



# **Report to the Minister for Communications, Energy and Natural Resources**

## **The Central and Regional Fisheries Boards Annual Report 2008**



**The Central and Regional  
Fisheries Boards**

## **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, Energy and Natural Resources.

The principal functions of the Central Fisheries Board are to:

- advise the Minister for Communications, Energy & 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. Éamon de Buitléar

Mr. Paddy Byrne

Mr. Eamon Cusack

Ms. Paula Carroll

Mr. John Henry McLaughlin

Mr. Myles Kelly

Mr. Naul McCole

### **Senior Management Team**

Dr. Ciaran Byrne

Chief Executive Officer

Dr. Cathal Gallagher

Director of Field Services

Mr. David Byrne

Director of Promotion and Marketing

Mr. Kieran Murphy

Director of Human Resources

Ms. Nuala O'Byrne

Director of Finance and ICT

Dr. Cathal Gallagher

Director of Research and Development

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## **Chairmans Statement**

I am pleased to be able to introduce the 2008 Annual Report for the Central and Regional Fisheries Boards. The report presents a summary of the work undertaken and services provided by the Boards in 2008.

In July, John O' Connor retired as Chief Executive Officer after 11 years service in this position. The Board are indebted to John for his dedication and commitment to the entire inland fisheries sector over this period and for bringing the Central Fisheries Board to the excellent position it is in today. Dr Ciaran Byrne, was appointed Chief Executive Officer to replace John O' Connor. In September Dr Cathal Gallagher was appointed as the Director of Research and Development.

In October, as part of the budget measures, the Government announced that the Central and Regional Fisheries Boards were to be subsumed into a new national fisheries agency, in order to optimise the structure and function of the fisheries service, and to ensure the service was best placed to be able to deal with the diverse range of challenges facing the sector in the coming years. Following the Governments decision a Restructuring Implementation Group (RIG), composed of senior Central Fisheries Board (CFB), Regional Fisheries Board (RFB) and Department of Communication Energy and Natural Resources (DCENR) personnel was established. The role of this group was to develop a draft heads of bill document which would form the basis of the legislation required to establish the new agency. The heads of bill document has been well advanced and it is envisaged that the legislation will be enacted in 2009.

As a result of the Minister's decision and the associated legislation in relation to conservation of salmon, the Central and Regional Fisheries Boards successfully implemented a new salmon management regime in 2007. In 2008 the Boards continued the successful implementation of this management regime and with the assistance of key projects like the assessment of attainment of conservation limits project, undertaken by Central and Regional Fisheries Board staff, built up

an even greater knowledge of the dynamics of our salmon rivers. This applied scientific assessment has translated into improved management of our salmon rivers on an individual basis. The success of the salmon management programme in 2008 was due to the expert planning, communication and commitment of the staff of all the Boards. The Board also recognises the significant contribution made by tourism and recreational angling to the Irish economy and to improving the quality of people's lives. In 2008 the Central and Regional Fisheries Boards continued to work in a coordinated manner with their tourism partners, government agencies and the industry in delivering the next phase of the Angling Tourism Marketing Strategy and the development of recreational angling for all.

The Central Fisheries Board conformed to all corporate governance requirements as set out in the Code of Practice for the Governance of State Bodies. This was achieved while coordinating and delivering specialist research and development support services to the Regional Fisheries Boards in accordance with the Board's business plans. All of the services delivered were completed while recognising the Board's "value for money" ethos, an example of which was the use of centralised procurement facilities for purchasing fleet and patrol boats which enabled significant savings to be achieved. As part of the culture of continuous improvement, the Board has upgraded its accounts and budgeting process to further enhance its financial control and reporting abilities, for all projects undertaken. The fruits of this work will become more evident in 2009.

With particular reference to 10.2 of the Code of practice for the Governance of State Bodies I wish to inform you that;

1. As a result of sewer contamination of the sub floor of the biological and chemical laboratories with raw effluent from a poorly maintained adjacent toilet block, the laboratories had to be completely stripped out and decontaminated. The Board then commenced a comprehensive re-fit out of the laboratories, which will be completed in Q2 2009. The Board will

not be exposed to any financial penalties as all works will be covered under the terms of insurance policies.

2. The Board has not established any subsidiaries and has not acquired any shares.
3. The Board manages the Salmon Conservation Stamp Fund, for and on behalf of the Department of Communications Energy and Natural Resources and the Regional Fisheries Boards. A committee comprised of Central and Regional Fisheries Board personnel has been established to allocate Conservation Stamp funding to specific salmon enhancement projects.
4. The Board is endeavouring on an ongoing basis to meet all of its requirements regarding financial reporting, internal audit procurement and asset disposals and is of the opinion that it has done so in 2008.
5. A draft Statement on the System of Internal Financial Control for 2008 is attached in the form set out at Appendix E of the Code. The final Statement for 2008 will be provided with the audited accounts following agreement with external auditors.
6. The Code of Business Conduct for Directors and staff has been adhered to in 2008, and a Customer Charter is in place and being reported against.
7. Government Policy on the pay of the Chief Executive in the Central Fisheries Board and its other employees is being complied with.
8. Government Guidelines on the Payment of Directors Fees are being complied with.
9. During the course of the year internal audits on specific aspects of the Boards business have been completed, and have highlighted a number of areas for improvement, however none of the audits focused on or revealed inadequacies in any of the points mentioned above.
10. As of now there have been no significant post balance sheet events. Our accounts for 2008 have yet to be audited by the Comptroller and Auditor General's Office and, therefore, we can only provide draft accounts at this time. The unaudited accounts are attached for your information.

11. The Guidelines for Appraisal and Management of Capital Expenditure Proposals were complied with in 2008, although much of the capital expenditure within the Board is below significant threshold levels.
12. I confirm that the Code of Practice has been adopted by the Board. It is the intention of the Board to continue to be in full compliance with the Code.

Work on the Water Framework Directive (WFD) increased significantly in 2008, and it was a very successful year for this project despite the inclement weather conditions. The WFD team which included CFB and RFB staff were fully occupied sampling rivers, lakes and transitional waterbodies throughout the country. This is the first time there has been a co-ordinated national inland fisheries survey, the results of which will not only satisfy our obligations under the WFD but also provide an accurate, relevant and very valuable scientific insight into the status of inland fish species nationally.

Staff in the Research and Development Division also worked closely with representatives from the DCENR and other stakeholders to progress the implementation of the Habitats Directive and the Eel Regulations. Both of these projects will begin in earnest in 2009.

The Board published a compendium of reports on the key Research and Development projects being undertaken within the Division. These reports are designed to provide readers with a very quick understanding of why the project is being carried out, for whom, and what results can be expected. The reports are written and produced in a manner that is attractive and understandable to all stakeholders.

I would like to thank my fellow Board members, the CEO and staff of the Central Fisheries Board for their expert and excellent contribution over the past year. I would also like to thank our colleagues in the Department of Communications,

Energy and Natural Resources and in the Regional Fisheries Boards for their continued cooperation and support.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'David Mackey', is written over a faint, light-colored rectangular background.

David Mackey

Chairman

April 2009

### **Comment of the Chief Executive Officer, Dr Ciaran Byrne**

This report sets out what the Central and Regional Fisheries Boards and the Fisheries Cooperative Societies have been engaged in during 2008 to advance the management of the inland fisheries and sea angling sectors in Ireland. It was a very successful year for the Boards with a number of major new initiatives initiated and delivered. This annual report details these achievements.

All of the Boards adopted the Government's Code of Practice for the Governance of State Bodies in 2006 and they continued to abide by its principles in 2008. The 2007 annual accounts were cleared and signed off by the Comptroller and Auditor General in November 2007. The fisheries service received a vote of €31.4 millions from the Department of Communications Energy and Natural Resources (DCENR) of which the Central Fisheries Board received a €9.7 million grant.

Under the 'Towards 2016' agreement the Fisheries Boards developed a comprehensive and challenging modernisation programme and work on this programme continued in 2008. The Board maintained stable industrial relations, delivered the National Training Programme and also provided Health & Safety support to the Central and Regional Fisheries Boards. One of the main challenges going forward is the restructuring of the Inland Fisheries sector while continuing delivery of the Modernisation Programme and maintaining existing supports and services to all Regional Fisheries Boards.

In October, following the budget, the Government announced that the Central and Regional Fisheries Boards were to be subsumed into a new national inland fisheries agency. Resulting from this announcement a Restructuring Implementation Group (RIG) was established to develop the key features and structure of the new model and advise on the legislative provisions required to deliver same. Senior personnel from the DCENR, two Regional Fisheries Board CEO's, and the CEO and Director of Human Resources from the Central

Fisheries Board participated in this group. Significant progress was made on this issue in the months following the budget announcement.

Scientists in the Research and Development Division delivered a focused Research and Development programme, as set out in the Boards business plan, which significantly enhanced our understanding of the autecology and synecology of our freshwater and recreational sea fish species. 2008 was also a very successful year for scientific collaborations with sister agencies, including the Office of Public Works, Waterways Ireland, The Environmental Protection Agency and the Marine Institute. Many of the key research and development deliverables in 2008 were only possible as a result of these successful collaborations. In addition, scientists in the Division provided a comprehensive advisory and support service to the Regional Fisheries Boards. As the scope of the projects worked on by Board scientists is extensive, to support an understanding of their work the Board has published summaries of the key Research and Development projects worked on in 2008 in a Project Summary document which is available on the Boards website on [www.cfb.ie](http://www.cfb.ie).

Work on the Water Framework Directive continued, and was significantly increased in 2008. As a result of the funding provided by our parent Department, Central and Regional Fisheries Board staff were in a position to undertake a full schedule of survey work as required by the Directive. 83 Rivers, 32 lakes and 42 transitional waters were sampled between June and October. The significant inclement weather conditions during the summer meant that it was not possible to sample 37 sites. These sites will be completed in the 2009 surveys. The Water Framework Directive is one of the most important projects to be undertaken in the inland fisheries sector as it is the first national survey of all fish species. It will provide an invaluable body of data which will not only satisfy Ireland's requirements under the fish element of the Directive, but also provide fisheries managers with a comprehensive understanding of fish populations and their changing dynamics. Significant progress was also made with our parent Department and other key stakeholders on the implementation

of the Habitats Directive and Eel Regulations, both being pieces of European legislation which will require comprehensive scientific monitoring programmes to be put in place. Monitoring programmes will commence in early 2009.

The Angling Marketing Division had a successful year in 2008 and significantly progressed the Angling Tourism Marketing Strategy in partnership with the key stakeholders including, Regional Fisheries Boards, Fáilte Ireland and Tourism Ireland. Staff in the Division also worked closely with other key stakeholders including the Loughs Agency and the Department of Culture Arts and Leisure, Northern Ireland and Waterways Ireland in promoting Ireland as a premier angling destination.

Over 19 national and international angling shows were attended by angling promotion staff from the Central and Regional Fisheries Boards. A new national suite of promotional brochures covering all products was produced in English in 2008 and following a 'needs analysis' of the current and required promotional literature a production plan was developed for the production of additional e-brochures in 2009. In line with the Angling Tourism Marketing Strategy's approach of targeting specific markets, 2 of a total of 5 promotional brochures have been translated into French.

In keeping with the Boards focus on achieving good 'value for money' and continuous improvement the Board further focused on e-publishing in 2008 and all 5 of the English versions of the promotional brochures are available as e-brochures on the Central Fisheries Board website. In 2007, the Board launched angling marketing websites in French, Dutch and German, representing the key overseas angling markets, these language websites were further developed and enhanced in 2008 and page views have continued to increase.

The strong focus on conservation of the wild Irish Salmon initiated in 2007 on foot of a Government decision to prioritise conservation over catch continued in 2008 and harvest quotas were set for the 148 designated salmon rivers. In

2008, 40 rivers were opened for recreational salmon angling as against 38 in 2007. An additional 34 rivers were opened for catch and release salmon angling on the basis that they meet at least 65% of their conservation limit as against 7 in 2007 and 74 rivers were closed for all salmon and sea trout angling as against 103 in 2007. In 2008, 24 rivers had a commercial salmon fishery on them which represented no change from 2007. Overall 28,383 salmon were caught in 2008, representing an increase of 143 from the 28,240 salmon caught in 2007. Recreational angling accounted for 19,480 fish or 68.6% of the total catch and the remainder 8,903 fish were caught by commercial fishermen.

Included in the Government decision to prioritise conservation over catch was an undertaking to increase the funding available for the rehabilitation of salmon rivers, through the medium of the Conservation Stamp Fund, paid by all salmon license holders. In 2008, €702,549 was collected, which will be used to fund salmon rehabilitation projects in 2009, however in 2008, 28 projects were initiated and continued with the funds collected in 2007. Details on the projects funded can be found in the leaflet produced by the Central Fisheries Board and on the CFB website [www.cfb.ie](http://www.cfb.ie)

Notwithstanding the increased focus on the conservation of salmon and the cessation of indiscriminate mixed stock netting at sea the Central and Regional Fisheries Boards continued their fisheries protection programme, which included running the Large Patrol Vessels (LPV's) and managing a joint programme with the Air Corps and Naval Service.

In 2008, 96 patrol days were completed by the LPV's resulting in 4,500m of illegal netting being seized compared to 6,500m in 2007 and 1 prosecution was initiated. Fisheries Board staff completed 52 patrol days with the Naval Service and participated in 12 Air Corps surveillance flights.

Finally, I would like to thank my chairman David Mackey, my Board members, the management and staff of the Regional Fisheries Boards, without whom

much of the work reported on in this document would simply not have been possible, and the Department of Communications, Energy and Natural Resources. All have provided guidance and support to the Central Fisheries Board over the past year. I would also like to compliment all of the staff of the Central Fisheries Board who continue to bring excellence and dedication to the work of the Board. Looking forward to the serious challenges that lie ahead, I am confident and optimistic that the drive, commitment and expertise of the staff throughout the fisheries service will help us face and overcome any obstacles in our way.



Dr. Ciaran Byrne  
CEO  
Central Fisheries Board.

## Central Fisheries Board

### Field Services

The Field Services Division identified in the CFB's Strategic Plan (2008-2010) its strategic goal is "to deliver a high quality and effective fisheries protection and conservation service and to provide strong strategic business planning and operational leadership to the Fisheries Boards."

The Division strives to achieve this lofty goal through;

- Implementation of policies in relation to inland fish species and ecosystems.
- Provision of technical and management support/advice to the DCENR and relevant agencies regarding fisheries protection and conservation.
- Management of the strategic and business planning process for the CFB and to support the Regional Fisheries Boards in this area.
- Delivery of excellent customer service and value for money.
- Management and delivery of policy relating to the States Fisheries.

With reference to the above objectives the Field Services Division outlined specific measurable goals which were outlined in the 2008 CFB business plan. This section of the annual report outlines the main achievement mapped against the 2008 plan.

The National Programmes dealing with fisheries protection and salmon and sea trout tagging, for which the division has operational responsibility were delivered on time and in line with budgets. Salmon management and associated conservation measures continued to have strong focus during 2008. The division excelled in delivery of salmon management services and advice, thus enabling the continued efficient management of salmon stocks on a river catchment basis based on scientific advice.

The protection and conservation of all inland species was supported by the continued development of policy and through the enactment of legislation in partnership with the RFBs, DCENR and other interested parties.

In 2008, the CFB were pleased to open a new warehouse facility and implemented a new equipment management system; which enables the efficient purchase, use and maintenance of all the Board's equipment. The development and roll-out of a warehouse and fleet policy have also continued to improve our operational status and ensured delivery of value for money for 2008 and indeed for the years ahead.

The CFB coordinated with the Regional Fisheries Boards in delivery of quarterly performance metrics, as defined in the Service Level Agreement between the Central and Regional Boards and the Department of Communications, Energy and Natural Resources.

### **National Fisheries Protection Service**

The Board coordinates the development and operation of the national fisheries protection plan which incorporates the inshore fisheries protection function of the Regional Fisheries Boards, Naval Service, Air Corps and An Garda Síochána. The national protection plans' operations and strategies are both preventive and reactive and include the following:

- Intelligence driven deterrent ensuring the maximum visible presence in waters where the threat of illegal activity is greatest.
- Enforcement of legislation through prosecution of offenders and confiscation of illegal nets, equipment, tackle and catch.
- Effective coordination of all sea going protection capabilities (Large Patrol Vessels (LPV), Naval Service, Regional RIB patrols) and maritime protection flights.
- Agreed time schedules for Regional Boards patrol plans for LPV, Naval and Air Corp patrols.

### Boards Large Patrol Vessels (LPVs)

The Board manages the operation of two LPVs An Bradán Beatha and An Cosantóir Bradán. An Bradán Beatha operated for 15 weeks with Regional Fisheries Board officers as part of the National Protection Plan (see table 1). There was a reduction in patrols this year due to budget restrictions. An Cosantóir Bradán was made available to the Sea Fisheries Protection Authority (SFPA) for a 14 week period, under a management agreement to support the SFPA efforts and role in fisheries protection.

The operation of the Large Patrol Vessels (LPVs) included:

- Provision of a contract with a shipping agency for the supply of professional crew and other marine services.
- Servicing of systems and equipment including the conformance with the requirements of the Marine Survey Office certification and all mandatory servicing of life saving equipment.
- Management of the budgets and associated spend in relation to all aspects of the day to day running of the vessels.
- Management of the day to day patrol operations.
- Insurance of compliance to operating procedures.
- Adherence to value for money and corporate governance requirements.
- Coordination and implementation of patrol plans with the Regional Fisheries Boards.

	2006	2007	2008
No of LPV Patrol Vessel Days	308	126	96
No of Naval Service Patrol Days	64	60	52
LPV No of Sightings/Checks	870	340	308
LPV No. of Miles on Patrol	17,350	10,556	6,139
No of Air Corps Maritime Patrols	16	17	12
Illegal Net Seized LPV (m)	11,500	6,500	4,500
LPV & Naval Prosecutions	13	8	1

**Table 1: Details of the National Protection Programme Operations 2008.**  
**Procurement Services**

The Board coordinates procurement of all vehicles for the Central and Regional Fisheries Boards through the Government Supplies Agency (GSA). In 2008, forty four vehicles were purchased through the GSA for the Fisheries Boards at a cost of €1,037, 000 which represented an estimated saving of approx €300k on recommended retail price.

This service represents value for money for the Fisheries Boards, compliance with corporate governance and non duplication of the tender process.

The Field Services Division also coordinates the purchase and maintenance of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE), safety equipment and general field equipment for the Central Fisheries Board. All this equipment is stored and serviced at the Boards new warehouse facility. This ensures the availability of functional serviced equipment for the field operational staff. In the PPE cage in the warehouse, each member of staff has been allocated a specific area to store their equipment and each area has been labelled.

In 2008, through the GSA, the CFB were able to source and supply PPE equipment including wet weather equipment, dry suits and diving equipment. A standard set of wet weather equipment for issue to field staff has been selected and this will form the basis of any future purchases. This offered a significant saving on protective equipment purchase and supply.

The Central Fisheries Board also provides the following support services to the Regional Boards:

- Provision of marine safety notices and marine advisory service.
- Technical certification and safety of all sea going Rigid Inflatable Boats (RIBs).
- Design and build consultancy for all new boats.
- Technical specification of specialist equipment.

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

This is the eighth year of the wild salmon and sea trout tagging scheme for which the CFB provides a service in planning, implementation and monitoring. The 2008 salmon season has continued with the delivery of the new salmon management regime<sup>1</sup> driven by the need for conservation and based on scientific advice. The Board was involved in strategy development, reviewing legislation, and provision of services and advice to enable the roll out of the changes in salmon management.

In 2007, Ireland implemented a single stock management regime which necessitated management of salmon catches on a river by river basis, where fishing (commercial and angling) is only permitted where the river has met its salmon conservation limit. In 2008, river conservation limits resulted in the closure for salmon and sea trout fishing of 74 rivers<sup>2</sup>, with 34 open for catch and release<sup>3</sup>. As an additional conservation measure a system of brown gill tags<sup>1</sup> was continued where it was considered necessary to protect stock of multi sea winter salmon and to facilitate monitoring of the angling quotas to ensure river based quotas are not exceeded.

The online licensing system is another step in moving toward real-time data management and in automation of management reports. A goal of the CFB is the generation of real-time angling catches to facilitate better and more efficient decision making for all stakeholders involved in salmon management. The Bradán Database is the IT tool used to capture salmon licensing and catch information. In 2008, the Board continued development of this database with its integration with an online licensing system (see table 3). This web based tool offers the angler the capability to purchase a salmon licence from the comfort of home at any time of the day or night with the licence and tags are then despatched to the customer by the chosen Regional Board. In 2008, an online system was rolled out, in which hardware and software was made available to

<sup>1</sup> (s.i. no. 849 of 2007) wild salmon and sea trout tagging scheme regulations 2007.

<sup>2</sup> Conservation of salmon and sea trout bye-law no. c.s. 293, 2007

<sup>3</sup> Conservation of salmon and sea trout bye-law no. 830, 2007.

the larger retail outlets. The CFB has a database used to produce commercial and recreational salmon and sea trout catches. Summary data is available in tables 3 and 4 below. For detailed statistics please refer to the annual Wild Salmon and Sea Trout statistics reports available via the CFB website.

<b>Salmon Catch</b>		
	<b>2007</b>	<b>2008</b>
Total salmon harvest	28,273	31,118
Total commercial salmon harvest	8,843	8,903
Adjusted Salmon angling harvest	19,430	22,215
Reported Salmon caught and released	13,000	11,977

Table 3. Details of the Salmon Catch.

The salmon commercial catches have been consistent between 2007 and 2008 however the angling catches have shown a 14.34% increase in the number of salmon harvested in 2008 and a 7.87% decrease in those caught and released in 2008.

<b>Licence and Logbooks</b>		
	<b>2007</b>	<b>2008</b>
Angling licences sold	19,986	20,061
% Logbook return	65%	69%
No of nationalities who purchased licences	55	50

Table 4. Details of the licence sales and log book returns.

The salmon angling licence sales have also remained quite consistent between 2007 and 2008 with an increase in the percentage logbook returns, however the number of nationalities who purchased licences has decreased.

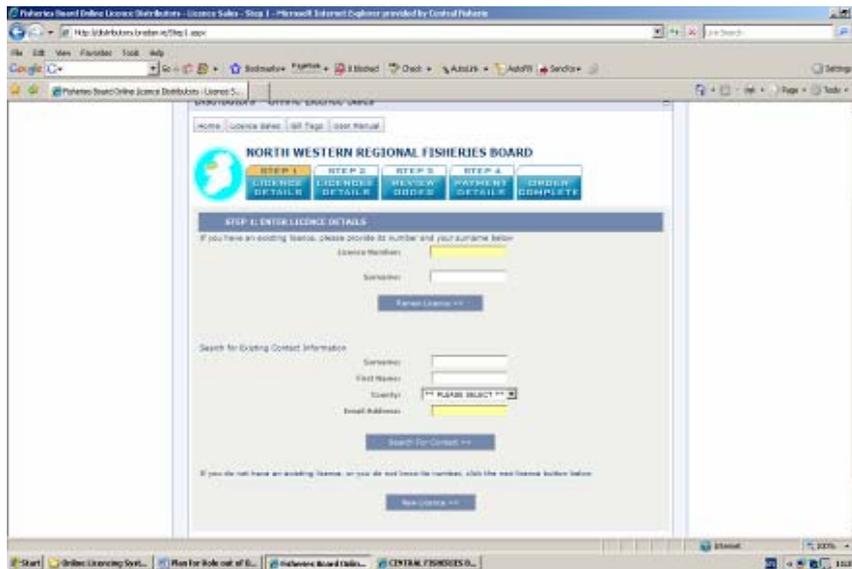


Table 5: Online licencing system

The CFB continued to provide a secretarial service to the National Salmon Commission until the end of its term in May 2008.

### Salmon Conservation Stamp Process

On December 4<sup>th</sup> 2006, the Central Fisheries Board received a Ministerial Direction under section 18A, 19(4) and 20(3) of the Fisheries Act 1980 directing the Board to co-ordinate the preparation and implementation of a programme for rehabilitation of salmon stocks giving priority to rivers below their conservation limits in special areas of conservation which have the greatest prospect of recovery.

This programme was to be funded by the proceeds of the salmon conservation stamp component of the salmon licence fees. In 2008, the salmon conservation stamp component equated to 50% of the licence fees. (Approximately €700K was collected in 2008 for allocation to projects which will be carried out in 2009). The Revenue generated from the Salmon Conservation Stamp Fund is reinvested to promote the recovery of our salmon stocks and habitats taking into account project feasibility, funding availability and value for money considerations.

An Implementation Committee was set up to assess project applications according to the criteria identified in the terms of reference, and a numeric score was attached to each criterion. The Implementation Committee made a recommendation for funding allocations to the National Fisheries Management Executive (NFME) in November and decided on a cut off point at a score of 9.2, below which projects would be re-assessed prior to being funded. Qualifying projects will carry out works in 2009.

In 2008, river banks were protected, salmon spawning grounds were created and enhanced thereby increasing capacity. In stream structures were improved and enhanced to provide additional juvenile salmon habitat, pools were constructed creating holding areas for salmon fry. New fish passes and removal of blockages improved upstream access for salmon and sea trout to spawning areas while river bank clearance where overgrowth was removed resulted in increased levels of macro invertebrates, vegetation and increased numbers of fish. The projects carried out under the salmon conservation stamp programme have assisted with the increase in the survival of fry to smolt stage. For a full list of projects carried out under the salmon conservation stamp fund please refer to the brochure on the CFB website.

Conservation Stamp Funds will be collected again in 2009. It is envisaged that a similar amount, approximately €700K will be collected for salmon rehabilitation projects. The Salmon Conservation Stamp Fund represents a major contribution by licence holders to wild salmon conservation.

### **Catch and Release Incentive Scheme**

The Central and Regional Fisheries Boards national incentive scheme continued for the second year to encourage anglers to participate in catch and release when angling for wild Atlantic salmon. The scheme intends to acknowledge anglers who practice catch and release during the 2008 angling season.

Approximately 12,000 salmon were caught and released during 2008. The winner of the 2008 catch and release scheme released 30 salmon on the Ballysadare River and was awarded one days fishing on the Ridge Pool in Ballina. (refer to CFB website for details).

### **State Fisheries**

The CFB has approximately 167 State Fisheries under its control. A standard and transparent process is in place for the tendering and licensing of State Fisheries. This process starts by advertising all fisheries available for tender at the end of each fishing season in preparation for the next year. Clubs with expiring licences are also contacted directly to advise them of the need to tender again. After the tender deadline, all tenders are opened with witnesses present. Tenders are awarded based primarily on the proposed management of the fisheries by tender applicants. Preference is given to local angling clubs over private groups and also to sitting clubs. The CFB has a policy of making all its State assets openly available to the public. To achieve this we insist that any angling club that manages a fishery makes day/weekly/season tickets easily available to any visiting angler ensuring that all State Fisheries can easily be enjoyed by locals and tourists alike. The CFB are not obliged to award a fishery to the highest tender.

In 2008, the CFB successfully licensed 80 fisheries to 46 Angling Clubs, Associations and Regional Boards. Based on the salmon conservation limit 40 of the licensed fisheries were open, 20 were open on a catch and release basis and 20 were closed for angling. There were two additional fisheries available for licence in 2008 compared to 2007 and thirteen more than in 2006.

Year	Successful Tenders (new 2009 licences)	On going licences (multi year)	Not licenced (no tender or on hold)	Total Fisheries
2008	45	35	5	85
2007	49	31	3	83
2006	51	21	0	72

Table 6: State Fisheries available for licence in 2008

In 2008, an initial review of the State Fisheries under CFB management was carried out. The hard copy files relating to the State Fisheries contain the licence documentation relating to each fishery, all written correspondence with the angling clubs and documentation returned by the angling club to include end of year reports, membership lists, club rules and statements of accounts. Resulting from the review, these files were re-organised and updated and older files were archived.

The existing State Fisheries database was upgraded to a Microsoft Access database. Each hardcopy fishery file was reviewed for historic licence details and these details were updated on the new database where necessary. This new database is now more efficient and accurate than the previous database and has proved very useful in the early stages of the 2009 tender process carried out in late 2008.

A review of fishing rates payable was started in 2008. Some of the State owned fisheries are rated where others are not and the amount of the rates varies quite considerably.

In late 2007, the Minister set out the Terms of Reference for a review into the management of State fisheries:

- (a) To review the current management of State Fisheries in Ireland
- (b) To develop a vision, policy and appropriate strategies for the future management of State owned fisheries

In early 2008, a working group was set up to carry out this review. An initial meeting took place in relation to the issue of ownership of State Fisheries. In Q3 of 2008 a resource was put in place to manage this review. A project plan was developed and the review is now on schedule for completion by the end of 2009.

### **Customer Service**

The Central Fisheries Board had a successful year in Customer Service delivering on the government service Modernisation Programme and Quality Customer Service initiative (QCS). All customer queries in 2008 were responded to in a timely manner to comply with our commitments under the Central Fisheries Board's customer charter and in line with the Public Service Modernisation Programme and Quality Customer Service initiative (QCS).

In 2008, the Board's Customer Service Officer answered seventy one Customer requests which represents a decrease of 36% from 2007.

The Board will continue to progress Quality Customer Service for the coming year in line with our Customer Charter, and improve further the delivery of a service reflecting customer satisfaction and value for money.

## Human Resources

### Training and Development

The Central and Regional Fisheries Boards (C and RFBs) invested €162k in their National Development and Training Programme in 2008. The plan, developed annually, with input from the Central and Regional Fisheries Boards addressed the key developmental and training needs of the organisation.

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

- Health and Safety training
- Disability Access Awareness training
- LPV and RIB Training with the National Maritime College of Ireland (NMCI)
- Induction training
- Job Skills development;
- Third level education support in the Higher National Certificate in Fisheries Management and other programmes;
- Management Development programme

The fourth group of RFB staff (7 in all) commenced the Higher National Certificate in Fisheries Management course in Sligo I.T. in September 2008. The course was available for the first time this year through the Central Applications Office (CAO) and attracted significant interest. 9 of the students attending the course were selected from the CAO applicants.

The total number of training days for the C&RFB for 2008 was 1,599 which was an average of 3 days per staff member (including days attributed to attendance at Sligo I.T.)

Of the 398 training days at the CFB, the Water Framework Directive team at the CFB received 101 days training.

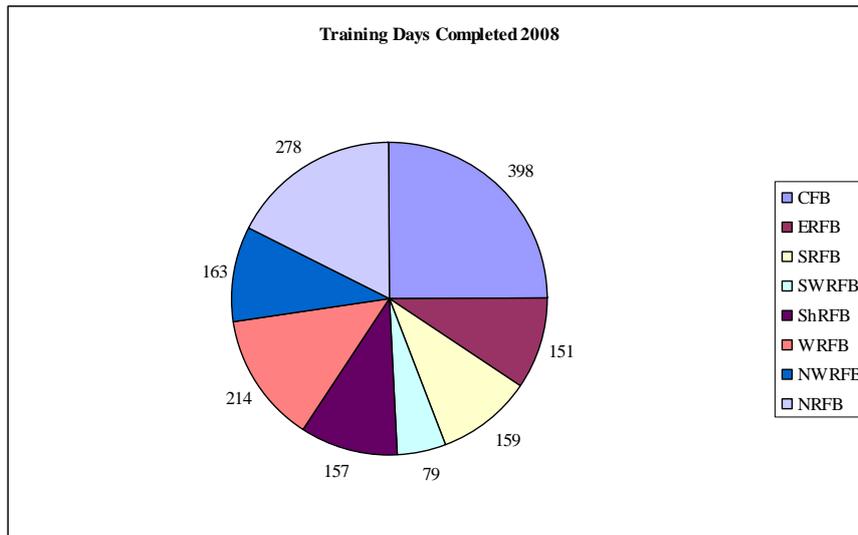


Figure 1: Number of training days for 2008.

### Freedom of Information (FOI) 2008

There were 34 new requests for information made to the Central and Regional Fisheries Boards in 2008, under the *Freedom of Information Acts 1997 and 2003*. The breakdown of requests was as follows:

- Clients: 8
- Others: 9
- Journalist: 8
- Business/Interest Group: 8
- Staff: 1

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

- 23 were granted
- 3 were part-granted
- 7 were refused.
- 1 decision was appealed internally.
- 1 request remains live into 2009.

