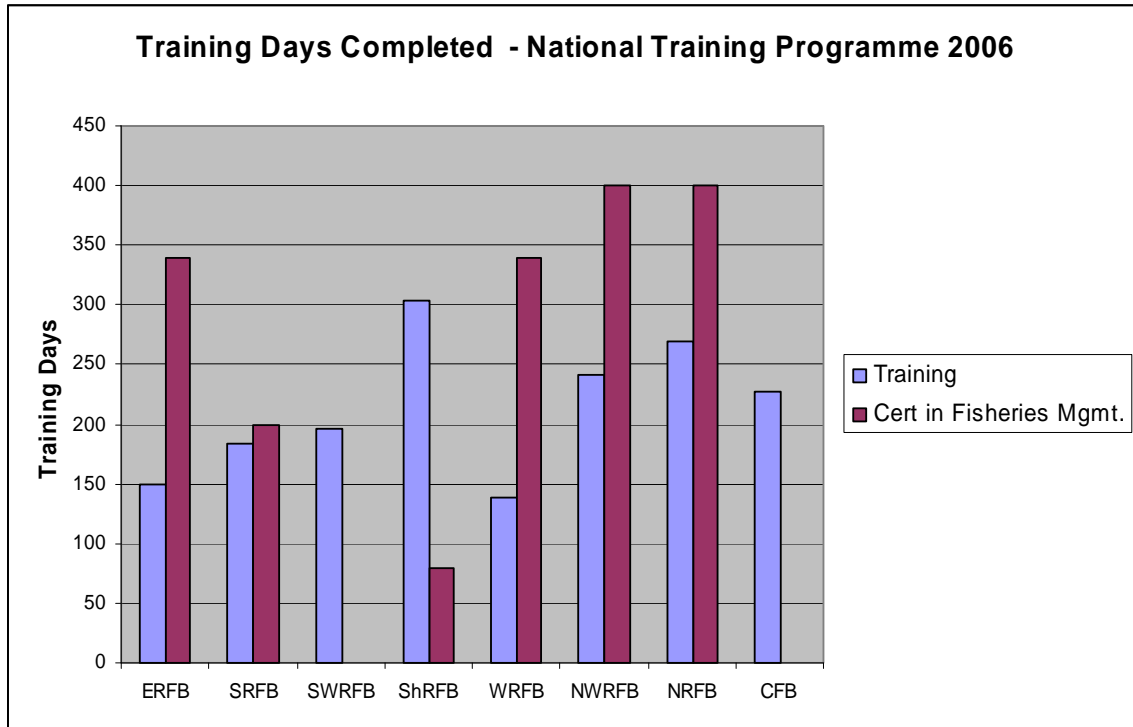
The Central & Regional Fisheries Boards (C&RFBs) continued their National Development & Training Programme in 2006 with an investment of €308k. The plan, developed annually, with input from the Central & Regional Fisheries Boards addresses the key developmental and training needs of the organisation.

The key areas of development and training addressed in the national training plan were:

- Competency development training (Teamworking & Quality Customer Service)
- Health & Safety training, (First Aid, Manual Handling, Safety rep. Water Safety, Pesticides, Winch Safety, etc.);
- Induction ( new 3-day programme developed and delivered to new staff)
- Job Skills development;
- Third level education support in the Higher National Certificate in Fisheries Management and other programmes;
- An accredited Management Development programme for middle managers was initiated in 2006 with 36 managers having the opportunity to avail of a variety of learning events.

The second cohort of students attending the Higher National Certificate in Fisheries Management successfully completed their course in Sligo I.T. in September 2006. The 3<sup>rd</sup> cohort commenced the course in October with 2 students joining the programme from the Lough's Agency in Northern Ireland.

The total number of training days for the C&RFB for 2006 was 3,488 which was an average of 7.5 days per staff member.



### **Freedom of Information (FOI) 2006**

There were 14 new requests for information made to the Central and Regional Fisheries Boards in 2006, under the *Freedom of Information Acts 1997 & 2003*. The breakdown of requests was as follows:

- Business/Interest Groups: 4
- Journalists: 8
- Others: 2

The decisions made by the Central and Regional Fisheries Boards on the release of information under the *FOI Acts 1997 & 2003* throughout 2006 were as follows:

- 10 were Granted
- 1 was Part-granted
- 1 was Refused

1 decision was appealed and went to the Office of the Information Commissioner.

2 cases carried forward into 2007.

### **Employee Relations**

Further progress was made during 2006 with the staff and Trade Unions across a range of issues. These included the following:

- Successful conclusion of the Sustaining Progress and development of a new modernisation plan under the Towards 2016 agreement.
- Continued development of the revised suite of Human Resources policies
- Agreement on a revised code of conduct for employees
- Maintenance and development of excellent working relationships with staff and Trade Unions in a Partnership basis.
- Establishment of a communications mechanism with the Marine Institute in relation to the decision to transfer the CFB Research Division to that body.

### **Recruitment**

2006 proved to be an extremely active period in the recruitment area, with a total of 26 recruitment campaigns conducted during the period. A web based recruitment facility was used by the Board for the first time in 2006 and this proved very successful resulting in significant savings being made in relation to advertising costs.

### **Partnership**

A Partnership framework was developed in the Central Fisheries Board and a Steering Group set up to oversee the Partnership process. A number of projects were undertaken and completed using the Partnership approach. Partnership training was provided for all staff.

### **Health & Safety**

Since the introduction of the Safety, Health & Welfare at Work Act 2005 and with the implementation of further regulation pending, the legal landscape governing health and safety management has been transformed. With this in mind, the Board has taken a proactive approach in the management of staff safety, health and welfare. The board has

displayed its commitment by compliance with standards; providing training, education; establishing partnerships; and encouraging continual improvement in workplace safety and health. The board endeavours to create a working environment that places the highest value on the welfare of the individual, to instil a sense of ownership and to embrace excellence in all aspects of safety performance. The foremost achievements in 2006 have included:

- The Safety on the Water Angling Safety Guidelines which was launched by the Board in conjunction with the RNLI, was officially launched at the angling exhibition in the National Show Centre.
- Roll out of the new Employee Assistance Programme to all Boards was completed. Management is on-going with focus on trends identified in the bi-annual reports.
- A smoking policy was developed and implemented as part of best practice with regard to compliance with the Public Health (Tobacco) Act, 2002 (Section 47) Regulations 2003
- An induction programme has been developed and implemented to promote health and safety among new members of staff.
- As required by the Departmental Sectoral plan the completion of accessibility audits for each regional board was co-ordinated.
- A new safety statement for the regional boards was drafted to comply with recent changes in health and safety legislation.
- Vaccination programmes are on going in compliance with the Biological Agents regulations.
- Support, advice, investigations, hazard identification, risk assessment and recommendations were made to the regional boards as requested throughout the year.

# Central Fisheries Board

## Finance & ICT

### **General Financial Management**

The Boards accounts were prepared and submitted under full compliance with our statutory obligations under paragraph 10.2(iii) of the Code of practice for the governance of State bodies

### **Financial Accounts**

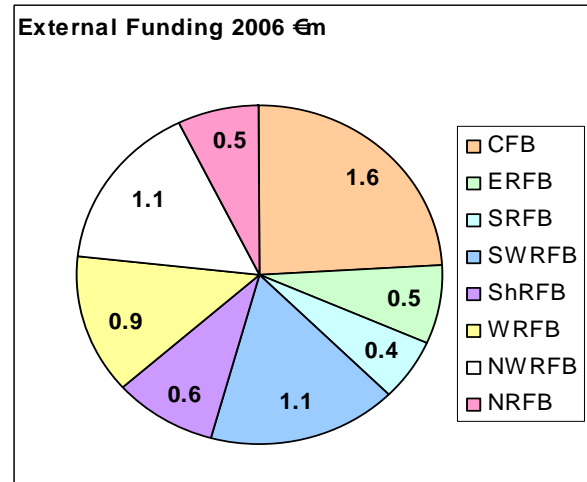
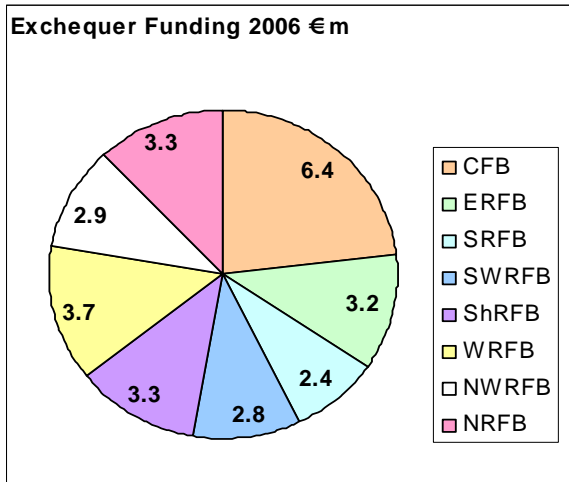
The financial accounts for 2006 were fully signed off in October 2007.

### **Internal Audit**

Deloitte & Touché commenced two internal audit examinations in October 2006, one on the fish farm operations and one on the Boards other income, with a view to reporting in January 2007 on their findings.

### **Funding for 2006**

In 2006 the Fisheries Boards received an exchequer grant of €28 million, of which €17.6 million or 63% of the total grant received was allocated towards pay costs. €2.1 million was allocated to national programmes, which were co-ordinated by the Board. The Boards also generated €6.7 million from other sources which was reinvested in the management, conservation and protection of Inland Fisheries. An additional €350,000 which was received to support wild salmon fishery management initiatives associated with preparations for the significant change in the management regime is recorded as deferred income in the balance sheet of the Board as at 31 December 2006.



## Property Management

In 2006 work commenced to fit out the new laboratory facilities in Swords Business Campus with a scheduled completion date for the second quarter of 2007. We are on target to meet this date and within budget. A suitable storage facility within the Swords area was also identified with negotiations nearing completion at the end of 2006.

## Information and Communications Technology

### ICT Strategy / Systems

The Board has continued to develop, enhance and invest in its ICT systems as identified in the ICT strategy.

The Board has invested significantly in its ICT infrastructure over the last three years. The addition of a Blackberry communication server now enables both field staff and research managers to keep in constant communication with the Board and others while on the move. Internal systems, which in the past were made up of many different interconnecting operating environments, have now been consolidated to one administrative architecture. Network perimeter security has also undergone some enhancements with the addition of a Cisco PIX firewall; this now enables the Board to conduct data communication in a more controlled and secure fashion with remote sites and designated access clients. A number of core software applications have undergone



upgrades, e.g. HR & Finance, along with the Board users' desktop hardware and software resulting in a more compatible environment.

In 2005, the Board implemented a common application framework that will form the basis for almost all future business applications in the organisation (excluding the main financial and HR applications on security grounds). This framework is a DotNetNuke framework built on an MSSQL server network. It will form the basis of the Board's internet and intranet applications and provide the basis for implementing a range of eServices. Key features of this framework include its flexibility, it is sufficiently powerful to comfortably cater for the size of applications envisaged by the CFB, it represents very good value and it is relatively inexpensive to develop applications on.

The Board implemented a number of modules on the framework. Including Phase 1 of the Bradán system (salmon licensing, tag management and logbook issue and return) and Phase 1 of the Research Database.

One of the projects undertaken in 2006 was the development of a data management policy for the organisation and the development and implementation of procedures supporting this policy.

### **Website**

The website is a remarkably successful marketing tool for Irish angling abroad and for raising the profile of the Board at home and amongst our international peers. It continues to be the premier website for Irish angling and freshwater fisheries research information. Website statistics indicate that 606,328 visits, up 44% over last year, were made to the website. Users of the site accessed almost one and a half million pages (1,483,943) of quality information, an increase of 33% over 2005.

The Board also undertook the re-development of the South Western, Eastern, North Western and Western Regional Fisheries Boards' websites in 2006. The South Western and Eastern Regional Fisheries Board websites are complete and online and have

received favourable comment from stakeholders. The new websites for the Western and North Western Regional Fisheries Boards will be available in 2007.

Following a successful pilot Extranet in late 2005 this service was integrated with the CFB Library Intranet, further improving its usefulness to staff.

### **Library Management**

The CFB holds many historical, valuable and varied sources of information which are held in paper format. To complement the ICT strategy, a library management initiative was initiated in November 2004, with a business plan being rolled out in January 2005.

In August 2005, a new Library Management System for the Board was acquired and installed. This system provides an electronic, fully searchable library catalogue as well as keeping track of material and was fully live in 2006.

Full rollout of all library services to the Regional Fisheries Boards was completed in 2006.

