

Determination of Foreshore Licensing application – T03/071A

River Bank Mussels Ltd., c/o Pricewaterhouse Coopers, Cornmarket, Wexford has applied for a foreshore licence for bottom cultivation of mussels on the inter-tidal foreshore on a 80.04 hectare site (T03/071A) in Wexford Harbour, Co. Wexford.

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 80.04 ha to 50.8294 ha. In making his determination the Minister considered those matters which by virtue of the Foreshore Act 1933, and other relevant legislation, he was required to have regard. Such matters include any submissions and observations received from the Department of Housing, Local Government & Heritage (DHLGH) in accordance with subsection (1B) of Section 3 of the Foreshore Act, 1933.

Reasons for the Decision:

- Section 82 of the Fisheries (Amendment) Act, 1997 stipulates that the Minister, in considering an application for a licence under the Foreshore Acts, which is sought in connection with the carrying on of aquaculture pursuant to an Aquaculture Licence, shall have regard to any decision of the licensing authority in relation to the Aquaculture Licence.
- An Aquaculture Licence has been granted reducing the footprint of the site from 80.04 ha to 50.8294 ha. The reason for the recommendation to reduce the footprint of the site is that the Appropriate Assessment concluded that both the existing and proposed applications for the cultivation of bottom culture mussels in Slaney River Valley SAC would impact on the Annex 1 intertidal habitat 'Mudflats and Sandflats not covered by seawater at low tide' (1140). To mitigate the impact resulting from the cultivation of bottom culture mussels, it was recommended that site T03/071A be reconfigured to exclude overlap with the aforementioned intertidal habitat (1140) within the Slaney River Valley SAC.