### **Chief Executive Officer Remuneration**

The remuneration of the Chief Executive Officer of the Central Fisheries Board is in accordance with the Principal Officer (higher) scale which ranges from € 97,617 to

€120,382. The remuneration of Chief Executive Officers of the Regional Fisheries Boards is in accordance with the Principal Officer (standard) scale which ranges from

€89,674 to €111,164

### **Employee Relations**

2008 was a year which marked the announcement of a fundamental future change in the Inland Fisheries Sector. During the year ongoing discussions were held as to the most appropriate model for the Sector into the future. A number of proposals were examined in this regard. This culminated in a Government decision, announced in the 2008 Budget, to merge the Central and Regional Fisheries Boards into one National Authority.

Since that announcement representatives of the Central and Regional Boards have been working closely with officials of the Department in a Restructuring Implementation Group (RIG) to advance the merger. A total of 4 RIG meetings were held during the latter part of 2008. Following each meeting a general communiqué was issued to all staff.

In any proposed change situation the level of anxiety rises as staff are unsure as to the future. In this context stable employee relations were maintained.

Following on from the development of an approved revised modernisation template under the terms of Towards 2016 National Agreement in 2007 the Board successfully submitted two modernisation progress reports in 2008. Examination by the verification group resulted in the T 2016 pay increases being implemented in March and September respectively.

## **Recruitment**

2008 proved to be a busier year than in the past in relation to recruitment. This was largely due to the fact that the Board required additional expertise to fulfil its commitments under the requirements of the Water Framework Directive. A total of 19 recruitment campaigns were conducted on behalf of the Central Fisheries Board which resulted in a total of 34 appointments. Human Resources staff also assisted a number of the Regional Fisheries Boards in recruitment campaigns.

## **Health & Safety**

This year has seen the successful completion of a number of key health and safety objectives. The Board has also become involved on a voluntary basis in a new health and safety initiative known as Work Positive coordinated by the Health & Safety Authority. Our success is clear evidence of the Boards commitment to continuous improvement in the area of workplace health and safety management. The principal achievements in 2008 have included:

- The implementation of a new Safety Statement for the Central Fisheries Board.
- The implementation of a new employee safety handbook for the Central and Regional Fisheries Boards.
- The development of an occupational health programme.
- The on-going management of the Employee Assistance Programme (EAP) nationally with continuous promotion of the service to staff.
- The subscription of the Board to the Health and Safety Authorities Work Positive Programme.
- The implementation of the Departmental Sectoral plan has led to the successful training of all staff in the Central and Regional Fisheries Boards in accessibility awareness.
- Health and Safety training and induction was conducted with Central Fisheries Board staff.
- Ergonomic risk assessments were conducted for the Central and Regional Fisheries Boards.

- On-going risk management of the Central Fisheries Board fish farms.
- Completion of incident report analysis for the Central and Regional Fisheries Boards.
- The provision of support, advice, investigations, hazard identification, risk assessment and recommendations were made to the Regional Fisheries Boards as requested throughout the year.

## Finance & ICT

### Financial Management

#### 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 audit process commenced, on the 2007 financial accounts in January 2008, and was fully signed off by December 2008. The date for the commencement of the audit process for the 2008 accounts has yet to be confirmed by the C and AG

#### Internal Audit

Deloitte & Touché reported on four areas of internal audit in 2008 (HR and Payroll, Corporate Governance, Procurement and Research and Development) further development of our Risk Register also took place in 2008 with a final register expected in early 2009.

#### Funding for 2008

In 2008, the Fisheries Boards received an exchequer grant of €28.6 million, of which €18.3 million or 64% of the total grant received was allocated towards pay costs. €1.25 million was allocated to salmon stock rehabilitation and €1.3 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 €0.633 million was also generated from the Salmon Conservation Stamp fund in 2008. €0.2 million of this was disbursed in 2008 for reinvestment in the management, conservation and protection of Inland Fisheries, with the balance due to be disbursed in the first quarter of 2009.

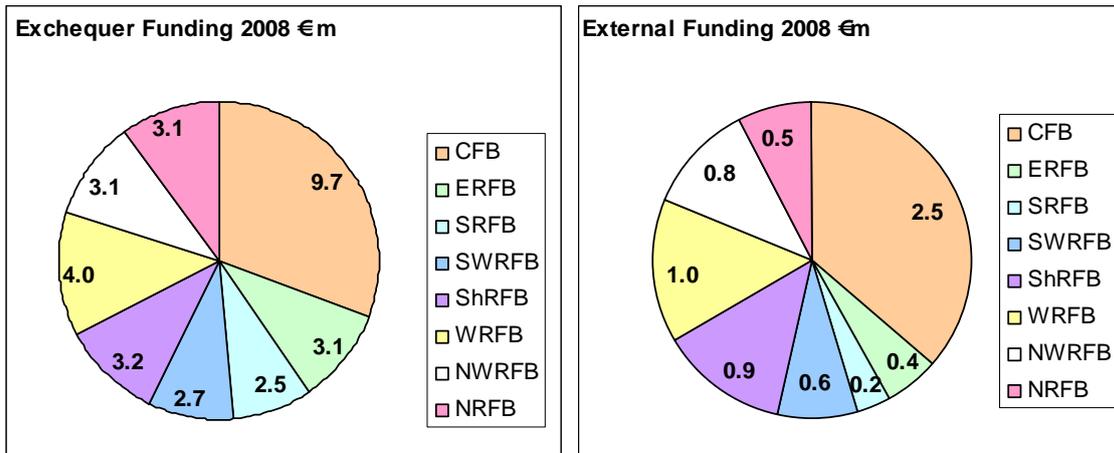


Figure II: Central and Regional Boards funding for 2008.

### Property Management

In 2008, work was completed on the fit out of the new warehouse facility in Swords on schedule and within budget. Work commenced on the refurbishment of the lab facility in the last quarter of 2008 with a completion date for the works scheduled for the end of the second quarter of 2009.

### 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.

#### Water Framework Directive, GIS (ArcGis Server)

A new virtual environment has now been successfully integrated into the CFB ICT core server infrastructure. Within this new virtual environment the Central Fisheries Board have deployed ArcGis Server and its associated components, along with a new instance of SQL server. This early adoption by the Central Fisheries Board in virtual technology will mean a more integrated approach across all aspects of ICT server infrastructure.

#### Central Fisheries Board, ICT Disaster Recovery

Additional measures regarding disaster recovery have been taken, with the implementation of a new backup solution and server hardware care packs, this

new system now protects the physical elements of the server infrastructure from possible disaster.

### **Warehouse Wireless Data Network**

A concealed wireless access point now provides access to the internet and the Central Fisheries Board head quarters, from the within the main warehouse facility. This form of connectivity provides a more flexible method of connecting to the internet, as it enables remote workers to move freely about the facility with laptops and mobile devices while still connected to the remote offices over a secure wireless link.

### **Regional ICT Support**

Continued ICT support has been provided to the Regional Fisheries Boards. Advancements in accounting applications have seen the Southern Regional Fisheries Board upgrade their existing application. Earlier this year the CFB ICT department aided in this upgrade, along with the integration of a new time and attendance system. Further developments are currently taken place on the TMS application. The Southern Regional Fisheries Board have also invested in VPN upgrades, which enable more staff secure access to the SRFB network from remote locations.

Eastern Regional Fisheries Board has seen additional enhancements to the ICT infrastructure in 2008. Network based storage capacity was increased and new backup software introduced to further protect against data loss.

## Research and Development

The Research and Development Division identified in the CFB's Strategic Plan (2008-2010) its key strategic goal as "to develop and deliver high quality cost effective applied scientific research and development services to meet the Boards customers needs".

The Division will achieve this strategic goal through;

- conducting scientific research on fisheries to deliver economic and heritage benefits by ensuring sustainability and conservation of fish in their ecosystems .
- conducting research with sister agencies to provide advice for the management and understanding of ecosystem function in aquatic fisheries habitats.
- ensuring adherence to operational procedures which harmonise with our environment and cultural heritage.
- supporting and preserving the quality and diversity of aquatic ecosystems and ensuring compliance with relevant European Union and national legislation.
- providing an advisory service to relevant bodies.

Each year our planning cycle culminates in the development of a Business Plan which contains details of the specific measurable goals and expected deliverables for the year ahead. Based on our 2008 business review and detailed project plans this report summarises some of the work carried out by the Research and Development Division. Our intent here is to give the reader a flavour of the applied research role of the CFB rather than to document all deliverables and advice offered during 2008.

During 2008 we were involved in circa 30 projects and reported across a broad range of fisheries research and monitoring activities including water chemistry, aquatic vegetation, coarse fish, pike, salmonids, "conservation" species, estuarine and marine fish. Many of the projects are applied fisheries management projects dealing with diverse pressing issues such as measuring

the attainment of salmon conservation limits, management of invasive aquatic species and reporting on the conservation status of EU Habitats Directive designated species. Several projects are being delivered through strategic partnerships with other national agencies including the Marine Institute (MI), the National Parks and Wildlife Service (NPWS), the Office of Public Works (OPW), and also with some international agencies including the Environment Agency (EA), the European Union (EU), North Atlantic Salmon Conservation Organisation (NASCO) and the European Inland Fisheries Advisory Council (EIFAC).

In addition to the Research and Development Division's mandate to conduct applied research we are also tasked with the provision of advice to our parent Department, the Department of Communications, Energy and Natural Resources. This role increased greatly over the past year with advice offered across most inland fresh water species and in relation to issues concerning the riparian corridor.

It is important that the support and expertise received from our colleagues in the Regional Fisheries Boards (RFB's) is acknowledged and it is in coordination with these colleagues that the successes in the Research and Development Division were delivered. We work hand in hand with the staff of the Regional Fisheries Boards in delivery of national research projects and also in addressing their regional research requirements.

The year ahead offers many challenges both environmental and managerial while we continue to see rapid changes in our natural aquatic environment, with climate change, water quality and the potential threats from invasive species a continued focus. We must also be cognisant of the changed economic climate and with this in mind we have focused strongly on securing non-exchequer funding and ensuring that our business and project management functions are robust in order to deliver the required research while ensuring quality and value

for money. As an organisation the CFB are delivery focused and this in the key message for the 2009 research year.

## **National Fish Stock Assessment Programme**

### **1) Conservation Fish Programme**

Funding from the National Research Programme of the Central and Regional Fisheries Boards permitted a limited programme of work on this area in 2008. The Nore catchment is a designated Special Area of Conservation (SAC) for lamprey. In 2004, CFB undertook investigations on lamprey in the main stem R. Nore and in selected tributaries as part of investigations into the Kilkenny City flood relief scheme and its potential impacts on lamprey species. The funding in 2008 permitted CFB to return to the Nore system and undertake lamprey distribution and status surveys in those channels not examined in 2004. An overview status report on lamprey distribution, status and population structure in channels of the Nore system will be completed in 2009 and available through the CFB website. The lamprey studies in both 2004 and 2008 were undertaken with the assistance of staff of the Southern Regional Fisheries Board (SRFB).

In preparation for monitoring works under the Habitats Directive, trials with a small otter trawl were undertaken to assess fit-up of gear and suitability of technique for assessment of autumn-caught young-of-year of twaite shad in the lower reaches of estuaries in the south-east designated as SACs for shad. While trials with more large-scale commercial fishing gear in 2005 were successful, the recent trials did not yield any conclusive information on gear or on shad status.

### **2) Marine Sportsfish Programme**

**Saltmarsh and niche habitat fish sampling programme:** This long-running programme, initiated in 1972, is operated in partnership with the Angling and Marketing Division of the CFB. The programme, which is concentrated mainly on cartilaginous species, continued in 2008. Work began on developing a database to store all of the 40,000 individual tagging records and database

design was agreed and all of the outstanding hard copy records were digitised for database incorporation. Reporting requirements including annual tagging report, species assessment and statistical outputs were defined and it is intended that the database and all reporting requirements, covering the past four decades, will develop as an important new project for CFB in 2009.

### 3) Coarse Fish Programme

*i) Waterways Ireland (WI):* The Central Fisheries Board (CFB) is commissioned by Waterways Ireland to conduct scientific research aimed at understanding and improving habitat conditions for fish and aquatic life on the Royal Canal, Grand Canal (Main Line and Barrow Line), the Barrow Navigation and the Shannon-Erne Waterway. Allied to this research role, close attention is focused on the requirements of anglers and other waterways users.

In 2008, in excess of 20,000 coarse fish were stocked during enhancement operations conducted at eight locations along the waterways. Some 2,800 rudd were stocked into the 15<sup>th</sup> level of the Royal Canal at Kilcock in advance of the Waterways Ireland Sponsored Junior Canals Championship held in August 2008.

Fish rescue operations were necessitated by routine dredging and maintenance operations particularly on the Grand Canal-Barrow Line. These operations have enabled trials to be initiated investigating the practical implementation of various habitat mitigation measures. These measures involved the creation of different channel profiles to assess re-colonisation of the canal margins by aquatic macrophytes and macroinvertebrates, following dredging operations. The programme was completed in September 2008 after 18 months of sampling. Sorting and identification of invertebrate samples is ongoing.

The spatial ecology of certain fish species, determined using both acoustic and radio telemetry, continues to provide an important source of management

information. In 2008, particular emphasis was placed on how coarse fish use the recently dredged areas of canal.

Fish stock assessments play an important role in the management and development of fisheries on the inland waterways. Stock assessments were conducted on 14 levels on the Royal, Grand and Barrow Canals and three Lakes on the Shannon-Erne Waterway. Excellent stocks of coarse fish (e.g. roach, bream, perch and tench) were identified at many of the locations surveyed. Notably, large increases in relative fish stock abundance (when compared to previous surveys) were recorded at several fisheries.

Water quality monitoring at 220 main channel and feeder stream sites on the Royal and Grand Canals, the Shannon-Erne Waterway and the Barrow Navigation was conducted three times in 2008. A subset of forty canal sites was sampled four times in compliance with the Water Framework Directive (WFD). Aquatic submerged and emergent plant communities were also assessed at these sites in Autumn 2008. For the first time, CPET (Chironomid Pupal Exuviae Technique) sampling of canals was completed. This involved three surveys of both the Royal and Grand Canals.

The CFB and WI carried out an interim classification of the 36 Artificial Water Bodies (AWBs) owned and/or monitored by WI to be included in the draft River Basin Management Plans (RBMP) 2008. Water chemistry, macrophyte and macroinvertebrate data were provided from the 40 canal sites that were surveyed during the period 2006 - 2007, as part of WFD monitoring. The majority of AWBs were determined to be at Good Ecological Potential (GEP), with three AWBs achieving GEP by extrapolation. Further work is necessary to determine the status of the Shannon-Erne Waterway.

An extensive aquatic plant survey was conducted on both the Royal and Grand Canals (Main and Barrow Line) in July 2008. The survey was aimed primarily at identifying areas where amenity usage was negatively impacted by aggressive

plant growth as well as those areas where such problems may occur in the future. The implementation of an Aquatic Weed Management programme was integral to Waterways Ireland's maintenance plan in 2008. This programme aims to manage aquatic plant communities in an ecologically sensitive manner ensuring that canal channels remain open for amenity use while retaining ecological diversity and value.

*ii) Inniscarra Reservoir:* With its diverse fish stocks and its proximity to Cork City, Inniscarra Reservoir is a popular angling destination with both local and tourist anglers. The principal species present are bream, rudd, roach x bream hybrids, perch and pike. In recent years concern has been expressed regarding diminishing fish stocks. In order to permit informed comment regarding the current status of fish stocks to be made, a survey was undertaken by the CFB and SWRFB in 2008.

Perch was the most abundant species recorded, comprising almost 50% of the total number of fish captured. The survey revealed a healthy stock of bream that ranged in age from 1+ to over 9 years. Fish in the 15 to 19cm size group (3+ to 5+ years of age) dominated the catches. In a previous survey conducted on this reservoir in 2005, no roach were recorded. In 2008, some 18 specimens were taken in the gill nets. Roach is an invasive fish species that has been shown to rapidly dominate fish populations in Irish waters. Its progress in Inniscarra Reservoir will need to be monitored. The stock of pike in this water was good in 2008, although no fish greater than 3kg were captured during the survey.

#### **4) Salmon, Sea Trout and Eel Programme**

*i) Catch and Release Salmon Project:* Resulting from the new salmon angling regulations introduced in 2007, a number of rivers were opened on a catch and release basis only. CFB research into angling catch-and-release demonstrates that, when the correct procedures are followed, there is a very high survival to spawning of grilse caught on the fly based on radio-tracking results. In 2008, attempts were made to determine the survival of spring salmon (multi-sea-winter fish) after catch and release on the River Slaney. Due to a combination of

high water and poor runs of spring salmon, numbers of salmon captured were low and no conclusive results were obtained.

*ii) Development of a Juvenile Salmon Index:* The abundance of salmon fry close to salmon redds in riffle areas has been used previously as an index of salmon abundance on the River Bush in Northern Ireland. An electrofishing technique based on these principles is now being developed for Irish salmon rivers to provide an index of juvenile salmon abundance on a catchment-wide basis which can be used to assess attainment of salmon conservation limits. Catchment-wide electro-fishing was undertaken in 39 catchments in 2008 to assess abundance and distribution of salmon fry. Nationally, 745 sites were surveyed in 2008. In total, 59 individual catchments have been surveyed in the first two years of this assessment.

The technique has good potential for salmon stock assessment and is likely to be more reflective of salmon stock status in rivers where rod catch could not be used to estimate salmon stock size. Several years of data will be required to compile a robust dataset against which individual catchment performance and trends can be assessed. Catchment-wide electro-fishing is also important in providing managers with information on the distribution and abundance of salmon fry. The absence or low density of salmon fry may be related to water quality issues, obstructions, or habitat damage and areas of low abundance can be investigated.

*iii) National Salmon Genetics Programme:* This project entailed the identification and mapping of discrete spawning areas within tributaries of the salmon bearing rivers in Ireland and collection of juvenile Atlantic salmon from these rivers at locations close to the principal spawning areas for establishment of a genetic baseline. Genetic analyses were carried out by the Zoology Department in University College Cork (UCC). The principle application of this project was to use this genetic baseline to determine the river of origin of salmon from scale samples from any location (at sea, in the estuary or in freshwater) around the coast. The degree to which commercial salmon fisheries and specific inshore

commercial fisheries exploit mixed stocks was determined and the findings of this programme were reported in 2008.

The baseline will contribute to many projects in the future including SALSEA, an EU funded study, currently underway to investigate salmon survival at sea. This information will be critical in attempts to determine the likely causes of reduced marine survival of salmon nationally and will contribute to international studies. In Ireland the database is also being used for local management of salmon stocks.

*iv) Ferox Trout Study:* Ferox trout are large lake trout known to be genetically separate from the normal brown trout stock. 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. Over the three year period, 2005-2007, eighty Ferox trout were tagged in Lough Corrib. By radio tracking at spawning time, it was found that 82% of tagged trout recorded were recorded in the Cong River. This tributary of Lough Corrib has been shown to be the primary spawning location for Ferox trout in the Corrib catchment. As a result of the findings of this study, a conservation bye-law was introduced in 2008 on the Cong River to protect the spawning trout population.

The study moved to the Lough Mask catchment in 2008 and 32 Ferox trout were radio-tagged to determine spawning locations. Only six fish were recorded in spawning streams, four in the Cong canal linking Lough Corrib and Lough Mask. One fish tagged in Lough Mask was detected in Lough Corrib close to the Cong river, having being washed over the fish screen on the Cong canal. More research is required to determine the primary spawning location of Lough Mask Ferox trout due to the low detection of fish tagged in 2008.

v) **Eels:** European eel stocks have seen a very severe collapse in the past decade and the reason for the collapse is not clearly understood. If the migration route and spawning location of eels at sea can be found, scientists can begin to shed light on the reasons for the stock collapse of European eels. CFB and WRFB collaborated with scientists from the Danish Institute for Freshwater Research, the Norwegian Institute for Fisheries Research and CEFAS in the UK in an EU funded eel satellite tagging study. The objective is 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 are fitted with miniature satellite tags on their seaward migration which record depth, temperature and light on the eel migration route across the Atlantic. This information would be crucial to understanding the reasons for the collapse of European eel stocks.

In October and November 2008, 45 large silver eels were fitted with satellite tags and another 45 eels were fitted with data storage tags. Approximately half of the tagged eels are from catchments where the eel population does not have the swim bladder parasite *Anguillicola crassus* while half are from catchments harbouring the parasite. Different tags are programmed to pop-off at differing time periods up until February 2010. The objective is to track the migration route across the Atlantic towards the Sargasso Sea. The tags float to the surface and connect with the Argus satellite which downloads the data on depth and other parameters and give a GPS position of the tag. This research aims to contribute to our understanding of silver eel migration at sea and our understanding of the causes of the collapse of juvenile eel recruitment to European waters in recent years.

**vi) *Compilation of Habitat-Based Catchment Information and Historical Eel Data in Support of Eel Management Plans (EEL-PLAN):*** The latest scientific advice from the International Council for the Exploration of the Sea (ICES) concerning

European eel is that the stock is outside safe biological limits and that current fisheries are not sustainable. ICES have recommended that a recovery plan be developed for the whole stock of European eel as a matter of urgency and that exploitation and other human activities affecting the stock be reduced to as close to zero as possible. The new EU Regulation for the recovery of the stock of European eel requires that current spawner escapement (as silver eel) is measured against the best estimate of escapement that would have existed if no anthropogenic influences had impacted on the stock. It has been assumed that pre-1980s data represents the best potential estimate of pristine production levels.

Ireland established a National Working Group on eel management in 2006 in order to begin the preparatory work required. This group produced the required national and River Basin District Eel Plans which was supported by data collated within this project. The project is designed to collate available historical eel data from rivers, lakes and transitional waters and deliver to the eel management process in a habitat based GIS database. Data from the majority of major eel catchments have been collated.

The National Plan also describes a comprehensive programme of monitoring and evaluation of management actions and their implementation, and a programme of eel stock assessment to establish a stock baseline, estimate silver eel escapement and monitor the impact of the management actions on the local stocks. Work began in late 2008, in conjunction with the Marine Institute, to establish and deliver the National Eel Monitoring Plan.

## **European Directive National Obligations**

### **i) Habitats Directive (HD)**

The Habitats Directive lists Atlantic salmon, three species of lamprey, and three species of shad and pollan as qualifying fish species. The Irish Habitats Directive implementing legislation identifies the Minister for Communications, Energy and Natural Resources, along with the Minister for Environment Heritage and Local Government, as having a role in undertaking investigations

on the status of qualifying fish species. During 2008 a draft discussion document, outlining the proposed roll-out of the Habitats Directive fish requirements, was developed and formed a template for discussion with the Department of Communications, Energy and Natural Resources (DCENR). Funding from DCENR will permit commencement of a circumscribed monitoring programme for Annex II and V fish species in Irish waters in 2009.

## **ii) Water Framework Directive (WFD)**

In December 2000, the European Union introduced the Water Framework Directive (WFD) - as part of a new standard approach for all countries to manage their water resources and to protect aquatic ecosystems. The fundamental objectives of the WFD, which was transposed into Irish Law through the European Communities (Water Policy) Regulations 2003 (S.I. No. 722 of 2003), are to protect and maintain the status of waters that are already of good or high quality, to prevent any further deterioration and to restore all waters that are impaired so that they achieve at least good status by 2015. The Directive specifies that fish shall be monitored at all sites selected for Surveillance Monitoring (SM) (This list includes 179 river sites, 73 lakes and various transitional waters in the Republic of Ireland).

The WFD fish surveillance monitoring programme in 2008 has been extensive and 83 river sites, 32 lakes and 42 transitional water bodies were successfully surveyed nationwide. A team of scientists were recruited by the Research and Development section of the Central Fisheries Board to carry out the monitoring surveys. As many as four Central and Regional Fisheries Board WFD monitoring teams were deployed simultaneously to work in the field. The surveys were conducted using a suite of European standard methods; electric fishing is the main survey method used in rivers and various netting techniques are being used in lakes and estuaries. Sampling in rivers was frustrated by poor weather, higher than average rainfall and water levels. Due to the stresses of weather the surveying and monitoring of some river sites have been deferred until 2009.

Approximately 80,000 fish have been recorded during the surveys and all fish have been identified, counted and a representative sample has been measured, weighed and had scales removed for aging purposes. Some fish were retained for further analysis in the CFB laboratory. Work on the programme in the field finished in early November and staff spent the winter months processing the large volume of fish samples taken over the sampling period.

This new national monitoring programme for the WFD will provide up to date accurate information on fish species in our waters for decision makers, angling clubs and owners and will establish a baseline ecological status for these waters. The information from the monitoring programme will be used to evaluate the effectiveness or otherwise of the control measures in the WFD River Basin Management Plans. All lakes and rivers surveyed for WFD up to 2008 have been assigned an ecological status class (high, good, moderate, poor, bad) and results have been submitted to the River Basin Management Plans. These plans were published by the River Basin Districts in December 2008.

A GIS officer was also recruited to support the WFD team. The information obtained from the monitoring programme will be incorporated into a new GIS database and fish species distribution maps will be made available to the public through the WFD fish website early in 2009.

Public information evenings have been held during 2008 and more will be arranged with interested groups during 2009. While carrying out fish stock surveys at designated locations around the country the CFB WFD team members discussed the work and the project with members of the public and other interested parties. WFD fish information leaflets and posters giving information on the programme were disseminated.

Preliminary reports are available to read on the WFD fish website ([www.wfdfish.ie](http://www.wfdfish.ie)). A more comprehensive report and interactive maps giving information on fish stocks for each of the waters surveyed is planned for the website in 2009.

## National Environment and Biodiversity Programme

### 1. Invasive Species

*i) Status in the Royal and Grand Canals:* The canals network in Ireland is continuing to expand and the link to the River Shannon via the Royal Canal will soon be re-established. This highly interconnected network provides a ready conduit for the spread of unwelcome invasive plant, macroinvertebrate and fish species. A number of potentially problematic invasives already present in these canals, albeit at relatively low levels in most cases, include: Nuttall's pondweed, New Zealand pigmyweed, Water fern, Zebra mussel and Dace. Riparian species are becoming more prominent and have the potential to impact not only native biodiversity but also the recreational usage of the canals. Most important among these is the Japanese knotweed. The status of these species was monitored in 2008 and a programme for their management and control has been formulated.

*ii) Status and distribution of Chub (*Leuciscus cephalus*) in the River Inny:* Chub is a non-native fish that was recently introduced to the River Inny. Twenty-five specimens were captured using electric fishing in 2006 and 2007. An examination of these fish revealed that they were healthy and most were in spawning condition. The survey further revealed that long sections of the River Inny provide a habitat that is suitable for the establishment, growth and proliferation of the species. The fact that chub can spread naturally from the River Inny to other major river systems *via* Lough Ree and the River Shannon means that the species has the potential to become more widespread in Ireland.

In 2008, an extensive electric fishing survey revealed just two chub. Both were captured in the lower reaches of the river, in a relatively fast flowing area. The fish were fitted with radio tags and released. The aim was that these 'Judas' chub would join their natural shoals, thus identifying their locations and movement patterns. This would make easy the task of removing the majority of the invasive chub from the river. Results from continuous monitoring of the two radio-tagged fish revealed that they stayed in the section from which they had

been captured and did not encounter any other chub. It is proposed to remove these tagged fish in spring 2009.

*iii) Lagarosiphon major in Lough Corrib:* Lough Corrib is a lake of major conservation importance and is a nationally valuable wild brown trout and Atlantic salmon fishery. In 2005 the presence of an aggressive invasive alien plant species was recorded in a bay on the western shore of the lake. *Lagarosiphon major* is a submerged plant that originates in southern Africa. Outside its native range, the plant is highly invasive and rapidly outcompetes native plant species. It also creates habitats that are less favourable to native fishes.

In 2005 this invasive species was recorded from nine sites on the lake. This number increased to 24 in 2006, to 64 in 2007 and to 113 in 2008. This rapid expansion in the distribution of the species is mirrored in the rate of expansion of plant stands at individual sites. In one bay the recorded plant stand expanded from just less than 1,000 sq meters in 2007 to in excess of 70,000 sq meters in 2008. To date no *Lagarosiphon* has been recorded from the shallower lower lake, although the plant is rapidly spreading in a southward direction and is now widespread in the middle lake.

In 2008, some 4,700 tonnes of *Lagarosiphon* were cut and removed from the lake. The cutting operations were focused on the upper lake in 2008 and will progressively move southwards. Large containment nets were deployed in bays where cutting was in progress in an effort to minimise the drift of viable plant fragments. In small, localised areas the herbicide dichlobenil was used to target selected stands of this invasive plant. In other areas, hand removal using scuba divers successfully cleared recently colonised bays and littoral areas. The use of a biodegradable geotextile product to cover *Lagarosiphon* stands and block out incident light has proved to be quite an effective weed control method. Early results using this method suggest that it will effectively kill the *Lagarosiphon* beneath, while also permitting the growth of some indigenous Charophyte species through the fine meshes of the geotextile.

## **2) Salmonid River Rehabilitation**

### **Riverine Enhancement**

In 2008, the CFB commenced a major riverine enhancement programme in collaboration with the Engineering Services Section of the Office of Public Works – “The Environmental Rivers Enhancement Programme” (E.R.E.P.). This will involve the enhancement of drained river catchments, throughout Ireland, where O.P.W. are responsible for the drainage maintenance of such systems. These programmes, scheduled over five years, will involve the restoration of the river corridor, not just the river channel itself.

Initially six catchments have been targeted for enhancement works namely the Boyne, Corrib, Dee, Maigue, Maine and Moy systems. In chronological order the programme will involve the following steps;-

1. Channels will be surveyed to identify reaches where capital works are most likely to enhance the river corridor.
2. Works programmes will be designed.
3. OPW staff will implement the programmes.
4. CFB staff will monitor changes in relation to the morphology and ecology of the river and also review changes in relation to bird, bat and small mammal populations in the river corridor.

Additional facets of this programme include an audit programme for OPW’s machine crews to monitor compliance with OPW’s environmental guidance notes and SOPs and development/roll-out of a new training programme on relevant environmental issues for OPW staff.

In addition to scientific studies associated with biodiversity and hydromorphology elements, the EREP will facilitate additional or on-going studies of relevance to channel management activities of OPW. Studies on the impact of channel maintenance on lamprey and on crayfish were undertaken in the 2005 - 07 period and Ecological Impact Assessments (EClAs) requested.

The lamprey report was published by OPW in 2008 and that on crayfish will be released in 2009. The post-impact recovery studies are on-going within the umbrella of the EREP and it is envisaged that this assessment work will continue for a further period.

### **3) Water Analysis**

#### **Laboratory Services**

The long term monitoring of important game and course fishing lakes, continued in 2008. Chlorophyll and total phosphorus results for L. Sheelin 1978-2007 were used in the “new” Central Fisheries Board book “Brown Trout in Ireland”, written by Dr. Martin O’ Grady.

A total number of 4,054 water samples were analysed in 2008, by the CFB chemistry laboratory; 89 of these samples (rivers and lakes) were analysed for the Water Framework Directive Project final report. The canals/Shannon-Erne sampling and monitoring also continued, as well as the statutory analyses for fish farm licences.

The CFB chemistry laboratory, as with previous years, retained its EPA inter-calibration certificate status for 2008.

Details of publications are available at [www.cfb.ie](http://www.cfb.ie)

## **Promotion & Marketing**

### **Marketing and Angling 2008**

2008 was another dynamic year for the Central Fisheries Boards marketing and angling team who continued to work closely with and support our Regional Fisheries Board colleagues, tourism partners, Failte Ireland and Tourism Ireland, government agencies and the industry in implementing the Angling Tourism Marketing Strategy (ATMS). The Central and Regional Fisheries Boards again demonstrated their commitment to implementing the ATMS through the development of a number of new marketing initiatives including the development of a new suite of angling brochures, new web initiatives and the attendance at promotional shows at home and abroad.

These and other developments have assisted in making it easier for visitors to come to Ireland to fish by improving the depth, breadth and timeliness of information available to customers. Closer working relationships were also established with the Loughs Agency, the Department of Culture, Arts and Leisure (DCAL) in Northern Ireland and the industry with a view to advancing the ATMS and developing joint working programmes where appropriate.

In addition to attendance at the promotional shows the Boards still carried out an extensive overseas journalist familiarisation programme in association with the Regional Fisheries Boards, Failte Ireland and Tourism Ireland. Industry members were also involved as appropriate. A total of 12 journalist visits from four markets, France, Germany, Holland and UK was achieved up to December 2008 securing 28 articles and 136 pages of editorial coverage. The articles covered all aspects of fishing in Ireland including sea, salmon, pike, trout and coarse. All of the top overseas publications were covered by these features. The editorial coverage received from these trips had an advertising equivalency of circa € 408,000 in 2008 and represents a huge return on investment and excellent value for money.