## The Central Fisheries Board

### Income and Expenditure Account for the year to 31 December 2006

| Income                                       | Notes | 2006             |                         | 2005             |                         |
|--|-------|------------------|-------------------------|------------------|-------------------------|
|  |       | €                | €                       | €                | €                       |
| <b>State and EU Funding</b>                  |       |                  |                         |                  |                         |
| Operating grants                             |       | 6,721,024        |                         | 6,270,638        |                         |
| Net deferred funding for pensions            | 12b   | 322,707          |                         | 281,607          |                         |
| Less: Allocated to Regional Fisheries Boards | 1     | <u>(324,928)</u> | <u>6,748,803</u>        | <u>(529,482)</u> | <u>6,022,763</u>        |
| <b>Other Income</b>                          | 2b    |                  | 1,636,765               |                  | 1,382,133               |
| <b>Transfer to Capital Account</b>           | 10    |                  | <u>218,856</u>          |                  | <u>225,770</u>          |
|  |       |                  | <u>8,604,424</u>        |                  | <u>7,630,666</u>        |
| <b>Expenditure</b>                           |       |                  |                         |                  |                         |
| Administration                               | 3     |                  | 3,261,435               |                  | 2,456,694               |
| Operations                                   | 4     |                  | <u>5,356,497</u>        |                  | <u>5,029,554</u>        |
|  |       |                  | <u>8,617,932</u>        |                  | <u>7,486,248</u>        |
| <b>Surplus for the year</b>                  |       |                  | (13,508)                |                  | 144,418                 |
| <b>Surplus at 1 January</b>                  |       |                  | <u>(222,418)</u>        |                  | <u>(366,836)</u>        |
| <b>Surplus at 31 December</b>                |       |                  | <u><u>(235,926)</u></u> |                  | <u><u>(222,418)</u></u> |

The results for the year relate to continuing operations.

The Statement of Accounting Policies and Notes 1 to 12 form an integral part of these Financial Statements.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Chief Executive Officer

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Board Member

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

## **Eastern Regional Fisheries Board**

2006 was a dynamic year for the Eastern Regional Fisheries Board. With the co-operation of the many stakeholders in the Region, implementation of the Board's Strategic Development Plan 2003-2006, continued through the Board's business plan for the year. Three staff retired from the Board this year; Sean Boland, Joe Morris and Bill Reidy.

### **Fisheries Management and Conservation**

#### **Habitat Enhancement Works**

2006 was characterized by instream and enhancement programmes with a total investment of €103,843 on 15 rivers. A remarkable 24km of rivers and streams were developed, this included works on the Rivers Boyne, Slaney, Upper Liffey, selected rivers in Dublin, Rivers Dee, Glyde, Monaghan Blackwater and Gas Lake in Monaghan. This is in part due to investment from EU Programmes such as Peace and Reconciliation, and CASA for the cross border projects. The Interreg IIIA Ireland – Wales programme also provided assistance with the Slaney Rivers Project and the Celtic Copper Heritage project in Avoca, Co. Wicklow.

#### **Environmental Management and Control**

The Board carried out investigations in relation to environmental issues and assessed the potential impacts of developments on fishery habitats. 796 submissions were made to the relevant local authorities in relation to planning applications, which may impact on fisheries. These applications relate to a variety of proposals from residential, agricultural and commercial developments. Comments were made on 24 local authority development plans in the Region and 40 submissions were made to the DCMNR Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) working group, with regard to screening, scoping and environmental reports for the various relevant plans as overseen by public bodies.

677 inspections were carried out during 2006, 489 of these were in response to complaints received by the Board. As a result of these inspections 2 prosecutions were initiated. 11 fish kill incidences occurred, the most significant of which was in

Taafes pond in Co. Meath.

Infrastructural development continued in 2006 throughout the Region, with a large emphasis on road developments. 11 national road projects were under construction and a further 5 were at the planning stage. 2,238 fish were salvaged from 14 rivers and tributaries affected by motorway/industrial developments during the year. In the Dublin area alone, fish stocks were monitored from 24 streams. Some of the larger infrastructural projects include the Dublin airport new terminal, the Luas project, the north-south gas pipeline and the upgrading of Carrickmacross Wastewater Treatment plant.

### **Product Development / Resource Investment**

#### **Access**

The largest number of projects took place in 2006 with 12 angling facility enhancement projects with a total investment of €163,500 creating 39 additional angling spaces. This work took place on the Rivers Slaney, Mattock (tributary of River Boyne), Glyde, Fane, Monaghan Blackwater and the White River. Under the Peace II programme funding was acquired for lakes in Monaghan which enabled ancillary services to be provided for a number of angling venues in the form of fishing stands and increased disabled access. Disabled stands were erected at Monalty, Capragh and Baithe Lakes in Castleblaney. A car park, boat slipway, jetty and angling stands with wheelchair access were erected at Gas Lake in Castleblaney.

#### **Surveys**

Electro fishing works were carried out on many of the Region's rivers with 53 salmonid surveys and an investment of €49,756 during the year. This included surveys on the Rivers Liffey, Slaney, Boyne, Lough Acurrey and Chapel Lake, selected rivers in Dundalk district and the Grand and Royal Canals. The Board also assisted the ESB with its salmon smolt impingement survey at ESB estuarine thermal generating stations and the CFB with salmon scale sampling, estuarine, bass and coarse fish surveys. The Board took possession of the fish counter on the River Slaney from the Marine Institute in late 2006.

## **Marketing and Promotion**

The Board attended 10 key angling promotions at home and abroad in 2006 and Press and media coverage during the year was very successful with a total of 90 items recorded. This included editorial coverage in national newspapers, radio and TV along with a number of overseas publications. The Board's website was redesigned to make it more user friendly. For the first time angling tourism workshops were held with regional tourism agencies which proved very successful. The national marketing strategy was completed and 'centres of excellence' are to be launched early in 2007.

## **Education and Fisheries Awareness Programmes**

The Dublin Angling Initiative had a successful year with over 250 young people participating in DAI's angling courses. There are now 5 fishing clubs actively running independently with the support of the DAI, with more emphasis provided on advanced angling skills. 10 angling festivals were organised including two North South events funded by the Peace II funding programme. Assisted by Department of Education funding, two fishing competitions and angling workshops were held at Darndale pond in North Dublin. For the first time the Emerald Youth Trout Flycasting competition was held at Carton Estate, Maynooth, Co. Kildare. Visits were made to 25 schools in the Region as part of the Board's 'Something Fishy' educational programme. This included presentations, release of trout ova into local rivers and field trips.

## **Networking Catchment Management**

### **Avoca Catchment Management**

2006 saw the installation of an active pilot treatment plant at Avoca Co. Wicklow. The purpose was to treat the acid mine drainage from the abandoned copper mines which has made the Avoca river the most polluted river in Ireland. Funding for this was under the Ireland / Wales Interreg programme for which the Board is the lead partner of the project entitled 'Celtic Copper Heritage'. The pilot treatment plant ran for three months, 2 staff were trained to operate the plant and it was successful in that it established the requirements for an overall active treatment system as the way forward for Avoca.

## **Regulation**

### **Commercial Salmon Season**

The total allowable catch (TAC) for the Region for salmon and sea trout in 2006 was 1,855. The provisional statistics on the reported commercial catch for the year was 1,518. Of this, the commercial catch for salmon was 1,417, and for sea trout 101.

These figures are in line with a continuing trend over the last ten years or so and the total reported catch for the region now constitutes less than 1.75% of the national reported catch. Since the start of the tagging season in 2001, there has been an overall decrease in the catch by almost three quarters (75%) when the total reported catch was 6,076, which is a cause for great concern. The introduction of the salmon conservation measures at the end of 2006 will have a significant impact on the East coast fishery which we expect to yield benefits in future years.

### **Angling Season**

Salmon and sea trout angling was reported as fair, whilst brown trout angling was reported as very good throughout the Region. Anglers accounted for 893 salmon and seatrout in 2006. These are provisional statistics and are based on angling returns of 81%. 2006 saw the introduction of a reduced bag limit and the introduction of catch and release for the month of September. This impacted to a large extent on angling returns particularly on rivers in Dundalk which are late fisheries. Coarse and pike fishing was reported as very good with the lakes of Cavan and Monaghan producing specimen bream, tench and hybrids. 11 of the 15 specimen tench recorded in 2006 were from Ballyhoe and Rahans lakes. Similarly, sea angling was very good with notable catches of tope from Dundalk Bay and excellent fishing along the Wexford coastline with a variety of species recorded.

### **Prosecutions**

Following the trend of recent years, overall there was a decrease in the number of illegal salmon fishing detections in 2006. 1,746 man hours were completed on carrying out sea patrols and inland boat patrols. 1,685 yards of nets were seized and 14 prosecutions were

initiated. 76 on the spot fines were issued, 48 of which were for non return of angling logbooks for the 2006 season.

### **Pressures on Coarse Fish Stocks**

As in previous years 2006 saw an increase in the number of callouts in relation to incidences regarding anglers in breach of coarse fish byelaws and the widespread killing of coarse fish. Approximately 20 on the spot fines were issued for coarse fishing offences during the year. The introduction of a coarse fish byelaw in 2006 has been helpful in dealing with this issue, however it requires resources for the surveillance that is necessary to detect, apprehend and prosecute offenders. New signs and brochures were printed featuring the new coarse and pike byelaws in 9 different languages.

### **Aquaculture**

Aquaculture continues to be carried out in parts of the region particularly Dundalk Bay and Wicklow and Wexford on the South East coast. The situation remains that there are a large number of boats involved in harvesting cockles in Dundalk Bay.

### **Administration / Corporate Governance**

The Board discharged its statutory functions, struck the fishery rate, issued licences, collected rates, prepared estimates and accounts and co-operated with new and pending legislation. It met with its statutory, administrative, financial and corporate governance duties in 2006. The appointment of internal auditors has aided the Board's systems of internal controls.

### **Board Fisheries**

There was approximately 3,473 rod days on the Board's waters this year with €2,672 revenue created. 2,500 brown trout and rainbows were released into Emy and Bracken Lakes during the angling season.



### **Eastern Fisheries Development Society**

The Eastern Fisheries Development Society did not meet in 2006 as it is awaiting the release of funds from DCMNR.

### **Health and Safety / Training**

Safety continued to be of paramount importance within the Board. Three staff completed the Fishery Management Diploma course in Sligo RTC and a further two staff began the course in September. All staff attended further PMDS and Customer relations training. Courses were conducted for Safe Pass, Self defence, GIS, Middle Management, Water Framework Directive (Small Streams Risk Score) and Something Fishy educational programme. Three staff received an award for their brave efforts in successfully rescuing an individual from the River Boyne.

**The Eastern Regional Fisheries Board**

**Income and Expenditure Account for the year to 31 December 2006**

| <b>Income</b>                      | <b>Notes</b> | <b>2006</b><br>€ | <b>2005</b><br>€ |
|------------------------------------|--------------|------------------|------------------|
| Oireachtas Income                  | 1            | 3,175,911        | 2,823,981        |
| Other Income                       | 2            | 524,547          | 520,351          |
| Net Deferred Funding for Pensions  | 13(b)        |                  | 274,569          |
|                                    |              | <u>3,700,458</u> | <u>3,618,901</u> |
| <b>Transfer to Capital Account</b> | 11           | (299,948)        | (280,157)        |
|                                    |              | <u>3,400,510</u> | <u>3,338,744</u> |
| <b>Expenditure</b>                 |              |                  |                  |
| Administration                     | 3            | 594,660          | 667,873          |
| Operations                         | 4            | 2,790,719        | 2,820,781        |
|                                    |              | <u>3,385,379</u> | <u>3,488,655</u> |
| <b>Surplus for the year</b>        |              | 15,131           | (149,911)        |
| <b>Surplus at 1 January</b>        |              | (14,727)         | 135,184          |
| <b>Surplus at 31 December</b>      |              | <u>404</u>       | <u>(14,727)</u>  |

The results for the year relate to continuing operations.

The Statement of Accounting Policies and Notes 1 to 14 form an integral part of these Financial Statements.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Acting Chief Executive Officer

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Board Member

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

## **Southern Regional Fisheries Board**

This Annual Report has been prepared in accordance with the requirements of Section 11 of the Fisheries (Amendment) Act 1999. The last five years has seen unprecedented changes in salmon management, and the Board continues to address and promote the key issues that are important to support and advance the effective management of the Regions commercial and recreational fisheries. I wish to record my thanks and appreciation to the chairperson Mr. Joe Teesdale, and Board members for their assistance and cooperation during 2006. I also wish to acknowledge the dedication, professionalism and commitment of the Boards staff in relation to their work in the effective management of the fisheries in this region.

### **Corporate Governance**

#### **Board Member Appointments**

All members continue in office on the invitation of the Minister for Communications, Marine and Natural Resources pending Stage II of the Review of Fisheries.

At its AGM, the Board elected Mr. Joe Teesdale as Chairperson and Ms Mary Ferns Vice Chair.

