

## APPROPRIATE ASSESSMENT DETERMINATION AND CONCLUSION STATEMENT

**Project reference:** FS006905 Ion Organics – for the hand harvesting of seaweed at Ballyheige, Co. Kerry.

The proposed project is for the hand harvesting of two seaweed species *Fucus vesiculosus* and *F. serratus* at Black Rock, Ballyheige Bay for the purpose of the manufacture of bath and beauty products. The area overlaps with Akeragh, Banna and Barrow Harbour SAC (IE000332) and Tralee Bay Complex SPA (IE004188).

The Appropriate Assessment Screening process determined that likely significant effects could not be ruled out with respect to trampling of Annex I coastal habitats when accessing the shore and spread of invasive alien species in the overlapping SAC and disturbance to bird species in the overlapping SPA.

In accordance with Regulation 42(6) of the European Communities (Birds and Natural Habitats) Regulations 2011 SI 477 as amended, the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage made a determination following screening that an Appropriate Assessment was required as the project individually or in combination with other plans or projects is likely to have a significant effect on European sites.

The Appropriate Assessment identified that there was no spatial overlap between access routes to the shore and the coastal habitats for which the overlapping SAC has been designated. Given the small scale of the operation disturbance to the bird species for which the overlapping SPA has been designated was not significant.

It is therefore concluded that the proposed project, either alone or in-combination with other projects, will not adversely affect the integrity of European sites, in view of the said sites' conservation objectives.

**Signature and Date of Recommending Officer:**  16<sup>th</sup> August 2021

**Signature and Date of the Decision Maker:**