The Board also continued to support and develop recreational angling in Ireland by providing information on, when, where and how to fish to anglers throughout the country. The CFB website and the accompanying expert advice provided by the staff of the Board continue to be vital in delivering this service to Irish anglers. The Board has also harnessed the assistance of the voluntary sector in developing this area and seven youth angling training courses and events were organised nationwide.

The Boards have worked closely with our education partners in 2008 and the importance of our fisheries resource and its place in our natural heritage was successfully communicated to young people countrywide through the National Educational Programme “Something Fishy”. This collaborative approach to active learning has transformed the way the curriculum is experienced by teachers and students alike by providing hands on learning opportunities to all concerned. It is planned to extend and develop this programme into 2009 and beyond.

### **Overseas Promotional Events 2008**

In 2008, the Central and Regional Fisheries Boards, in association with Tourism Ireland and Failte Ireland, attended a number of targeted angling promotions in the UK, France, the Netherlands, Germany and the USA. A new calendar of events was developed by the Central and Regional Fisheries Boards for 2008 which will deliver on the goals and objectives as set out in the ATMS.

The Boards actively promoted Ireland as a leading tourist fishing destination at these events by promoting the best of what we have to offer to target segments in each of the markets identified under the ATMS. The Boards attended 12 overseas promotions in 2008 including 3 events in France, 4 events in the UK, 2 events in Holland, 2 events in USA and one event in Germany. Where possible and appropriate the Boards also worked and engaged with industry members.

The main reason for attendance at these shows was to increase visitor numbers through the promotion of Ireland as a premier angling destination. Attendance at these shows also afforded the Boards to assess the market potential in each market and develop product offerings for specific target groups and segments in each of these markets. The important information obtained assisted better targeting of viable segments in some markets. One of the main successes in 2008 was the reported growth in bass anglers resulting from the aggressive marketing campaign undertaken in France. This has led to increased economic and social benefits accruing to local and rural communities in Ireland.

Marketing activities undertaken in 2008 have also assisted in the development of 'shoulder' and 'off peak' business and have addressed the issues of regional spread and rural and coastal development.

### **Promotional Events in Ireland and Northern Ireland 2008**

Attendance at promotional shows in Ireland and Northern Ireland allowed the Central and Regional Fisheries Boards to communicate with a number of target audiences including, game, coarse, sea and pike anglers, young people, children and students, educators, the agricultural community, other government agencies, the industry and the general public. Participation in these events allowed the Boards communicate with these audiences in a positive and interactive manner. From a communication perspective the angling shows in Ireland and Northern Ireland provided the perfect vehicle to communicate the new salmon and sea trout regulations for 2008 to anglers.

Promotions attended in Ireland and Northern Ireland during 2008 included the Ireland Angling Show, the Birr Castle Country Fair, Farmfest in Galway, the BT Young Scientist Exhibition, the National Ploughing Championships, the Loughs Agency Show and the Belfast Show.

### **Website Development and Performance 2008**

The Central Fisheries Board website remains the premier website for Irish angling and freshwater fisheries research information. Website statistics indicate that 495,339 visitors, up 19.6% over last year, accessed 1,996,218

pages - a 31% increase over 2007. In particular, anglers downloaded the equivalent of 30,000 Sea Angling brochures, 24,000 [Coarse Angling](#) brochures, 22,000 [Pike Angling](#) Brochures, 22,000 [Game Angling](#) brochures and 18,500 [Trout Angling](#) brochures.

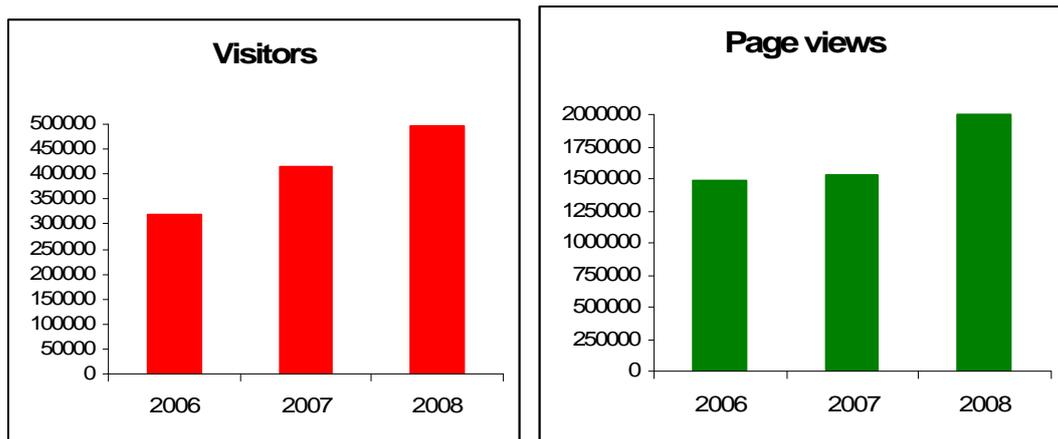


Figure III: Numbers of visitors and page views of CFB website during 2008.

Over 800 angling and site content queries were directed to the website during the year. In addition just over 120 users completed the online Irish Angling Update survey.

The Board continued the development of the French, German and Dutch versions of the site during 2008. The sites are continuing to perform well and are maintaining their positions with the search engines. The French, German and Dutch sites have significantly increased the number of angling queries from these markets.

The websites of the Northern, South Western, Southern and Eastern Regional Fisheries Boards were maintained and managed by the CFB during the year. Advice and support was given to the North Western Regional Fisheries Board, Recreational Angling Ireland and the education programme Something Fishy in maintenance and management of their websites.

In addition to this work the CFB developed a pair of websites for the Water Framework Directive fish sampling programme. The first site was to make

available information and reports to the public - anglers, stakeholders and other interested parties. The second site was a private extranet which allowed the WFD team to circulate draft reports and other useful documents amongst themselves and the Regional Fisheries Boards staff.

One of the most exciting new developments was the enhancement of the Irish Angling Update, which has been issued almost weekly for over 25 years by the CFB. This informative and valuable fishing report is now available as an online newsletter (ezine) and has been very well received by subscribers.

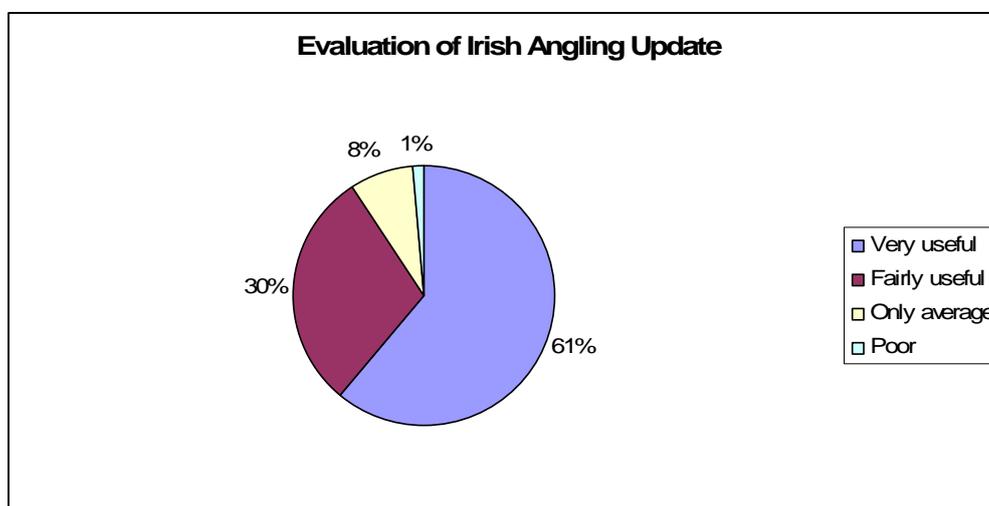


Figure IV: Evaluation of Irish Angling Update during 2008.

The successful pilot national angling websites in French, German and Dutch formed the basis of a proposal and background work into developing an all Ireland angling website to ensure the quality and diversity of the product is best represented to online tourist anglers.

### National Angling Brochures 2008

A new suite of angling brochures under the headings salmon and sea trout, wild brown trout, pike, coarse and sea angling were jointly produced by the Central and Regional Fisheries Boards and Failte Ireland in 2008. These brochures provide overseas visitors with details on the best of Irish angling through centres of excellence for each type of fishing. In addition to the suite of five English brochures the sea and pike angling brochures were produced in

French. The full suite of English language brochures were also developed as e-brochures and are available on the CFB and Failte Ireland websites.

### **Regional Fisheries Board Publications**

A new sea angling guide was produced by the Central Fisheries Board on behalf of the Southern Regional Fisheries Board. This angling guide represented the second brochure in the suite of brochures being produced for the Regional Fisheries Boards. These publications are a considerable step up in quality from previous publications and are full colour productions featuring not only excellent photographs but also top quality tackle and rig graphics. A new brochure on trout fishing on the River Suir was also produced for the SRFB and has been very well received by anglers at home and abroad.

In delivering the Boards messages and in addition to the above publications the following publications were also developed and produced by the Division in 2008.

### **Additional Major Publications 2008**

1. Pike Conservation Leaflet - 8pp DL flyer on the proper handling & conservation of pike.
2. Angling Map Pull-up Stand - A pull up stand with a map of Ireland for use at trade shows.
3. Water Framework 6pp DL - A leaflet outlining the main ideas behind our implementation of the WFD.
4. Strategic Plan - The CFB Strategic Plan in both English and Irish.
5. Martin O'Grady Brown Trout Book - 130pp A4 Book on brown trout.
6. Catch and Release Leaflet - 6pp DL for C and R Incentive Scheme.

### **Further Publications**

1. Catch of the month Certificates for Seascapes.
2. Catch of the week Certificates for CFB.
3. Breast Cancer Certificates for CFB/ERFB.
4. Something Fishy Certificates.
5. RAI Certificates.

### **The National Education Programme “Something Fishy”**

“Something Fishy” was developed as a collaborative venture between the Central and Regional Fisheries Boards and Blackrock and Monaghan Education Centres. It was originally launched in 2005. In February 2006 Regional Fisheries Board staff underwent training in child protection, risk assessment and group management to ensure delivery in line with best practice for working in this sector.

To streamline the delivery of the programme in 2008, two dedicated coordinators from the Central Fisheries Board and Blackrock Educational Centre were appointed. Following the success of the competition 2007 it was agreed to run this again in 2008 at both Regional and National level. Each school taking part in “Something Fishy” will produce a class project based on the lessons in the pack and focused on one of four main themes.

In 2007, 162 schools took part in the programme and from this it is estimated that the programme reached circa 4,050 students. On foot of the success of this programme in 2007 plans were put in place to run the programme over the academic year 2008 / 09. From the previous cycle of the programme a detailed and honest evaluation was drawn up. Using this as a starting point a timeline for the running of the programme was put in place with a clear understanding of what was required to be delivered.

Though the latest cycle of programme has only been running since September it appears to be functioning significantly better than during the previous cycle. It is envisaged that a larger number of schools will be facilitated than previously and a larger number of students reached.

This collaborative approach to active learning undertaken by the Fisheries Boards and Education Centres has transformed the way the curriculum is experienced by teachers and students alike by providing hands on learning opportunities to all concerned. It is planned to further extend and develop this programme.

### **Press/Communication 2008**

A media/communications plan was developed and implemented in for the Central Fisheries Board in 2008 and assistance was also given the Regional Fisheries Boards in this area. Press releases, editorial and interviews to highlight the Boards activities and successes were targeted at appropriate media including national and local newspapers, TV, radio and overseas publications. As part of the media and communication plan for 2008 a number of key areas were highlighted these included raising the CFB Profile through press releases, editorials, TV and radio interviews and advertisements.

A number of interviews were conducted with the CFB's CEO, Ciaran Byrne, and included interviews on RTE's Six One News, RTE's radio marine program Seascapes, The Irish Angler and Public Affairs Ireland. Seven radio interviews were aired during 2008 these included interviews with Dr Joe Caffrey on invasive species in Ireland and Dr Willie Roche on the Irish Specimen Fish Committee awards.

Twenty press releases were issued during 2008. The areas covered in the press releases included the Boards Educational Programme Something Fishy, Invasive Species, Irish Specimen Fish Committee and The Water Framework Directive. 16 of the press release were covered by the angling media and regional press.

The Irish Angling Update was produced regularly during the 2008 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. The catch of the week award scheme developed in conjunction with the RTE radio 1 programme Seascapes has proved extremely successful. The development of a new ezine in 2008 has greatly enhanced the Boards communications and has been well received by journalists and anglers alike.

### **Water Framework Directive (WFD) Awareness Campaign**

The Central and Regional Fisheries Boards are working jointly to survey fish communities in rivers, lakes, estuaries and other coastal waters around Ireland. The CFB has a specific requirement to promote the fish element of the Water Framework Directive (WFD). To meet this requirement an information campaign was devised in 2008 by the Angling and Marketing Division titled “Sampling Fishing for the Water Framework Directive”

As part of the campaign posters, pull up stands adverts and information leaflets were deigned and published to inform the public about the fish element of WFD. A number of articles were written for the press these included two articles in the Irish Independent Earth Magazine, Inshore Ireland, Irish Country Sport and Country Life magazine and the Sherkin Comment. General adverts were place in the Public Sector Times, The Irish Angler and the Irish Anglers Digest.

Seven information evenings were organized nationally in a bid to inform the general public, anglers and fishery owners about the Central and Regional Fisheries Boards role in WFD. Each information evening was advertised in the local press including The Irish Examiner, Corks Evening Echo, Wexford People, The Kerryman, Peoples News, The North Side People and other newspapers across the Country. The information evenings were hosted by the Research and Development Division. A PowerPoint presentation was given with a Q&A session afterwards. Large numbers of people attended the seven meetings across the country. The Fisheries Boards received a lot of positive feedback from the people who attended these information evenings.

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

The Regional Fisheries Boards were involved in jointly delivering these schemes again in 2008 with the Central Fisheries Board. These schemes provide the Central and Regional Fisheries Boards with important scientific and marketing information.

## **Sea Angling Logbook Statistics 1978 - 2008**

The tagging and logbook programme was run successfully again in 2008. The bad weather during the year means that we expect figures to be low for both the tagging and logbooks. We are also seeing a number of skippers diversify away from angling into other areas such as sightseeing & eco-tours which means that the trend in participation in the logbook programme is declining. On a more positive note we are continuing to recruit more and more anglers to the tagging programme which is growing year on year.

## **Marine Sport Fish Tagging Programme**

Over 50 charter skippers and a few dedicated anglers took part in the 2008 Marine Sport Fish Tagging Programme. Over 1,000 fish were tagged and released including blue and porbeagle shark, tope, common skate and ray. Since 1970, a total of 39,919 sea fish have been tagged and released including 18,801 blue shark. This programme is the largest of its kind in Europe and the second largest in the world after the USA.

## **A Review of the 2008 Angling Season**

### **Salmon and Sea Trout**

It was a very quiet start to the salmon season this year with only a small number of fish recorded around the country. As usual the first salmon of the season was landed on the River Drowes in Donegal. Some fine fish were recorded in the early season on Lough Currane in particular. In April this year the season really started with some nice fish reported from the Rivers Feale in Kerry, The Munster Blackwater in Cork and Galway Weir fishery. Indeed the fishing at the Galway Weir throughout the whole summer with the higher water levels was excellent with the best run of fish in years. In May fishing on the River Moy picked up and the fishing was very consistent after that. In 2008 salmon fishing all over Ireland was affected by the record rainfall from late June to early September. It did bring more fish up through river systems quickly resulting in salmon being evenly spread throughout river systems like the River Moy. In early July a salmon of 28 lbs. 3 oz was recorded on the River Bandon in Cork. This fish was the biggest recorded by the Fisheries Boards since 1991. The

numbers of salmon recorded on the River Moy at 7,300 was well down on the previous year mainly due to the very high water levels for most the season. The Munster Blackwater had one of its best seasons with great fishing throughout August and September. The neighbouring River Nore also produced very good fishing at times with many fish over 20 lbs. recorded and released in September. The Donegal rivers produced some good fishing at times and in the east, the River Boyne was open for angling on a catch and release basis and there was some fine fish reported at the end of the season. 2008 will also be remembered as the year some good numbers of salmon over 20 lbs. were reported with regularity throughout the season from many fisheries.

### **Sea Trout**

As in previous years, most of the best of the sea trout fishing reports came from Lough Currane in Co. Kerry. The first specimen of the year i.e. over 6 lbs. was reported from the lake in early April, and practically every week of the season after that there was a specimen or two reported until the end of September. An English visitor took the best fish of the year of 10 lbs. 9 oz on fly in the middle of May. There was a fairly good run of smaller fish reported on the lake during the later months of the season and it is good to report that many sea trout big and small were returned after capture thanks to help of the excellent ghillies who work tirelessly on this great lough. Elsewhere, the Moy and Erne estuaries fished quiet well at times with good fishing reported on many weeks throughout the summer. The River Bandon in Cork produced some good sea trout fishing but overall it probably was not the best season and for the other small sea trout rivers in west Cork probably due to the flood conditions which prevailed for the months of July and August. There was some very good fishing reported from the Owenmore River and Carrowmore Lake throughout the summer in north west Mayo. There was some good sport also reported in several parts of Connemara particularly on the Ballinahinch system. There were only sporadic reports of sea trout catches elsewhere overall excluding Lough Currane; the sea trout catch for the season was well down due to the exceptional water levels on many fisheries during the summer.

### **Wild Brown Trout - River and Lake.**

The weather had a huge impact on trout fishing on most of our major fisheries throughout the season. There was fair fishing on the duckfly on Loughs Corrib and Mask in April. Fishing on the midland trout lakes was generally poor in the first few months of the season with only fair hatches of fly and very sporadic fishing in very cool weather conditions. The mayfly season did not improve things and hatches of fly were very varied. There were some big trout caught during this period on Loughs Ree and Derg but the midland and western lakes all fished quiet poorly with Lough Conn probably providing the most consistent fishing throughout this period. Indeed this lough, of all the great western lakes fished the best even during the very wet months of July and August. In September, a fine 12lbs+ trout was caught and released on fly on Lough Conn. The traditional green peter fishing on the midland trout lakes did not materialise in July and many anglers were very disappointed with very poor fishing. From June onwards however small numbers of anglers fished Lough Sheelin mainly with small dry sedges and were rewarded with some fine consistent fishing. Late evening fishing produced some huge trout and the lough fished well until the end of the season. By the middle of September, there was a great improvement in lough fishing everywhere with good fishing reported on western and midland trout loughs in particular.

The weather certainly had a very negative impact on trout river fishing for a lot of the season with the high water levels and very cold spring weather creating poor conditions for good river fishing. When there were breaks in the poor weather, the River Boyne and tributaries fished well producing some fine fishing with many French and Irish anglers enjoying good sport. There were a few reports of fair river fishing from the River Suir and the Kings River in the South during the season but the fishing was very sporadic due to prevailing high water levels.

### **Pike Angling**

Very high water levels in early spring and throughout much of the summer did curtail some sport for pike but they enjoyed good consistent sport throughout most of the year. During the spawning period water levels were high at first but dropped dramatically in April and there was very cold weather also. One fish of 32 lbs. was reported caught and released at the Oaks Fishery in Derry. The rivers Suck and Inny produced many 20 lbs. plus pike during this period with less numbers reported from the River Barrow. The River Shannon and many lakes in the Cavan, Leitrim, and Monaghan areas also produced many pike to over 20 lbs. during the season. It was great to report that good numbers of Dutch anglers fished in Ireland this year with great success in many areas. There were many French anglers fishing for pike in Ireland this year and one top story was the success of four French visitors recording over 600 pike in nine days in the Cavan Lakelands with fish to over 20 lbs. Some others groups fly fished for pike with great success taking pike to over 20 lbs. in this area also. The recent pike conservation measures have certainly had a great effect of better quality pike fishing on the majority of our fisheries. Late in the season, the good fishing continued with a great 26.5 lbs. fish taken on fly winning one of the catch of the month competition for a well known English angling journalist. A party of Italians had superb fishing in late October on Lough Ree recording fish up to 30 lbs. The best reported fish of the year was taken on the last day of the year, a fine 33.5 lbs. fish taken on a jerkbait by a local angler at Shreelane Lake, a fishery managed by the South Western Regional Fisheries Board in west Cork.

### **Coarse Angling**

The cold dry spring brought some excellent fishing particularly in the midlands where the hot water stretch on the River Shannon at Lanesboro produced some wonderful bream fishing and some fine specimen roach to over 2 lbs. Catches over 100 lbs. a day were common when the hot water outfall was hot from the nearby power station. When the hot water was off for some periods fishing catches declined with many of the fish heading upriver or out into the wilds of

Lough Ree. The same lough also produced some superb fishing at many venues near Athlone and on parts of Inny Bay area of the lake. In May, several specimen tench up to 7 lbs. 8 oz were recorded at the hot water stretch at Lanesboro. Throughout the summer there was very good catches of tench reported from many venues in the eastern region, the Erne catchment and on the River Shannon mostly notably at Shannonbridge and at nearby Banagher where there was one catch of 200 lbs. of tench for an English visitor including a super fish of over 8 lbs. Plenty of very big bream were also caught and reports of several fish over 10 lbs. were reported from Co. Leitrim and at Lough Oughter. Big roach bream hybrids were also taken with some fish close to the Irish record of 7 lbs. reported from lakes in the Drumconrath area of Co, Meath. The very high water levels due to the heavy rainfall during the summer months did not affect the huge catches of bream and hybrids recorded at venues in Co. Cavan at Cootehill, Arva, and at Gowna. Many catches of bream over 100 lbs. were reported from these locations. Similar catches were also reported for many venues in small lakes in Co. Longford and in the nearby lake complex in Strokestown in Co. Roscommon. There was very good bream fishing reported for most of the summer on several areas of Lough Derg. The autumn festivals at many venues in the Cavan Leitrim area fished extremely well with tonnes of roach, bream and hybrids recorded at each of these despite the very high water levels. There were many reports of carp over 20 lbs. taken at Ballinafid Lake near Mullingar. In the Arva and Longford areas there were reports of good bream fishing right up to the end of November. The harsher winter weather conditions in early December put an end to very good coarse angling in most regions except on some of the midland canal stretches and on Lough Ramor where good catches of roach and hybrids were reported weekly right up to the end of the year. All in all it was a good coarse angling season in Ireland.

### **Sea Angling**

The year started off brightly along the east with good shore fishing reported along the Wicklow and Wexford coasts. The tope season started early in the Shannon Estuary with good fishing reported as early as the first week in April.

Red Bay in Co. Antrim dominated headlines all through the season with a huge haul of specimens and several new Irish record fish. Among the notable fish caught with charter skipper Hamish Currie were several spur dogfish records broken on three occasions with a Dutch visitor setting the new Irish record at 10.319kgs. Many large Skate were recorded all through the season at Red Bay including several fish estimated to beat the current Irish record of 221 lbs. Good numbers of skate were also recorded and tagged at Courtmacsherry and Newport in particular. While many fine specimen fish were recorded all summer, most charter skippers reported many lost days due to very windy conditions and dangerous conditions to go to sea. This impacted on anglers fishing off the far out wrecks in particular especially off the Cork and Donegal coasts. Nonetheless there were plenty of fish recorded on the good days including fair numbers of blue shark both in west Cork, Kerry and in Donegal. One interesting fact was the numbers of porbeagle shark recorded this year with 3 from Galway Bay and 17 for anglers fishing out from Downings in north Donegal. Another usual catch was the capture to the side of a huge six gill shark estimated to weigh well over 300 lbs. at Carrigaholt in the Clare in August. Significant catches of tope were recorded both by anglers out charter fishing and small boat fishing at most sea angling centres throughout the season. Among the normal species, good numbers of pollack and coalfish were recorded everywhere but numbers of cod and codling were well down on other years. On the shore there were more people out targeting bass particularly in south Wexford, Cork and in parts of Kerry. Catches when the weather permitted were very good with many fish now taken on fly as well as lures and bait. Another fish, the thick lipped mullet was very much in demand with shore anglers with many specimens recorded and put back alive at many angling centres around the coast. Mackerel were plentiful at all times. The newer summer species like trigger fish did not make much an appearance this year probably due to the poor summer and no species of tuna were recorded this year although albacore were sighted several times off the south west coast. Other new Irish records were a 1lb herring recorded up in Red Bay, a blackmouthed dogfish also from Red Bay in Co. Antrim and a bluemouth of 1.32 Kilos taken in Cork in July.

## The Central Fisheries Board

### DRAFT UNAUDITED INCOME AND EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT FOR THE 12 MONTHS TO 31 DECEMBER 2008

	Notes	2008		2007	
		€	€	€	€
<b>Income</b>					
<b>State and EU Funding</b>					
Operating grants		10,118,887		5,786,508	
Net deferred funding for pensions	12b	482,654		633,016	
Less: Allocated to Regional Fisheries Boards	1b	(700,002)	9,901,539	(152,000)	6,267,524
<b>Other Income</b>	2b		2,505,798		2,166,743
<b>Transfer from / (to) Capital Account</b>	10		428,339		(313,883)
			<u>12,835,676</u>		<u>8,120,384</u>
<b>Expenditure</b>					
Administration	3		4,152,845		3,426,916
Operations	4		7,517,667		5,157,114
			<u>11,670,512</u>		<u>8,584,030</u>
<b>Surplus / (Deficit) for the year</b>			1,165,164		(463,646)
<b>Surplus / (Deficit) at 1 January</b>			(58,283)		405,363
<b>Surplus / (Deficit) at 31 December</b>			<u>1,106,881</u>		<u>(58,283)</u>

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

### **Chairman's Report**

#### **Corporate Governance**

The Board had an excess of income over expenditure of €293,193 in its draft financial statements. During 2008, assets were purchased totalling €474,964. As can be seen from the draft accounts EU funded projects amounted to €46,680. These accounts are in draft format and are subject being certified by the Comptroller and Auditor General.

The Board worked to a detailed business plan for the year, and in many cases exceeded the goals set. The Chief and Assistant Chief Executive Officer attended National Fisheries Management Executive (NFME) and Operational Management Team (OMT) group meetings respectively during the year.

It is the Boards view that effective use was made of the Boards resources attested by the numerous achievements outlined in the annual report and business plan. The Board's offices and stores at Creevy, Carrickmacross were completed.

Two requests were received by the Board under the Freedom of Information Act.

When appropriate, the Board has consulted with the Department of Community, Rural and Gaelthacht Affairs (DCRGA) over development and promotional activities.

The Board has met the required achievements set out under Benchmarking. There are several areas identified under Sustaining Progress that the Board has achieved. Other areas under Sustaining Progress are proactively being pursued and will be achieved in the foreseeable future.

The Board has complied with the requirements of the Disability Act 2005 in that the 3% target has been reached. The Board erected a number of structures

catering for wheelchair access in Counties Monaghan and Meath. All staff completed disability awareness training.

### **Internal Controls**

On behalf of the Eastern Regional 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 Boards circumstances having regard to its size, level of expenditure, staff resources and the nature of its operations. However, the systems do not, and cannot, provide absolute assurance against material error.

The Board has appointed an audit committee whose duties include;

- a) Review of annual financial statements before submission to the Board.
- b) Discussions as appropriate with the Comptroller and Auditor Generals Office.
- c) Discussion of any problems and reservations arising from internal and external audit and any matters which auditors may wish to discuss with the committee (in the absence of management where necessary).
- d) To review the external auditors management letter and managements response.
- e) To review the Board s internal control systems with particular reference to EU funds.
- f) To consider major findings of internal investigations and managements response.
- g) To consider other relevant topics, as defined by the Board.

The Chairman of the audit committee reports both formally and verbally to the Board as appropriate and conveys the recommendations of the audit committee 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 Boards professional advisors are available for consultation by the Board as required.

A detailed procedural manual is now complete and management exercise 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.

i. Formal procedures are in place for the purchase of all goods and services, for approval of invoices in respect of goods and services and authorisation 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.

ii. Monthly accounts and budgets are prepared throughout the year. On a quarterly basis, management accounts are reviewed by the audit committee. The Board operates a computerised accounting system which is capable of providing a wide range of financial and accounting information.

iii. Budgets are prepared in respect of each year and monthly statements of income and expenditure are produced to facilitate comparison with budgeted figures.

iv. Together with the other Fisheries Boards, the Board has put in place a system of internal audit which involves the annual audit of the Boards financial affairs by an external firm of auditors. Reports have been provided, management has responded to these and action has been taken on recommendations as appropriate. Draft and final reports were considered by the Board's audit committee and by the main Board as appropriate. Auditors have met with the audit committee both in the absence of Board management and in the presence of management. The Chairman and other members of the audit committee have reported to the Board on their deliberations and findings. On

the basis of these reports, I am satisfied that the Board has implemented an adequate system of financial control.

I wish to confirm that the Board has reviewed the effectiveness of its system of internal financial control on the basis of reports provided by internal and external auditors and by the audit committee.

**John Chambers**

**Chairman**

With one of the wettest summers on record, 2008 proved challenging for enhancement and instream works on the rivers and lakes within the Board's jurisdiction. Implementation of the Board's Strategic Development Plan continued through the Board's business plan for the year with the co-operation of the many stakeholders in the Region. Mr. William Walsh was appointed Assistant Chief Executive Officer in April.

## **Fisheries Management and Conservation**

### **Habitat Enhancement Works**

2008 was characterized by very heavy rainfall during the summer months which prevented the completion of many instream works. 7 river enhancement programmes took place with a total investment of €36,851. 9.5km of rivers and streams were developed, this included works on the Rivers Mattock, Urrin, Liffey, Vartry and the River Dee.

### **Environmental Management and Control**

The Board carried out investigations in relation to environmental issues and assessed the potential impacts of developments on fishery habitats. 1,089 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 local authority development plans in the Region. 198 submissions were made regarding licensed applications. Of this, 130 Section 4 licence application submissions were made for housing development in the Wexford district which is an increase of 40 from 2007.

948 inspections were carried out during 2008, 90 of these were in response to complaints received by the Board. As a result of these inspections, 23 warning letters were issued and 3 prosecutions initiated. 5 fish kill incidences occurred, the most significant of which was on Lough Ramor. The extent of the fish kill was not fully established as it occurred over a number of weeks but it is estimated to have been in the thousands.

As in 2007, there was a decline in the number of housing and commercial projects, however infrastructural development continued throughout the Region. Projects included the M3 motorway project, Kildare and Dunboyne rail projects. 4 national road projects were under construction and a further 10 were at the planning stage. 1,500 fish were salvaged from rivers and tributaries affected by motorway/industrial developments during the year. Fish stocks in 10 streams were also monitored in the Greater Dublin area. Flood relief works carried out in recent years in the Dublin area appear to have been successful as despite the heavy rainfall during the summer months there was no repeat of the flooding of homes in the aftermath of the Dublin floods of November 2000. There were two separate incidences of invasive species with Himalayan balsam appearing along the banks of the River Dodder and Lagrosiphon major on Darndale pond in Dublin.

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

#### **Access**

A large number of projects took place this year with 7 angling facility enhancement projects with a total investment of €139,321 creating 50 additional angling spaces. This included the creation of an angling jetty and car park on Milltown Lake in County Monaghan, works on Emy Lough and a wheelchair accessible fishing stand at Mullagh Lake. Some of these works were partly funded by the Heritage Council, Monaghan County Council and Failte Ireland.

#### **Surveys**

Electro fishing works were carried out on many of the Region's rivers with 112 salmonid surveys and an investment of €86,803 during the year. The Catchment Wide Electrofishing programme was undertaken in conjunction with the Central Fisheries Board. The purpose of the five minute fishing technique was to evaluate juvenile salmon stocks for management purposes. High water prevented many of the sites being fished, some sites produced very good juvenile salmon numbers and some were fewer than expected.

The Board also assisted the ESB with its salmon smolt impingement survey at ESB estuarine thermal generating station, the CFB with salmon scale sampling, pit tagging programme, estuarine, lamprey, bass and coarse fish surveys and the EPA and local authorities with various surveys.

### **Product Development**

#### **Marketing and Promotion**

The Board attended 9 key angling promotions at home and abroad in 2008. Press and media coverage during the year was very successful with a total of 75 items recorded. This included editorial coverage in national newspapers, radio and TV. Television coverage included articles on RTE and TV3 on the Avoca river and on the schools programme.

Two successful ladies flycasting courses were held for the purpose of introducing flyfishing to female beginners, 30 participated and €1400 was raised for charity. The national suites of angling brochures were launched during the year. The Board produced a new angling guide for the Greater Dublin area. Meath and Monaghan Tourism continued to part fund promotional activities.