#### **Board Meetings**

The Board met 11 times

11 members attended 11 meetings; 05 members attended 10 meetings; 02 members attended 09 meetings; 02 members attended 07 meetings

Overall percentage attendance 92.3%

#### **Sub-Committees**

The Boards Audit Subcommittee met 4 times, and also met the C&AG independently of the Executive. Subcommittees for Eels, Licence allocation and Fishery Districts also met throughout the year. All Committees reported to the full Board.

## **Audits**

The Boards 2006 Accounts were audited and certified by the Comptroller and Auditor General, and are included in this Report.

The Boards Internal Auditors Sheehan Quinn & Co., completed an internal audit of the Boards operations in 2006 in compliance with the Code of Practice for the Governance of State Bodies. All the audits, subcommittee and Board operation complied with the provisions of the Code of Practice for Corporate Governance of State Bodies, the Ethics in Public Office Act 1995 and the Standards in Public Office Act 2001.

## **Customer Charter**

The Boards website now includes an updated Customer Charter which also incorporates a customer comment card.

## **Freedom of Information**

One request for information under Freedom of Information legislation was received by the Board during 2006. The information requested was supplied within the time allowed.

## **Equality**

During 2006 the Boards Headquarters were audited by external experts, to take into consideration access throughout to both members of the public and to Fisheries Board staff. A final report with the findings of this Audit is expected in early 2007.

## **Staff Development & Training**

Board staff underwent various development and training programmes during 2006. Four staff are participating in a Management Development Programme, two staff completed supervisory management training, one staff member completed a Higher Diploma in Public Management while two completed the Certificate in Fisheries Management Course in Sligo and another has commenced this programme. Teamwork training was provided for all staff as were seminars on pensions, bullying and stress, motivation, GIS, the library service. Various other courses such as Krav Maga, Civil Engineering were

also attended by Board Staff. The Board acknowledges the assistance of the Training Manager and HR at CFB.

### **Health & Safety**

Monthly meetings for Health and Safety are attended by all staff in the various work teams and districts. The Safety Committee meet quarterly, while risk assessments and audits are ongoing. A new Safety Representative was appointed during 2006 – FO D A O Donovan, who has completed a safety rep training course. There was one accident at work reported during 2006 and there were also three minor road traffic accidents. None of these required reporting to the H&S.

### **Facilities**

The Board successfully tendered for a ½ acre site in Ballylynch Industrial Estate, Carrick On Suir. This site, once developed will house the West Waterford Operational Team and equipment and should be completed towards the end of 2007.

The Lismore District Staff, both Environmental and Cross Functional, work out of a new rented depot in Fermoy, Co. Cork.

The Board upgraded buildings in the Headquarters site to provide archive and storage facilities. It also provided new canteen facilities at Headquarters.

### **Review of Activities**

#### **Fisheries Management & Protection**

2006 was a busy year for staff working in protection ensuring that there was a high level of compliance with all relevant legislation. Regular river boat, estuary and RIB patrols were undertaken along with a large number of mobile and foot patrols over the entire region. The introduction of Catch and Release in the Waterford District for September made for an extremely busy end of season for staff. This effort resulted in 19 prosecutions being initiated, 2 boats and 73 nets being seized. The Board also successfully prosecuted 21 anglers for non-return of angling logbooks, and issued 61 on the spot fines for the same offence.

In 2006 a new quota was introduced for both Districts within the Southern Region. These were a Total Allowable Catch of 5,672 for the Waterford District and 3,928 for the Lismore District. The table below outlines the different catch for different net types in both Districts.

### Commercial Catch 2006

| District                              | Licence Type | Salmon Caught | Sea Trout Caught |
|---------------------------------------|--------------|---------------|------------------|
| Waterford                             | Draft Net    | 10            | 0                |
| Waterford                             | Drift Net    | 3307          | 33               |
| Waterford                             | Snap Net     | 2298          | 28               |
| <b>Total Catch Waterford District</b> |              | <b>5615</b>   | <b>61</b>        |
| Lismore                               | Draft Net    | 90            | 0                |
| Lismore                               | Drift Net    | 3229          | 10               |
| Lismore                               | Other        | 42            | 2                |
| Lismore                               | Snap Net     | 203           | 17               |
| <b>Total Catch Lismore District</b>   |              | <b>3564</b>   | <b>29</b>        |

### Angling Catch 2006

In 2006 3,118 salmon rod licences were sold in the Southern Region. These generated an income of €103,602 to the Board. The majority of licences sold were District Licences, total sales in this category alone were 1,276 (€38,280). Sales of 21 Day Licences exceeded sales of All Ireland 877 v 615. This is displayed in the table below.

### Summary of the Rod License Sales in 2006 Presented by License Type.

| All Ireland | District | 21 Day | Juvenile | 1 Day | Total Sales | Total € |
|-------------|----------|--------|----------|-------|-------------|---------|
| 615         | 1276     | 877    | 148      | 202   | 3118        | 10,3602 |

Rod Catch for 2006 is reflected in the Tables below both for Salmon and Sea Trout. The River Blackwater (Munster) has the second highest national salmon rod catch.

| <b>District</b> | <b>River</b>         | <b>Species</b> | <b>Reported Catch</b> |
|-----------------|----------------------|----------------|-----------------------|
| Lismore         | Allow                | Salmon         | 3                     |
| Lismore         | Blackwater (Munster) | Salmon         | 1815                  |
| Lismore         | Bride                | Salmon         | 75                    |
| Lismore         | Dallua               | Salmon         | 2                     |

| <b>District</b> | <b>River</b>         | <b>Species</b> | <b>Reported Catch</b> |
|-----------------|----------------------|----------------|-----------------------|
| Waterford       | Barrow               | Salmon         | 138                   |
| Waterford       | Colligan             | Salmon         | 1                     |
| Waterford       | Mahon                | Salmon         | 8                     |
| Waterford       | Nier                 | Salmon         | 1                     |
| Waterford       | Nore                 | Salmon         | 421                   |
| Waterford       | Owenduff (Waterford) | Salmon         | 1                     |
| Waterford       | Suir                 | Salmon         | 370                   |
| Waterford       | Tar                  | Salmon         | 1                     |
| Waterford       | Tay                  | Salmon         | 4                     |
| Waterford       | Other                | Salmon         | 12                    |

Reported Sea Trout Catch for the Region is outlined in the following tables for both Districts of the Southern Region.

| <b>District</b> | <b>River</b>         | <b>Species</b> | <b>Reported Catch</b> |
|-----------------|----------------------|----------------|-----------------------|
| Lismore         | Blackwater (Munster) | Sea Trout      | 8                     |
| Lismore         | Finisk               | Sea Trout      | 1                     |

| <b>District</b> | <b>River</b>         | <b>Species</b> | <b>Reported Catch</b> |
|-----------------|----------------------|----------------|-----------------------|
| Waterford       | Colligan             | Sea Trout      | 4                     |
| Waterford       | Nore                 | Sea Trout      | 1                     |
| Waterford       | Owenduff (Waterford) | Sea Trout      | 2                     |
| Waterford       | Suir                 | Sea Trout      | 4                     |
| Waterford       | Tar                  | Sea Trout      | 1                     |
| Waterford       | Tay                  | Sea Trout      | 5                     |

It should be noted that these figures only reflect the logbooks returned to the Board. Out of a total of 3,118 licences and logbooks sold only 75% were returned to the Board.

With regard to Sea Trout the figures are very low but it must be remembered that only Sea Trout greater than 40cm need to be recorded under the Wild Salmon and Sea Trout Tagging Regulations.

## **Environmental Management**

### **Water Quality**

During 2006 the Environmental staff of the Board inspected a multiplicity of local authority, forestry, civil engineering, farm and industrial premises for actual or potential sites of fisheries habitat degradation and water quality concerns. These inspections resulted in a number of fisheries habitats and water quality infringements being detected necessitating various responses from prosecutions, to warnings and consultations.

### **Planning**

Board staff also commit a large proportion of their time to proactive and preventative work which includes areas of Physical Planning (planning applications, development plans, SEA, etc), Licensing (IPPC, WPA, Waste, Foreshore, Aquaculture, etc) Infrastructural Projects (roads, wastewater and water treatment plants, landfills, abstraction, etc) Forestry (planting, felling, fertilisation, NWS, roads etc) and routine inspections (aerial patrols, spot-checks), participation in various working groups, committees, etc.

During 2006 Board staff also gave a large number of presentations at training courses, meetings and conferences.



## **Fisheries Development Societies**

### **The Southern Trout and Coarse Fisheries Development Society**

The Co-op paid out €42,512 to Angling Clubs for works undertaken in 2004. This represents a 25% matching to project costs and is a decrease from the 33% paid out in previous Years.

The grant in relation to matching funding for 2005 expenditure to The Southern Trout and Coarse Fisheries Development Society has not yet been sanctioned and remitted to the Society. The Societies Forum is in negotiation with the Boards and the Department of Communication, Marine and Natural Resources in relation to procedures surrounding works and funds.

During 2006 the Co-op continued to support clubs with their great work in the region. Works to the value of €134,385.31 were undertaken during 2006.

## **Promotion**

Staff attended a number of promotional shows throughout the year. For the first time in the Boards history, staff attended shows outside the state. These are beneficial as many anglers attending the shows did follow up with visits and enquiries. A main feature of the agriculture and countryside shows were the angling lessons given by the staff. The list of the shows attended included:

- Failte Ireland Irish day in The Hague, (Holland).
- The World Fly Fishing Championships, Portugal.
- Countryside Alliance, Co. Antrim, Northern Ireland.
- The World Fly Casting competition at Carlton House Co. Kildare.
- Emo Country Fair Co. Laois.
- Kildalton Country Fair Co. Kilkenny.
- The World Ploughing Championships Co. Carlow.
- Swords Angling Show Swords Co. Dublin.

## **Education and Fisheries Awareness**

Staff used every opportunity to promote fisheries and the board and to inform the general public of good fishery practice.

- Educational packs and posters were distributed at all angling shows attended and sent to schools throughout the region.
- Staff gave talks at R.E.P.S. courses, schools and catchment management conferences.
- Presentations were also given by staff on new developments in fisheries such as: invasive weeds and plants and the Chinese Mitten crab to the institute of Fisheries Management, angling clubs and the Barrow catchment Steering group.

## **Surveys**

The Minister of State Deputy John Browne T.D. launched the Suir Survey in August 2006.

- This year also saw surveys conducted on the River Bride (Blackwater).
- Fish stock assessment surveys were also carried out at Ballyshunnock (Waterford), Knockananagh Lake (Fermoy).
- River fish stock surveys include, fish monitoring downstream of industry on the River Drish and the River Goul.
- Large numbers of other minor qualitative surveys have been conducted to assess rivers for infrastructural programmes, such as road crossings etc.
- A continuation of the Bass spawning survey, which has been on going for the past twenty years.
- A survey in the estuary to assess the distribution of the Chinese Mitten Crab (*Eriocheir sinensis*).
- A survey on the Waterford estuary in conjunction with the C.F.B to assess the distribution of other fish species such as smelt, plaice, shad etc.
- A smolt survey on the river Suir to trap smolts returning to sea. These smolts are micro tagged and released and it is hoped that these smolts will be captured as returning adults.

## **Fishery Enhancement Projects**

Some of the main fishery enhancement programmes undertaken by the board were:

- A fish pass easement facility at Ballyellin Weir, Goresbridge on the River Barrow. This involved the construction of a fish pass and the manipulation of the downstream approach channel.
- The post drainage fisheries rehabilitation on the River Suir downstream of Thurles. This involved the construction of deflectors, submerged weirs, thalwegs etc.

## **Other Enhancement Projects Include**

- Fishery development works on the River Tar at Clogheen
- The cleaning of banks and construction of car parks and angling strands at Ballyshunnock Lake, Co. Waterford.

## **Partnership Projects**

Many fishery enhancement projects were conducted with other bodies and private individuals. These include:

- Fish pass easement at Kilkenny weir in conjunction with the O.P.W. local angling clubs and Department of Marine Engineers.
- Bank protection using rock armour along a stretch of the main channel of the river Blackwater at Banteer Co. Cork with local land owners.
- The removal of three weirs and the construction of fish easement facilities on a tributary of the River Nore at Inistioge.
- Bank protection and associated works on the Glenshalawn River at Cappoquin. In conjunction with the local land owners.
- Fishery Development Lake at Cappagh, Dungarvan, in conjunction with the local land owner and Waterford Leader Programme.
- The Laois angling centre lakes near Mountrath Co. Laois in conjunction with the land owner and Laois Leader Programme.

