

Determination of Aquaculture/Foreshore Licensing Application –T04/127A

Pat Cullen has applied for authorisation for the cultivation of Pacific Oysters using trestles and bags in the inter-tidal part of the foreshore on a site (T04/127A) in Dungarvan Harbour, Co. Waterford.

The Minister for Agriculture, Food and the Marine has determined that it is in the public interest to grant a variation of the licence sought, i.e. reducing the footprint of the site from **20.355 hectares to 13.59 hectares**. In making his determination, the Minister considered those matters which by virtue of the Fisheries (Amendment) Act 1997, and other relevant legislation, he was required to have regard. Such matters include any submissions and observations received in accordance with statutory provisions. The following are the reasons and considerations for the Minister's determination to grant the licence sought:-

- a) Scientific advice is to the effect that the waters on the Whitehouse Bank are suitable;
- b) Public access to recreational and other activities can be accommodated by this project;
- c) The site is located within Dungarvan Harbour Shellfish Designated Waters;
- d) The renewal should have positive effects on the local economy;
- e) An EIA screening assessment was carried out and it concluded that the environmental impacts from the proposed activity will not be significant;
- f) No significant effects arise regarding wild fisheries;
- g) An archaeological study found no evidence of archaeological structures, features or objects within the site of the proposed aquaculture;
- h) The site is located within Dungarvan Harbour Special Protected Area. An Article 6 Assessment has been carried out in relation to aquaculture activities in Dungarvan Harbour SPA, including a subsequent monitoring programme. The Licensing Authority's Appropriate Assessment Conclusion Statement (2016 Update – available on the Department's website) outlines how aquaculture activities in this SPA, including this site, are being licensed and managed so as not to significantly and adversely affect the integrity of Dungarvan Harbour SPA".

The footprint of this site (and others) is being reduced to accommodate the introduction of a tidal break / corridor in the oyster trestle configuration on the Whitehouse Bank. This management action is being taken to mitigate the risk of the deterioration of conservation status of birds at site level that is directly attributable to oyster culture operations