#### **Education and Fisheries Awareness programmes**

The Dublin Angling Initiative (DAI) had a successful year with over 158 young people participating in DAI's summer 3 day angling courses and assistance given to 160 teenagers from youth fishing clubs on a regular basis. 5 angling festivals took place including celebrity media competition, ladies fly casting events, Monaghan Pairs coarse fishing competition, Rosslare Small Boats festival and Dublin Angling Initiative youth competition.

A total of 40 schools participated in the 'Something Fishy' educational programme for fifth and sixth classes and it included presentations, school visits, release of trout ova into local rivers and field trips. Many schools are introducing this as part of the Green Schools programme which is an international environmental education programme designed to think holistically about the environment.

Other educational events in the Dublin area included an information stand at Fingal Biodiversity Day at which over 1,000 people attended. The Dublin Angling Initiative also participated in an educational day for schools in the Dun Laoghaire Rathdown area at which 600 young people participated in workshops on the salmon lifecycle. Much support was given to existing youth fishing clubs - Whitechurch youth fishing club started three years ago and with the dedication of the youngsters, the DAI and volunteers, this year saw three of the members qualify for the Leinster flytying junior competitions.

### **Networking / Catchment Management**

#### **Avoca Catchment Management**

Minister of State Sean Power, T.D. (DCENR) launched the Avoca website and selected promotional material in July. This event received good press coverage and marked the completion of The Celtic Copper Heritage Interreg project. An agreement was reached with Wicklow County Council regarding the location of the third datalogger in the main river channel. From conservation stamp funds, €10,000 was spent on a smolt rescue programme on the Avoca River whereby fish migrating downstream are trapped and transferred below the polluted stretch on the river.

#### **Regulation**

The River Liffey was closed for salmon and sea trout angling as they were below the conservation limit required to sustain salmon populations. The Rivers Slaney and Boyne were open for catch and release only. On the River Slaney 234 salmon and sea trout were caught and released and on the Boyne the figure was 242 fish. The River Fane was open for angling and had a quota of 214 fish and the angling catch was 198.

There was an increase in the number of salmon licences sold - 1,359 which is almost double that of 2007. At the time of writing, 80% of angling logbooks had been returned.

Indications from redd counts are that spawning levels differed throughout the Region, with some rivers remaining average in the Dublin and Wexford areas, slight increases in the Drogheda and Dundalk districts.

### **Conservation Stamp Monies**

€56,456 was allocated for conservation stamp funds in 2008. This was spent on enhancement works on the Rivers Mattock, Liffey, Dargle, Urrin, Vartry, Avoca and selected tributaries in the Dundalk District.

### **Angling Season**

The angling season was characterised by a very dry spell in May followed by an extremely wet summer. Brown trout angling was reported as good throughout the Region with a specimen fish from the River Boyne. Coarse and pike fishing was reported as very good with the lakes of Cavan and Monaghan producing good catches with a 26lbs pike recorded at Quig Lough. Carp fishing was very good on Lisanisk Lake with a 16lb fish recorded. Over six tonnes of coarse fish, mainly bream and roach were caught and released during the Monaghan Pairs competition. Rahan's and Ballyhoe Lakes continue to hold their own with 9 specimen tench caught from them during the year.

Despite the poor weather conditions for boat fishing for much of the season, sea angling was quite good with the Wexford coastline producing some good catches. 41 species caught at the Rosslare Small Boats festival including a new record black bream of 3lbs 4ozs caught by UK angler, Gordon Thornes. Black bream was added to the specimen fish listing for 2010. Specimen bass, mullet, smoothhound, tope and wrasse were caught in the Wicklow and Wexford area.

### **Prosecutions**

There was an increase in effort in patrolling our inland waterways in 2008 and this coupled with high water levels for much of the year meant that there were few breaches of the salmon conservation laws. There were many callouts in relation to the bass byelaws. 1,617 man hours were completed on carrying out

sea patrols and inland boat patrols. 1,900 yards of nets and 6 boats were seized.

The number of callouts increased during the year in relation to incidences regarding anglers in breach of coarse and pike fish byelaws. Signage, distribution of brochures and an increase in temporary staff during the season ensured a more effective service being carried out. 30 prosecutions were initiated, the majority of which were for breaches of the coarse and pike byelaws. 46 on the spot fines were issued and 80 fishing rods were seized. The Board won a landmark case against two people for coarse fishing offences in County Monaghan, with two defendants given six month sentences and heavy fines.

#### **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 2008. The appointment of internal auditors has aided the Board's systems of internal controls.

#### **Board Fisheries**

There was approximately 1,500 rod days on the Board's waters this year with €1,000 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 met four times and received four applications for grants from angling clubs. €3,258 was allocated to the society during the year and €1,226.50 was allocated to these clubs in grant aid.

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

A new safety booklet was published by CFB and distributed to all staff. Two staff participated in the Middle Management course. Other training attended by

staff included disability awareness, electrofishing, GIS, conflict resolution, something fishy, child protection and survival at sea.

## The Eastern Regional Fisheries Board

### INCOME AND EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT FOR THE 12 MONTHS TO 31 DECEMBER 2008

Income	Notes	2008 €	2007 €
Oireachtas Income	1	3,144,680	3,597,622
Net Deferred Funding for Pensions	13(b)	620,320	532,990
Other Income	2	380,916	260,126
		<u>4,145,916</u>	<u>4,390,738</u>
<b>Transfer (to) / from Capital Account</b>	11	(157,494)	(221,499)
		<u>3,988,422</u>	<u>4,169,239</u>
<b>Expenditure</b>			
Administration	3	722,075	624,729
Operations	4	3,559,540	3,149,500
		<u>4,281,615</u>	<u>3,773,779</u>
<b>Surplus/(Deficit) for the year</b>		(293,193)	395,460
<b>Surplus/(Deficit) at 1 January</b>		<u>395,865</u>	<u>404</u>
<b>Surplus/(Deficit) at 31 December</b>		<u>102,673</u>	<u>395,865</u>

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

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

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

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

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

## Southern Regional Fisheries Board



### **Chairman's Report**

I am pleased to present the 2008 Annual Report of the Southern Regional Fisheries Board.

This report details the Board's operations and activities during the year across its broad range of responsibilities.

This is the 8<sup>th</sup> year of operation of the current Board and the members and the staff continues to perform to the highest ethical standards and in 2008 complied with all the Corporate Governance criteria for statutory bodies.

The Board is anxious to play a constructive role in the restructuring of the fisheries service as announced by Minister Ryan in October 2008.

Finally, my thanks to my Board colleagues and the Board's staff for their continued support to me in 2008.



Joe Teesdale  
Board Chairperson

## CEO Report

This 2008 Annual Report has been prepared in accordance with the requirements of Section 11 of the Fisheries (Amendment) Act 1999.

No commercial salmon fishing took place in the region. The Barrow was closed for salmon angling and the Nore and Suir were on Catch and Release. The Blackwater had a quota of 7,743 salmon and operated a brown tag fishery for spring fish.

Board staff continued to support, and advance the effective management of the Region's Fisheries.

I would like to thank the Chairperson of the Board, Mr. Joe Teesdale and his Board colleagues for their assistance and cooperation during 2008.

Also a special thanks to all the professional and committed staff for their trojan work, loyalty and service in 2008.



Brian Sheerin

Chief Executive Officer

## **Administration and Corporate Governance**

### **Report regarding the implementation of the Code of Practice for Governance of State Bodies.**

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

All Board members had made a Disclosure of Interests in accordance with the provisions section 3, Appendix A, of the Code of Practice.

All Board employees are aware and fully compliant with the provisions of the Code of Business Conduct for Employees.

The up to date codes of business conduct are available upon request with a copy of each such code accessible through the Board's body's web site.

The Board has in place a Customer Charter and this is posted on the Board's web site.

Report with reference to section 10.2 of the Code of Practice:

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.

The Board complied with all appropriate procedures for financial reporting, internal audit, procurement and disposal of assets.

A statement on the Board's system of internal financial control, in accordance with the requirements of 10.2 (iii) of the Code is also available in the body of the Financial Statements.

As stated above, the Codes of Business Conduct for Board Members and Employees have been put in place and adhered to.

Government policy on the pay of the Board's Chief Executive Officer is being complied with.

Government guidelines on payment of Director's fees are being complied with; no fees are paid to members of the Board

As of now, there have been no significant post balance sheet events. The Board's accounts for 2008 have been audited by the Comptroller and Auditor

General and await sign off and, therefore, the Board can only provide draft accounts at this time.

The Guidelines for Appraisal and Management of Capital Expenditure Proposals were complied with.

The Code of Practice has been adopted by the Board and the Board is compliant with the provisions of the Code.

### **Board Member Appointments**

All members continue in office on the invitation of the Minister for Communications, Energy and Natural Resources pending the independent review of the Inland Fisheries Sector and the Ministers direction that the sub-committee of the Liaison Group work with officials of the Department in formulating proposals for Government approval. In October the Minister requested the Board to allow the CEO to participate in the restructuring process of the Fisheries Service.

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

### **Board Meetings**

The Board met 10 times.

18 members attended 4 meetings

17 members attended 7 meetings

16 members attended 9 meetings

15 members attended 10 meetings

Overall percentage attendance 90 %

### **Ministerial Direction**

The Board was issued with a Ministerial Direction under Section 18A of the Fisheries Act 1980, to put in place appropriate measures so as to ensure that the Minister for Community, Rural and Gaeltacht Affairs is consulted in relation to development. The Board is required to report on the consultations undertaken

and the outcome of same in the Annual report. The Board is in the process of agreeing appropriate measures.

### **HSA Seminar**

6 Board members the CEO and the ACEO attended a half-day "Responsibility of Board Directors for Health and Safety " which was organised by the Health and Safety Authority.

### **Sub-Committees**

The Board Audit Subcommittee met 4 times. Subcommittees for Eels, Licence allocation and Fishery Districts also met throughout the year. All committees reported to the full Board.

### **Audits**

The Boards 2008 Accounts were audited by the C and AG in late January 2009 and the board await certification.

The Boards Internal Auditors Sheehan Quinn and Co. completed an internal audit of the Boards operations in 2008 in compliance with the Code of Practice for the Governance of State Bodies. All the audits, subcommittee and Board operations 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.

### **Equality**

During 2008, all staff including the CEO and ACEO received training in employing and providing services for people with disabilities.

### **Freedom of Information**

4 requests for information under Freedom of Information legislation was received by the Board during 2008. The Board also assisted the CFB in the compilation of information for FOI requests which applied to all Boards.

### **Partnership**

The Board has two partnership groups in place. Group one deals with non-IR issues and all divisional areas and grades are represented. Group two is in place to work in partnership with SIPTU and comprises SIPTU shop stewards, the local SITPU branch secretary and management. Both groups meet quarterly.

During 2008 Group one investigated and initiated the use of 'Green' fuel, organised Training Days and raised funds for Hospice etc.,.

### **Staff Development and Training**

Board staff underwent various development and training programmes during 2008. As part of the Boards programme of training and up-skilling, training has taken place in Project Management, Advanced Driving, Supervisory Management, First Aid, Sea Safety, Coxwain courses etc. The Board fully support the Certificate in Fisheries Management Course in Sligo Institute of Technology, and James Robinson graduated from this in 2008. Teamwork training and building continues. The Board had two half days with all staff participating in the events. Two of the Boards staff attended a conference on River Restoration in Venice and two staff attended a conference on IWA Watershed and River Basin Management in Budapest.

All new Board staff were inducted and given Manual Handling Training and PMDS training, The Board acknowledges the assistance of the Training Manager and HR at CFB and the Boards own in house trainers.

### **Health and Safety**

Monthly meetings for Health and Safety are attended by all staff in the various work teams and districts. The Safety Committee met quarterly, while risk assessments and audits are ongoing. The Safety Statement was reviewed and amended by the Safety subcommittee which incorporated the new 2007 general regulations. A new safety representative Mr Isaac Ferns was appointed and

trained during 2008, and he also attended a Seminar for safety representatives which was organised by the Health and Safety Authority. There were seven accidents/incidents at work reported during 2008, two of which were reported to the HSA, as both resulted in the employee needing time off work. The CEO was invited by the HSA to give a presentation on Health and Safety at it's seminar in Carlow.

### **Facilities**

The Board have received Planning Permission for the half acre site it purchased 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 middle of 2009.

### **EU Programmes**

The CEO met with representatives from Pyrenees-Atlantique (PECHE 64) from France and after securing parties in Scotland and Wales proceeded to develop an application around salmon into the Atlantic Area Programme 2007-2013. Unfortunately, the French group were unable to sign off on the application for submittal and it is recommended that the application is prepared for the 2<sup>nd</sup> call in late spring 2009.

### **Eel Management Plan**

The Board participated in the Eel Working Group which completed RBD plans for submittal to the EU by January 2009. The Board held a public information/consultation meeting in Waterford where Board members, eel fishermen from both the Southern Board region and the Slaney attended. The Board sub-committee also formulated a submission to the working group. Mr Pat Diggins also attended a number of the Eel Working Group meetings.

## **Review of Activities**

### **Fisheries Management and Protection**

In 2008, the River Blackwater had a quota of 7,743 while the Barrow was closed and the Suir and the Nore were catch and release. 2008 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. The Board issued 36 no of On the Spot Fines to anglers. The Board also prosecuted anglers for non-return of angling logbooks, and issued 119 On the Spot Fines for the same offence. A total of 42 prosecutions were initiated in the period. The Board confiscated 28,55 yards of net and seized 2 boats. The Board met all its targets in relation to its service level agreement dedicating more than 31,000 man hours to lake, river and coastal patrols. Staff also carried out 53 checks on fish dealers, 42 checks on restaurants and 25 checks on hotels/guest houses.

### **Commercial Sector**

There was no commercial catch in 2008. Only 1 draft net was open on the Blackwater and the owner decided not to fish it.

### **District Committees**

The Board as per the 2008 Regulations held 2 joint District Committee meetings.

### **Salmon Management Fund**

The Board received sanction in 2007 to employ 4 extra staff for a period of 3 years to implement and manage the new salmon regime. During 2008 Ms Claire Moore and Mr. Michael Goona were replaced by Mr Liam Boland and Mr John Croke.

### Hardship Scheme

The Board's role in implementing this scheme was confined to the verification and collection of commercial nets from the applicant. The Board bagged all the nets and delivered them to Dunmore East for recycling in Wales. The scheme is now finished and the Board is awaiting the list of names from BIM. The ACEO was invited to sit on the Waterford Leader Partnership evaluation committee in relation to the Community Support Scheme operated by the Leader Companies. The CEO attended two meetings of the East Cork Leader Board which dealt with applications from commercial fishermen under this scheme.

### Angling Catch 2008

In 2008, 2471 salmon rod licences were sold in the Southern region. These generated an income of €161884 to the Board of which €80,942 was in respect of Conservation Stamp and was remitted to the CFB as per Ministerial Direction under sections 18A, 19(4) and 20(3) of the Fisheries Act 1980.

All Ireland	District	21 Day	Juvenile	1 Day	W	Total No.
375	875	921	76	224	0	2,471

Table 7: Rod licence sales in the Southern Regional Board for 2008.

Rod Catch for 2008 is reflected in the Table below both for Salmon and Sea Trout.

District	River	Species	Reported Catch
Lismore	Blackwater (Munster)	Salmon and sea trout	4,698

Table 8: Rod catch in the Southern Regional Board for 2008

### Logbook Returns

It should be noted that these figures only reflect the logbooks returned to the Board.

Out of a total of 2,471 licences and logbooks sold, only 75% were returned to the Board.

## **Environmental Management**

### **Water Quality**

During 2008, 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 prosecution, to warnings and consultations. The Board undertook a successful prosecution against Laois County Council.

### **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, waste water 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 2008, Board staff also gave 14 presentations at training courses, meetings and conferences.

### **Fisheries Development Societies**

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

The Board paid €88,299 to the Co-op during 2008 which relates to matching funding for 2006 and 2007. A further disbursement for 2008 will take place during 2009. During 2008 the Co-op continued to support clubs with their great work in the region.

#### **National Coarse Fishing Federation - All Ireland Championships**

The Board were the proud sponsors of the National Coarse Fishing Federations All Ireland Coarse Fishing Championship which was held on the Barrow in July. Special thanks go to Board Member David Neal and Board staff for the time involved in networking and organising this event.



**Figure V: National Coarse Fishing Federations All Ireland Coarse Fishing Championship which was held on the Barrow in July**

## **Conservation Fund Programmes**

### **River Drish**

Works on the River Drish commenced in September owing to high water levels in July and August. These works were a follow on from a cleaning exercise conducted by Lisheen Mines and North Tipperary County Council. Following long term discharges from the mines a layer of silt had built up on the River bed and angling was closed on the river throughout 2007. This silt was removed by vacuum tanker and some sediment laden aquatic vegetation was removed using excavators and silt traps. North Tipperary County Council then funded the removal of what were termed pinch points along the river channel. These were points where deposition had occurred or the river had narrowed with the result of upstream flooding. Following all this work fisheries conducted a habitat survey and developed a plan for fishery improvement works throughout the channel. These works involved in stream structures such as deflectors and silt removal, bank protection using rock armour, the removal of some foot bridges and replacing these with large diameter pipes or new foot bridges, the removal of debris and improved angler access.



Figure VI: Silt Beds prior to Removal on the River Drish

### **River Allow and Daula - (Tributaries of R Blackwater (Munster))**

A walking survey of this river system in early January '08 identified various problems with the system regarding bankside erosion and gravel deposition.

A report was drafted and printed for the interested parties concerned e.g. SRFB, Blackwater Salmon Development Group (BSDG) and Kanturk Anglers Association in February 08.

A number of meetings were held by the interested parties and eventually it was decided to commence work upstream of Kanturk where a particular problem with long term consequences was identified (river cutting across piece of ground, leading to the potential forming of an island and thereby hindering future angling activity where junior anglers are concerned). This particular area is used by the club for training and competition for young anglers.

Works undertaken consisted of the placing of large boulders along the waters edge to prevent erosion and the possible splitting of the area. When works commenced in late August '08 a problem was identified following very heavy rain with resultant flooding. Boulders which had been placed along the left hand bend slipped as a result of the force of water and had to be removed and reinserted with extra rock armour placed behind the replaced rock that had earlier slipped. As well as extra rock the base at the bottom had to be widened to accommodate very large boulders with which to build upon.

As work continued in September '08 a local landowner who had been informed of the works expressed concern with regard to possible flooding of his land and erosion. His concerns were addressed by introducing extra rock to place along his side of the river. The project was completed by the end of September with the local club expressing their thanks and delight at the Boards efforts to protect the existing channel and the creation of extra bank side space for junior anglers.

The staff on site expressed thanks to the landowner on behalf of the SRFB for allowing us to access the river through his private property which was restored to original state when the contractor was leaving the site following works completion.

### **River Dinin**

A major programme of bank protection work using rock armour took place on this river. This was jointly funded by the Board and landowners with input from the National Parks and Wildlife Service (NPWS). The River Dinin is properly the most dynamic river in this region. Bank protection is a major problem. Gravels are constantly being eroded and deposited and although this project was a major success only approximately one kilometre of one bank has been completed and further investment is requires in both bank protection and fencing. Requests from landowners continue to be received and a joint programme with National Parks and Wildlife is being developed for this river.



**Figure VII: Bank Protection on the River Dinin**

### **Water Framework Directive**

In conjunction with CFB, a number of electro-fishing surveys were carried out by SRFB staff under the specifications of the Directive. The methods used were both bank and boat electro-fishing sets. None of the proposed survey sites on the main river channels (River's Suir and Nore) were carried out due to high water levels and staff availability.

Sites on tributaries such as the River Golreen (Abbeyleix), River Nuenna (Freshford), River Anner (Tipperary), River Duag (Clogheen), River Womananagh (Castlemartyr), River Nire (Ballymacarbery), River Mahon (Bonmahon), River Colligan (Durgarvan) and River Multeen (Golden) were surveyed.

In all sites a mixture of salmonid species were observed with the exception of the River Nuenna where only trout were noted. A notable finding on the River Duag was the presence of a large abundance of freshwater lamprey. On the River Anner the number of adult trout observed was impressive.



**Figure VIII: Electro - fishing as part of the WFD**

### **Estuary Survey**

Under the Water Framework Directive surveys were conducted in, the Blackwater and Suir / Nore estuaries. These consisted of trawling with small mesh nets to capture the young of smelts, shad, lamprey etc. Some seine netting and fyke netting was also done. The reports on these surveys were written by CFB and are available on request.

## **Education**

### **Clonmel Junction Festival**

The theme for the annual Junction Festival in Clonmel this year was the River Suir. Part of this Board's involvement included visiting the participating national schools with our workshop. Where possible we took the children out to a nearby stream or river to show them kick sampling and electro - fishing so that by the end of the session they could identify some invertebrates and fish. In instances where the circumstances such as weather, proximity of a school to the appropriate habitat etc were against us, we brought samples of aquatic life and fish life into the classroom where again the children could identify invertebrates and fish by the end of the workshop session. In early July the children's art work of River life was displayed in the form of banners / flags around the town of Clonmel.

### **Ballyshonock Education Programme**

In conjunction with members of the Waterford and City Coarse Anglers we developed an education programme which gave children an insight to aquatic life in the reservoir and allowed them the opportunity to fish. This programme was targeted to the primary schools within the Waterford area and was delivered during May and June.

With 600 students participating indicates the popularity and necessity of the programme. The children enjoyed the first hand experience of trying to identify our live fish samples from the work sheets they were given, touching fish especially the eel's, being allowed the opportunity of setting up their baits (the maggots were very popular!) and being allowed to fish.



Figure IX: Children participating in Angling at Ballyshonock Reservoir

### Recreational Angling Ireland (RAI)

In late September we ran a day's tutoring and fishing at Oakland's Lake, New Ross, Co. Wexford with the RAI. Participants ranged in between the ages of 8 - 11. They all enjoyed the event, with participants catching fish and practicing catch and release methods. The Lake, its facilities and the weather made the event memorable with all the participants looking forward to the next session. We would like to thank all at Oakland's Lake for their co-operation and help on the day.



Figure X: Preparing the Bait for Angling on Oakland's Lake as part of RAI day

### Talks and Seminars

Staff gave a number of talks to interested parties such as angling clubs, REPS, environmental groups and other sporting groups.

### **National Electro Fishing Programme**

A catchment wide electro-fishing programme was designed jointly between the Regional Boards and the Central Fisheries Board. This programme is an effort to assess the population estimates of salmon fry in various catchments throughout the country. A standard procedure of fishing each kilometre of various catchments was agreed. In this region the Rivers Bride, Finisk, Glenshelane and Lickey have been completed, along with the upper reaches of the River Barrow. This survey will help the scientific committee in their calculations on conservation limits for various rivers. This was carried out over a four week period prior to July when only salmon fry are available.

### **Nore Barriers Programme**

This was a two year programme to survey all bridges and obstructions on the River Nore Catchment. Staff visited each site and made an assessment of its potential as a barrier to the free movement of fish. These were categorised as impassable, high risk, moderate risk, low risk and no risk. All sites were plotted on GIS and a full report is available.

This work also formed part of the programme of measures for the hydromorphology section of categorising rivers under the Water Framework Directive (WFD) River Basin Districts.



Figure XI: Thomastown Weir following Breach 2008

## **Fish Passage**

Fish passage in general has become more important in recent years and is being focused on more closely following the removal of drift nets and the closure of rivers that are not meeting their conservation limits. Following various surveys on fish populations, redd counts the National 5 Minute Electro-fishing Programme, the Wetted Area Report and the Nore Survey Report a number of barriers to the free passage of fish have been examined with a view to their removal or improved fish pas facilities. A number of these have been dealt with this year and this work will continue into the future.

Clonmel Weir - As part of the flood relief scheme in Clonmel the OPW have agreed to improve fish passage at the weir. The design of the new fish pass has now been agreed following long and sometimes heated debates over design and construction issues. The new fish pass will be a pool pass structure that will allow passage of salmon, trout and lamprey. It is hoped that construction will commence in summer 2009.

Clondulane Weir - Long and protracted engineering and legal consultations have taken place with regard to Clondulane Weir and a number of habitat and engineering surveys have taken place. However, this matter is the subject of a legal review and therefore no further comment will be made at this time.

Fermoy Weir - Engineering plans and drawings have been produced to improve fish passage at the weir. The OPW have been consulted however, some controversy remains with the local Rowing Club and Fermoy Urban District Council, therefore no construction work had commenced until a satisfactory resolution for all concerned will be reached.

Glenshelane Weir - Surveys of fish populations both up stream and down stream of this weir indicated that the weir was a major obstruction to salmon reaching the head waters to spawn. In consultation with the owners of the weir

and under licence from Coillte this weir was removed completely. This should increase the number of fish spawning in the Glenshelane System.



Figure XII: Glenshelane Weir prior to removal

Glenshelane Bridge - A bridge apron was also classed as an obstruction to fish movement particularly at low water conditions (see photo). A rock ramp type fish pass was installed on the down stream side of the apron. This facilitates the free movement of all fish species at all water levels.



Figure XIII: Glenshelane Bridge Apron prior to remedial works

River Goul - During flood relief works on the River Goul two small weirs were removed completely.



Figure XIV: Pre Drainage Works



Figure XV: Post Drainage Works  
(Construction stage)

Donerile Park - During routine inspections it was noted that the fish pass in Donerile Park was not functioning properly as the baffles had decayed. New baffles were manufactured and fitted. This resulted in major improvements in the efficiency of the pass.



Figure XVI: Staff inserting baffles into fish pass at Donerile Park

Others - Smaller weirs were passed with rock ramps structures and during the construction of motor ways some old culverts and pipes were replaced with more efficient clear span bridges or culverts.

## Flood Relief Schemes

### Clonmel

A flood relief scheme for Clonmel involving flood defence systems commenced in 2008. This involves the construction of concrete retaining walls and earthen

embankments. The driving of steel piles along the river bank is a major part of this programme. While this pile driving is mainly confined to the annual open season, some pile driving occurred outside this time but this was done away from the river bank.

The treatment of small streams entering the main channel is being dealt with on a number in different ways from retaining walls, culverts, river diversions and sluice gates. This work is ongoing and consultations take place at regular intervals with both the consultants and the contractors. Part of the flood relief scheme will involve the construction of a new fish pass in the weir which is outlined above in fish passage.

### **Mallow**

The Mallow flood relief scheme is well under way. The Hospital and Spa Streams have been diverted to allow for new culverts and retaining walls to be constructed. These streams will be realigned in early spring when work is complete. The river bank at the bridge has been graded to increase flow capacity through the bridge. A number of earthen banks and retaining walls have been constructed. Consultations on phase two of the project have taken place. This involves dealing with tributaries such as the Bear Forest Stream and the Clyda headrace where diversions, culverts and sluice gates are to be installed. This work will be commencing early 2009.

### **Mountrath**

A flood relief scheme for the town of Mountrath Co Laois was completed in 2008. This involved the widening of sections of the river, the cleaning of debris and some bank material. Two small weirs were removed during this programme. While the completed programme is successful as a flood relief project some issues and concerns arose during the work stage.

Fisheries concerns were outlined to both the county council, contractor and EIS consultants. However, we are monitoring the effects of this project on the fisheries habitat and this may result in further action being taken.

## **Drainage**

### **Rive Barrow Drainage**

Despite having planned various drainage works for 2008 the work of the Barrow Drainage Board was severely affected by the almost continuous high water levels.

The Drainage Board is comprised of three (3) Local Authorities. Laois Co.Co. Offaly Co. Co. and Kildare Co. Co. For administration purposes the latter two mentioned are run as a joint programme with individual plans for each county carried out and overseen by the same crew.

### **List of works carried out in 2008 where conditions allowed:**

#### Laois - Stradbally River

On this river the lower stretch was cleaned upstream and downstream of bridges to enable the free flow of water. No bank side vegetation was removed only in stream silt beds and previous floods debris.

#### River Owenass:

Upstream of Mountmellick a particular developed over the previous winter when some private property was flooded and a road in the area became unstable. This road needed to be strengthened and before entering the river the SRFB was contacted to advise on possible threats to fish habitat and vegetation. Following advice given by the Fishery development section works commenced. The first course of action was to electro fish the section to be diverted and transfer the fish. Rock armour was then installed in the manner requested by fisheries and the work carried out. While a 12 ton excavator was present on site the Co. Co. offered it to the Board if we needed any work done in stream. As this is a natural river untouched by drainage the only work to be carried out was the removal of various blockages mainly fallen trees.

Eight substantial blockages were removed and were disposed of by the Co. Co. As the excavator crossed the river he raked the compacted gravel. This is a great example of liaising with other authorities and should be encouraged.

### River Barrow:

This work comprised of some cleaning below the confluence of the Owenass and the Barrow. Again the works were carried out in a fish friendly manner with SRFB advice.

Below the Borness Bridge the Drainage Board had some rock left from previous work and they placed it along the eroded banks following SRFB input instead of using it to curtail the passage of vehicles in another part of the county. The SRFB staff member on the ground convinced the local engineer it would be cheaper to buy rock than transport it. Again no cost accrued to the SRFB.

### Offaly

The only work carried out was the removal of silt and rushes from the Philipstown River below the town of Daingean, Co. Offaly. This river runs through very flat country thus it has very restricted gradient thus allowing for the build up of silt and the thick growth of rushes. The banks alongside the river were not touched as per fishery requirements. This is not a salmonid river.

### Kildare

Again only one channel was subjected to drainage and this was the very upper section of the River Slate upstream of Allenwood, Co. Kildare. Substantial build up of silt had occurred and they had to remove it to release flooding pressures. This section of the Slate does not contain any salmon or trout spawning area. Indeed these areas are located some miles below Allenwood. Despite the absence of spawning areas they carried out the work as per fishery requirements so as to lessen the run off of soil and silt down stream.

Overall it must be said that major progress has been made with the Drainage Board in protecting fishery habitat. The weekly and sometimes daily contacts are proving to work for all concerned with regard to river drainage works.

## **Fish Counter Programmes**

### **Suir Fish Counter**

All stakeholders with regard to the site have been consulted and permissions obtained for the construction of a crump type weir across the river Suir just upstream of Carrick on Suir. Consultations have taken place with the local authorities who have asked for some minor alterations. The pre-cast units for this weir have been constructed and are ready for installation. We are awaiting confirmation and permission from the OPW for the installation of the weir. Further consultations with angling clubs and other stakeholders will commence in early 2009 and it is hoped to install the structure the summer months.

### **Nore Fish Counter**

A number of sites for the Nore fish counter have been investigated. These include:

Dysert Weir - Landowner permission and access rights are still under investigation however, the suitability of the site for engineering and technical reasons may deem the site unsuitable.

Thomastown Weir - This weir was examined on two separate occasions. Firstly prior to its breach the fish pass was considered but was deemed unsuitable for technical reasons. Following the breach at the weir this site was surveyed again but was deemed unsuitable from an engineering and technical viewpoint.

Other old weirs on the system - Some other weirs on the system were surveyed such as Inistioge and one at the rear of the GAA pitch in Thomastown. These again were deemed unsuitable for engineering and technical reasons.

Two new sites are being investigated, one close to the weir in Thomastown and the other close to the GAA field. Selection will be finalised shortly.

### **Didson Counter**

A new under water sonar counter was purchased during 2007. This equipment basically works by sending a sonar beam across the river channel. When fish of

a predetermined size enters the beam their presence is detected and recorded by computer. This is new technology which may have teething problems and is more suited to rivers of less than 30 metres in width.

Two sites were developed to assess the performance of this type of counter. One site on the River Mahon is now being used as our first experimental site where training and commissioning of the instrument is taking place with the help of the Electronics Department of Waterford Institute of Technology.

A second site has been prepared on the River Nore upstream of Brownsbarn Bridge. The river at this point has a flow where fish would move through rather than lie in. Therefore fish will be counted as they pass this point. The instrument will be placed approximately 27 metres from the bank to gain greater efficiency. It is positioned close to the entry of a tributary so that both upstream and downstream fish movements will be recorded and better information of fish behaviour at river confluences may be obtained. It is expected to move the didson to this site in early 2009 when water levels allow and training is complete.



Figure XVII: Site for Didson Counter showing Weir with Fish Pass

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

With the return rate for 2007 angling season very high and the success of the reminder letters a total of 119 on the spot fines were issued to anglers for the failure of non return of logbooks. From this 30 cases were presented in Clonmel

District Court were the various judges imposed fines, costs and convictions as they saw fit.

### **Promotions and Shows**

In early 2008 we produced "River Suir Angling Guide" and "A Guide to Sea Angling in the Southern Region". Both publications have been well received and complimented as being very informative.