### **Stocking and Hatcheries**

- Trout from Roscrea fish farm were stocked by the Board into tributaries of the Suir and Nore as unfed fry. 10,000 one year old trout were stocked onto Ballyshunnock and Knockaderry Lakes.
- Other commercial put and take fisheries in the region also stocked large numbers of brown and rainbow trout in to their lakes these include: Stradbally Lake, Castlecommer Lakes and Ballyhass Lake.
- Angling clubs throughout the region have stocked small numbers of trout into their river sections under authorisation of this Board.

### **Board Managed Fisheries**

The Board manages two lakes in County Waterford:

- Knockaderry Lake is a trout fishery with five boats for hire to anglers. This year was unfortunate as a disease was found in the fish caused by the long hot dry summer.
- Ballyshunnock Lake is a mixed fishery mainly used by Waterford and District Coarse Angling Club. This club holds a number of events on the lake each year for juvenile anglers (who can easily catch Rudd), anglers with disabilities, and anglers from St. Paul's school for disadvantaged children, and the Garda liaison programme. The board are proud to be associated with these initiatives.

## The Southern Regional Fisheries Board

### Income and Expenditure Account for the year to 31 December 2006

| Income                             | Notes | 2006<br>€             | 2005<br>€             |
|------------------------------------|-------|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| Oireachtas Income                  | 1     | 2,375,012             | 2,420,810             |
| Other Income                       | 2     | 380,720               | 367,463               |
| Net Deferred Funding for Pensions  | 10(b) | 402,026               | 376,239               |
|                                    |       | <u>3,157,758</u>      | <u>3,164,512</u>      |
| <b>Transfer to Capital Account</b> | 9     | (179,790)             | (75,729)              |
|                                    |       | <u>2,977,968</u>      | <u>3,088,783</u>      |
| <b>Expenditure</b>                 |       |                       |                       |
| Administration                     | 3     | (1,354,170)           | (1,195,240)           |
| Operations                         | 4     | (1,733,494)           | (1,793,212)           |
|                                    |       | <u>(3,087,664)</u>    | <u>(2,988,452)</u>    |
| <b>Surplus for the year</b>        |       | (109,686)             | 100,331               |
| <b>Surplus at 1 January</b>        |       | <u>428,738</u>        | <u>328,407</u>        |
| <b>Surplus at 31 December</b>      |       | <u><u>319,042</u></u> | <u><u>428,738</u></u> |

The results for the year relate to continuing operations.

The Statement of Accounting Policies and Notes 1 to 13 form an integral part of these Financial Statements.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Chairperson

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Chief Executive Officer

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Board Member

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

## **South Western Regional Fisheries Board**

The Board had a very successful year in 2006. Its office move heralded a new era for the Fisheries Service in the SW. Environmentally stakeholder attitudes towards the inland fisheries environment improved with the Board receiving many beneficial information calls from the general public and anglers. The commercial salmon sector worked well with the Board in the development and management of its industry into the future.

Game, coarse and sea angling was of a very high standard throughout 2006. While the salmon arrived late due to low water, numbers in some rivers were up on 2005 statistics.

There were many notable successes on the tourism angling front. This bodes well for the future of tourism angling in the SW and Ireland generally. Sea angling was of a particularly high standard.

### **Corporate Governance**

#### **Board Staff**

In 2006 the Board had 32 full time staff and employed 5 temporary staff. The Board carried out its functions in accordance with, and as laid down by, the 'Ethics in public Office' directives. Corporate governance and 'value for money' are viewed as core principles by the Board, management and staff.

The Boards Audit Committee continued to function efficiently.

### **Five Year Development Plan**

The Boards five-year development plan, with its emphasis on safeguarding the environment through sustainable development continues to be applied with educational programmes forming its backbone. No Net Loss is a valuable addition to the plan and continues to gain momentum.

## **Annual Business Plan**

The Board successfully achieved the components of its business plan in 2006. While there were many challenges throughout the year the Board succeeded in delivering its objectives and bringing the programmes home on budget.

## **Fisheries Management and Conservation Sustainable development**

The Board made considerable headway in its sustainable development initiatives and continued with its education awareness programme through ‘Something Fishy’ and multi stakeholder processes generally. The Holistic Management Model developed for the Kerry Blackwater continues to be applied elsewhere.

## **Aquaculture**

The Board continued to keep a watching brief on the regions sea lice monitoring programme. The Board assisted the Tralee Oyster Society.

## **On The Spot Fines (OTSF)**

The Board issued 42 on the spot fines in 2006.

## **Mobile Protection Unit**

The Boards mobile Protection Unit proved to be a considerable deterrent to illegal fishing activities in 2006. The Unit provides a valuable rapid response facility to the Board that greatly assists its protection operations. The Unit was well received by the general public and anglers.

## **Fisheries Protection**

Through the work of the Boards protection staff a number of prosecutions were initiated and a substantial quantity of illegal fishing equipment seized in 2006. The ‘On the Spot fines’ system continued to prove effective. The general public continued to feed information into the Board which is of considerable assistance in tackling illegal activities in the region.

**Protection Statistics  
Cork Region**

|                        |                  |
|------------------------|------------------|
| Total nets seized      | 8 nets – 1,850 m |
| Fish seized            | 2 salmon         |
| Prosecutions initiated | 19               |
| Equipment seized       | 19 items         |

**Kerry Region**

|                        |                   |
|------------------------|-------------------|
| Total nets seized      | 43 nets – 9,010 m |
| Fish seized            | 609 salmon        |
| Prosecutions initiated | 5                 |
| Equipment seized       | 2 items           |

**National Fish Counter Programme**

The following counters operated in the region during the year;

Waterville fishery

Kerry Blackwater

River Bandon

The Board counter programme continues to deliver quality data on salmon and sea trout movements in the SW. The Board upgraded its counter programme during the year and now downloads and validates data at time of capture.

**Tags and Quotas**

The Tagging programme ran smoothly throughout 2006. Disappointingly there was only a 53% return of anglers log books, a 9% reduction on 2005. There was a 99% commercial logbook return, the same as in 2005.



### Commercial Salmonid Catches in 2006

| Region | Method    | Salmon | Sea Trout |
|--------|-----------|--------|-----------|
| Cork   | Bag Net   | 108    | 0         |
| Cork   | Draft Net | 1030   | 36        |
| Cork   | Drift Net | 10746  | 36        |
| Kerry  | Bag Net   | 10     | 0         |
| Kerry  | Draft Net | 4726   | 147       |
| Kerry  | Drift Net | 13216  | 3         |

### Environmental Management and Control

#### Aquatic Environment

The Board received 201 reports of an environmental nature during 2006. These reports ranged from complaints of the discharge of effluent directly to waters from agriculture, industry and local authority sources, through non-compliance with planning conditions, dumping of materials close to watercourses and physical interference with rivers through drainage and gravel extraction.

Comment: The impact of water abstractions during periods of low water flow was evident with critical effects on aquatic habitat noted in several river catchments.

The majority of the reports were received from the general public with the remainder being from fishery officers, anglers and Board members. The nature of the reports were

| Activity                           | % in 2006 |
|------------------------------------|-----------|
| Drainage & gravel removal          | 17        |
| Agriculture (slurry/silage etc)    | 13        |
| Industrial/ Commercial Discharges  | 12        |
| Local Authority Works/Discharges   | 11        |
| Abstraction/Low Flows              | 7         |
| Forestry Works                     | 3         |
| Construction Activities Discharges | 4         |
| Planning Concerns                  | 10        |
| Fish Health/Disease                | 6         |
| Eutrophication                     | 3         |
| Miscellaneous*                     | 14        |

\* Includes unsubstantiated reports, odour pollution, fish passage issues and natural events etc.

## Prosecutions

8 prosecutions were initiated as a result of environmental investigations. These related to fish kills, serious and repeat pollution events, and aquatic habitat interference. Four cases remain to be heard while four have been successfully concluded.

## Fish Kills

8 fish kills were recorded during the year. Investigations confirmed the cause in four with agricultural discharges and instream drainage responsible. Of the four remaining incidents, poaching, civil works and agriculture were suspected; the fourth could not be attributed to any cause. Prosecutions proceedings have been initiated where cases can be substantiated.

**Details of all fish kills in 2006 are given below.**

| <b>Date:</b> | <b>River:</b>      | <b>Location:</b> | <b>Nos.</b> | <b>Type:</b>                                 | <b>Cause:</b>                      | <b>Prosecution</b> |
|--------------|--------------------|------------------|-------------|--|------------------------------------|--------------------|
| 23.06.06     | Owenageragh (Lee). | Berrings         | 10+         | B.trout, Salmon, (parr and fry)              | Silage Effluent                    | Yes                |
| 11.08.06     | Behennagh Trib.    | Barraduff        | 2-300       | B.trout, Salmon, (parr and fry), stoneloach  | Unconfirmed. Civil Works Suspected | No                 |
| 16.08.06     | Mealagh. R.        | Donemark, Bantry | 50+         | Salmon, Sea trout                            | Unconfirmed. Poaching Suspected    | No                 |
| 19.08.06     | Owenacurra         | Lisgoold         | 2000+       | Salmon, Sea trout, B trout, Eel              | Agri Effluent Suspected            | tbd                |
| 22.08.06     | Dripsey Trib.      | Donoughmore      | 10+         | B.trout                                      | Drainage                           | No                 |
| 28.08.06     | Maine Trib         | Keel             | 100         | Salmon, B trout, Sea trout                   | Unconfirmed                        | No                 |
| 11.11.06     | Caragh R.          | Glencar          | 100+        | B.trout, Salmon, (parr and fry)              | Drainage                           | Yes                |
| 22.12.06     | Blarney (Lee)      | Whitechurch      | 2-300       | B.trout, (adult and fingerlings), stoneloach | Slurry                             | Yes                |

Cork = 5, Kerry = 3

## **Submissions**

Submission were made in relation to the following

- a) 10 Water Pollution Act, (Discharge to Waters), Licence Applications.
- b) 55 Waste Management Permit Applications.
- c) 0 Dumping at Sea Permit Applications.
- d) 72 Forestry submissions relating to establishment, clear fell and native woodland schemes.
- e) 1 Aquaculture Licence Applications.
- f) 6 Policy Papers and Guidelines.
- g) 54 SEA/Draft Development plans.

## **Section 18 Authorisations EIS + Research**

11 authorisations were issued during the year.

### **Civil Works**

164 civil work proposals were assessed, which involved inspections, meeting, consultations and or submissions as appropriate. 3 fish removals were also carried out to accommodate construction.

### **Educational/Awareness Programme**

12 school environmental visits and a total of @ 321 students addressed.

4 Presentations were given at REPS courses, 1 public presentation. Field trips were organised in conjunction with the above.

Information leaflets on Zebra Mussel prevention issued to over 100 angling clubs/anglers.

No Net Loss Presentation to KCC

### **Planning**

A total of 17808 planning applications were reviewed with 519 submissions in relation to their potential impact on fisheries made to the relevant planning authorities. In many instances preplanning consultation with developers took place and fishery requirements were included in development design. 1 decision was appealed to an Bord Pleanala during the year.

### **Freedom of Information Act**

No requests under the Freedom of Information Act were received by the Board in 2006.

### **Energy requirements**

The Board, a member of the Lee Valley Ecolabel Project, continued its programme of energy improvement. In addition the Board as part of its sustainable energy initiative modified 5 vehicles to run on pure vegetable oil thereby reducing the Boards CO2 footprint.

### **Training**

Board staff attended a number of training courses during the year.

### **PMDS**

The Boards 2006 PMDS programme continued to gain momentum. Staff stated that they found the process valuable, allowing for additional feedback which assisted them in the delivery of the Boards Development Plan.

### **Health and Safety**

The Board held a number of staff H&S meetings during the year. Comprehensive equipment checks were undertaken to ensure safe operations.

The Board undertook its ongoing remedial works programme on its Board fisheries.

### **Marketing and Promotion**

The Board had a very successful year on the marketing and promotional side producing a number of publications. Five trade shows were attended in 2006, two in the USA, one in the UK and two in Holland. These shows resulted in a number of firm bookings and generated considerable interest.

Angling log book data indicates that the US trade shows have resulted in a very positive growth from USA anglers. Several promotional articles were written for various publications.

### **Catchment Management**

Catchment Management, a process fully adopted by the Board, continues to gain favour and is widely acknowledged as the most appropriate tool for managing the regions fisheries. While a number of aspects associated with catchment management generated considerable discussion throughout the year, co-management is now well set to become the management tool of choice for fishery managers.

### **Multi Stakeholder Processes (MSP's)**

The Board continued to develop and advance the multi stakeholder process in the management of the regions inland fisheries. Considerable effort was applied to the development of systems that would allow for the dissemination of information.

### **Public Education Awareness**

The Board undertook a number of public/school awareness programmes. These are designed to build capacity and foster relations. They were very well received by the groups in question.

### **Network and partnering**

The Board continued to build its network base in 2006. Collaborative management and partnerships are viewed as pivotal by the Board in delivering a stream lined service.

