

**From:** Enda Conneely [southaran@gmail.com]  
**Sent:** 08 January 2015 18:33  
**To:** 2025strategy  
**Subject:** Section 14 Seafood

Dear Sir

Some observations on the Seafood papers in the above consultation.

- Aquaculture in particular needs serious investigation especially in relation to Finfish farming in the open sea. Assumptions made in the document warrant scrutiny as the industry is moving swiftly away from open pen aquaculture with all its negative implications both for the industry itself and to the marine environment.
- By 2025 operations will have moved onshore into closed containment systems possibly quite close to the market. THIS IS HAPPENING ALREADY and by following the model that BIM suggests we run the risk of being left behind again.
- There needs to be an emphasis on Social Justice in the fisheries and aquaculture sectors that has not been evident in the 2020 vision. Large scale models may suit vast countries with requirements quite unlike ours. You will note that modern processes in industry are finding small units to be less risky and less expensive should an issue arise that needs correction.
- It is recognised by industry and science and experience that Irish Waters and bays by their nature are not suitable for Salmon rearing in open pen structures. Amoebic gill disease and sea lice infestations alone will render these operations obsolete as has been proved over the last thirty years here where despite all the supports available the industry could not flourish.
- It is recognised by the major players in the industry that sourcing the feed for these carnivorous species is not sustainable in the long term and much effort is being directed at the issue, it is likely that solutions found may direct industry away from currently exploited species - Salmon in particular if you choose to analyse its market performance is prone to vast fluctuations in price and reputation.
- Reputation is of great importance to the "Origin Green" brand and it is incumbent on you to exercise due diligence and extreme caution when analysing this issue. The value of our beef and dairy sector cannot be allowed to be tarnished by high risk ventures with potential damage to the country's food industry.
- Without genuine quality behind the brand the damage that can be done in a market such as the US, EU, and indeed China is incalculable.
- A Strict Regulation and an enforcement regime similar to other food production systems MUST be in place for finfish aquaculture before moving forward with any further waste of scarce resources.

As to the catching sector, it seems that we have passed by the point at which we need to take serious remedial actions to revive stock levels. It is not realistic to talk of expanding catch volumes in a dwindling resource.

- This resource can be rescued but it needs serious people with a grasp of reality to take charge.
- Scientific evidence based on logbook figures that are often out of date needs to be improved and corroborated with some other mechanism.

- It seems obvious that since there is overcapacity in the catching sector that this needs to be addressed.
- Expecting other fleets to land fish in Ireland for processing in remote locations is not economically realistic.
- Numbers employed in coastal communities have dwindled under the stewardship of the current authority since 1952 whereas a tiny number have gained vast fortunes. Social justice needs to be part of the future if we are to succeed as a society as opposed to the current experience.

I hope that a brighter future can be laid out for us than has been the case in the recent past.

Best wishes in your efforts.

Enda Conneely