Staff attended numerous promotional shows in Ireland and Europe. These events ranged from the BT Young Scientist Exhibition to Scoone Game Angling Fair in Scotland.

A programme of information signs along the River Barrow outlining angling information and regulations on coarse and game fish was undertaken and information boards erected along the main channel.

Catch and Release signs were erected at intervals and points of access along the main channels of the River Nore and Suir. Where appropriate these signs were removed or altered to cater for changes for in legislation.

### **Roads and Infrastructural Projects**

During 2008 many road projects were started and a number of others were under second or third years of construction. This meant that many rivers were being diverted to facilitate the construction of bridges and culverts. The diversion of a river entails an initial survey where a suitable site for a temporary channel is selected. This channel is then dug out by the contractor and the bed covered with suitable gravels. No water is allowed into this new temporary channel until fisheries staff are on hand and have agreed its suitability.

A partial blockage is then made on the existing river to divert 50% of water down the new channel. This allows for soakage and reduces the amount of water in the existing channel. When both channels are flowing with 50% water the existing channel is electro-fished a number of times to capture all fish which

are placed in the new channel. A 100% blockage of the existing channel then takes place and all water and fish are now in the new channel. This allows the contractor to work in a dry area with minimal effect on the fisheries. On most occasions the culvert or bridge is built beside an existing watercourse and the diversion described above takes place through the new structure. This eliminates the need for two diversions.



**Figure XVIII: New Type Clear Span Culvert**

Sometimes up to four rivers a day were being dealt with. Consultations were taking place on a daily basis with contractors and consultants. High water levels and bad weather narrowed the window of opportunity for completion of works. The Waterford bypass and Kilkenny to Carlow Roads will continue into 2009 as will Portlaoise to Cullahill and Portlaoise to Nenagh. This will mean that fisheries work on these projects will continue for some time to come.

The Carlow by-pass and the M8 Motorway between Cullahill and Cahir were opened in 2008. These were a major success form a fisheries viewpoint.



Figure XIX: Example of Urban In Stream Works

### **Bass Survey**

During the last week in August 2008 the annual Bass Juvenile Survey took place. The sites sampled included St. Mary's Point, Wexford Harbour (in conjunction with the Staff of the Eastern Regional Fisheries Board), Fisherstown on the River Barrow, Woodpoint on the River Blackwater (Munster) and Pilmore in Co. Cork.

Owing to the high summer rainfall the salinity levels were lower than normal resulting in smaller numbers of juvenile bass being caught. All samples were taken by the Marine Institute for analysis and personnel from CFB assisted with the survey.

## The Southern Regional Fisheries Board

### INCOME AND EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT FOR THE 12 MONTHS TO 31 DECEMBER 2008

Income	Notes	2008 €	2007 €
Oireachtas Income	1	2,758,728	2,999,054
Net Deferred Funding for Pensions	10(b)	580,461	526,921
Other Income	2	211,463	269,015
		<u>3,577,652</u>	<u>3,794,990</u>
<b>Transfer (to) / from Capital Account</b>	9	<u>111,321</u>	<u>(167,663)</u>
		<u><u>3,688,973</u></u>	<u><u>3,627,327</u></u>
<b>Expenditure</b>			
Administration	3	(1,440,160)	(1,449,843)
Operations	4	(2,339,887)	(2,072,361)
		<u>(3,779,887)</u>	<u>(3,522,204)</u>
<b>Surplus/(Deficit) for the year</b>		(90,914)	105,123
<b>Surplus/(Deficit) at 1 January</b>		<u>424,165</u>	<u>319,042</u>
<b>Surplus/(Deficit) at 31 December</b>		<u><u>333,251</u></u>	<u><u>424,165</u></u>

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 2008. Stakeholder attitudes and awareness towards the inland fisheries environment continues to grow with the Board receiving many beneficial and positive comments from the general public and anglers.

The commercial draft net 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 2008. 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, once again, was of a particularly high standard, generating considerable editorial interest and bass angling is continuing to be the premier sea angling product.

### **Chairmans Statement**

In accordance with paragraph 10.2. of the Code of Practice for the Governance of State Bodies, I wish to report to you on the current position in relation to the implementation of the Code in the South Western Regional Fisheries Board. The Board has in 2003 adopted the Code and intend to comply with it in full. The Board decided not to seek any derogation under Section 1.3 of the Code. Early in 2003, the Board had requested Central Fisheries Board to assist in the preparation of a Framework Code of Best Practice for Corporate Governance in the Fisheries Boards, a Framework for a Code of Business Conduct for Board members and employees in the Fisheries Board and Principles of Quality Customer Service for customers and clients of the Fisheries Board (being consistent with that outlined in the Appendices to the Code). The Board has in 2004 adopted a Code of Conduct for Board Members, and has published its Customer Charter on its website. Board management has utilised the assistance given as has produced a draft Code of Business Conduct for Employees. The Board has examined this draft and has requested management to bring it to completion following appropriate consultation and coordination with

other Fisheries Boards. This has now been completed and the Code has been adopted by the Board

With particular reference to 10.2. of the Code I wish to inform you that;

1. The Board in December 2008 brought to completion by agreement the contract it had entered into to refurbish a store and build laboratory space at its currently owned property at Farnanes. This was funded with Departmental approval by the proceeds from the sale of our previous headquarters disposed of in 2006 together with additional grant and other own income. The build proceeded throughout 2007 and 2008 and is now complete.

The Board is defending against three court cases taken against it arising from its functions in enforcing fishery law. One of these is before the high court and concerns fishing in the estuaries of the Laune and Caragh. Another refers to a case which had been forwarded to the Office of the DPP but could not proceed due to an oversight in that office. An individual is now claiming compensation as a result. The third relates to seizure of fish, the biggest such seizure in the Board's history.

The Board has not established any subsidiaries and has not acquired any shares. From 2003 to 2008 the Board has formed a committee arising from the tagging and quota regulations. In 2009 the Board shall repeat this procedure.

The Board has in 2005, 2006, 2007 and 2008 managed a fund for Cork Harbour research and raised money externally for this purpose. The Board intends extending research to other fisheries throughout the region as circumstances permit.

The Board received a grant under the Innovation and Change Programme to convert part of the Board's vehicle fleet to biofuel.

The Board received donations for fishery development work following pollution instances.

2. The Board is endeavouring on an ongoing basis to meet all of its requirements regarding financial reporting, internal audit, procurement and asset disposals and is of the opinion that it has done so in 2008.
3. A draft Statement on the System of Internal Financial Control for 2008 is attached in the form set out at Appendix E of the Code. The final Statement for 2008 will be provided with the audited accounts following agreement with external auditors.
4. A Code of Business Conduct for Directors, a Code of Business Conduct for Employees and a Customer Charter is now in place.
5. Government Policy on the pay of the Chief Executive in the South Western Regional Fisheries Board and its other employees is being complied with.
6. Government Guidelines on the Payment of Directors Fees are being complied with. There are no payments to any of the Board members within the region currently.
7. Our Internal Audit Review process brought to our attention the Code.
8. As of now there have been no significant post balance sheet events. Our accounts for 2008 have yet to be audited by the Comptroller and Auditor General's Office and, therefore, we can only provide draft accounts at this time. The unaudited accounts are attached for your information.
9. It is our understanding that the Guidelines for Appraisal and Management of Capital Expenditure Proposals are not relevant to the activities of this Board for the year 2008.

10. I confirm that the Code of Practice has been adopted by the Board at its March 2003 meeting. It is the intention of the Board to continue to be in full compliance with the Code.
11. The Board, in line with government decision of Oct 2007 (5180/20/13/0996), consults with the Department of Community Rural and Gaeltacht Affairs, where applicable, in its development and promotional programmes.
12. Professional services, where applicable, are tendered for by the Board in line with government procedures.

In relation to Section 10.1. - Reporting Arrangements, the Board requests that the existing situation whereby the Board's accounts should be provided within three months of the end of the previous year be retained as opposed to two months as outlined in this section. The Board is obliged to meet a tighter deadline than that outlined in 10.1(iii) in relation to the publication of its Annual Report. The Board is obliged to submit its Annual Report to Central Fisheries Board prior to the end of the third month of the subsequent year. We suggest that the Board should be allowed to meet a single deadline in respects to paragraphs (ii) and (iii) of this section, that being the end of March. Regarding the Disposal of Assets and Access to Assets by Third Parties, the Board has adopted the Code in full. The Board tried to dispose of one asset in 2008 greater than €70,000 but a sale has not been achieved as yet. The Board has undertaken under section 5.5 to maintain a record of disposal of assets over a threshold of €200 to directors and employees or their families. The Board has retained a requirement that any disposal above €2,000 to such persons will require formal endorsement by the Board. There have been no disposals to the above persons in the year 2008 and the Board is in full compliance with the disposal procedures as outlined in the Code.

Yours sincerely,

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Ellen Godfrey.  
Chairman

## **Corporate Governance**

### **Board staff**

In 2008 the Board had 32 full time staff and employed 7 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 and mitigation banking are valuable additions to the plan which continues to gain momentum.

### **Annual Business Plan**

The Board successfully achieved the components of its business plan in 2008. 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. While not without its challenges MSP's continue to offer a real opportunity in management of the regions fisheries. Mitigation Banking is similarly making headway.

### **Aquaculture**

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

The Board assisted the Tralee Oyster Society.

## **Fisheries Protection**

Through the work of the Boards protection staff a number of prosecutions were initiated and a substantial quantity of illegal fishing equipment and fish was seized in 2008. 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.

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

The Board issued 18 (Kerry) and 199 (Cork) OTSF's in 2008.

## **Mobile Protection Unit**

The Boards mobile Protection Unit proved to be a considerable deterrent to illegal fishing activities in 2008. 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.

## **Protection statistics**

### *Cork Region*

Total nets seized	3 nets
Fish seized	29
Prosecutions initiated	25
Equipment seized	154 items
Eels seized	75kgs

### *Kerry Region*

Total nets seized	44 nets - 2,470 m
Fish seized	12 salmon
Prosecutions initiated	8
Equipment seized	13 items

## **National Fish Counter Programme**

The following counters operated in the region during the year:

- Waterville Fishery
- Kerry Blackwater

- River Bandon
- Sheen River

The Boards 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 wild salmon and sea trout tagging scheme ran smoothly throughout 2008. There was a 100% return of logbooks from commercial fishermen. The return of angler's logbooks up to the 15<sup>th</sup> of January stands at 76%, which is 2% up on the same period in 2008. During 2008, a total of 332 on the spot fines were issued to persons who had still failed to return their logbooks for the 2008 season. Prosecutions for non return of logbooks were initiated against 25 individuals.

### Commercial Salmonid Catches 2008

Fishery district	Rivers	Total Surplus	Commercial TAC	Commercial Catch
Cork	Lower Lee (Martin, Shornach, Bride)	2208	1689	741
	Bandon	1221	372	49
Kerry	Ilen	381	119	75
	Mealagh	196	153	0
	Coomhola	174	32	0
	Roughty	672	399	163
	Blackwater (Kerry)	621	300	0
	Sneem	594	529	39
	Waterville	672	419	0
	Caragh	1121	918	492
	Laune	7265	6261	1799
	Owenmore	108	101	100

Table 9: Rivers where draft netting operated and the total catch reported on those rivers for 2008.

## Environmental Management and Control

### Aquatic Environment

The Board received 217 reports of an environmental nature during 2008. 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.

Removal of river bed materials affecting salmonid spawning and nursery grounds continued in 2008 again compromising river ecosystems and bank stability.

Several incidents of silt discharges from large civil engineering development sites occurred within the region. The Board worked with contractors to develop measures to control contaminated waters, however good site management, maintenance of silt control facilities and ceasing works during inclement weather conditions was found the most effective measures in preventing discharges.

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

Activity	2008 (%)
Drainage & gravel removal	14
Agriculture	15
Industrial/Commercial Discharges	8
Local Authority Works/Discharges	13
Abstraction/ Low flows	2
Forestry Works	1
Construction Activities Discharges	16
Planning Concerns	10
Fish Health Disease	2
Eutrphication	4
Miscellaneous	15

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

**Table 10: Nature of environmental reports received in 2008**

### Prosecutions

3 prosecutions were initiated as a result of environmental investigations. These related to fish kills, serious and repeat pollution events and aquatic habitat interference. These have yet to be heard. 3 outstanding cases were heard during the year, one was successfully concluded, a second was struck out with costs and expenses awarded to the Board and the third has been deferred to July 2009 pending works being completed.

### Fish Kills

3 fish kills were recorded during the year. The cause in one was positively identified and is the subject of prosecution proceedings. However, there was insufficient evidence in two others to initiate court proceedings.

Date	River	Location	No.s	Type	Cause	Prosecution
25.02.08	Tributary of Ilen	Skibbereen	>1000	bt +salmon, (parr and fry)	Unconfirmed	no
17.05.08	Mall River	Dingle	500	B.trout, eels and flatfish	Concrete suspected	no
03.09.08	Glountouig Stream	Monkstown(Cork)	100	Eels, lamprey, B.Trout, salmon, flounder	Water treatment chemical (LA)	yes

Table 11: Details of fish kills in 2008

### Submissions

Submission were made in relation to the following:

59 Water Pollution Act Discharge Licence/Waste Management Permit Applications.

52 Foreshore/Aquaculture Licence Applications.

138 Forestry Submission on applications relating to establishment, clear fell and native woodland schemes.

15 SEA/Draft Development Plans.

4 submissions were made on National and Regional Policy Papers and Guidelines.

Section 18 Authorisations EIS + Research

12 Authorisations were issued by the Board during the year.

### **Civil Works/Fishery Development**

143 civil work proposals were assessed, which involved inspections, meeting, consultations and or submissions as appropriate. Fish removal operations were undertaken to facilitate river diversions and temporary bridge construction.

### **Educational/Awareness Programme**

14 school environment sessions and a total of 5,300 students addressed.

9 REPS Presentations were made at Teagasc organised courses.

Board participated in National Heritage Day programme and in Killarney Water Day.

### **Planning**

A total of 11,800 + planning applications were reviewed with 347 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. 6 decisions were 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 2008.

### **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, continues to run 7 PVO modified vehicles thereby reducing the Boards CO<sub>2</sub> footprint.

### **Consultation**

The Board ensured that as defined under Government decision Oct 2007 (5180/20/13/0996) it consulted with Department of Community Rural and Gaeltacht Affairs over development and promotional activities where applicable.

### **Access**

The Board continues to implement its disabled access programme.

### **Farnannes Fishery Centre (FFC)**

The Board successfully completed its Farnannes re development programme and had a Ministerial Opening of the Centre by Mr Batt O’Keeffe TD.

### **Training**

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

### **River Lee Salmon Restoration Programme.**

The Board successfully launched the River Lee Salmon Restoration Programme at the FFC. The event was covered by RTE and received TV and radio coverage.

### **PMDS**

The Boards 2008 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 and S meetings during the year. Comprehensive equipment checks were undertaken to ensure safe operations.

### **Marketing and Promotion**

The Board had a very successful year on the marketing and promotional side producing a number of publications. Six trade shows were attended in 2008, two

in the USA, one in the UK, one in France 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, this has also been shown to be the case from Failte Ireland data.

Several promotional articles were written for various publications.

### **Catchment Management**

Catchment Management, a process fully adopted by the Board, continues to gain ground. 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 2008. 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. Boat patrols on the lake proved very successful.

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

### **Development Report**

2008 saw the benefits begin to show for the Boards' upgrading policy on the Managed Lakes. Despite a terrible summer's weather revenue grew as hoped with prices reflecting an improved service. Gross income was €131,647.00 up circa 40% on 2007. Compliments on fish quality and zero complaints on litter / boat cleanliness also impressed.

Improvements included easier access to lakeshores, car parking, picnic tables and better signage. A new more sheltered harbour for winter boats on Shreelane Pike Fishery was completed with demand for boat hire growing rapidly. Shreelane also produced only the 2<sup>nd</sup> specimen lake pike in the whole country (as far as we know) weighing in at 35 lbs.

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

The total permit sales for the Boards fisheries other than the Managed Lakes was € 29,327

### **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 2008.

## **Special Projects**

### **European initiatives**

The Board actively sought new European programmes during 2008. 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.

### **Tourism Angling Programmes**

The Board in conjunction with both Kerry and Cork County Councils undertook development programmes on a number of the regions rivers and lakes in excess of €220,000.

**The South Western Regional Fisheries Board**

**INCOME AND EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT FOR THE 12 MONTHS TO 31 DECEMBER 2008**

Income	Notes	2008 €	2007 €
Oireachtas Income		2,732,152	2,524,074
Other Income	1	560,059	843,635
Net Deferred Funding for Pensions	10	550,644	498,614
		<u>3,842,855</u>	<u>3,866,323</u>
<b>Transfer to Capital Account</b>	9	<u>(258,166)</u>	<u>(582,586)</u>
		<u>3,584,689</u>	<u>3,283,737</u>
<b>Expenditure</b>			
Administration	2	(954,889)	(937,863)
Operations	3	(2,942,385)	(2,696,636)
		<u>(3,897,274)</u>	<u>(3,634,499)</u>
<b>(Deficit) Surplus for the year</b>		<u>(312,585)</u>	<u>(350,762)</u>
<b>Surplus at 1 January</b>		<u>861,638</u>	<u>1,212,400</u>
<b>Surplus at 31 December</b>		<u>549,053</u>	<u>861,638</u>

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

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

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

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

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

## Shannon Regional Fisheries Board

### **Chairman's Statement**

2008 represented a busy and testing, yet very productive year, for the Board. The Annual Report provides an overview of the extensive range of activities which the Board and its staff, together with its stakeholders, engaged in.

Protecting our fish and their environment is the corner stone of our Strategy and Business Plans. In this regard we provided a significant proportion of our resources to enforcement of legislation affecting fisheries and the prevention of the degradation of the fish environment. Creating awareness and appreciation of our great inland and sea fisheries resources is a key element of our programmes which culminated in an extensive series of very successful public events during Fisheries Awareness Week.

The production by the Board of an "*Urban Watercourse Guide, a template for sustainable development along watercourses in urban areas*", highlighted the many challenges to our water ways, but more importantly it provided solutions which, if followed, would allow development without major impact on our streams and rivers.

With the assistance of other stakeholders the Board invested heavily in development of the fisheries resource in the Region. Working with the ESB on a number of excellent stream rehabilitation programmes. While Leitrim, Westmeath and Clare Local Authorities and Failte Ireland additional angling facilities for angling tourist were provided. These investments allowed us to build on the tremendous angling resource available to tourist anglers in the Region.

In successfully delivering on its 2008 Business Plan, the Board complied with its Corporate Governance requirements as set out in the Code of Practice for the Governance of State Bodies. The Board is committed to providing an efficient

and transparent service where value for money is pursued. The main elements of our Corporate Governance compliance are detailed in the Annual Report

In fulfilling our remit, I was greatly assisted by the excellent and expert assistance of the Board members, CEO and Staff and thank them for their hard work and commitment throughout 2008. I would also like to thank the CFB and the Regional Fisheries Board, the Department of Communications, Energy and Natural Resources (DCENR) and our stakeholders for their ongoing assistance and support.

Michael Callaghan  
Chairman

## **Corporate Governance**

I am pleased to present the 2008 Annual Report of the Shannon Regional Fisheries Board. This report details the Board's operations and activities during the year across its broad range of responsibilities.

The Board had an excess of income over expenditure of €63,304 in its draft financial statements. During 2008, assets were purchased totalling €274,949. These accounts are in draft format and are subject being certified by the Comptroller and Auditor General.

The Board members, both elected and Ministerial nominees, meet monthly to review the Board's operational and financial performance, and to formulate strategies and give direction to the Board. The Board members are representative of the stakeholders in the Shannon catchment.

The Board has established subcommittees, which focus on Policy development, Audit oversight, and Fisheries management.

The Board engages external professionals to perform an Internal Audit of the Board's operations, in addition to the regular audit by the Comptroller and Auditor General.

The Board has clearly defined Policies and Procedures, focusing on professionalism, accountability and segregation of duties.

The Board adopts an annual Business Plan, which is drafted to ensure compliance with the Board's service level agreement with the Department of Communications, Energy and Natural Resources.

In line with the Government decision, the Board, when appropriate, has consulted with the Department of Community Rural and Gaeltacht Affairs (DCRGA) over development and promotional activities.

The Board has put in place a Risk Register and Risk Management Strategy.

The Board complied with the Ethics in Public Office Act and has adopted the Code of Practice for the Governance of State Bodies, 2001. All Board members are aware and appear fully compliant with the provisions of the Standards in Public Office Act 2001 and the Code of Business Conduct. All Board members have made a Disclosure of Interest in accordance with the provisions section 3, Appendix A, of the code of Practice. All Board employees are aware of and fully compliant with the code of Business Conduct for employees. The up to date Codes of Conduct are available on the Board's website.

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. The Board complies with all appropriate procedures for financial reporting, internal audit, procurement, appraisal and management of capital expenditure, and disposal of assets.

A statement on the Board's system of internal financial controls, in accordance with the requirements of 10.2 (iii) of the code is also available in the body of the Financial Statements.

The Board compliant with Government policy on the pay of the Board's Chief Executive and guidelines on the payment of director's fees, no such fees are paid to the Board members.

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

Three Freedom of Information requests were received and replied to by the Board with the assistance of the CFB.

The Board also complied with the requirements of the Disability Act 2005 in that the 3% target has been achieved and surpassed with 7.4% of staff with a disability under the definition in the Disability Act 2005. All staff completed disability awareness training and programmes put in place to assist disabled anglers.

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

The Board was involved in discussions to reform the Inland fisheries service in conjunction with the other Regional Fisheries Boards. Proposals were made to the Department of Communications, Energy and Natural Resources to introduce a new structure while maintaining regional structure. In the October Budget the Government announced its intention to amalgamate the eight Boards into a single national organization. The Board is committed to implementing Government policy and is working to ensure meaningful regional input into the new structure.

The Shannon Fisheries Region covers the sea angling and inland fisheries of the Shannon River catchment from the River Feale catchment in North Kerry and the rivers of County Clare flowing westwards to the Atlantic to its source in Co. Cavan. The coastal boundaries stretch from Kerry Head to Hags Head in County Clare. The region covers a land area of 17,776 square kilometres which is serviced by 18 local authorities.

## 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”.*

In delivering on the 2008 Business Plan and the Service Level Agreements (SLAs) in place with the Department of Communications, Energy and Natural Resources (DCENR), the Board achieved its goals in seven main areas. The Board is committed to operating through partnership and delivering on its goals to a high standard, in a professional manner.

## Habitat Conservation

*Protect the fish habitat through the provision of Fisheries Environmental services in line with needs and available resources, in partnership with our stakeholders.*

The development of the Country's Road infrastructure continues to impact on fish habitat. The Board's close working relationship with the National Roads Authority has reduced the impact of road construction on fish habitat and in a number of cases improved and restored sections of spawning streams. The Board would suggest that the pre-emptive and consultative approach adopted by the NRA be adopted for all infrastructural projects, particularly those in ecologically sensitive areas.

Waste water treatment facilities continue to pose a risk to our lakes and rivers. While there is a slow down in the construction of new developments, the infrastructure currently in place is insufficient to cope with existing demands. The Board reiterates its view that greater and timelier investment in waste water treatment facilities is required.

Two spawning streams were destroyed towards the end of a very wet summer, resulting in significant fish kills. These kills resulted from peat slides on the Glashoreag River in Co. Kerry and the Owengar River in Co Leitrim. Both slides occurred as a result of road construction on raised peat lands during the construction of Windfarms. An heroic effort was made by Board staff to

minimise mortalities, but sadly many young fish were lost and the habitat destroyed will take many years to renew. Significant assistance was received from County Council staff in attempts to stop the flow of peat and the Defence Forces in the provision of aerial reconnaissance. The Board is working to achieve a reinstatement of both rivers.

While the Board welcomes the sustainable generation of energy, this should not lead to habitat destruction and the killing of scarce salmon and brown trout stocks. It is important to ensure that the construction of wind turbines does not lead to further destruction of peat uplands and spawning streams. The problems encountered were at the construction phase and not with ongoing operations. The Board has called on the Department of the Environment to introduce national guidelines and regulations to avoid future reoccurrences.

A large number of pollution inspections were carried out, resulting in the initiation of nine prosecutions. In addition to the major fish kills caused by the two peat slides there were six minor fish kills recorded in 2008 and few serious water pollution incidents were reported. As in 2007 the low number of incidents was helped by the high flow rates during the wet summer months and the awareness programmes and enforcement policies of the Board and Government. The REPS farming programme, where applied, has reduced the incidents of farm pollution. The effluent from waste water treatment plants and the inappropriate spreading, or over spreading, of farm effluent and fertilisers continues to enrich our rivers and lakes.

The introduction of alien fish and weed species highlights the urgent need for legislation to control the spread of Invasive species. During 2008, the Board continued its programme to remove Chubb in the River Inny and removed a Lagarosiphon infestation from a lake near Abbey, Co. Galway, preventing the introduction of this deadly weed, which has infested the Corrib, to Lough Derg.

The Board produced an Urban Watercourses Guide, a template for sustainable development along watercourses in urban areas. The Board is finalising a

similar document on best practice to conserve fisheries during road construction. Such publications provide planners, architects and engineers with blueprints to minimise the destruction of fish habitat.

Drainage of rivers and streams continues to cause serious damage to the fish habitat. In seeking to prevent or minimise its effects, the Board consulted with the Office of Public Works, Local Authorities, and local land owner drainage committees. While progress is being made and the groups involved are more aware of the fisheries needs, legislation in this area is required.

### **Regulation Compliance**

*Protect fish and their habitat through ensuring compliance and enforcement of regulations.*

In 2008, staff issued in excess of 60 on- the -spot fines for minor breaches of fisheries legislation and 15 court cases have been initiated for pollution and protection breaches. Unusual seizures were lime from the Deel river, crayfish traps on the Little Brosna and crayfish nets from Shannon River.

### **Salmon**

1,347 salmon rod licences were issued in 2008. This is a slight increase on the 1,302 licences sold in 2007.

The ShRFB provided protection services on the Lower Shannon in 2008 under contract to the ESB. Staff patrolled the entire Region and responded to several reports from concerned anglers. Most breaches detected were minor and on-the-spot fines were issued for the offences. Information provided to our staff helped us identify problem areas and individuals. ESB Fisheries staff assisted in passing on timely reports and arranging access to power station during night time surveillance operations.

50 commercial licenses were issued to draft net fishermen on the Feale and a two-week extension was granted to these fishermen. Commercial catches were extremely poor for 2008, possibly as a result of high water levels; additionally

there was a steady run of lower numbers of salmon into the river and not larger peaks. 10 draft net licences were also issued to fishermen on Lough Ree, who continue to fish in a traditional manner to wild brown trout.

The Board increased its large, sea going, RIB boats patrols during 2008 and were assisted by LPV and aerial patrols. Nets were seized in the tidal waters of the Feale, Doonbeg and Cree rivers as well as throughout the lower Shannon estuary.

The Salmon Hardship Scheme finished in 2008 with appeals addressed in consultation with BIM and the Appeals Officer, DCENR. Grants were made available under the Salmon community support scheme for former drift net holders and the ShRFB facilitated meetings with the LEADER groups in Clare, Kerry and Limerick regarding the fund.

### **Eels**

Eel patrols took place from May to August, ensuring compliance with the new Bye Law including the 30cm limit. Targeted patrols took place during the month of October. Eel collections by the ESB were monitored and catches of eels were good.

Following on from the introduction of the EU Eels Directive the Board prepared an eel management plan for the Shannon Region in consultation with stakeholders. This was submitted to the Government for inclusion in the draft nation plan submitted to the European commission. The Board anticipates significant changes to the management of Eel stocks, which will lead to an increased focus on eel protection duties in 2009 and subsequent year.

### **Other Species**

The Board patrolled throughout the Region ensuring compliance with Trout, Pike and Coarse Fish Bye Laws. The number of breaches of the trout, pike and coarse fish fisheries regulations is increasing; therefore we are focusing

additional Board resources on this area. The Board is also addressing this issue by disseminating information on the Fisheries Regulations in different languages to both local and visiting anglers.

In Dromore Lake staff encountered 11 tourist anglers using non native carp as live bait. Fyke nets were seized in Lough Derg and Dromore Lake. A trammel net was seized in Kilgory lake.

A number of targeted coarse fish patrols were carried out following reports from anglers, in Lough Derg and surrounding East Clare lakes. These took place during the early hours of the morning and at weekends - there were large numbers of anglers fishing but few legislative breaches. With the help of anglers in Lough Derg a net was seized and individuals apprehended.

Enforcement of the bass bylaws took place at the water outlet in Tarbert and also along the coast where there were reports of netting taking place.

### **Resource investment and Product development**

#### ***Deploy resources effectively to meet operational needs***

Maintaining and developing the fisheries /angling resources of the Region is a core activity of the Board. We have embarked on various programmes to ensure that we understand the resources we have, what development is required and how the resources should be managed. The Board carried out projects to enhance and understand the angling resources using its own funding and in conjunction with other agencies/stakeholders.

### **Fish Counters**

The Feale fish counter worked well in 2008. While the Mague counter was operational, the design of the weir and the water levels, affected the accuracy of the count. Technical problems at the Mulkear counter which affected its operations have now been resolved. A CCTV system has been installed at the Mulkear to verify count data. It is intended to install a counter on the River

Fergus during 2009, following consultations with the NPWS and County Council.

### **Projects**

A number of projects were undertaken by the Board, some in co-operation with national studies. Board personnel assisted CFB during summer with the Water Framework Directive fish stock monitoring programme of rivers, lakes and estuaries. As part of the fisheries element of the Water Framework Directive 40 lakes were surveyed which completed the lake bathymetry survey which commenced in 2007.

### **Fisheries Development**

All of the Board's 755 angling structures were maintained in good condition, these structures can cater for over 2,000 anglers.

In partnership with Local Authorities as part of Failte Ireland's Angling Initiative, a number of infrastructural improvements were completed across the regions. Projects included car parking facilities and disabled stands at the Big Meadow, Athlone; at Lough McHugh in Mohill and at The Mud Flats, Carrick-on-Shannon.

Fisheries river rehabilitation work was carried out on a number of trout, pike and coarse fish waters in association with the NRA, ESB, private industry and angling clubs. This work included:

- Four kilometers of stream was rehabilitated using bank arming and a variety of weirs and deflectors on the Maughera River at Lough Sheelin.
- The third phase (3km) of a full rehabilitation project on the Cross River was completed during the year.
- The fourth phase of the six year rehabilitation of the Camlin River took place, involving work on the Ballinalee river, a major spawning river.
- Technical assistance and supervision of ESB fisheries rehabilitation works on the Camcor, Little Brosna, Cross, Tang and Creggy rivers.

The system of 27 trout and coarse fisheries which are managed directly by the Board proved popular with 3,239 angling permits being sold, a significant increase over 2008, which was in line with our Business Plan.

### **Partnership**

The Board is committed to the partnership process, involving all stakeholders in a catchment in the management of their fisheries. During 2008, numerous partnerships were developed with state agencies and non-government organisations. Staff met with angling clubs throughout the Region. When appropriate, the Board has consulted with the Department of Community Rural and Gaeltacht Affairs over development and promotional activities.

The Mulkear Catchment Management Group has been highly successful in bringing together stakeholders and has implemented several of the initiatives in the Mulkear River Plan. The Board submitted a funding application to the EU LIFE + nature programme, focusing on two major fish species occurring within the Mulkear catchment - sea lamprey and the Atlantic salmon - and other native species, such as the Otter. In December 2008 the EU approved this project and the Board is presently working with its partners to initiate the programme. This will run over four years, will cost 1.4 million euro and bring significant benefit to the Mulkear system.

The Shannon Salmon Restoration Project established in 2007 to look afresh at salmon management on the Shannon system, produced its preliminary report in November 2008. This project is managed by a Shannon Regional Fisheries Board steering group who received advice from a Technical Committee made up of scientists and managers from the ShRFB, the CFB, the ESB and the Marine Institute. Submissions were sought on the preliminary report and a number of public meetings held for interested parties. It is intended to finalise the report, following review of submissions, early in 2009.

The Board held a joint workshop with the NPWS where the two organisations developed protocols to enhance co-operation and awareness of each other's

activities. This has led to smoother interaction between both agencies and a number of opportunities for further synergies are presently being investigated.

### **Education, Promotion and Marketing**

*Seek to conserve and protect the fish and their habitat through education and public awareness of the fisheries requirements.*

The Board, in accordance with our Business Plan, promoted the angling resource to local and tourist anglers. The fisheries resource of the Region is of great benefit to the tourist sector and the Board worked with Fáilte Ireland, Local Tourism Groups, Local Authorities and others to attract tourist anglers to the Region. Our work included attending trade shows, issuing information leaflets, hosting angling competitions, hosting visiting journalists etc.