### **Board Fisheries**

#### **Coarse Angling - Inniscarra Lake**

Inniscarra Lake, managed jointly by the ESB and the SWRFB, had a very successful year and indications are that visiting tourist numbers are on the increase. Pike and bream angling were particularly good during the year. The boat patrols carried out on the lake for the first time proved very successful.

There were several angling competitions held on the lake during the year and by all accounts these had very successful returns.

### **Managed Trout Lakes**

The Boards 11 managed Rainbow trout lakes had a good year. Approximately 50,000 Rainbow trout were stocked into the lakes. Net permit revenue amounted to €95,188. The Creel Census forms indicated that people enjoyed fishing the lakes with some large fish being landed during the year. The Jack Charlton Cup proved to be once again a successful event.

### **Permit Sales for the Boards Fisheries**

The total permit sales for the Boards fisheries other than the Managed Lakes was € 28,536

### **Sea Angling**

Reports from anglers during the year indicated that sea angling, both from boat and shore, were of a high standard. Good numbers of mainland European anglers continued to visit our shores, especially the Dutch. Similarly there was a good volume of UK anglers. Several specimen fish were landed by the charter boats in 2006.

### **Special Projects**

#### **European initiatives**

The Board actively sought new European programmes during 2006. While it did not initiate any new programmes it engaged in consultation with two prospective leads.

### **No Net Loss**

The Boards 'No Net Loss' programme aimed at ensuring sustainable development of the SW is ongoing. A number of presentations were given during the year.

### **South-western Trout and Coarse Fish Development Society**

The South-western Trout and Coarse Fish Development Society did not meet in 2006 as it is awaiting the release of funds from DCMNR.

**The South Western Regional Fisheries Board**

**Income and Expenditure Account for the year to 31 December 2006**

| <b>Income</b>                      | <b>Notes</b> | <b>2006<br/>€</b>  | <b>2005<br/>€</b>  |
|------------------------------------|--------------|--------------------|--------------------|
| Oireachtas Income                  |              | 2,788,012          | 2,978,258          |
| Other Income                       | 1            | 1,134,524          | 568,001            |
| Net Deferred Funding for Pensions  | 11 b         | 383,784            | 306,359            |
|                                    |              | <u>4,306,320</u>   | <u>3,852,618</u>   |
| <b>Transfer to Capital Account</b> | 9            | (139,033)          | (754,334)          |
|                                    |              | <u>4,167,287</u>   | <u>3,098,284</u>   |
| <b>Expenditure</b>                 |              |                    |                    |
| Administration                     | 2            | (867,731)          | (1,143,330)        |
| Operations                         | 3            | (2,232,432)        | (1,867,510)        |
|                                    |              | <u>(3,100,163)</u> | <u>(3,010,840)</u> |
| <b>Surplus for the year</b>        |              | 1,067,124          | 87,444             |
| <b>Surplus at 1 January</b>        |              | 153,299            | 65,855             |
| <b>Surplus at 31 December</b>      |              | <u>1,220,423</u>   | <u>153,299</u>     |

The results for the year relate to continuing operations.

The Statement of Accounting Policies and Notes 1 to 13 form an integral part of these Financial Statements.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Chief Executive Officer

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Board Member

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

## **Shannon Regional Fisheries Board**

The Shannon Fisheries Region covers the Inland Fisheries of the Shannon catchment, the River Feale catchment in North Kerry and the rivers of Co Clare flowing westwards to the Atlantic. The coastal boundary stretches from Kerry Head to Hags Head in Co Clare. The Region covers a land area of 17,775.7 sq Km which is serviced by 18 local Authorities areas

### **Mission Statement**

“To conserve, develop, manage and promote the valuable inland fisheries and sea angling resources of the Region, in their own right and in a sustainable manner for the benefit of local communities.”

### **Product Development and Resource Investment**

Ensuring the maintenance and development of the angling resources of this Region is a major task.

### **Fish Stock Surveys**

Understanding the fish stock structure in our waters is vital to the proper management of our fisheries. To further our knowledge the Board undertook a number of studies on rivers such as the Rivers Cross, and Maigue. While in association with CFB five main lake surveys were undertaken and coarse fish stocks were monitored on the main Shannon.

### **Cross Border Project**

A Cross boarder angling tourism project which is part funded by the European Union under INTERREG IIIA and through ICBAN commenced during the year and is due for completion by October 2007. The project seeks to promote angling and to attempt to counter the trend of falling visiting angler numbers in Counties Leitrim and Fermanagh, while investigating reports of falling fish stocks. The Board is working closely the other



partners from the North and South of Ireland including, The Department of Culture Arts and Leisure, The Central Fisheries Board, The Agriculture Food and Bioscience Institute, Leitrim County Council and Fermanagh County Council.

### **Partnership**

The Board worked in partnership with local communities, angling clubs, Local Authorities and other State agencies in the spirit of our mission statement to carry out fish habitat rehabilitation and enhancement works. The ESB and the Board entered a new partnership programme in 2006. This enhancement programme brought the staff of the ESB and the Board together to successfully enhance sections of the Cross, Camcor and Inny rivers.

### **Managed Fisheries**

The Board directly manages a network 27 trout and coarse fisheries throughout the Region. In the year under review 2,853 angling permits were sold and good fishing was reported from many of these waters. The annual stocking programmes were successfully continued with over 726,600 fish stocked into specific managed fisheries. Ninety percent of these were brown trout unfed fry, which were stocked to Lough Owel, Lough Derravaragh and Lough Ennell respectively.

### **Commercial fishing**

#### **Salmon**

A total of 174 commercial salmon drift and draft fishing licenses were issues in 2006. All license holders filled in their log book returns. Of the quota of 6880 a total of 6,724 salmon and 18 sea trout were caught and most of these were sold onto licensed salmon dealers.

#### **Eel**

The ESB own the eel fishery rights on the River Shannon, operations continued in 2006. In addition commercial eel fishing continued in a number of lakes in Co. Clare. The Board assisted the ESB with their Glass Eel and elver trapping operations in various

estuaries in the Region. These juvenile eels were stocked into areas above impassable barriers along the Shannon.

### **Trout**

The traditional Draft netting for brown trout continued on Lough Ree, with 10 Licences being issued. A total of 1552 trout were reported caught.

### **Regulation Compliance**

The Fisheries Acts were rigorously enforced in 2006. On the spot fines were issue and court action initiated on a number of cases. However it should be noted that the vast majority of persons utilising the waters of the Shannon catchment did so within the law.

### **Coarse Fish**

Ireland's recent economic success story together with enlargement of the EU has led to an increased number of foreign nationals either working or visiting here. Inevitably, angling habits and fisheries laws are different in the wide range of countries of origin and it is inevitable that there would be transgressions of Irish fisheries law in some instances. However where these violations have been serious prosecutions have been taken. Local anglers have express concern at perceived levels of poaching and taking of fish by foreign nationals to eat and this The Board views the removal of fish stocks seriously and is seeking ways of minimizing such occurrences and educating visiting anglers.

### **Salmon Protection**

The Board continued its salmon sea and land protection programme. During the most sensitive periods, the Air Corps and the Navy gave assistance in patrol operations. The ESB, who are the fishery owners on the main Shannon continued to police its fisheries upstream Limerick City. The fish pass at Ardnacrusha recorded 120 salmon passing upstream to the upper Shannon. A further 1227 were taken at Parteen Hatchery with 224 wild fish released upstream.

## **Angling, Promotion and Awareness**

### **Promotion and Awareness**

The Board undertook programmes to highlight the tourist angling resource of the Region including attending at angling fairs, producing information leaflets and working with Failte Ireland and the tourism sector to attract increased numbers of tourist anglers. Our awareness programmes also proved highly successful. Schools visits, REPs talks, and our Fisheries Awareness Week are just some of the activities which seek to build an understanding of the freshwater fish resource and attract people into angling.

### **Website**

The Boards continues to provide and update its website service, providing information, news, angling support and other ancillary eServices. It also serves as a portal and a marketing tool to attract tourist anglers to the Region, facilitating eBusiness and economic benefit to local communities. The site registered an increase in traffic of 30% on 2005 figures, with visitors from nearly 100 countries.

### **Angling**

The Shannon Region offers a wide variety of angling experiences including excellent sea angling from angling boats and from the shore, top class game and coarse fishing. Angling in the Region was highly regarded on some fisheries in 2006, with some welcome surprises such as the excellent Mayfly fishing for brown trout on the large Shannon lakes, Lough Ree and Lough Derg. Trout angling on rivers such as the Suck, Boyle, Fergus, Maigue and Inny produced some good catches

The spring salmon season of 2006 was very slow and uneventful, due in part, to very low water levels as the season opened. The River Feale again produced the best of the fishing with strong stocks of salmon, however the River Mulkear also providing some good returns. As part of the salmon conservation measures mandatory Catch and Release of salmon and sea trout was introduced into the Limerick Fishery District in September. At least 1623 salmon were caught in the Region with 401 being released.

The Board provided support to a number of angling competitions including the prestigious Dutch King of Clubs competition, which fished at a number of venues in Co Leitrim. 2006 was an excellent coarse angling year with reports of good catches from around the Region generally. One of the most notable events of the season was the increased abundance of bream showing in catch returns. Lough Derravaragh was a highlight with 11 specimen roach-bream hybrids verified by the Irish Specimen Fish Committee.

The Shannon Region again provided some excellent pike angling. Many pike waters, most notably Lough Ree, the mid sections of the River Shannon, the River Suck and Inny systems yielded quality fish in 2006. A Mullingar angler landed a specimen pike of over 30lbs, verified by the Irish Specimen Fish Committee, on Lough Ree in April. Over 200 fish were reported in the opening qualifier of the Kingspan Pike Championships fished on the River Inny.

The Shannon Region featured quite well in the Marine Specimen Fish Awards published by the Irish Specimen Fish Committee in 2006. Specimen fish included Scad, Ballan wrasse and John Dory. At least seven charter boats operated in the Shannon Region during the season.

As the weather improved in May a good start to the season was made with Mackerel turning up in force off the Loop Head. Early June brought some beautiful weather and Pollock up to 10lbs were quite a regular feature of the catches. The first Specimen John Dory of the year came on board on the 24<sup>th</sup> of June and was ratified by the Irish Specimen Fish Committee. Shannon Estuary fished well during the stormy days of the coast and good catches of Ray and Bull Huss were recorded.

### **Habitat Conservation**

2006 was another year of economic expansion in Ireland and this was reflected in the amount of new developments in the Region. Housing, road development and other

infrastructure projects continued at a very rapid rate, and inevitably, the scale of this development continues to place additional pressures on our water resources.

### **Water Quality**

The Board continued its water quality monitoring programme in key river and lake catchments. In all 2569 water samples were taken and analysed in our monitoring programme. This together with the work undertaken by the EPA and Local Authorities clearly shows that while some improvements are being made large section of our waterways continue to suffer form poor quality water. With the introduction of the EU Nitrates Directive at the end of 2006, the Board look forward to a reduction of agricultural nutrients into watercourses.

### **Roads**

Road development continued in the Region and the Board maintained its proactive stance to minimise the impact of these developments on water courses and fish passage. Nineteen major road developments projects are ongoing or nearing completion. These include route selection, preliminary and specimen design, and tendering phase and construction phase of a number of major road projects. This additional work load has put enormous pressure on the available resources of the Board.

### **Preservation and Rehabilitation of Fisheries**

Considerable progress has now been made in highlighting the Fisheries Board's requirements and the actions necessary to the fisheries habitat. In particular, the Board requires that there should be “**no net loss to fisheries**”. The Board continuities to make submissions on relevant planning applications to minimise there affects on the fisheries habitat.

The present level of development in the Region is such that it can no longer be satisfactorily address by the resources available to the Board.

### **Fish Kills**

In 2006 seven fish kill incidents were reported to the Board and these were investigated by Board staff. Although this figure is relatively low, it does highlight again the vulnerability of fish and our watercourses the toxic effects of water pollution.

### **Loss of Amenity**

The Board is becoming increasingly concerned at the loss of our waterways. This loss results from the removal of the riparian zone from road, housing and other developments and land improvement for agriculture or other uses. The increase in one off marinas, jettys and piers along our major lakes is of concern as these also affect the amenity value of the water bodies as well as fragment the riparian corridor and potentially negatively impact on the fish in-water habitat.

### **Abstraction**

Expanding population growth and increased individual consumption of water is placing increasing pressure on water resources, particularly during dry water periods. Projections have shown that demand for water will increase further due to the expanding population and increased development. Many projects are being planned including the Lough Ree / Dublin Water abstraction proposal which the Board is actively engaged in. The Board has sought to minimise the damage caused by abstraction and advocates water conservation and believes that more could be done to conserve and recycle water and reduce wastage.

