

"Determination of Aquaculture/ Foreshore Licensing application – T03/093A

Mr Eugene Duggan, 141 Belvedere Grove, Coolcotts, Wexford Town and Mr Jason Duggan, 10 Antelope Road, Maudlintown, Wexford Town, has applied for authorisation for the bottom cultivation of mussels on the foreshore on a 2.1234 ha site (T03/093A) in Wexford Harbour, Co. Wexford.

The Minister for Agriculture, Food and the Marine has determined that it is **not in the public interest** to grant the Aquaculture / Foreshore Licence(s) sought. 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 the statutory provisions

The site is located within the Slaney River Valley SAC, the Raven Point Nature Reserve SAC, Wexford Harbour & Slob SPA and the Raven SPA. An Article 6 Assessment was carried out in relation to aquaculture activities in Wexford Harbour (available on the Department's website).

The Article 6 Assessment report concluded, *inter alia*, that both existing and proposed applications for the cultivation of bottom culture mussels in Slaney River Valley SAC may impact on the Annex 1 intertidal habitats 'Estuaries' (1130) and 'Mudflats and Sandflats not covered by seawater at low tide' (1140).

The reason for the recommendation to refuse the granting of the application is on the basis of the Appropriate Assessment report findings, coupled with the Department's Marine Engineering Division / Wexford County Council recommendations. It was established that the site is located within the qualifying feature 'Estuaries' (1130). A substantial cut to the sites in these waters (Estuaries) was required to bring the feature in question below the 15% disturbance threshold. Accordingly, this has resulted in cuts being made to all sites (application areas) in estuarine waters.

The proposed reconfigured site for T03/093A, along with the 30m wide exclusion zone around the training wall, as requested by Wexford County Council, renders the site to be impractical. The site is almost entirely within the 30m proposed exclusion zone."