A highlight of the Board's year was the holding of Fisheries Awareness Week from 26th April - 5th May 2008. Angling competitions and information sessions were held at 25 locations throughout the region. There was a very large attendance at our conference on Managing Fisheries in a Changing Environment.

As in 2007 the numbers of tourist and Irish anglers were static. The angling product should be addressed and re-positioned in order to make angling more attractive to the wider public. The new salmon regime, particularly the closing of rivers, reduced salmon angling numbers. The Board has interviewed many anglers and angling service providers in order to identify initiatives to improve angling numbers. This data is being collated and analysed and the Board will publish its findings in 2009.

The Board's website is an important component of our promotional strategy. The number of visitors continues to increase, with 3% more visitors than in 2008. Considerable work was done on remodelled the website in 2008 and it is intended to rollout these changes in 2009.

The awareness by children of the importance of our fisheries is very important to the Board.

Staff worked with 101 schools as part of the national “Something Fishy” project and the Board’s own “Water is Life” programme. The school talks created awareness among primary school children of their water/fishery environment. In association with angling groups children were taken to rivers and lakes and shown the elements of a good fishery and how it can be damaged. As part of the “Water is Life” programme the Board organised a children’s art exhibition, where over 8,000 pieces were on display.

### **Fishing Competitions**

The Board assisted in the organization of a number of international angling events throughout the region during 2008.

In conjunction with Leitrim County Council and the Department of Culture, Arts and Leisure in Northern Ireland (DCAL), a Cross Border Pike Challenge took place in March. The event was sponsored by Waterways Ireland and attracted 200 anglers from Ireland and overseas.

The Dutch King of Clubs was fished in Drumshanbo and attracted 140 anglers from The Netherlands and Germany.

The Lough Derg Pike Challenge brought many pike anglers from mainland Europe with good catches of pike.

The National Trout championships were fished at a number of lakes in the region. The Leinster Qualifier was fished at Lough Owel and the Leinster Championships at Lough Ennell.

The Board continued its work for people with disabilities and organised several competitions and visits to our disabled angling facilities throughout the year.

## Human Resources

### *Continue to develop a capable, flexible and effective organization*

The key resource of the Board is its staff. Their dedication to the service was evident yet again during 2008. Over a number of years the Board has in collaboration with its staff developed a two pronged approach to staff development, utilising external training services (including that of the CFB) and developing in-house training skills. External courses included Conflict Resolution, Coxswain courses, Management Development and First Aid, while internal training included a number of workshops and coaching courses on Legislation, Water Quality, Forestry and Road Construction, utilising the skills and knowledge of Board staff. Over 500 training days were provided.

The Board organised Disability Awareness Training for all staff in 2008 and has taken several initiatives to ensure its operations are accessible and compliant with relevant legislation.

Continued focus is placed on promoting health and safety in the workplace. The Board carries out comprehensive reviews of equipment and personal safety. The Board has established a Health and Safety committee to ensure compliance and best practice in this area.

The Board also worked in partnership with the other Fisheries Boards in delivering the national training and modernisation programme. Items outlined in the Service Level Agreement with the Department of Communications, Energy and Natural Resources were addressed.

The Performance, Management and Development System is fully operational in the organisation. This system provides for the review of each individual's performance and their training needs against objectives which are in line with the business plan of the Board.

## The Shannon Regional Fisheries Board

### INCOME AND EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT FOR THE 12 MONTHS TO 31 DECEMBER 2008

Income		2008 €	2007 €
Oireachtas Income	1	3,257,846	3,148,910
Other Income	2	894,656	1,095,813
Net Deferred Funding for Pensions	13(c)	772,000	611,000
		4,983,403	4,855,723
<b>Transfer to Capital Account</b>		58,901	6,898
		4,983,403	4,862,621
<b>Expenditure</b>			
Administration		535,583	433,179
Operations		4,384,516	4,159,203
		4,920,098	4,592,382
<b>Surplus / (Deficit) for the year</b>		63,304	270,239
<b>Surplus at 1 January</b>		304,100	33,661
<b>Surplus at 31 December</b>		367,404	304,100

The Statement of Accounting Policies and Notes 1 to 15 form an integral part of these Financial Statements.

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

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Chairman

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

## Western Regional Fisheries Board

### **Chairmans Report**

As per a government decision in October 2007, 5180/20/13/0996, the Board has consulted with the Department of Community, Rural and Gaelthacht Affairs over development and promotional activities during 2008.

### **Report regarding the implementation of the Code of Practice for Governance of State Bodies.**

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

All Board members had made a Disclosure of Interests in accordance with the provisions section 3, Appendix A, of the Code of Practice.

All Board employees are aware and fully compliant with the provisions of the Code of Business Conduct for Employees.

The up to date codes of business conduct are available upon request with a copy of each such code is accessible through the Board's body's web site.

The Board has in place a Customer Charter and this is posted on the Board's web site.

### **Report with reference to section 10.2 of the Code of Practice:**

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.

The Board complied with all appropriate procedures for financial reporting, internal audit, procurement and disposal of assets.

A statement on the Board's system of internal financial control, in accordance with the requirements of 10.2 (iii) of the Code is also available in the body of the Financial Statements.

As stated above, the Codes of Business Conduct for Board Members and Employees have been put in place and adhered to.

Government policy on the pay of the Board's Chief Executive Officer is being complied with.

Government guidelines on payment of Director's fees are being complied with; no fees are paid to members of the Board

As of now, there have been no significant post balance sheet events. The Board's accounts for 2008 have been audited by the Comptroller and Auditor General and await sign off and, therefore, the Board can only provide draft accounts at this time.

The Guidelines for Appraisal and Management of Capital Expenditure Proposals were complied with.

The Code of Practice has been adopted by the Board and the Board is compliant with the provisions of the Code.

## Headquarters and Corporate Governance

### Introduction

The Board undertook its statutory responsibilities throughout the year ensuring that the accounts of the Board were in order and that the necessary obligations fulfilled.

On 22<sup>nd</sup> January 2008 the Board discussed the fishery rate and a proposal that the rate be struck at €16.80 in the Euro was sent to the Minister in that regard. On the 10<sup>th</sup> April 2008 the Minister confirmed the rate at €16.78 in the Euro.

All declarations in respect of the Ethics in Public Office for the year 2008 are in place for all Board members and the Chief Executive Officer.

### New Board Headquarters

The new headquarters was completed in the Autumn, there was only one delay which did not result in any additional costs being incurred by the Board. The project remained within the agreed budget. The Board received €1million in grant aid from the Department of Communications, Energy and Natural Resources towards the contract cost of €1.288million. In addition to the 288k the fit out costs were borne by the Western Regional Fisheries Board. The total cost of the project came to €1.7million. The building was completed at the start of October and following delivery of furnishings staff moved in from the 17<sup>th</sup> November 2008.



Fig XX: New Headquarters Building in Galway

## **Finance**

The Board accounts were prepared by the staff of the Board in conjunction with Deacy and Associates the Board's accountants. The draft accounts were forwarded to the Department of Finance on 28<sup>th</sup> February 2008.

A private firm undertook the audit of the Board on behalf of the Comptroller and Auditor General between the 7<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup> April 2008. The final accounts were adopted by the Board on the 8<sup>th</sup> July 2008. Following the recommendation from the External Auditor, the Board amended its depreciation policy from reducing balance to straight line.

The Internal Audit of the Board was undertaken by an external firm, Sheehan Quinn, on the 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> October 2008, this report was reviewed and adopted by the Audit Committee on 4<sup>th</sup> December 2008 and the recommendations were ratified by the Board on the 9<sup>th</sup> December 2008.

## **Management of Fisheries**

### **Salmon Hardship Scheme**

A small number of remaining issues under this scheme were addressed during the year at the request of the independent appeals officer. Those fishermen remaining in the commercial fishery were salmon draft net fishermen in Ballinakill.

### **Eel Management**

On behalf the Department the Board under took a public consultation on eel fishing and management in Headford on the 28<sup>th</sup> August 2008 and the recommendations from the meeting forwarded to the Department in September. The Board also recommended that a Hardship Scheme similar to the salmon hardship scheme be introduced for the eel fishermen who would be forced to leave the fishery.

### **Biosecurity Plan for Lough Mask**

The Board, with funding from the Zebra Mussel Control Initiative, engaged the services of RPS to carry out a Biosecurity Plan for Lough Mask following concerns about the possible spread of Zebra Mussels and *Lagarosiphon* to Lough Mask. The report was finalised in December.

### **Business Plan for Aasleagh Lodge, Cottages and the Erriff Fishery**

The Board engaged the services of Bane Mullarkey in Galway to undertake a business development plan for the Lodge, Cottages and Erriff Fishery to enable the state to get the best value for money from this asset. The report was presented to the December meeting of the Board and the recommendations adopted.

### **Lagarosiphon major Management - Lough Corrib**

In 2008 the Board, in conjunction with research staff of the Central Fisheries Board, engaged in a large scale management and research programme on *Lagarosiphon* in Lough Corrib. This has necessitated the deployment of very significant resources to managing this problem which would not have been required five years ago. The management of this weed is going to require very significant resources over the coming years and it is hoped that a suitable biological remedy can be found before the weed destroys large parts of the lake.



**Fig XXI: Weed Cutting boat in operation**

### **Salmon Counters**

The Board continued to lead the way in terms of salmon counters with the completion of the major counter on the Bunowen River and the installation of a Vaki counter in the fish pass on the Clifden (Owenglin) river. It is anticipated that this counter will be commissioned in 2009.

Significant resources had to be deployed throughout the season towards ensuring that counters are verified on a regular basis and downloaded as required. Further works will be required in relation to the facilities at Casla where the building housing the counter is sub-standard.

### **Ferox Project**

The Ferox monitoring project was extended to Lough Mask in 2008 with the monitoring of the previous year's fish continuing on Lough Corrib. 28 fish were caught and released but the locating of the fish at spawning time was disappointing. The project will be continued in 2009.

### **Development Projects**

A significant number of development projects were undertaken in 2008 particularly on streams around Loughs Mask and Corrib. Several of these were part funded by the local angling clubs and the Western Fisheries Development Society.

### **Sea Trout**

Sea trout returns in the Ballynahinch system were improved over 2008 indicating that the stock was making a noticeable recovery. However, sea trout post smolts with juvenile lice infestations were again a problem in the Delphi, Erriff and Kylemore fisheries, all of these fisheries were close to salmon farms that were populated with fish at the time of smolt migration. It is absolutely essential that wild salmon from SAC rivers be adequately protected and if lice cannot be eliminated then consideration must be given to removing the farms that are located too close to the fisheries and relocating them distant from wild fisheries.

## **Fish Traps**

The Board continued to monitor salmon and sea trout in the Screebe system (on behalf of the fishery owners); Invermore and Gowla as part of the ongoing research with the Central Fisheries Board and the Erriff - Tawnyard and Aasleagh Falls traps.

## **Staff Recruitment**

During the year the vacant post of Assistant Chief Executive Officer was filled on the 8<sup>th</sup> September 2008. Other posts filled in the course of the years were a permanent administrative assistant IV; a contract assistant inspector with responsibility for the management of the logistics in the *Lagarosiphon major* project; a contract fishery officer; a temporary fishery officer and three contract general operatives.

## **Retirement**

During the year Paddy McTigue retired after 40 years service to the Board working in the Greenfields area of Lough Corrib. The Board owes a sincere thanks to Paddy for his lifetime of dedicated work and service.

## **Environmental**

During the year, the Board began the process of aligning its procedures and protocols to that of the Water Framework Directive with a focus on fish populations and their habitats. In the context of the Boards aquatic environment program for 2008, the main projects undertaken included as follows;

- Fish Surveys.
- Monthly sampling of Lough Carra, Mask and Corrib.
- Investigation of complaints and incidents.
- Wastewater Treatment Plant sampling.
- Biosecurity Plan for Lough Mask and Carra.
- Alien species monitoring and control.
- Review of planning applications, water pollution licences, and forestry applications referred.

- Fish removal at selected sites associated with the N6 river and stream crossings.
- Water Framework Directive Management Group participation.
- GIS migration from Arcview v3.2 to v9.3.

### **Western Fisheries Development Society**

The Board continued to work in close association with the Western Fisheries Development Society and several projects undertaken by the angling club and funded by the Development Society were sub-contracted to the Fisheries Board. This resulted in excellent value for money. The Cooperative took in €40,584 from the sale of share certificates and made grant allocations totalling €12,163. The Coop also received a total of €18,836.50 and €31,801.50 for grant aid in respect of 2006 and 2007.

### **Publications**

The Board completed the publication of the new beat maps for the Erriff Fishery. In addition newsletters were prepared for both the Galway and Erriff Fisheries. Copies of these are available on the Boards website: [www.wrfb.ie](http://www.wrfb.ie)

**The Western Regional Fisheries Board**

**Income and Expenditure Account for the 12 months to 31 December 2008**

Income	Notes	2008 €	2007 €
Oireachtas Income	1	4,209,185	4,330,723
Other Income	2	1,006,839	888,257
Net Deferred Funding for Pensions	10(b)	633,906	436,538
		<u>5,849,930</u>	<u>5,655,518</u>
<b>Transfer to Capital Account</b>	11	<u>(1,339,518)</u>	<u>(604,631)</u>
		<u>4,510,412</u>	<u>5,050,887</u>
<b>Expenditure</b>			
Administration	3	1,690,843	1,285,151
Operations	4	3,404,727	3,302,843
		<u>5,095,570</u>	<u>4,587,994</u>
<b>Surplus for the year</b>		(585,158)	462,893
<b>Surplus at 1 January</b>		<u>673,139</u>	<u>210,246</u>
<b>Surplus at 31 December</b>		<u>87,981</u>	<u>673,139</u>

The results for the year relate to continuing operations.

The Statement of Accounting Policies and Notes 1 to 15 form an integral part of these Financial Statements.

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

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

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

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

## North Western Regional Fisheries Board

### Corporate Governance

#### Chairmans Statement

The Board complied with the provisions of the Code Practice for Governance of State Bodies. It had in place a Code of Business Conduct for Board Members and each member agreed to comply with the terms of the code. All Board members made a Disclosure of Interests in accordance with the provisions of section 3, Appendix A, of the Code of Practice. The Board had in place a Code of Conduct for Employees and a Customer Charter which was posted on the Board's web site. A Register of Business Risks was in place as required by the Code of Practice and this was updated and reviewed during the year. With reference to section 10.2 of the Code of Practice, I wish to report the following position in relation to my Board.

- I. 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.
- II. The Board complied with all appropriate procedures for financial reporting, internal audit, procurement and disposal of assets.
- III. I attach herewith a statement on the Board's system of internal financial control, in accordance with the requirements of 10.2 (iii) of the Code.
- IV. As stated above, a Code of Business Conduct for Board Members is in place and members have agreed to be bound by the terms of the Code.
- V. Government policy on the pay of the Board's Chief Executive Officer is being complied with.
- VI. Government guidelines on payment of director's fees are being complied with; no fees are paid to members of the Board.
- VII. As of now, there have been no significant post balance sheet events. The Board's accounts for 2008 have yet to be audited by the Comptroller and Auditor General and, therefore, the Board can only provide draft accounts at this time. The unaudited accounts were submitted to the DCENR before the end of February, 2009 in accordance with the requirements of the

Code of Practice and will be furnished to the Comptroller & auditor General for audit in accordance with statutory requirements.

VIII. I am satisfied that the Guidelines for Appraisal and Management of Capital Expenditure Proposals were complied with.

IX. I confirm that the Code of Practice has been adopted by the Board and that the Board is compliant with the provisions of the Code.

### **Systems of internal financial control - section 10.2 (iii) of the Code**

1. I hereby acknowledge that the Board is responsible for ensuring that an appropriate system of internal financial control is in operation within the Board.

The systems can only provide reasonable and not absolute assurance that assets are safeguarded, transactions authorised and properly recorded, and that material errors or irregularities are either prevented or would be detected in a timely period.

2. Key control procedures

The system of internal financial control operated by the North Western Regional Fisheries Board is based on the following measures:

- The Board takes the major strategic decisions and meets at regular intervals to monitor performance;
- There are clearly defined management responsibilities;
- 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;
- Monthly accounts and budgets are prepared throughout the year and these are reviewed by the Board Audit Committee and Board;
- Budgets are prepared in respect of each year and monthly statements of income and expenditure are produced to facilitate comparison with budgeted figures;

- The Board has in place a system of internal audit under which an audit is carried out by an external firm of auditors. Reports are considered by the Board's Audit Committee which met four times in 2008 and, also, by the Board as appropriate;
- An evaluation of business risks undertaken in 2008 was adopted by the Board and was reviewed by the Board's Internal Auditor whose recommendations are being implemented;
- The Board has adopted a policies and procedures manual on the internal controls over the receipt and disbursement of funds.

### 3. Operating Procedures

Formal procedures are in place for the purchase of all goods and services, for approval of invoices in respect of goods and services and authorisation of payment in respect of goods and services, for signing of cheques and for security of blank cheques. Procedures in this regard have been strengthened from time to time and recommendations arising from internal audits, audit committee findings and management reviews have been implemented.

### 4. Review of the effectiveness of the system of Internal Financial Control

The North Western Regional Fisheries Board carried out a review of the system of internal financial control in 2008.

John Walkin

Chairman

4 March, 2009

## **Compliance**

Ten Board meetings were held and the Audit Committee reported to the Board following each of its four meetings. The Board operated within budget and an internal audit of the Board's systems confirmed that management had implemented an adequate system of internal control in the areas subject to audit review. The Audit Committee met with both the internal auditor and a representative of the C and AG to review the audits. In accordance with a Government decision, the Board consulted with the Minister for Community, Rural and Gaeltacht Affairs in relation to a proposed development project.

## **Business Planning**

The Board adopted a business plan in line with its Strategic Development Plan and Service Level Agreement (SLA). Implementation of the plan was monitored and reported quarterly to the Board. Similarly, implementation of the SLA was also reported quarterly to the CFB in accordance with DCENR requirements. By year end the Board had achieved most of the targets set out in its 2008 business plan.

## **Freedom of Information**

The Board processed three FOI requests during 2008.

## **PMDS**

Implementation of the Performance Management and Development System was prioritised and all staff participated in the process which is now well embedded and commencing its sixth cycle.

## **Provision of Access for people with disabilities**

### **Access to Board facilities**

In accordance with its business plan, the Board made significant progress in relation to improving access for people with disabilities to the Board's facilities and services. As already referred to above, access was provided to one of the best salmon pools on the Moy and a new angling cot was deployed on the Ridge Pool.

## **Access to information**

The Board's website was further enhanced and is compliant with *W3C's Web Content Accessibility Guidelines*. The home page includes a quick link (indicated by recognised international icon) to the accessibility statement which includes full details in relation to contacting the Board's Access Officer. Details of accessible facilities are also included. A loop system has also been provided to facilitate people with hearing impairment.

## **Board Staff**

A survey of Board staff completed in March, 2008 indicated that the Board was achieving the 3% target for employment of people with disabilities. As part of its commitment to improving access for people with disabilities, all NWRFB staff received disability awareness training during 2008.

## **Protection and Conservation of Fisheries**

### **General**

Protection and conservation of the region's highly valuable salmon fisheries again accounted for the bulk of the Board's work in 2008. The coastal area was patrolled on a regular basis throughout the main salmon season with the Board's RIBs (Rigid Inflatable Boats) generally operating in pairs for safety reasons. All inland, salmon bearing waters were patrolled as necessary with the more important rivers being patrolled on a daily basis and some, such as the Moy, being patrolled two or three times in each 24 hour period. In general, there was very little sign of illegal fishing activity along the coast but inland waters required constant vigilance especially when water levels were suitable for netting although high water conditions persisted for much of the season and this made illegal fishing much more difficult. The region's oyster fisheries were also patrolled and Board staff regularly checked on eel fishing operations.

### **Seizures and Prosecutions**

A total of 43 nets measuring 2,684m, were seized and prosecutions were initiated in 14 cases. At the time of this report a conviction had been recorded in

just one case, charges had been struck out in another case on the basis of a financial contribution to the court, three cases had been withdrawn, the Probation Act had been applied in one case and eight were still pending.

### **Bye Laws**

At the Board's request, the Minister introduced three new bye laws during the year; one of these restricted angling on the River Deel for the months of June, July and August, in order to conserve salmon stocks, another increased the size limit for brown trout taken on Loughs Conn and Cullin to 12 inches (30.5cm) while a third brought forward the close of the season on Loughs Conn and Cullin for brown trout fishing to 30 September.

### **Management of Salmon Stocks**

#### **General**

The Board devoted considerable effort to the operation of the new salmon management regime which had been introduced by the Government in 2007 following the cessation of the drift net fishery. This involved the closure of a number of rivers for salmon fishing, the operation of a *Catch and Release* system on other rivers and the enforcement of bag limits on several other rivers. Commercial fishing in the region was limited to 23 special local draft net licences which operated in the Tullaghan Bay area and one ordinary draft net licence which operated on the Newport River estuary.

#### **Management of Quotas**

In accordance with legislation and following consultation with the Bangor Fisheries District Committee, the Board's CEO decided on the allocation of the total allowable catch between commercial fishermen and anglers in the cases of the Owenmore, Owenduff and Newport Rivers. Tags were allocated in accordance with the quotas and catches were monitored throughout the season. The Board issued 25 commercial salmon fishing licences and 6,158 salmon angling licences. Commercial fishing licences and logbooks were

checked on a regular basis and a total of 6,485 anglers had their licences/logbooks checked by Board staff.

### **Fish Counter Programme**

The Board further developed its fish counter programme with the provision of a new counter on the Owenduff River, in a joint project with the fishery owner. Further development of counter facilities on the Moy at Ballina was completed and Board staff managed the existing counters on the Munhin, Owenmore, Ballysadare and Garravogue Rivers. Robust counts were secured from the Owenmore, Munhin, Owenduff and Ballysadare counters with partial counts being collected from the Moy and the Garravogue counters. In partnership with the Marine Institute, an experimental DIDSON (hydro-acoustic) counter was successfully deployed and operated on the River Deel. The Board also assisted the Marine Institute with the operation of a smolt trap on the River Deel.

### **Monitoring Programmes**

The Board's juvenile salmonid monitoring programmes continued and electro fishing surveys were carried out at 30 index sites in the Bangor Fisheries District and at 19 index sites in the Moy Catchment. Board staff also carried out five minute electro fishing surveys at 42 sites in the Ballina District and at 53 sites in the Sligo District in accordance with a countrywide study of salmon stocks being carried out by the Central Fisheries Board as part of the new salmon management regime.

### **Development and Improvement of Fisheries**

#### **Glencullin River Rehabilitation**

A major river restoration project was carried out on the Glencullin River, a tributary of Carrowmore Lake, which had been devastated by a major flood event in 1997. More than 2km of river bank was restored and 683 metres of new spawning beds created in a project that involved the importation of 4,440 tonnes of large rock. The project was funded (€121k) under the Community Fund established as a planning condition for the Corrib Gas Project and included a

contribution from the Board of €41k. The project was an excellent example of co-operation between landowners and State Agencies for the benefit of both fisheries and farmers in the area.



Figure XXII: Bank restoration Glencullin River

### **Stock Management and Fish Stocking**

The Board continued with its ongoing stock management programmes at Loughs Conn, Cullin and Arrow where 2,078 pike (6,919 kg) were removed, of which, 1,378 pike (4,728 kg) were stocked to nearby designated pike fisheries. A total of 13,200 trout were also stocked to six lakes including Loughs Bo, Bilberry, Lannagh, na Leibe, Gall and Ballin Lough. To prevent mortalities associated with low water levels, more than 6,000 juvenile salmonids were salvaged from the River Deel and a further 500 trout were salvaged from the Aughagower River, in the Lough Arrow area.

### **Enhancement Works**

Significant enhancement works were carried out on the Cloonaghmore (Palmerstown) River where 6,470m<sup>2</sup> habitat was improved. It is hoped that these improvement works will greatly assist in restoration of salmon stocks in this river where stocks are currently below the Conservation Limit. Similar works, but on a much reduced scale, were also completed on the Ballinglen River which was also closed to angling. Other development projects included

improvement works and fencing along 1.5km of the Skinneadha River, County Leitrim, bank protection and spawning gravel improvements on the Mad (390m), Cuillacorraun (140m) and Castlehill (100m) Rivers.

### **Access Development**

Access for anglers along the Moy, Pollagh and Manulla Rivers was improved and included the construction/repair of 19 stiles and 17 bridges. Under the Board's FÁS Community Employment Scheme, huge amounts of excessive shrubbery were cleared along several tributaries of the Moy thus improving access for anglers as well as improving fish habitat. A new facility for disabled anglers was also provided at Derryguarry, Foxford which will enable wheelchair bound anglers to drive to the river bank and gain access to one of the best salmon fishing pools on that part of the River Moy.



Figure XXIII: Disabled angling facility on the Moy at Derryguarry, Foxford

### **Protection of Water Quality**

#### **General**

The Board continued to deploy two staff on a full-time basis on protection and monitoring of water quality in the region's fisheries. The Board's laboratory operated throughout the year and extensive sampling programmes were carried out on a number of fisheries. A total of 1,407 samples were collected and analysed for up to 11 parameters.

## **Planning**

A total of 74 planning applications were examined and comments submitted as considered appropriate for the protection of water quality. A number of appeals were submitted to An Bord Pleanála following decisions by Local Authorities which the Board considered detrimental to water quality. Environmental Impact Statements for various proposed projects were examined and detailed comments submitted as appropriate.

## **Pollution Monitoring**

Staff investigated 95 pollution reports and appropriate follow-up action was taken in all cases. An incident which was of particular concern to the Board, related to the discharge of a large volume of raw sewage to the Castlebar River which continued for a period of a week in January and which resulted in the successful prosecution by the Board of Mayo County Council.

## **Farm Inspections**

Board staff carried out 104 farm inspections and follow-up action was taken as appropriate in individual cases including the issue of warning letters in some cases.

## **Forestry**

Ninety eight forestry proposals were assessed and comments submitted as appropriate for the protection of water quality. Despite strong objections from the Board, the Department of Agriculture, Food and Forestry granted a licence for aerial fertilisation of forestry in the River Deel catchment. The Board's worst fears were realised when the operation went ahead in unsuitable weather and several of the conditions attached to the licence were breached.

## **Corrib Gas Project**

Potential impacts on water quality arising from the Corrib Gas Project were monitored closely and the Board's CEO sat on two committees whose functions were to monitor the operation of the project in relation to (a) construction of the

terminal (the biggest construction site in the country during the year) and (b) the “upstream” pipeline from the sea to the terminal site. Both committees operated very satisfactorily and were very beneficial in facilitating exchange of information and briefing all parties in relation to progress on the project.

### **Water Framework Directive**

The Board was also directly involved in implementation of the Water Framework Directive in the Western River Basin District. The Board’s Assistant CEO was a member of both the Steering Group and Management Committee for the project. Board staff assisted the Central Fisheries Board in carrying out WFD surveys on five lakes, nine river sites and five estuaries (transitional waters).

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

#### **General**

A wide range of angling and promotional activities were carried out including production of a weekly angling report during the main season which was circulated widely. Seven trade shows were attended including, for the first time, a major angling promotional show in the USA. The Board also hosted six visits by angling journalists which included French and German journalists, the region’s most important European markets. The Board’s website was maintained and updated as appropriate during the year. For the first time, a webcam was utilised to transmit live pictures of the Cathedral Beat and later of Ridge Pool on the Board’s website. The site received a total of 83,435 visits during the year, an increase of 19% on 2007.

### **Designation of Ballina as Salmon Capital of Ireland**

The Board was a very active participant in the work of Ballina/North Mayo Marketing Initiative and worked closely with Ballina Chamber of Commerce and Ballina Town Council in having Ballina officially designated, in June, as Salmon Capital of Ireland. Following the designation of Ballina as Salmon Capital of Ireland, the Board commissioned a feasibility study on the possible establishment of a salmon based visitor centre in the town. The study which

confirmed the feasibility of the project was carried out by Tourism Development International and was funded by Fáilte Ireland, the Board and Ballina Town Council/Mayo County Council.



Figure XXIV: Pictured at the launch of Ballina as Salmon Capital of Ireland are from Left to right: Declan Cooke, River Moy Manager, John Walkin, Chairman, An Tánaiste, Ms Mary Coughlan, T.D., Vincent Roche, CEO, Ann Campbell, Board member & Rory Sheehan, Fisheries Information Officer.

### Promotion of Juvenile Angling

The Board organised, or directly supported eight juvenile angling events, involving 143 participants during the year. In addition, throughout the season it provided evening fishing free of charge for additional juvenile anglers on the Cathedral Beat of the Moy Fishery in Ballina. Pupils from St Joseph's National School, Culleens, Co. Sligo also enjoyed a very enjoyable day's fishing on the Mount Falcon rainbow trout fishery which was part of their prize for finishing joint first in the National "Something Fishy" Competition held the previous year.



**Figure XXV: Vincent Roche, CEO presenting a cheque to Ms Rita McHugh, Principal, St Joseph's National School, Culleens, Co. Sligo following a juvenile event held at Mount Falcon in May.**



**Figure XXVI: A young angler landing a salmon at a juvenile angling event held on the Moy Fishery.**

### **Origin of Anglers who Purchased Licences in the Region**

Sales of salmon angling licences for 2008 were analysed to determine the origin of anglers who purchased licences in the region. A total of 6,158 angling licences were sold in the region which represented a decrease of 8% on 2007. The decrease was attributed to the exceptionally high water levels which prevailed on the Moy throughout a large part of the season. Of total licence sales, 71% were purchased by anglers from outside the region while 49% were purchased by anglers from outside the 26 counties and 36% of the total was purchased by anglers from outside the 32 counties. Anglers came from 33

countries with the greatest numbers coming from Great Britain, Northern Ireland, France and Germany.

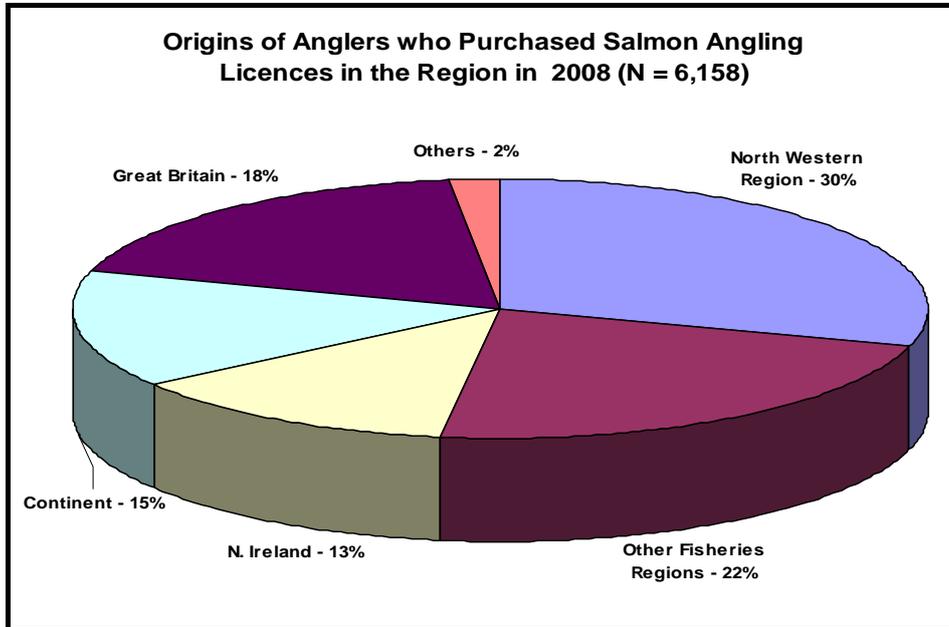


Figure XXVII: Details of origins of anglers who purchased salmon angling licences in 2008

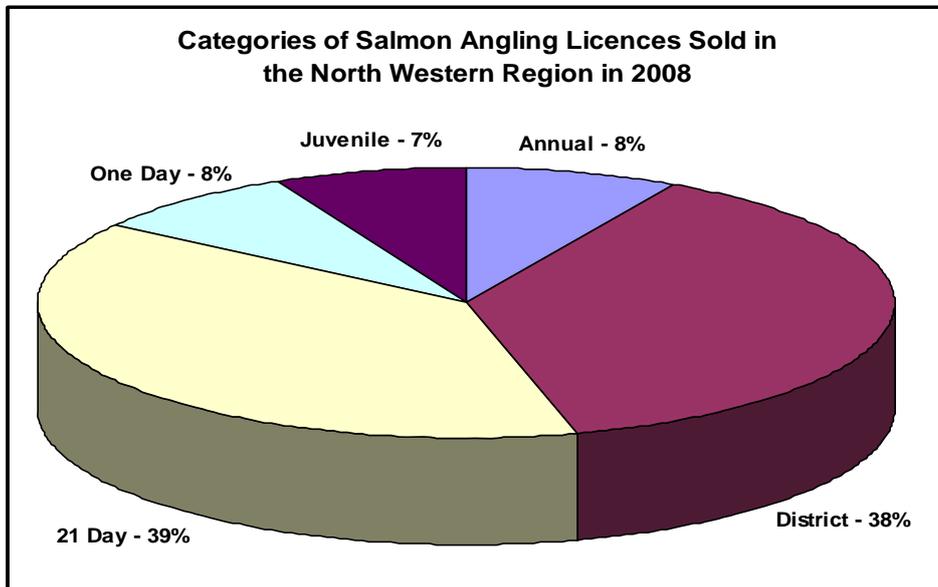


Figure XXVIII: Categories of salmon angling licences sold in 2008

## Management of Board Fisheries

### General

The Board was directly responsible for management of a number of State fisheries. The most important of these was the Moy Fishery at Ballina and the

Cloongee Fishery, also on the River Moy. A number of trout lakes were also managed by the Board. Booking arrangements were operated for all Board fisheries and boats were provided for hire on a number of lakes.