### **Corporate Governance**

The Shannon Regional Fisheries Board is committed to maintaining the highest standards of corporate governance and has adopted the Code of Practice for the Governance of State Bodies 2001. In addition the Board also follows the guidance of the Ethics in Public Office Act 1995 and the Standards in Public Office Act, 2001. In association with all Fisheries Boards a Performance Contract was entered in to with the Department of Communications, Marine and Natural Resources and the Board was accountable to the Minister for its implementation.

## **The Board**

The Board has a total of 22 members who have varied backgrounds, skills and experience and each brings independent views and objectives, representing the various stakeholders with an interest in fisheries with wide community base. The Board has a number of Sub-committees to assist it in its work, including the Policy, Eel and Salmon sub committees and the Audit Committee. These Committees meet as required with the Audit Committee meeting on 4 occasions.

## **Liaison and Interagency Work**

The co-operation and assistance of the Department of Communications, Marine and Natural Resources, other Fisheries Boards, ESB, Garda Síochána, Navy, Air Corp, Angling Clubs, Local and Regional Authorities, Tourism Authorities, OPW, and its many stakeholders is acknowledged by the Board

## **Safety and Staff Development**

The Board continues to review its safety programmes and training needs, to ensure the well-being of its staff and costumers. In 2006 the Board reviewed its safety procedures and policies. Comprehensives checks were carried out on equipment to ensure safe operation. Training was also provided to maintain and upskill staff Arising from the staffs training needs the Board organised local and with the 7 other Fisheries Board organised national training courses including, team building, management development, boat safety, customer service, first aid and child protection. The Board also sponsored a number a staff to undertake self development courses. In all the Boards training programme provided 435 training man days.

## **PMDS**

Performance, Management and Development System is now fully integrated with the organisation. Reviewing the performance of individual staff members against objectives set and inline the business plans, while delivering on individual training needs.

### **Fisheries Development Societies**

The two Fisheries Development Societies based in the Shannon Region undertook Fisheries development and conservation work on a wide variety of projects. Both Societies provided an annual report and their accounts in compliance with their requirements.



## The Shannon Regional Fisheries Board

### Income and Expenditure Account for the year to 31 December 2006

| <b>Income</b>                      | <b>Notes</b> | <b>2006</b><br>€ | <b>2005</b><br>€ |
|------------------------------------|--------------|------------------|------------------|
| Oireachtas Income                  | 1            | 3,265,176        | 2,940,469        |
| Other Income                       | 2            | 638,724          | 665,966          |
| Net Deferred Funding for Pensions  | 13(c)        |                  | 486,000          |
|                                    |              | <u>3,903,900</u> | <u>4,092,435</u> |
| <b>Transfer to Capital Account</b> | 11           | <u>(291,039)</u> | <u>(294,336)</u> |
|                                    |              | <u>3,612,861</u> | <u>3,798,099</u> |
| <b>Expenditure</b>                 |              |                  |                  |
| Administration                     | 3            | 442,896          | 465,597          |
| Operations                         | 4            | 3,279,950        | 3,397,681        |
|                                    |              | <u>3,722,846</u> | <u>3,863,278</u> |
| <b>Surplus for the year</b>        |              | (109,985)        | (65,179)         |
| <b>Surplus at 1 January</b>        |              | <u>145,661</u>   | <u>210,840</u>   |
| <b>Surplus at 31 December</b>      |              | <u>35,676</u>    | <u>145,661</u>   |

The results for the year relate to continuing operations.

The Statement of Accounting Policies and Notes 1 to 17 form an integral part of these Financial Statements.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Chief Executive Officer

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Chairman

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

## Western Regional Fisheries Board

### **Notable Achievements in 2006**

- Excellent salmon fishing on Galway Fishery with 900 fish caught the highest total for many years.
- 400 salmon caught on River Erriff, well up on previous years.
- Two major research projects completed as part of the Water Framework Directive.
- Bathymetry Project surveyed the bathymetry of over 100 small-medium lakes in the region.
- Small Streams Risk Score project surveyed 250 sites on small streams to assess eutrophication and pollution risk from small streams not included in EPA survey programmes.
- Planning permission obtained for fish counter hut on Bunowen River, Co. Mayo.
- Fish counter completed and fully operational on weir at Ballynahinch.
- Updated fish counter installed and operational at Inagh.
- SUMBAWS salmon lice treatment project successfully completed.
- Good sea trout runs in rivers close to Bertraghboy Bay, where cod farming is now in operation.
- New facility in Galway District purchased and upgraded for staff office accommodation and boat storage.
- Maintenance and habitat work carried out on 28 streams and rivers in Corrib catchment.
- Ferox radio-tagging project implemented successfully. Tracking is establishing migration patterns and spawning distribution in the catchment.
- Lagarosiphon weed control project commenced in winter 2006, in conjunction with National Parks & Wildlife Service.

## **Salmon**

The commercial salmon fisheries did not reach their quota in 2006 again. However, rod fishing catches were well up on previous years in some fisheries, with 900 fish landed at Galway, the highest total for many years. 400 salmon were caught on the Erriff, again well up on previous years. Elsewhere, catches were down on the Bunowen, with low water for much of the summer. Catches were well up at Screebe and Ballynahinch.

## **Sea Trout**

Sea trout runs improved again in fisheries close to Bertraghboy Bay, where cod farming has replaced salmon. Casla, Ballynahinch and Inagh all reported improved sea trout runs and fishing, and the fish counters on these rivers bear this out. In contrast, fisheries close to Kilkerrin Bay and Killary Harbour, where salmon farming is still operational, suffered another disastrous run of sea trout. Only 158 sea trout entered the Erriff River, where full trapping facilities counting and measurement. All fish were small (under 30cm) and in poor condition.

## **Fish Counters**

Fish counters were completed and installed successfully at Ballynahinch and Inagh, and the fish counter at Casla was upgraded. All three counters are now operated by fisheries board staff. The data provided by these counters will inform decision-making on salmon quotas and fisheries management within the catchment.

## **Water Framework Directive**

The WRFB was contracted by the Western River Basin District to carry out two major projects during 2006.

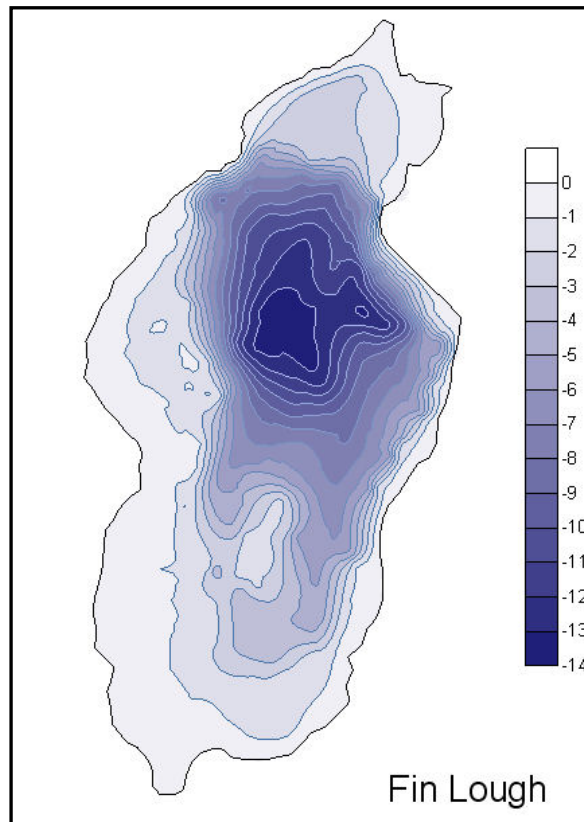
## **Small Streams Risk Scores (SSRS)**

This project surveyed 250 sites on smaller 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> order streams feeding into main tributaries. These smaller streams are not included in the EPA water quality surveys. Staff from each district was trained in survey techniques and macroinvertebrate identification.

Each team then surveyed the sites in their district. The project was carried during spring-summer 2006. Results were collated and a report delivered to the WRBD on time.

### **Lake Bathymetry Project**

The board was contracted to carry out bathymetric surveys of over 100 small-medium lakes. This survey was carried out in conjunction with River Monitoring Technologies Ltd. Staff used mobile sonar equipment mounted on small boats to survey the lakes. Data collected was interpreted with specialise software and used to create bathymetric contour maps of each lake. The output and report was delivered to the WRBD on time.



### **Staff**

Two staff retired during the year. Assistant Inspector Ruaidhri de Barra and Fisheries officer Joe Cusack retired after many years service. The position of CEO remained unfilled and Dr. Greg Forde continued as Acting CEO.

### **Protection and Development**

A very significant effort was made during the year to ensure that all fish were protected. Staff were deployed counting redds, improving river habitat, rescuing fish in low water, carrying out stock management in key wild brown trout fisheries, implementing the salmon carcass tagging and quota scheme patrolling rivers, estuaries and the sea

undertaking sea lice inspections and where deemed necessary stripping fish for enhancement and ranching purposes.

New legislation regarding pike and coarse fish protection was introduced, and this was implemented by staff. Concerns continue over the illegal taking of coarse fish in some areas.

### **Aquaculture**

The Board continued to monitor sea lice on salmon farms in conjunction with the Marine Institute. The Board remains deeply concerned that the problems in the aquaculture industry are not being properly addressed.

The new cod farm at Bertraghboy Bay produced harvestable fish for the first time. The removal of salmon from farms in this bay has coincided with the sudden upturn in sea trout populations in nearby rivers, and it is hoped that cod farming will continue to be successful here.

### **Aquatic Environment**

During the early part of the year weather conditions were generally favourable for fish life but sunny weather and low rainfall put pressure on fish stocks. A total of 746 water samples were tested.

A major fish kill occurred on the Clarin River in Athenry during July 2006, when a sewage pumping station malfunctioned. Board staff traced the source of the pollution and the problem was remedied swiftly, however high temperatures and low water levels meant that significant damage had already been done to fish stocks. A prosecution is pending in the District Court.

Deficiencies still remain in a number of sewage treatment facilities in the Region most notably in Headford, Clonbur, Oughterard, Claregalway, Clifden, Ballindine and

Dunmore. The Board is continuing to endeavour to get the replacement of these works prioritised.

Planning proposals are proving to be an increasing drain on Board staff resources. The assessment of very many planning applications annually takes a significant amount of time in addition to the number of appeals lodged annually. It is not possible for the Board to monitor all applications and inevitably some are passed without the standard of environmental safeguard the Board would see as necessary.

### **New Store in Galway District**

The purchase of a new premises was completed in 2006. These premises will be used by the staff of the Galway District, and will contain boat and equipment storage, office facilities and staff facilities. District staff carried out extensive works on the premises during the year to convert the upper floor for office and staff use. The Galway District has had no staff facilities for many years and had to rent storage facilities for boats and equipment, so this store will fill a very important role over the coming years.

**The Western Regional Fisheries Board**

**Income and Expenditure Account for the year to 31 December 2006**

| <b>Income</b>                      | <b>Notes</b> | <b>2006</b><br>€ | <b>2005</b><br>€ |
|------------------------------------|--------------|------------------|------------------|
| Oireachtas Income                  | 1            | 3,679,802        | 3,296,166        |
| Other Income                       | 2            | 908,359          | 1,081,850        |
| Net Deferred Funding for Pensions  | 10(b)        | (331,612)        | 468,687          |
|                                    |              | <u>4,256,548</u> | <u>4,846,703</u> |
| <b>Transfer to Capital Account</b> | 11           | <u>(776,544)</u> | <u>(77,471)</u>  |
|                                    |              | <u>3,480,004</u> | <u>4,769,232</u> |
| <b>Expenditure</b>                 |              |                  |                  |
| Administration                     | 3            | 812,257          | 1,223,771        |
| Operations                         | 4            | 2,937,006        | 3,100,971        |
|                                    |              | <u>3,749,263</u> | <u>4,324,742</u> |
| <b>Surplus for the year</b>        |              | (269,258)        | 444,490          |
| <b>Surplus at 1 January</b>        |              | <u>700,637</u>   | <u>256,147</u>   |
| <b>Surplus at 31 December</b>      |              | <u>431,379</u>   | <u>700,637</u>   |

The results for the year relate to continuing operations.

The Statement of Accounting Policies and Notes 1 to 17 form an integral part of these Financial Statements.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Chief Executive Officer

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Board Member

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

## North Western Regional Fisheries Board

In line with its five-year strategic development plan, the Board made significant progress across the full range of its statutory remit. Some of the more significant developments included the following:

- Purchase of the Cloongee Fishery on the River Moy;
- Provision of an Angling Centre on the Cathedral Beat, Moy Fishery;
- Publication of Report on water quality at Carrowmore Lake;
- Construction of major weir on Owenmore River (Bangor) to accommodate a new fish counter;
- Report on the operation of the Munhin Fish counter 2003-2005;
- Installation and operation of two experimental fish counters in the Moy Fishery traps;
- Provision of new access, car park and launching facilities at Lough Gill;
- Adoption of Owenduff Catchment Management Plan;
- Publication of new sea angling guide;
- Completion of Phase 1 of the Drumcliff River development
- Provision of new and improved stores at Bangor Erris.