### **Utilisation and Revenue**

A total of 4,409 rod days were fished on Board managed fisheries in 2008 compared with 4,617 in 2007, a decrease of 4.5%. Permit and boat hire income amounted to €233,724 in 2008 compared with €242,902 in 2007, a decrease of 4%. The decreases were due mainly to adverse weather conditions which prevailed for much of the summer and, in particular, to the impact of high water levels on angling at the Moy Fishery. Licensing of Board fisheries to angling clubs yielded a further €9,460.

### **Moy Fishery**

Angling on the Moy Fishery was allocated in accordance with the Board's established criteria. A total of 718 applications were processed with offers of angling being issued in respect of 1,372 rod days. The fishery accommodated a total of 2,910 anglers, from 19 countries, and they accounted for a total catch of 1,009 salmon, an increase of 108% on 2007 which was a particularly bad year at the fishery due to the impact of severe floods during the peak salmon run.

### **Cloongee Fishery**

The Board issued a total of 880 permits in respect of the Cloongee Fishery which produced a total catch of 250 salmon, a decrease of 27% which was somewhat surprising given that high water conditions should have favoured this upstream fishery.

### **Fish Catches and Angling**

#### **Salmon Draft Net Fishery**

A quota of 2,000 salmon was allocated to the holders of 23 special local draft net licences on the Owenmore and Owenduff River estuaries and a quota of 30 salmon to the holder of a licence on the Newport River estuary. Despite an

extension to the commercial fishing season to mid-August, the delay in the arrival of the main grilse run, combined with flood conditions during a substantial part of the season, resulted in a total catch of just 1,540 salmon.

### **Salmon Angling**

For the second year in succession, the salmon angling season was dominated by exceptionally high water levels which, for the most part, had a detrimental effect on angling. On some of the smaller, spate rivers, periodic flood conditions provided a boost to angling. The total recorded salmon catch on the Moy in 2008 was 7,392 fish, a decrease of 18% on the 2007 catch which was 8,997. The rod catch in the Bangor District was also down with a total catch in 2008 of 1,366 compared with 1,623 in 2007. The Sligo District did better where the Ballysadare River enjoyed a good run of fish throughout the main season. The 2008 Sligo catch was 1,358 fish which was very similar to the 2007 catch of 1,365 salmon.

### **Brown Trout Fishing**

Angling for brown trout on the region's main lakes was again somewhat disappointing and was hampered by bad weather with unseasonably high water levels impacting on fly fishing. Trout angling on Lough Conn was again quite "patchy" where the total recorded catch was 1,837 trout, compared with 2,081 in 2007. The introduction in 2008 of a new minimum size limit of 12 inches (30.5cm) (formerly 10 inches) may have impacted on the number of trout reported. Lough Conn continued to produce some large trout with the largest fish reported at 5.4kg (12 lbs). Fishing on Lough Arrow improved in 2008 and, at the season end, some local anglers were expressing confidence that 2008 would mark the start of an upturn in trout angling on this once famous trout fishery.

### **Rainbow Trout Fishing**

Ballin Lough, the Board's rainbow trout fishery, near Westport, again proved very popular with both local and visiting anglers. This small lake accounted for

600 rod days in 2008 compared to 556 rod days in 2007, an increase of 8%. Anglers fishing the lake reported a total of 881 rainbow trout and 107 brown trout (total 988) of which 415 rainbow trout and 73 brown trout (total 488) were returned.

### **Sea Trout Fishing**

Since the collapse of sea trout stocks in the Burrishoole and Lough Beltra fisheries, as a result of sea lice infestation, sea trout angling in the region has been confined mainly to Carrowmore Lake and the Moy Estuary. Carrowmore enjoyed some excellent sea trout fishing during the season while fishing on the Moy Estuary was disrupted significantly by flood water conditions. Nonetheless, anglers reported a total catch of 1,001 sea trout from the Moy estuary compared with 1,526 in 2007.

### **Sea Angling**

2008 was a challenging year for sea angling in the region as difficult angling conditions persisted throughout most of the season. However, despite the bad weather conditions, some fine catches were reported. Shark fishing improved and notable catches of Homelyn Ray were also recorded. Shore angling along the North Mayo/West Sligo coasts was reported to be good and a number of successful competitions were held.

### **Commercial Eel Fishing**

The Board issued 19 eel fishing licences which included 14 longline and 5 fyke net licences. Of these, 7 longlines and 3 fyke net licences were actually fished. The total reported regional eel catch was 4.4 tonnes compared with 6.6 tonnes in 2007 and 7.2 tonnes in 2006. The continued reduction in the eel catch reflects the shorter season introduced in 2008, a reduced effort and, in particular, the continued decline in the stock and the absence of any appreciable recruitment to the fishery.

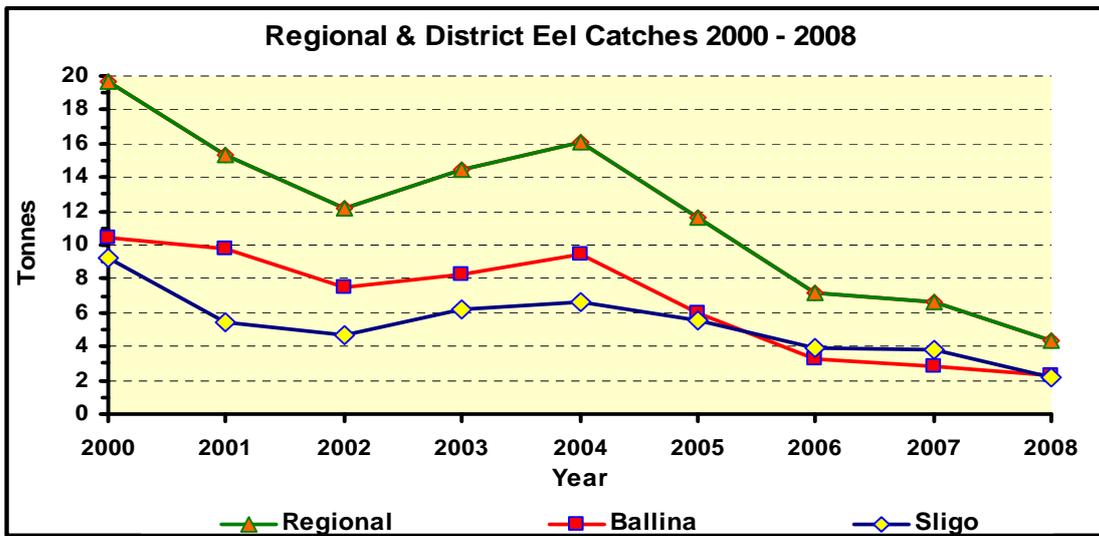


Figure XXIX: Regional and district eel catches 2000-2008

### Oyster Fishing

No oyster fishing took place in the region during 2008.

## The North Western Regional Fisheries Board

### INCOME AND EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT FOR THE 12 MONTHS TO 31 DECEMBER 2008

Income	Notes	2008 €	2007 €
Oireachtas Income	1	3,317,305	3,097,390
Net Deferred Funding for Pensions	14(b)	676,000	659,000
Other income	2	784,893	850,721
		<u>4,778,198</u>	<u>4,607,111</u>
<b>Transfer to Capital Account</b>	11	45,654	9,672
		<u>4,823,852</u>	<u>4,616,783</u>
<b>Expenditure</b>			
Administration	3	(1,614,716)	(1,422,728)
Operations	4	(3,074,277)	(3,127,551)
		<u>(4,688,993)</u>	<u>(4,550,280)</u>
<b>Surplus for the year</b>		134,859	66,503
<b>Surplus at 1 January</b>		<u>500,780</u>	<u>434,277</u>
<b>Surplus at 31 December</b>		<u><u>635,639</u></u>	<u><u>500,780</u></u>

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

Signed:

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

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

Date:

## Northern Regional Fisheries Board

### **Chairman's Statement**

During 2008, the Board completed significant conservation and enhancement of fisheries through the Salmon Rehabilitation and Wild Salmon Conservation funding (€183,500). In addition almost €483,000 was secured by the Board through Failte Ireland National Development Funds providing large scale investment in angler access and infrastructure in Cavan, Monaghan and Leitrim.

The year was marked by the retirement of Harry Lloyd (CEO) in November after twenty years of service to the NRFB. During his time with the Board, Harry served on a number of Departmental committees, the most notable being the Salmon Management Task Force and the Salmon Carcass Tagging report, in addition to chairing a number of significant cross-border programmes such as the Erne Salmon Management Programme, the Erne Eel Enhancement Programme and the L. Melvin Catchment Management Programme. Dr. Milton Matthews was appointed Acting CEO in November pending the outcome of the current review of inland fisheries.

The review of inland fisheries continued through the year culminating in an announcement by Minister Eamon Ryan T.D. that the Central and Regional Fisheries Boards structures were to be rationalised into a single agency. Arising from this a Restructuring Implementation Group was set up to develop the structure and operation of the new agency.

The Board met ten times through the year with additional subcommittee meetings held to deal with commercial fishing, angling, eels and corporate governance.

## Corporate Governance

### Report regarding the implementation of the Code of Practice for Governance of State Bodies.

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

All Board members had made a Disclosure of Interests in accordance with the provisions section 3, Appendix A, of the Code of Practice.

All Board employees are aware and fully compliant with the provisions of the Code of Business Conduct for Employees.

The up to date codes of business conduct are available upon request with a copy of each such code is accessible through the Board's web site.

The Board has in place a Customer Charter and this is posted on the Board's web site.

Report with reference to section 10.2 of the Code of Practice:

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.

The Board complied with all appropriate procedures for financial reporting, internal audit, procurement and disposal of assets.

A statement on the Board's system of internal financial control, in accordance with the requirements of 10.2 (iii) of the Code is also available in the body of the Financial Statements.

As stated above, the Codes of Business Conduct for Board Members and Employees have been put in place and adhered to.

Government policy on the pay of the Board's Chief Executive Officer is being complied with.

Government guidelines on payment of Director's fees are being complied with; no fees are paid to members of the Board

As of now, there have been no significant post balance sheet events. The Board's accounts for 2008 were audited by the Comptroller and Auditor General and await sign off and, therefore, the Board can only provide draft accounts at this time.

The Guidelines for Appraisal and Management of Capital Expenditure Proposals were complied with.

The Code of Practice has been adopted by the Board and the Board is compliant with the provisions of the Code.

The Comptroller and Auditor General's office carried out its annual audit of the Board's financial operations and systems. The audit sub-committee met four times during 2008 and the minutes and actions arising were adopted in full by the Board.

An internal audit was conducted confirming that the Board had implemented an adequate system of internal financial control. Audit recommendations were circulated to the Board and duly implemented.

In accordance with Financial Reporting Standards FRS17, the Board engaged an actuary to value the liability of the Board's Defined Benefit Superannuation Scheme. The results of the valuations are included in the 2008 accounts.

### **Ministerial Direction**

The Board was issued with a Ministerial Direction under Section 18A of the Fisheries Act 1980, to put in place appropriate measures so as to ensure that the Minister for Community, Rural and Gaeltacht Affairs is consulted in relation to development. The Board is required to report on the consultations undertaken and the outcome of same in the Annual report. The Board is in the process of agreeing appropriate measures.

### **Freedom of Information**

The Board received, and granted in full, three requests for information made under the Freedom of Information Act.

### **Human Resources**

The board has a full time compliment of 41 permanent staff. A further 15 temporary staff were employed to carry out specific projects and additional protection duties during 2008. A total 5 of staff were employed on EU funded projects (L. Melvin).

The Board continued its commitment towards staff training, development and health and safety. Four staff completed the Certificate in Fisheries Management at Sligo IT.

## **Aquatic Environment - Donegal, Leitrim and N. Sligo**

### **Investigations and Planning**

A total of 885 assessments and investigations in relation to aquatic issues were undertaken in 2008. 456 planning applications were examined with subsequent observations forwarded to the relevant planning authority. This was an unexpected increase of 167 on the previous year although a slowdown in referrals was evident in the last quarter. The applications reflected a diverse array of developments, ranging from single dwelling houses to often complex and contentious such as hydro schemes and marina proposals. In all, 484 physical planning and licensing proposals were assessed in 2008.

### **Forestry**

87 Forestry applications were assessed by the Board with recommendation's submitted to the Forest Service. The applications related to afforestation, felling, Forest Environment Protection Scheme (FEPS), Native Woodland Scheme (NWS) and road construction.

### **Pollution Reports**

52 reports were received by the Board and investigated. Two fish kills occurred during the year involving the Kilcar River in South West Donegal and the Owenboy River in Inishowen.

### **Infrastructure**

New wastewater treatment plants for Donegal town, Rossnowlagh and Ballyshannon were commissioned during the year, providing secondary treatment. Minor works relating to aesthetics and outlying pump station connections remain outstanding and will be completed in 2009.

### **Water Framework Directive (WFD)**

The Board assisted the CFB as part of the ongoing fish element for the WFD. 4 lake and 7 river sites were surveyed. The Board participated in the North Western and Neagh Bann Public Authorities Forum which provides a platform to liaise and consult in order to ensure the co-ordination of the WFD requirements to achieve the environmental objectives identified. A key concern for the Board is the protection of selected lakes in Donegal which contain Arctic Char, some of which are subject to water abstraction which may interfere with spawning of char along lake margins.

### **Co-operation**

Environmental staff liaise with a large number of State, Semi-State and private organisation as part of the Boards proactive approach to the protection of the Region's aquatic ecosystems. Such an approach involves, for example, pre-planning consultations, site visits for planning infrastructural projects and formal responses to discharge licensing, waste permit applications and waste water discharge applications.

### **The Lough Melvin Catchment Management Plan**

The Lough Melvin Nutrient Reduction Programme, a three year EU INTERREG IIIA programme for which the NRFB was the lead agency, was completed on 30 June 2008. A public information day was held in Bundoran in November to launch the Final Report and highlight future management recommendations. The programme involved intensive monitoring of the water quality of the lake and it's adjoining tributaries and an assessment of land use and nutrient run off from the surrounding catchment. The Catchment Management Plan provides a template for appropriate management of agriculture, forestry and domestic sewage in terms of ensuring the long term viability of this unique aquatic ecosystem.

The work of implementing the recommendations of the Lough Melvin Catchment Management Plan will be dependant on the continuing co-operation of all the relevant State and Semi-State Statutory Bodies who were involved in

both the Republic of Ireland and Northern Ireland. In addition to providing specific management recommendations for L. Melvin, the Catchment Management Plan provides a detailed Governance Framework which sets out how Northern Ireland and Republic of Ireland legislation and EU Directives are currently being implemented and the main areas where increased co-ordination is necessary to meet the full requirements of the WFD on this shared cross border catchment

The key community task of prioritising sustainable land use in the Lough Melvin Catchment will be promoted through the formation of a Rural Environmental Co-operative by the Melvin, Erne and Duff Partnership (MED). This project to establish a rural environmental co-operative to provide cross border catchment specific environmental services to farmers and rural householders will build on the Lough Melvin Nutrient Reduction Programme by implementing the recommendations contained in the Lough Melvin Catchment Management Plan.

## **Aquatic Environment**

### **Upper Erne**

Ongoing monitoring of the Erne Catchment Rivers and lakes indicate a significant continuing problem of eutrophication and loss of habitat as evidenced by periodic fish kills in lakes and toxin producing blue green algal blooms. These toxins have serious potential consequences for fisheries and for all beneficial uses of the waters.

The NRFB took a total of 580 samples from rivers, stream and lakes in the Erne catchment in 2008 which were analysed both by the Central Fisheries Board and by an external laboratory. Monthly water samples are analysed for TP, MRP, TN, TON, and chlorophyll; water transparency (Secchi Disc) is measured in the field. In terms of lake water quality, the primary constituents of concern are TP and chlorophyll.

Results from samples taken in 2008 indicate that there are many point source and diffuse sources to be dealt with currently in the catchment with ongoing problems in particular areas. In regards to lakes, Lough Gowna and Lough

Oughter both moved from the highly/strongly eutrophic category to the hypertrophic category. Results indicate elevated levels of Total Phosphorous and Chlorophyll concentrations to be as high as 0.07 mg/l Total P and 80ug/l Chlorophyll. Elevated levels of Total P were also found in the White Lake, Lough Na Bach and also Lough Sillan. These results would indicate unsatisfactory water for lakes.

With regards the rivers sampled in 2008 from the results it was also clear that consistent problems were arising in certain “hot spots”. Water quality parameters at each site include total phosphorous (TP), molybdate reactive phosphorous (MRP), total nitrogen (TN), and total oxidised nitrogen (TON). In terms of river water quality, the main constituent of concern is MRP. Samples taken downstream of certain industrial and municipal discharges indicated high levels of MRP which would reflect a poor quality of discharge emanating from sewage treatment plants.

The main pressures on surface water quality within the Northern Regional Fisheries Board district are point and diffuse, physical modifications, climate change and other local issues. Point and diffuse sources include; wastewater and industrial discharges, landfills, quarries, mines and contaminated sites, agriculture, wastewater from unsewered properties, forestry; and discharge of dangerous substances.

The main restorative measure required for surface water is nutrient loss control. In relation to point sources, this will necessitate further upgrading of sewage and industrial waste treatment plants to facilitate the removal of phosphorus and/or nitrogen; for certain sewage treatment plants such upgrading is also a requirement under the Urban Waste Water Treatment Directive. In relation to diffuse sources the National Action Plan for the implantation of the Nitrates Directive should provide a basis for the reduction of both nitrate and phosphate losses from farm land, which is the main contributor of these nutrients to waters.

## Planning

379 planning applications were examined with subsequent observations forwarded to the relevant Planning Authority. The applications reflected a diverse array of developments, ranging from farm yard developments including slatted sheds, single dwelling houses to often complex and contentious such as hydro schemes, Bio-Parks, marina proposals, and sludge centres. Mostly the applications did involve some consultations with the relevant Local Authority however some others of major concern would have involved consultations with the developer's directly and also environmental consultants. Submissions were also made in 2008 with regards to the demolition and reinstatement of bridges that would have a direct impact on fisheries. After submission stage this would be followed up by a meeting on site with the developers / consultants to ascertain that the remedial measures included in the method statement produced would actually be put into place.

## Inspections

The Northern Regional Fisheries Board staff carried out 506 non-routine inspections and 3,001 routine patrol inspections on various locations in the Erne Catchment. The 506 non routine inspections consisted of various types of units outlined below, and the 3,001 incorporates the monthly checks done on routine points.

Locations	No. Inspections
Farms	46
Industrial	187
Wastewater & WTP	202
Civil Engineering Works	10
Forestry	61
General Water	3,001
Inspections	
Total No. Inspections	3,507

Table 12: Details of inspections in 2008

From these inspections follow up action was taken to remediate any problems encountered. 3 prosecutions were initiated.

### **Agriculture**

As 2008 was such a wet year the activity giving rise to most concern was inappropriate slurry disposal, and in particular the use of the pipe system for spreading slurry (often onto land under unsuitable conditions). In so far as was possible slurry disposal was monitored, numerous incidents of slurry dumping/mismanagement of slurry were recorded. Samples were taken at one such incident and warning letters were issued in numerous others. This led to sampling one farm with a view of a prosecution for slurry run off and 29 warning letters issued. Follow up inspections were carried out in each case to see had the problem been remediated. Agriculture attributed to 1 fish kill. The biggest problem common to each farm was the problem with the bad weather and not being able to get out to spread the slurry in the open season. Most farmers believed that 'farming by dates' was an issue and felt that a common sense approach should be used. Regrettably, as illustrated below, there were incidents where large quantities of farm slurry were released onto fields adjacent to waterways resulting in gross run off.



Figure XXX: Slurry Run off from a field, Cavan

### **Industrial**

187 industrial environmental checks were carried out on various industries in the region. These checks were carried out in addition to routine monitoring, and

were conducted in response to pollution reports from members of the public or from incidents detected by NRFB staff. In 2008, one successful prosecution was taken against a factory in Clones which was discharging an effluent that was clearly above the acceptable limits.

The Board conducts a regular programme of monitoring of discharge effluents from industrial facilities. A continuous programme of monitoring is very often required to detect periodic breaches of effluent limits. In most cases breaches relate to either inadequate infrastructure in place to deal with the on-site treatment or insufficient expertise of the person in charge of the on-site treatment plant. Liaison with the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) is critical in this regard as most of the industries are licensed under Integrated Pollution Control Licensing (I.P.P.C.).

Overall the level of unacceptable discharges from industries is of huge concern and ongoing monitoring and regular inspections must continue if these problems are to be addressed.

### **Municipal Plants**

202 environmental inspections were carried out on Local Authority sewage treatment plants and pumping stations. One successful prosecution was initiated against Cavan County Council due to a blocked pumping station which resulted in the release of raw sewage to Cavan town river, which resulted in a fish kill. Local Authority engineers indicated a frequent problem encountered is blockage of pumping stations or to storm overflow pipes overflowing into surface waters.

Overall the level of unacceptable discharges from Local Authority sewage treatment plants and pumping stations is of huge concern as is the lack of phosphorus removal at sewage works for smaller towns and villages. From 2008 the Environmental Protection Agency are licensing Local Authority

discharges. This will help to prioritise the plants and discharges that are causing the major adverse impacts.

### Fish Kills

River/Lake	Date	Fish Mortalities	Cause
Cavan Town River	May 2008	4 Roach 1 Trout	Unknown
Green Lake, Cavan	May 2008	118 Roach 1 Pike	Local Authority Sewage
Lough Egish	May 2008	250 Skimmer Bream 1 Perch	Unknown
Bruskey	June 2008	309 Sticklebacks 7 Trout 6 Crayfish	Pig Slurry
Lackey	June 2008	155 Adult Trout 180 Trout Fry 34 Roach 4 Gudgeon 4 Perch 3 Stone Loach	Silage Effluent
Coal Pit, Cavan	Sep. 2008	2 Pike	Possible Eutrophication
Peartree Lake	Oct. 2008	60 Adult Bream	Possible Eutrophication

Table13: Details of fish kills in the Upper Erne catchment in 2008

### Protection and Conservation of Fisheries

#### Letterkenny and Ballyshannon districts

Protection of salmon stocks continues to account for the majority of the Board's work in relation to conservation of fisheries. The Board maintained a high

protection presence at sea through the season by means of Naval, twin-RIB, estuary and coastal patrols to ensure compliance with the current restrictions on commercial netting at sea. The prolonged wet summer resulted in an increased protection effort being concentrated on inland waters.



Figure XXXI: Seized fish and nets.

A total of 78 prosecutions were initiated over the season, the majority relating to illegal netting of rivers or use of fixed engines (nets) at coastal locations. The salmon tagging, bag limit and quota regulations were enforced with over 1,600 angling licences and logbooks checked. Regrettably, there was an increase in the level of illegal activity and aggression towards protection officers in certain localities with a number of serious incidents referred to the Gardaí.

Angling in 2008 was restricted to four rivers in the Ballyshannon district (Duff, Drowse, Eany and Glen) and three rivers in Letterkenny district (Owenea, Gweebarra and Crana). Angler compliance with the regulations was generally very good, although a number of prosecutions were taken for anglers fishing in rivers which were closed for conservation or for failure to tag captured salmon. Foul hooking of salmon was also detected at a number of key venues where salmon gather downstream of falls. Angling logbook returns have improved to almost 70%, with increased numbers of anglers practicing catch and release.

## **Upper Erne**

Increased protection patrols were required in response to incidents of illegal fishing activity where coarse fish were being targeted mainly, but not exclusively, by eastern European immigrants. The majority of incidents involved very low numbers of fish with a total of just 7 pike seized. The increased protection effort did result in a number of seizures resulting in successful prosecution through the District courts and the imposition of significant fines and costs on defendants with the forfeiture of boats nets and other items seized. A total of 11 prosecutions were initiated with further cases are pending.

Regular patrols at periods of peak pike angling activity were conducted to ensure compliance with the pike bye laws. There is a high level of awareness and compliance by both local and visiting anglers.

## **Fish Stock Assessment**

The Board conducted a number of fish stock assessment surveys around the region Board in relation to surveillance monitoring for the Water Framework Directive. Working in conjunction with the Central Fisheries Board a total of 8 lakes and 13 river sites were surveyed using survey gill nets, fyke nets or electrofishing to determine current stock abundance and diversity.

Under the METRIC programme, 3 estuaries (Trawbeaga Bay, Sheephaven Bay and Ballyness Bay) were also surveyed. Preliminary results of these surveys can be found on the related CFB website [www.wfdfish.ie](http://www.wfdfish.ie).

NRFB staff assisted the EPA in water quality sampling of the Erne, Eske, Gweebarra and Swilly estuaries through the year as part of the Water Framework Directive (WFD) requirements for transitional waters.

Catchment-wide electrofishing surveys were carried out in 16 river systems currently closed to salmon angling for conservation purposes. These surveys, comprising five minute electrofishing surveys at selected sites throughout each

river system, provides direct estimates of juvenile salmon stock abundance for each of these rivers to support future management recommendations.



Figure XXXII: Electrofishing as part of the WFD

### Sea Trout Sea Lice Monitoring

Sampling continued in the Eany, Eske, Leannan and Crana river systems for prematurely returning sea trout with sea lice infestations. High sea lice burdens were noted from the Eske sea trout sampled in particular. The Board continues to have serious concerns regarding the potential impact of aquaculture operations on wild sea trout rivers given the frequency of serious breaches of sea lice control thresholds recorded at certain aquaculture facilities over recent years.

### Commercial Salmon Fishing

The commercial salmon draft net fishery was restricted to three estuaries:- Loughros More (Owenea R.), Gweebarra and Inver Bay (Eany R.). The traditional season was extended by two weeks to the 14<sup>th</sup> August on a trial basis. Despite this, catches were well short of the TAC particularly in the Gweebarra and Eany estuaries.

	Total Allowable Catch	Actual catch
Loughros More	897	859
Gweebarra R.	374	305
Inver Bay (Eany)	693	413

Table14: Details of commercial salmon fishing in 2008

### Salmon Counters

Year	2006	2007	2008
Number of Salmon	1,092	1,080	957
Number of Trout	27	30	36
Total Fish	1,119	1,110	993
Salmon Surplus	269	257	134

Table 15: Details of Eske counter for 2008

The Board maintained their programme of servicing, downloading and routine maintenance of the salmon and sea trout counters on the Eany and Eske rivers. The salmon runs were down on previous years in both rivers with the Eany R. in particular showing a significant decline.

Year	2005	2006	2007	2008
Number of Salmon	2,049	N/A	2,803	1,847
Number of Trout	42	N/A	57	40
Total Fish	2,091	N/A	2,860	1,887
Salmon Surplus	309	N/A	1,063	107

Table 16: Details of Eany counter for 2008

### Oyster Fishing (L. Swilly)

The Board conducted a number of oyster fishery patrols and random inspections of oyster boats and harvested catches though the year to prevent illegal hand-picking and to ensure undersize oysters are returned from dredge catches. The Board continues to encourage self regulation and co-operation amongst the traditional oyster fishing community. Overall fishing effort decreased in 2008 due to a decline in market demand.



Figure XXXIII: Tending oysters in L. Swilly

### **Eel Conservation**

Due to the continued and dramatic decline of European eel stocks the EU Commission introduced a Council Regulation in September 2007 which required all Member states to prepare Eel Management Plans for the recovery of stocks for submission to the EU by 31 December 2008.

In anticipation of the necessary constraints on the fishery required by the Regulation, the Minister, Eamon Ryan T.D., introduced conservation bye-laws to apply in 2008 which capped the number of commercial eel licences at 2007 levels and restricted the brown and silver eel fishing seasons to three months each.

The Board issued 24 fyke net licences and 26 long line licences. The total recorded catch was 12.7 tonnes compared to 10.9 tonnes in 2007.

In addition to participation at the National Working Group the NRFB was the lead agency in preparation of the Eel Management Plan for the North-West International River District Basin (NWIRBD), which was prepared in conjunction with the Marine Institute, ESB and relevant Northern Ireland fisheries authorities. Public consultation meetings were held in Ballyshannon and Enniskillen in September.

## Angling

### Letterkenny and Ballyshannon Districts

Angling activity was again down on previous years due to the restricted number of rivers open for angling, the increased cost of angling licences and the weakening of sterling. Nevertheless, the prolonged wet summer and reduced commercial net fishery resulted in good angling opportunities with higher than average sized salmon taken on many fisheries. The Duff and Drowse/L. Melvin fisheries had good returns with the first salmon falling to Colin Gardiner from Lurgan, Co. Armagh on the R. Drowse on 5<sup>th</sup> January. Catches from the other Donegal rivers indicated salmon runs were similar, or slightly down, on recent years.



Figure XXXIV: Colin Gardner with the 1<sup>st</sup> salmon of the year from R. Drowse with Shane Gallagher

Sea fishing was good throughout the year and especially during the settled weather of May and June. The blue shark fishing was excellent and also the boats fishing waters in the north of the county experienced good porbeagle shark fishing.

## **Upper Erne**

Coarse angling in the Upper Erne continued to attract UK and continental tourists, although there appears to be a decline in the numbers of UK coarse anglers visiting.

The consensus among anglers was that coarse angling was satisfactory though there is still concern about the perceived lack of bream in some areas.

Locally organised coarse angling festivals continued to be successful and significant increases in numbers entering were recorded by some, most notably Belturbet, Cootehill and Carrigallen. The Irish Ferries and Failte Ireland sponsored British King of Clubs was again successful with a total catch of 3,563.3 kg by 100 anglers. The average catch per peg weighed in was 7.4 kg.

Pike angling early in the year was very good and some visiting parties from the continent recorded high catches of mainly small pike, with a few big pike also taken.

Local clubs operating put and take trout fisheries recorded a good demand for visitor day tickets and some are now considering placing restrictions on the number of visitors in order to reserve space for their own members. Moyduff Lake, which is managed directly by the Board, produced satisfactory results, but permit sales were down compared to 2007 returns.

## **Development and Improvement of Fisheries**

### **Donegal**

A total of €38,000 was received by the NRFB under the Wild Salmon Conservation fund for the enhancement of salmon habitat on three Donegal game rivers; - the Glen, Clady and Gweebarra. Additional funds (€145,000) secured under the Salmon Rehabilitation fund were allocated for purchase of a salmon counter, habitat improvement and improved access on three additional rivers- the Leannan, Owenea and Eske.

Fishery	Funding	Works Completed	Total
Glen R.	Salmon Conservation	Bank stabilisation and fencing	€17,500
Clady R.	Salmon Conservation	Bank stabilisation and bank clearance	€4,000
Gweebarra R.	Salmon Conservation	Bank stabilisation and fencing	€17,000
Leannan R.	Salmon Rehabilitation	Purchase of salmon counter	€100,000
Owenea R.	Salmon Rehabilitation	Installation of foot bridge	€30,000
Eske	Salmon Rehabilitation	Bank stabilisation and fencing	€15,000
		<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>€183,500</b>

Table 17: Details of funds allocated towards fishery development in 2008

### Glen River

This project provided bank stabilisation and fencing on an important spawning area on this fishery. Work consisted of the placement of large boulders along the river-bank which has prevented bank erosion and the deposition of silt on the gravel used by salmon for spawning purposes. Fencing was also carried out along substantial stretches of the main river channel in order to prevent access by livestock to the river-bank. This allows natural vegetation along the riparian zone to re-establish providing shelter and food for juvenile fish.