### **Protection and Conservation of Fisheries**

The year was an exceptionally busy one for the protection service with an upsurge in illegal salmon fishing in various parts of the region. The coastal area was patrolled regularly throughout the salmon season and the main salmon rivers and lakes were patrolled throughout the year. Oyster fisheries were patrolled during the dredging season and during periods suitable for hand picking of oysters which is illegal. Patrols were carried out to ensure that regulations were complied with on trout fisheries and eel fishing activity was also monitored to ensure compliance with the law.



There was noticeable increase in illegal fishing on the Moy in late July due to an increase in the price of wild salmon. This probably also accounted for a considerable level of illegal activity by a small number of commercial salmon fishermen along the north Mayo coast following the close of the commercial salmon fishing season. Board staff devoted considerable attention to this problem and a number of prosecutions were pending at the year end. Staff in the Bangor District also had to cope with an upsurge in illegal activity during the August/September period as a late run of salmon, combined with low water conditions, made rivers very vulnerable to poachers. Board staff was viciously assaulted in the course of a patrol in the Glenamoy area and, at the year end, prosecutions were pending in respect of two separate incidents involving assault of staff.

### **Management of Salmon Stocks**

Salmon spawning was monitored in all Districts and, where possible, redd counts were obtained in order to ascertain the level of spawning. Commercial salmon fishing quotas were allocated following consultation with the relevant Fishery District Committees. Tags were distributed and commercial fishermen's licences and logbooks were checked regularly during the fishing season. A total of 3,397 angling licences/logbooks were checked to ensure compliance with the tagging regulations. Catch data in respect of 8,111 angling and commercial licences and 3,901 logbooks was input to the national database. Return of logbooks by anglers, at 47 %, was again very disappointing.

The Board's fish counter on the Munhin River operated throughout the year and a report was produced on the operation of the counter in the years 2003-05. A large weir was constructed on the Owenmore River to accommodate a fish counter which will be commissioned in 2006. Two experimental fish counters were installed in the traps on the River Moy, at Ballina, and plans were advanced, in conjunction with fishery owners, for the provision of counters on the Owenduff and Newport Rivers. The Marine Institute counter on the Ballysadare River was also monitored.

## **Catchment Management**

In accordance with its Strategic Development Plan, 2002-2006, the Board continued to move towards a catchment based approach to management of the major river systems. A Fisheries Catchment Manager was deployed full time in the Bangor District and another officer was deployed part time in the Moy catchment. A Fisheries Catchment Management Plan for the Owenduff River system was adopted by the Board in 2005 and a draft fisheries catchment management plan was also prepared for the Glenamoy River.

Good progress was made on implementation of the Owenmore Fisheries Catchment Management Plan which had been published the previous year. Stakeholders contributed towards the construction costs of a major weir on the Owenmore River. Following two years of research, in conjunction with the EPA and Mayo Co. Council, a comprehensive report on phosphorous discharges to Carrowmore Lake was produced, circulated to stakeholders and the findings presented to various interest groups. In conjunction with Bord na Mona, a rehabilitation plan for those areas of the catchment which have been affected by peat harvesting operations, was implemented.

For the fifth consecutive year, electro fishing surveys were carried out at 37 sites on the Owenmore, Owenduff, Glenamoy and Newport River systems in order to monitor stocks of juvenile fish.

## **Development and Improvement of Fisheries**

A new Angling Centre was constructed at the Cathedral Beat of the River Moy in Ballina. It includes an anglers' lounge together with ghillie's desk, toilet and storage facilities. The Board provided a new access point to Lough Gill at Hazelwood, near Sligo town and, extensive improvement works were carried out on the Drumcliffe River. In conjunction with FAS, a Community Employment Scheme also commenced and, in excess, of 30 km of channel in the Moy catchment was cleared of excessive shrubbery.

A number of enhancement projects were completed in association with other bodies. These included improvements to the Manulla River and Bohaun Stream in association

with the OPW and to spawning/nursery streams in the Lough Conn Catchment in association with Lough Conn and Lough Cullin Anglers' Association. The latter works were funded by Ballina Beverages Ltd.

At Lough Arrow, improvement works were carried out on the Aughagowla and Derrylea Streams and small incubation units were operated on the Cartron, Flanagan's and Aughagowla Streams. In the Bangor District enhancement works were completed on the Owenmore and Inver Rivers comprising bank protection, road improvements and the provision of a small parking area.

Water flow was maintained in the River Deel and a number of fish salvage operations were undertaken. Arising from the operation of the Glencullin salmon incubation unit, 111,164 eyed ova were planted out in March, 2005 in tributaries of the Owenmore system and a further 153,800 salmon ova were put to hatch in December, 2005. The Board continued its programme of stocking selected trout fisheries with hatchery reared fish. Stock management on the region's principal trout fisheries also continued and 741 pike, weighing 1.6 tonnes (average 2.2 kg) were transferred to pike fisheries in the region.

### **Protection of Water Quality**

The protection and restoration of water quality was again a high priority for the Board. Disruption of angling on Carrowmore Lake, due to an algal bloom, was again a cause for serious concern. The Board produced a report on a two year study of Carrowmore Lake which found that discharges of phosphorous to the lake were extremely elevated and needed to be reduced by at least 45%. The study confirmed that land use practices, principally agriculture and forestry, were the main contributors to the enrichment problem. The report also made a series of recommendations aimed at redressing the problem and these were being progressed at year-end.

The Board dealt with a wide range of infrastructural projects which impacted on water quality. Planning applications were monitored and individual applications were reviewed. The Board lodged four appeals to An Bord Pleanala, three of which were successful and

one was withdrawn by the Board. Two appeals lodged by the Board in 2004 were also determined, in favour of the Board, in 2005. Three prosecutions were initiated during the year. Two were successful and one, which was dismissed, was under appeal at the year end.

The Board commenced a new water sampling programme in the Lough Conn/Cullin sub-catchment with a view to identifying specific sources of phosphorous. One fish kill was investigated during the year and related to large-scale mortalities of roach on Loughs Conn and Cullin. The fish kill was not pollution related and examination of roach by Marine Institute pathologists failed to establish a definitive cause for the mass mortalities.

### **Promotion and Marketing of Angling**

The Board carried out a range of activities aimed at attracting more anglers to the region and encouraging more young people to participate in angling as well as enhancing the reputation of the area as an angling destination. The quality of fishing on offer in the region was advertised in various angling and tourism publications and favourable articles on angling in the region appeared in a number of Irish, UK and US angling magazines.

A new Guide to Sea Angling in the North Western Region was published. The full colour publication contains a wide range of information on boat and shore angling available throughout the region as well as contact details for angling clubs, boat hire operators. A weekly report was produced during the main fishing season and this was circulated to local and national media and, through the CFB, to international media as well as being posted weekly to the Board's web site, [www.northwestfisheries.ie](http://www.northwestfisheries.ie), which received 33,123 visits in 2005 compared with 24,568 visits in 2004, an increase of 35%.

Analysis of angling licence sales revealed that anglers came to the region from at least 31 countries. Of the 7,967 licences sold, 7,002 (70%) were purchased by anglers from outside the region while 4,188 (53%) were purchased by out of state visitors. Six juvenile angling events were organised by the Board and these proved highly popular with boys and girls ranging from six to eighteen years of age. In conjunction with Mayo Education

Centre, the *Something Fishy* programme was launched in national schools in Co. Mayo and ongoing support was provided to participating schools.

### **Management of Board Fisheries**

During the year the Board acquired and managed the Cloongee Fishery, on the River Moy. A total of 5,336 rod days were fished on Board fisheries in 2005, an increase of 3% on 2004. Permit and boat hire income on Board fisheries amounted to €255,529 in 2005 compared with €224,261 in 2004, an increase of 14%.

Angling on the Moy Fishery was allocated in accordance with the Board's criteria and 3,725 anglers from 21 countries were accommodated. Booking arrangements were operated for all other Board fisheries and these were advertised on the Board's web site and in angling publications. An extensive, phased stocking programme ensured that the Board's put and take fisheries had adequate trout stocks throughout the angling season.

The Board again utilised its fisheries to promote juvenile angling. As well as the events reported above (Promotion of Angling), the Board allocated 154 rods to juvenile anglers, at a nominal charge, on the Moy Fishery Cathedral Beat. These young anglers enjoyed excellent sport and caught a total of 49 salmon during the season.

### **The North Western Fisheries Development Society**

The North Western Fisheries Development Society was inactive in 2005.

### **Fish Catches and Angling**

#### **Commercial Salmon Fishing**

Commercial salmon fishing was poor in 2005 with fishermen in all three districts failing to catch their allocated quotas. Commercial fishermen recorded a catch of 25,457 salmon in their logbooks, one of the lowest on record. However, the actual catch was believed to be significantly lower as it is known that catch figures were inflated in many cases.

### **Salmon Angling**

Salmon angling was also poor on most of the region's fisheries. As usual, however, the Moy fared better than most rivers and had quite good fishing with the Ballisodare Fishery also doing well. The total rod catch for the region was 11,244 fish of which 8,031 (71%) were taken on the Moy system.

### **Brown Trout Fishing**

Brown trout fishing on the major lakes was again disappointing though Lough Conn continued to show signs of improvement with a further reduction in the average weight (1.1 lbs) of the 2,280 trout caught. A fish stock survey carried out on Lough Conn during the year indicated that, while the stock of trout was still poor, there was much healthier spread of fish across the various age classes. On the regions other main trout lake, Lough Arrow, fishing was extremely disappointing.

### **Rainbow Trout Fishing**

Ballin Lough (near Westport) and Lough Nasool (near Lough Arrow) again proved popular with local and visiting anglers. Ballin Lough accounted for 519 rod days and produced a total of 906 rainbow trout of which 466 were returned alive.

### **Sea Trout Fishing**

Carrowmore was again unfishable for much of the season, due to an algal bloom, but the Moy estuary provided reasonable fishing throughout most of the season with a reported catch of 1,751 trout.

### **Sea Angling**

2005 was a reasonably successful year for sea angling and four national championships were fished in the region. A number of specimens were recorded from Achill, Clew Bay and Killala Bay. Shore angling was also quite popular with good catches of pollack, coalfish, wrasse, ray, plaice, mackerel and sea trout being landed. Rock and pier fishing throughout the region also attracted good numbers of continental anglers.

### **Commercial Eel Fishing**

Eighteen long line and fyke net licence holders caught a total of 11.6 tonnes of eels in 2005 compared with 16.1 tonnes in 2004. The bulk of the catch was taken on Loughs Conn, Arrow and Gill.

### **Corporate Governance**

The Board complied with virtually all of the requirements of the *Code of Practice for Governance of State Bodies (CPGSB)* and continued to modernise its corporate governance and management systems. It produced and implemented a Business Plan for the year based on its 5-year Strategic Development Plan. Quarterly reports on the implementation of the plan were prepared and reviewed by the Board. Draft accounts for 2005 were prepared and submitted to the Department of Communications, Marine and Natural Resources (DCMNR) in accordance with the requirements of the *CPGSB* and to the Comptroller and Auditor General for audit in accordance with statutory requirements. The Board operated within budget for the year and submitted accounts monthly to the DCMNR. The Board also reviewed monthly accounts periodically.

An internal audit of the Board's financial management procedures was carried out and the consultants reported that the Board management had implemented an adequate system of internal financial control in the areas which were subject to audit and made some recommendations for improvement. Eleven Board meetings were held during the year and the Board's audit sub-committee met nine times and had discussions with both the internal and external auditors. Board members were reminded of their responsibilities in relation to the provisions of the Ethics in Public Office Acts 1995 and 2001.

The Board's Safety Committee met four times to review safety matters and made recommendations in relation to elements of the Board's Safety Statement and also worked on the preparation and adoption of Standard Operating Procedures. Two accidents occurred which, in accordance with legislation, were reported to the Health and Safety Authority. A number of training courses, on safety related issues, were attended by Board staff.