### Clady River

Bank stabilisation and selective bank clearance was carried out on some of the tributaries above Dunlewy Lough. Bank stabilisation work consisted of the placement of stone-filled gabion baskets along the river-bank. Selective bank clearance was completed in an area where excessive tree and shrub growth had caused 'tunnelling'. This work now allows sunlight to reach the stream bed and should increase productivity of invertebrates thus providing food for juvenile fish.



Figure XXXV: Rock Armour (Glen)



Figure XXXVI: Gabions (Clady)



Figure XXXVII: Gabions (Gweebarra)

### **Gweebarra River**

This project provided bank stabilisation, fencing and the removal of debris and obstructions on two major spawning tributaries of this fishery. A combination of river bank stabilisation using gabion baskets and removal of large obstacles from the stream bed will lessen bank erosion and ease the passage of salmon through the system.

### **Leannan River**

Under the Salmon Rehabilitation fund €100,000 was allocated for the installation of a salmon counter on the R. Leannan. Site assessment, design and purchase of VAKI and Logie salmon counters have been completed, but due to ongoing legal difficulties with the private owner it may not be possible to proceed with the project at this time. The Board have identified an alternative site are at an advanced stage of negotiation with the relevant landowner.

### Owenea River

Funds of €30,000 were re-allocated for the provision of a footbridge on the Owenea at the site of the proposed fish counter and river monitoring station, which records depth, temperature and flow.

### Eske River

This project consisted of bank stabilisation, fencing and selective bank clearance.

### Upper Erne Catchment (Cavan, Monaghan and Leitrim)

During 2008 the Board secured almost €483,000 in National Development Plan funding through Failte Ireland for upgrading and extending of road access and car parking facilities at several angling venues in Cavan, Monaghan and Leitrim. Integral to one of these projects was the provision of high class facilities for disabled anglers in the form of a floating purpose designed pontoon at Gulladoo L. in Carrigallen, Co. Leitrim. Two new sites were created as a result of the programme yielding over 40 new angling spaces.

Water	Area	Works completed	Cost
L. Oughter - Eonish	Killeshandra	Upgrade existing access road & car parking	€121,000
Barnagrow Lake	Cootehill	Access road & new car park	€154,015
Corglass Lake	Gowna	Access road & new car park	€76,910
Lough Major	Ballybay	8 New stands:- 5 fixed, 3 floating	€96,000
Gulladoo Lake	Carrigallen	Disabled stand & car park	€35,000
		<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>€482,925</b>

Table 18: Details of NDP funding through Failte Ireland for 2008



Figure XXXVIII: New disabled angling stand at Gulladoo Lake

Substantial progress was made through the year in the repair or replacement of damaged or derelict angling stands and stiles. The annual programme of bank and swim clearance at key angling venues continued. Clearance of swims in L. Oughter was required for the first time in decades due to the proliferation of Zebra mussels in some parts of the lake which has led to a clearing of the previously turbid water conditions thus allowing macrophytes to flourish.

The Board continued to provide assistance for local and sponsored angling events and festivals. Support includes event planning, preparation of venues, clearance of swims, pegging, signposting and provision of stewarding and weigh in services.

Events assisted through the year include:

- Cootehill Easter Festival
- Waterways Ireland Pike Challenge
- King of Clubs
- Stena Challenge
- Ballybay Festival
- Arva (Heineken) Angling Festival

- British King of Clubs
- Cootehill Angling Festival
- Carrick On Shannon Angling Festival
- L. Scur Angling Festival
- Carrigallen 5 Day Festival

### Marketing and Promotion

Shows Attended by NRFB	Dates	Interest
Peche Loisirs, Clermont-Ferrand, France	16 <sup>th</sup> to 18 <sup>th</sup> January	Pike & Game Angling
Angling in Ireland, Kings Hall, Belfast	26 <sup>th</sup> to 27 <sup>th</sup> January	Game & Sea Angling
National Angling Show, Swords, Co. Dublin	16 <sup>th</sup> & 17 <sup>th</sup> February	Game, Coarse & Sea
Loughs Agency Angling Fair, Derry, N. Ireland	8 <sup>th</sup> & 9 <sup>th</sup> March	Game, Coarse & Sea
Angling Show, N.E.C. Birmingham, England	21 <sup>st</sup> to 23 <sup>rd</sup> March	Sea Pike & Coarse Angling
Visma Angling Show, Rotterdam, Netherlands	27 <sup>th</sup> to 30 <sup>th</sup> March	Sea & Pike
North East Sea Angling Show, Newcastle, UK.	25 <sup>th</sup> to 26 <sup>th</sup> October	Sea Angling

Table 19: Details of shows attended in 2008



Figure XXXIX: NRFB staff at angling stand at Visma Netherlands.

Board staff attended a number of angling shows through the year to promote angling in the region. A particularly good response was noted from both the Peche Loisirs (pike and trout) and Visma (sea angling) shows in terms of follow-

up angler visits to the region arising from these shows. In conjunction with Fáilte Ireland, Tourism Ireland and the Central Fisheries Board, the NRFB provided guiding and liaison support to a number of visiting angling journalists during the year generating several editorial articles on the region's fisheries in angling publications including **Trout and Salmon** (fly fishing for pike; sea trout), **Zee Engelsport** (Sea Angling- Holland) and **Voyage de Peche** (Sea angling and fly fishing for pike).

The Northern Regional Fisheries Board's website, [www.nrfb.ie](http://www.nrfb.ie), was completely redesigned during the year with the assistance of Myles Kelly (CFB). The Board's angling officer responded to a large volume of queries through the season. A weekly angling report was provided through the season which was posted on the CFB and NRFB websites. Angling updates are regularly emailed out to anglers and journalists on our distribution list.

### Education and Fisheries Awareness

The Something Fishy education programme was again undertaken during the year providing class room presentations and 'hands on' field trips for 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> class pupils in primary schools to their local river. The programme provides a teacher resource pack, interactive web site and 'Fish species of Ireland' books and posters to encourage school children to experience the fish, insect life and habitat of their local river. Feedback from the schools has been consistently positive with additional schools seeking to participate.



Figure XXXX: Electrofishing for the 'Something Fishy' education programme

## The Northern Regional Fisheries Board

### INCOME AND EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT FOR THE 12 MONTHS TO 31 DECEMBER 2008

Income	Notes	2008 €	2007 €
Oireachtas Income	1	3,404,724	2,862,790
EU Income	2	456,686	356,713
Other Income	3	518,537	425,865
Net Deferred Funding for Pensions	15 b	364,943	641,390
		<u>4,744,890</u>	<u>4,286,758</u>
<b>Transfer to Capital Account</b>	11	91,211	62,279
		<u>4,836,101</u>	<u>4,349,037</u>
<b>Expenditure</b>			
Administration	4	1,684,627	1,639,363
Operations	5	3,132,474	2,756,945
		<u>4,817,101</u>	<u>4,396,308</u>
<b>Surplus for the year</b>		19,000	(47,271)
<b>Surplus at 1 January</b>		<u>425,266</u>	<u>472,537</u>
<b>Surplus at 31 December</b>		<u>444,266</u>	<u>425,266</u>

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

		Eastern Board	Southern Board	South Western Board	Shannon Board	Western Board	North Western Board	Northern Board	Total
<b>Instream Spawning / Enhancement</b>									
No. Rivers Streams Enhanced	No.	7	10	-	4	53	7	4	85
Investment in Instream / Spawning Enhancement	€	36,851	96,000	-	88,000	48,820	178,000	56,500	
Length of River and Stream Developed	Km	9.5	14	-	7.7	19	5.4	5.5	61.1
<b>Angling Development</b>									
No. of Angling Facility Enhancement Projects	No.	7	5	12	3	15	2	7	51
Investment in Angling Facility Enhancement	€	139,321	60,000	87,500	81,000	47,800	56,500	518,425	
Angling Pools Created	No.	16	10	-	54	0	-	-	80
Stiles, Footbridges, Platforms Etc.	No.	27	14	10	378	3	36	92	
Additional Fishing Spaces Created	No.	50	20	-	70	0	1	30	171
No. Coarse Fish Transferred	No.	2,250	0	-	350	87	1,378	80	4,145
Bank Clearance / Habitat Enhancement	Km	9.5	14	-	-	16.05	7.5	7.5	54.55
<b>Surveys</b>									
Salmonid Surveys	No.	112	2	8	5	9	5	-	141
Coarse Fish Surveys	No.	5	0	-	2	9	-	2	18
Other	No.	2	102	-	5	9	4	-	122
Investment in Fishery Surveys	€	86,803	75,000	12,500	-	17,200	40,000	-	

Appendix 1. Fisheries development and surveys undertaken in 2008.

		Eastern Board	Southern Board	South Western Board	Shannon Board	Western Board	North Western Board	Northern Board	Total
<b>Pollution Control</b>									
Reported Fish Kills	No.	5	6	3	8	1	0	7	30
Fish Kills Caused by Agriculture	No.	1	2 suspected	-	2	1	-	2	8
Fish Kills Caused by Industry	No.	1	-	-	-	0	-	1	2
Fish Kills Caused by Eutrophication	No.	0	-	-	1	0	-	0	1
Fish Kills Caused by Local Authority	No.	1	1 suspected	1	-	0	-	1	4
Other	No.	2	3	2	1	0	-	3	11
Pollution Inspections	No.	948	727	-	1,800	400	95	1,418	5,388
Warning Letters Issued	No.	23	454	-	15	12	43	33	580
Pollution Prosecutions Initiated	No.	3	3	-	9	2	1	3	21
<b>Water Quality</b>									
Water Samples Taken	No.	32	65	350	2,119	532	1,595	672	5,365
Samples Tested by Regional Boards Laboratory	No.	19	55	45	4	227	1,407	10	1,767
Samples Tested by CFB Laboratory for the RFB's	No.	0	-	205	1,975	84	120	626	3,010
Samples Tested Externally	No.	13	10	-	129	295	68	36	551
Total Water Tests	No.	32	65	-	2,108	2,500	1,595	672	6,972
Average No. of Determinants Tested	No.	8	3	4	5	5	9	17	51

Appendix 2. Pollution control and water quality report for 2008.

		Eastern Board	Southern Board	South Western Board	Shannon Board	Western Board	North Western Board	Northern Board	Total
<b>Fish Stocking</b>									
Brown Trout Stocked	No.	0	2,100	-	244,100	2,500	3,850	125,000	377,550
Salmon Stocked	No.	109,000	0	-	-	69,900	-	-	178,900
Rainbow Trout Stocked	No.	0	0	50,000	12,500	0	9,348	-	71,848
Coarse Fish Stocked	No.	2,250	-	-	-	0	13,198	-	15,448
<b>Total</b>									
<b>CFB Stocking to Regional Boards</b>		<b>111,250</b>	<b>2,100</b>	<b>50,000</b>	<b>256,600</b>	<b>72,400</b>	<b>26,396</b>	<b>125,000</b>	<b>643,746</b>
Brown Trout Fry	No.	390,000	-	-	200,000	0	-	-	590,000
Brown Trout Summerlings	No.	0	-	-	25,000	0	-	-	25,000
Brown Trout 2 Year old	No.	1,500	-	-	19,100	2,500	-	-	23,100
Rainbow Trout Fry	No.	0	-	-	-	0	-	-	0
Rainbow Trout Summerlings	No.	0	-	-	-	0	-	-	0
Rainbow Trout 1 Year Old	No.	1,000	-	-	12,500	0	-	-	13,500
Rainbow Trout 2 Year Old	No.	-	-	-	-	0	-	-	0

Appendix 3. Fish stocking report for 2008.

		Eastern Board	Southern Board	South Western Board	Shannon Board	Western Board	North Western Board	Northern Board	Total
<b>Rod Angling Licence Issues</b>									
Salmon / Sea Trout	No.	1,359	2,471	3,185	1,347	2,442	6,158	3,099	20,061
Share Certificates	No.	0	-	-	0		-	0	0
<b>Commercial License Issues</b>									
<b>Salmon</b>									
Drift Net	No.	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Draft Net	No.	0	1	40	50	16	2	21	130
Special Local Draft Net	No.	0	0	0	-	0	23	11	44
Snap Net	No.	0	0	0	0	0	-	0	0
Trap	No.	0	0	0	0	1	-	0	1
Other	No.	0	0	0	10	19	-	0	29
<b>Totals</b>		<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>60</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>194</b>
Salmon / Trout Dealers	No.	139	103	52	55	34	37	-	420
Eels Dealers	No.	117	1	13	18	1	19	49	218
Molluscs Dealers	No.	52	Included in S&T & Eel	39	46	17	6	27	214
<b>Board Managed Fisheries</b>									
Fisheries Managed	No.	3	2	15	27	6	7	5	65
Rod Days	No.	1,500	500	18,152	-	2,469	4,409	866	27,896
Revenue	€	1,000	9,505	160,000	88,021	141,011	233,724	20,028	653,289

Appendix 4. Fishing licences and Board managed fisheries report 2008.

		Eastern Board	Southern Board	South Western Board	Shannon Board	Western Board	North Western Board	Northern Board	Total
<b>Protection &amp; Surveillance</b>									
Short Duration Boat Patrols	Man Hours	1,617	3,467.5	720	13,873	5,688	2,647	3,831	31,843.5
Net Seized Boats Seized	Yards / No.	1,900 / 6	2,855 / 2	3,370 / 0	2,600 / -	4,130 / 0	2,935 / -	4,125 / 6	21,915 / 14
Prosecutions Initiated	No.	30	42	33	15	2	14	89	225

Appendix 5. Protection and surveillance report 2008.

		Central Board	Eastern Board	Southern Board	South Western Board	Shannon Board	Western Board	North Western Board	Northern Board	Total
<b>Staffing</b>										
Permanent Staff	No.	35	37	31	36	47	53	42	41	322
Exchequer Funded Temporary Staff	No.	23	3	10	3	8	8	6	21	82
Project Funded Staff (EU or other)	No.	27	13		4	-	9	0	5	58
<b>Total</b>		<b>85</b>	<b>53</b>	<b>41</b>	<b>43</b>	<b>55</b>	<b>70</b>	<b>48</b>	<b>67</b>	<b>462</b>
Development Staff / Field Staff	No.	-	43.8	5	4	46	19	10	14	141.8
Protection Staff	No.	-		27	30	-	33	28	34	152
Pollution Staff / Environmental Staff	No.	-	4.7	4	2	2	2	2	4	20.7
Admin / Finance & Other Staff	No.	85	4.5	5	7	7	6	8	7	129.8
EU + other							10	-	8	18
<b>Total</b>		<b>85</b>	<b>53</b>	<b>41</b>	<b>43</b>	<b>55</b>	<b>70</b>	<b>48</b>	<b>67</b>	<b>462.3</b>

Appendix 6. Staffing report 2008.

	Eastern Board	Southern Board	South Western Board	Shannon Board	Western Board	North Western Board	Northern Board
Chairperson Salmon Rod Rep.	John Chambers	Joe Teesdale	Ms. Ellen Godfrey	Michael Callaghan	Lal Faherty	John Walkin	John McLaughlin
	Kieran Caffrey	Jim Wemyss	Paul Lewton	Jim Horgan	Martin Beatty	Seamus Henry	Chris Shaw
Draft Net Rep.	Roddy Minogue		D.J. O'Riordan	Andy McAllion	Lal Faherty	Declan Turnbull	Gerry McNulty
	Brendan Long		Jack Howard	Gabriel McKenna	John Joe Flaherty	John Munnelly	John McIntyre
Drift Net Rep.	Leo Boyle		Denis Teahan	John Slattery			
	Edward McCormack			-			
	Martin Costigan	David Neal	Seamus DeBurca	Patrick Peril	John Needham	Michael Waters	Vacant
		Michael Connors	Thomas B. O'Rourke	Matthew Benn	Christy Martyn	Melvin Tighe	Roger Curran
Other Salmon Netsmen Rep.		John Furlong		-	Francis Flanagan		Stephen McGonagle
		Tom Walsh		-			
		Peter Walsh		-			Mary O'Donnell
		John Carroll		-			
Eel License Rep. Rated Occupier	Anthony Wilde	Pat Diggins	Ms. Ellen Godfrey	Michael Flanagan	Michael Gannon	John Hughes	Kieran Lynch
Trout Angler	John Murphy	Joe Teesdale (Chair)		Edmond P Costelloe	Leslie Lyons	Peter Layden	Shane Gallagher
	Stewart McGrane	Michael Byrne		Martin McEnroe	John Burke	Finian Dodd	Frankie Byrne
Coarse Angler		Kyrle Delaney		Michael Callaghan	Paddy Tierney	Francis Taaffe	
	John Chambers	Michael Walsh		Sean Young	Vacant		Brendan Coulter
Sea Angler IFT Life Member Staff Member	Hugh O'Rorke	Paddy Power	John Martin	Joe O'Donoghue	Duncan Brown	John Walkin	Terence Sheridan
	Patrick J. Conneff	David Willis	Gerry Keating	Jim Robinson	Edmond Cusack		Bill McGarvey
Oyster Rep. <b>Ministerial Appointees</b>	Kevin O'Brien	Pat Bowe	John Harte	Patrick J Isdell	Ruaidhiri De Barra	Padraic Traynor	Patrick Foley
			Joe Tanskey	Seamus McDermott			-
	Carmel Lynn	John Condon	James Doyle	-	Josie Curran	Paddy Quinn	Patrick Sweeney
	Des Taylor	Mary Ferns	Mary Buwalda	Cllr. Mary Bohan	Mary O'Muircheartaigh	James Mabney	
	Anne Farrell	Anne Gibbons	John Harrington	Declan Quigley	Marie O'Connor	Brendan O'Mahony	Matt Caulfield
	Betty Hayes	Vacant 1	John Lucey	Mary Candler-Kennedy	Dr. Jimmy Dunne	Anthony Ferguson	Maeve Quinn
	Karin Dubsky	Vacant 2		Peg Ward-Heslin	Tomas Browne	Mary Gallagher McBride	Caroline Connolly
	Michael Joyce	Vacant 3	Marry O'Connor	Paddy Mackey	Vacant	Mary Hensey	Joan Kelly
	Vacant 4		Breege Murray	Vacant	Ann Campbell	Enda Bonner	
			Kevin Duffy	Vacant	Ann Geary	Jerry Lundy	

Appendix 7. Regional Fisheries Board members 2008

	Licences sold	Log book Returns	% Returns
ERFB	1,359	1,079	79.40%
SRFB	2,471	2,008	81.26%
SWRFB	3,185	2,485	78.02%
ShRFB	1,347	1,127	83.67%
WRFB	2,442	1,780	72.89%
NWRFB	6,158	3,315	53.83%
NRFB	3,099	2,123	68.51%
<b>Total</b>	<b>20,061</b>	<b>13,917</b>	<b>69.37%</b>

Appendix 8. Licence sales and log book returns for 2008.

	Annual A	District B	21 Day R	Juvenile P	1 Day S	Foyle Area W	Special Local X	Region Total
Eastern	607	541	97	73	39	2	0	1,359
Southern	375	875	921	76	224	0	0	2,471
South Western	673	1,493	623	173	223	0	0	3,185
Shannon	272	841	67	114	53	0	0	1,347
Western	355	717	869	141	357	3	0	2,442
North Western	503	2,316	2,385	447	500	7	0	6,158
Northern	294	1,107	531	214	264	586	103	3,099
<b>Total</b>	<b>3,079</b>	<b>7,890</b>	<b>5,493</b>	<b>1,238</b>	<b>1,660</b>	<b>598</b>	<b>103</b>	<b>20,061</b>

Appendix 9. Details of angling licences purchased in each Regional Fisheries Board in 2008.

District	River	Draft net catch salmon	Draft net catch sea trout
Cork	River Lee	686	31
	Bandon	47	2
	Ilen	75	0
Kerry	Owenmore	92	8
	Caragh	491	1
	Laune	1,794	5
	Sneem	39	0
	Roughty	163	0
Limerick	Cashen	580	0
	Feale	920	7
Ballinakill	Clifden Bay	12	0
	Bundorragha	756	0
	Dawros	87	0
	Unknown	21	0
Bangor	Owenduff	238	0
	Owenmore River	1,300	0
	Newport River	30	0
Ballyshannon	Eany	412	1
Letterkenny	Gweebarra	301	4
	Owenea River	859	0
<b>Total</b>		<b>8,903</b>	<b>59</b>

Appendix 10. Commercial salmon and sea trout catches by river from log book returns in 2008.

	No.s Tagged To Dec. 2008	Numbers Recapt. to Dec. 2008	% Return	Days at Liberty	Dist. Travelled (Miles)	Numbers Tagged in 2008
Blue Shark	18,233	815	4.47	Feb '99	0-4,250	232
Porbeagle Shark	128	7	5.47	71-3,947	89-2,300	44
Thresher Shark	1	0	0	-	-	0
Tope	6,042	412	6.82	28-6,587	0-2,185	332
Monkfish	1,027	190	18.5	0-4,525	0-720	0
Common Skate	1,136	155	13.64	Oct '75	0-120	48
Long Nosed Skate	3	0	0	-	1	0
White Skate	21	1	4.76	975	3	0
Blonde Ray	707	112	15.84	26-1,871	0-45	11
Undulate Ray	1,094	55	5.03	0-2,676	0-60	5
Thornback Ray	9,318	281	3.02	0-2,190	0-80	313
Painted Ray	262	13	4.96	13-1,398	0-20	0
Homelyn Ray	330	12	3.64	294-1,373	0-72	5
Spurdog	53	0	-	-	-	53
Bass	1,805	56	3.1	0-1,373	0-88	0
Mullet	311	5	1.61	0-275	0-200	0
Flounder	287	30	10.45	0-738	0-3.5	0
Sting Ray	40	0	0	-	-	2
Bull Huss	73	4	5.48	103-1,499	0-125	22
Dabs	43	2	4.65	378	2	0
Smooth Hound	57	0	0	-	-	1
Plaice	5	1	20.0	70	0	0
Bluefin Tuna	11	0	0	-	-	0
<b>Totals</b>	<b>40,987</b>	<b>2,146</b>				<b>1,068</b>

Appendix 11. Tag and recapture of marine species up to December 2008

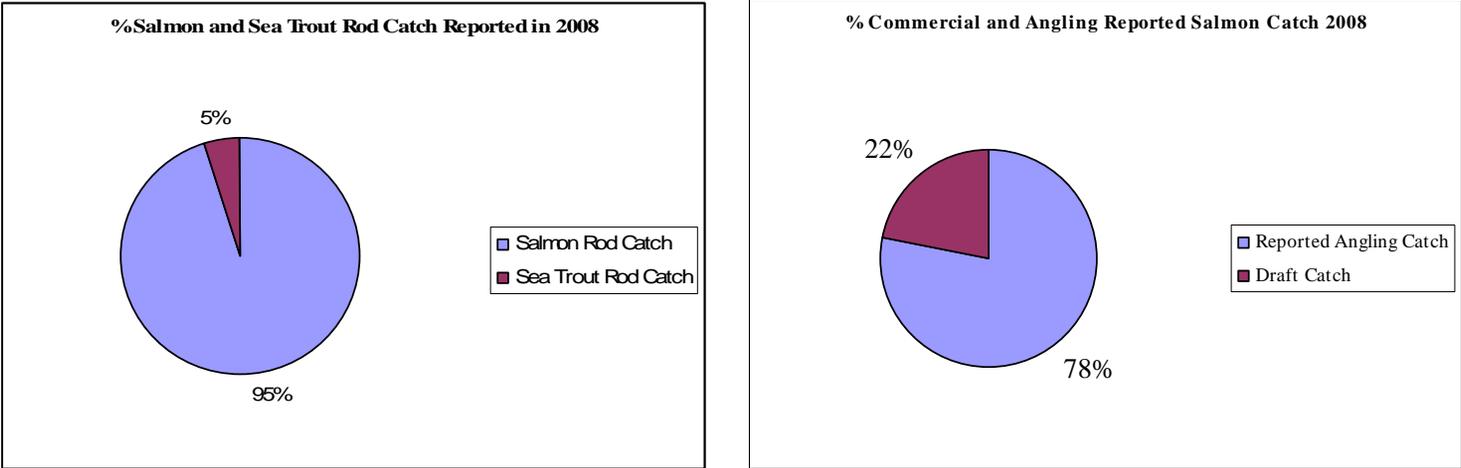


Fig 1. Pie charts of the commercial and angling salmon and sea trout catch by engine 2008.

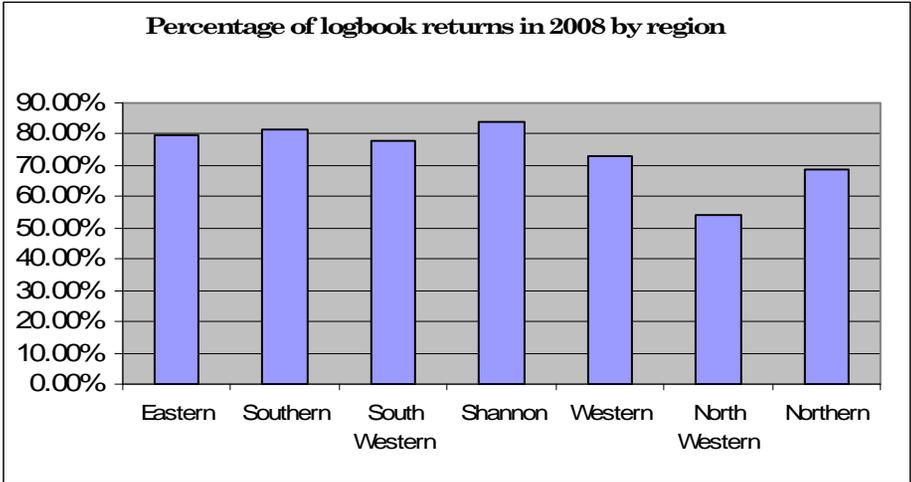


Fig 2. Bar chart of percentage log book returns in each Regional Fisheries Board 2008.

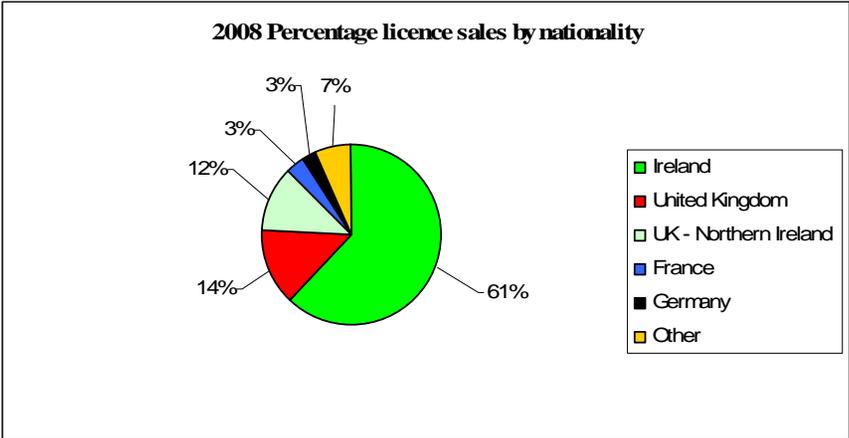


Fig 3. Pie chart of the nationality of anglers who purchased salmon fishing licences in 2008.

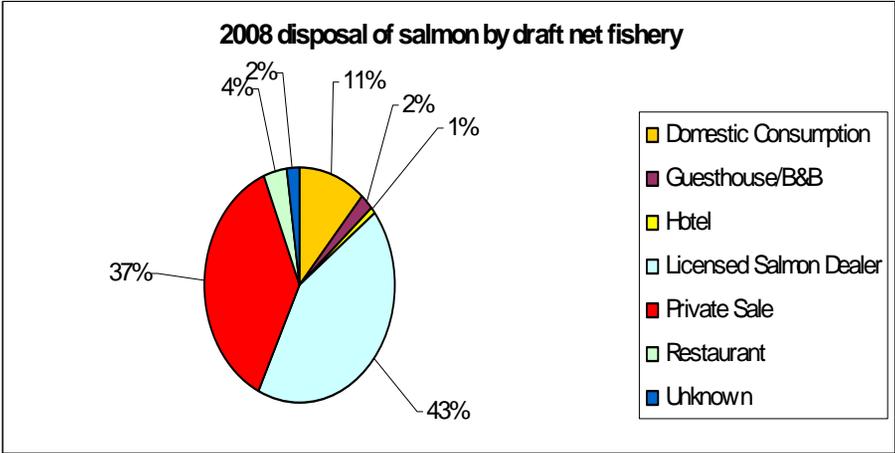
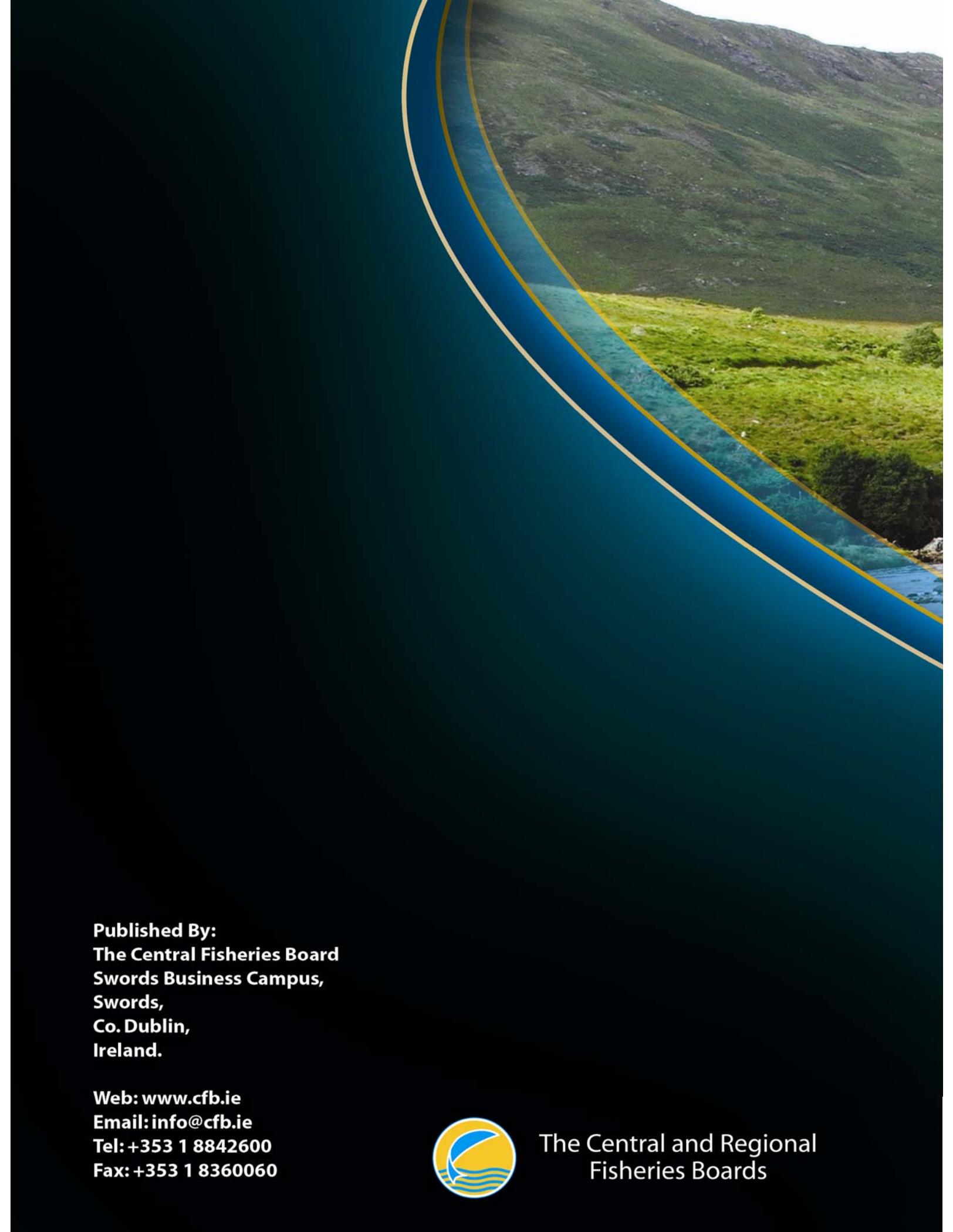


Fig 4. Pie chart of the disposal of salmon caught by draft net in 2008.



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**The Central and Regional  
Fisheries Boards**