**The North Western Regional Fisheries Board**

**Income and Expenditure Account**  
**for the year ended 31st December 2006**

|                                       | Notes            | 2006<br>€          | 2005<br>€          |
|---------------------------------------|------------------|--------------------|--------------------|
| <b>Income</b>                         |                  |                    |                    |
| Oireachtas Income                     | <b>1 &amp; 2</b> | 2,898,944          | 2,811,223          |
| Net deferred funding for pensions     | <b>15 (b)</b>    | 580,000            | 499,028            |
| Other Income                          | <b>3</b>         | 1,006,086          | 862,563            |
|                                       |                  | <u>4,485,030</u>   | <u>4,172,814</u>   |
| Transfer to Capital Account           | <b>12</b>        | (550,033)          | (336,255)          |
|                                       |                  | <u>3,934,997</u>   | <u>3,836,559</u>   |
| <b>Expenditure</b>                    |                  |                    |                    |
| Administration costs                  | <b>4</b>         | (1,281,261)        | (1,106,479)        |
| Operation Costs                       | <b>5</b>         | (2,838,478)        | (2,386,355)        |
|                                       |                  | <u>(4,119,739)</u> | <u>(3,492,834)</u> |
| <b>Surplus/(Deficit) for the year</b> |                  | (184,742)          | 343,725            |
| <b>Surplus at 1st January</b>         |                  | 586,503            | 242,778            |
| <b>Surplus at 31st December</b>       |                  | <u>401,761</u>     | <u>586,503</u>     |

The Statements of Accounting Policies and Notes 1 to 17 form an integral part of these Financial Statements.

Signed:

\_\_\_\_\_  
Chief Executive Officer

\_\_\_\_\_  
Board Member

Date:



## Northern Regional Fisheries Board

### **Angling**

The Northern Region once again claimed the first Irish salmon of the 2005 season. The fish weighed 8lb and was caught at 1.14pm by 14 year old, Andrew Desmond of Dunfanaghy, representing his first ever salmon. The run of spring salmon was good on the Lennon and very good from April onward on the Drowes. The Gweebarra was notable for the poor run throughout the whole season.

The grilse run to Donegal was late due in part to the low water conditions prevalent throughout much of the summer. The grilse run was poor with average weights of the grilse to rod and line down on previous years. Improved rainfall through late August and September resulted in a decent late run of grilse to the Eske and Eany rivers. Other rivers fished reasonably well through the season although low water levels and bright conditions resulted in attendance being down on most fisheries.

Good sea trout fishing was recorded on the R. Lackagh, Eske and Erne fisheries with the Erne estuary in particular yielding exceptional returns of well conditioned finnock and adult sea trout. L. Melvin had a mixed year though the early fishing for brown trout was excellent. Good numbers of salmon were present throughout the season although returns were impacted by frequently difficult angling conditions.

Sea angling was good throughout the season from most ports and marks with some good flatfish angling off some of the beaches. Blue Fin Tuna catches were down on recent seasons, but continues to attract huge interest amongst visiting anglers.

The Board continued to support key local and international coarse angling events throughout the season including the NCFFI All Ireland championships held on L. Oughter in July and the British King of Clubs in September. Services provided by the Board include preparation of swims, signposts, pegging, stewarding and weighing in.

Match returns confirm coarse fish stocks in the Cavan-Monaghan area to be abundant, as evidenced by average returns of almost 14 lbs per peg during the King of Clubs. However, concerns persist regarding the decline in numbers of large bream recorded in recent years visiting which are valued by many UK coarse anglers in particular.

### **Fisheries Development**

The Board completed an extensive audit of over 2,000 fishing stands and structures throughout the Northern region. Prioritised remedial repair work was undertaken on the Eany, Eske and Owenea Rivers in Donegal and in selected coarse and game fisheries in the Upper Erne. Whilst significant progress was made in relation to replacement or renovation of angling structures under the TAM, extensive additional funding will be required to bring angling facilities up to a safe standard for public access.

Limited fisheries development was carried out in 2005 due to the lack of funding. A fish pass was installed on Breenagh Falls on the Swilly River. Access roads and car park facilities were provided at L. Rooskey and Natooley. A major upgrade of access and car parking facilities was completed at Rockfield Lake, Killeshandra, with the assistance of Cavan County Council Peace II Task Force funds. Access facilities to L. Scur, Keshcarrigan were also upgraded.

### **Cross-Border Funding**

In co-operation with the Fishery Conservancy Board (Northern Ireland) and the ERFB, the Northern Board succeeded in securing significant capital and development funding (€400,000) under the EU INTERREG IIIA measure for the enhancement and management of cross-border fisheries.

### **Protection and Surveillance (Donegal and Upper Erne)**

Capital funding permitted purchase of a vehicle, 4.5 m RIB and safety equipment to bolster inshore protection. Purchase of night vision equipment and upgrading of both marine and portable radio communications has significantly increased effectiveness of protection patrols.

### **Fish Health Monitoring (Upper Erne)**

Purchase of a vehicle, 3m RIB, outboard motor and survey nets greatly enhanced delivery of the Board's ongoing coarse fish health survey in the upper Erne.

### **Lough Melvin - Catchment Management and Environmental Monitoring**

Aerial digital photography of inflowing streams surrounding L. Melvin was completed as part of ongoing catchment management. Purchase of state of the art Trimble Geo-Explorer GPS handheld palm top units, has enabled fisheries and habitat assessment data to be recorded directly in the field with sub-meter accuracy. The Board's GIS system was significantly upgraded.

### **Lough Melvin - Habitat Enhancement of Feeder Streams**

Major habitat enhancement (€80,000) was completed on L. Melvin feeder streams including introduction of spawning gravels, bank clearance, installation of riparian fencing and construction of a stepped fish-pass on the County R.

### **Northern Regional Development Society**

A total of €7,438 was allocated for payment to the Northern Regional Fisheries Development Society in respect of works completed in the public interest in 2005. Works undertaken in 2005 include construction of stone and timber weirs on the Crohyboyle and Crovey rivers, both of which are owned by the Rosses Angling Association. The Development Society also approved funding for improvement works on selected fisheries in counties Monaghan, Cavan and Leitrim. These projects were part-funded by the EU LEADER programme in support of development of coarse fisheries along the border region.

### **Fish Counters**

A total of 5 fish counters are located in the Northern Region- the Eany, Eske and Dungloe (Rosses) counters are currently managed by the Marine Institute, with the remaining 2 counters installed and operated by the ESB on the Erne and Clady/Crolla systems. Total salmon counts for the Eany was 2,545 upstream and 712 downstream. Incomplete counts

were achieved from both the Eske and Rosses counters due to technical difficulties, but indications are that both had good late runs of salmon and sea trout, respectively.

### **Promotion & Marketing**

A new angling brochure was produced for Co. Monaghan in association with Co. Monaghan Tourism Marketing Executive and the ERFB.

A Donegal Game Angling guide containing in depth information on all major fisheries in the Donegal region was once again produced and circulated widely to anglers and tackle dealers. Angling newsletters for the Eany, Eske and Owenea Rivers were circulated to distributors and anglers. Angling reports were provided through the year to the national and local press and CFB and North West Tourism websites. Final preparations were made for launch of the NRFB website in early 2006. A number of educational talks on fisheries ecology were given to schools, colleges and REPS courses through the year. A series of Something Fishy presentations were given to primary and secondary schools throughout the Northern region.

### **Protection and Conservation of Fisheries**

Good early run of salmon to the Donegal rivers necessitated increased allocation of protection resources to river and estuary patrols. Regular offshore RIB patrols were supplemented by LPV and Naval patrols from May to July. Joint RIB patrols were carried out in conjunction with the North-western Regional Fisheries Board and the Garda Marine unit. The Board continued protection on L. Swilly to prevent illegal hand-picking of oysters.

11 prosecutions were initiated through the year with 8,465 yards of net seized. The return rate of angler logbooks at 50% remain unacceptably low and is compounded by poor returns from 1 day, Foyle extension and Special Local licence holders chiefly from N. Ireland.

Commercial salmon catches from Donegal were low due to a poor run of grilse. Despite a significant reduction in the total allowable catch (Letterkenny 14,639; Ballyshannon 8,747), licensed fishermen failed to catch the district quota with 94% of the TAC landed.

### **The Aquatic Environment**

An extensive programme of lake fish surveys took place throughout the region in association with CFB staff in preparation for requirements under the Water Framework Directive. A total of 28 lakes were surveyed throughout the region in 2005 providing essential baseline data on abundance and population structure of fish communities according to typology, water quality and depth. Further lakes have been identified for inclusion in 2006.

### **Upper Erne**

No cases were taken in relation to water pollution in the Upper Erne in 2005. 160 warning letters were issued following farm surveys. 3 fish kills were recorded in lakes. The Board is actively engaged in a joint project with the Marine Institute and CFB monitoring lake water quality and fish health status to determine the underlying cause of fish kill events.

Issues of environmental concern arose from the high numbers of applications to Local Authorities for planning permission to carry out housing development particularly in relation to the adequacy of mitigation measures to treat effluents from proposed developments. This includes the risk of overloading sewage treatment plants and the adequacy of percolation proposed for developments in areas not serviced by the sewerage system. The lack of phosphorus removal also warrants attention. Additional issues arising include the increased risk of flooding, with attendant pressures for drainage and culverting of watercourses due to the increased run off arising from the loss of field surfaces and wetland habitat and the loss of the water retention afforded by such land.

### **Donegal, N. Leitrim and N. Sligo**

Increased development continues to put severe strain on Board resources regarding planning referrals. An unprecedented number of planning application referrals were made to the Board during the year ranging from single houses in sensitive catchments to major commercial and retail development in more developed and promoted fisheries. The Boards statutory remit in the planning process is an essential one in ensuring that developments as proposed are sustainable and will not impinge upon the aquatic resource to the detriment of our natural heritage.

Key infrastructural projects requiring monitoring and input from the Board included the Bundoran/Ballyshannon By-Pass, embankment works on Owenea R. as part of a road widening proposal, OPW drainage maintenance programme on the R. Duff, Ardara Sewerage Scheme and proposed water abstraction from L. Greenan to augment the Letterkenny water supply.

Significant increases in forestry issues have arisen relating to harvesting activities by Coillte Teo due to the commercial crop reaching maturity and requiring various levels of harvesting intervention. Following application for a 5 year felling licence (instead of the usual annual licence) a series of meetings were held to identify sensitive sites and agree appropriate harvesting management to protect susceptible fisheries.

Recent warm summers have given rise to increased incidences of marine algal blooms along the coast. Blooms were recorded at Mullaghmore, Rossnowlagh, Coolmore and the Lackagh estuary. Mortalities of shellfish, sand eels, flounder, dogfish, salmon and sea trout subsequently occurred and gives rise for concern. The blooms were not isolated to the Donegal coast and were widespread along the western and southern seaboard. Given the anticipated change in weather patterns, the incidences of large marine algal blooms may become a regular feature in future years.

**Staff**

The Board continued to invest heavily in the training and development of staff. All staff completed PMDS (Phase 3) training. Additional courses and seminars run included:- power boat handling, drainage operations (CFB/O.P.W.), native woodland restoration (Coillte), G.I.S. (Compass Informatics) and G.P.S. (Survey Supplies). 3 staff members completed courses in Fisheries Management in Sligo RTC and 1 staff member completed a B.Sc. in Environmental Science.

The Board maintained its excellent record in relation to health and safety through an ongoing programme of training, safety committee meetings, risk assessments and remedial action. Safety training carried out during the year included: Marine Fire Safety, Sea survival, Health and Safety, PSSR, and Safety Representative training. Significant funding was allocated for purchase and replacement of safety equipment for staff, for increased security of Board premises and for provision of improved access for the public to Board facilities.

**The Northern Regional Fisheries Board**

**Income and Expenditure Account for the year to 31 December 2006**

| <b>Income</b>                      | <b>Notes</b> | <b>2006<br/>€</b> | <b>2005<br/>€</b> |
|------------------------------------|--------------|-------------------|-------------------|
| Oireachtas Income                  | 1            | 3,322,985         | 2,564,823         |
| E.U. Funding                       | 2            | -                 | 32,000            |
| Other Income                       | 3            | 498,982           | 370,881           |
| Net Deferred Funding for Pensions  | 15(b)        | 410,695           | 380,703           |
|                                    |              | <u>4,232,662</u>  | <u>3,348,407</u>  |
| <b>Transfer to Capital Account</b> | 11           | <u>(529,222)</u>  | <u>(48,992)</u>   |
|                                    |              | <u>3,703,440</u>  | <u>3,299,415</u>  |
| <b>Expenditure</b>                 |              |                   |                   |
| Administration                     | 4            | 1,562,911         | 1,062,043         |
| Operations                         | 5            | 2,095,249         | 2,140,611         |
|                                    |              | <u>3,658,160</u>  | <u>3,202,654</u>  |
| <b>Surplus for the year</b>        |              | 45,280            | 96,761            |
| <b>Surplus at 1 January</b>        |              | <u>450,081</u>    | <u>353,320</u>    |
| <b>Surplus at 31 December</b>      |              | <u>495,361</u>    | <u>450,081</u>    |

The results for the year relate to continuing operations.

The Statement of Accounting Policies and Notes 1 to 16 form an integral part of these Financial Statements.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Chief Executive Officer

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Board Member

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date



