

Sea lice levels high in local fish farms

Reports show breaches of sea lice levels in Donegal

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News Reporter

High levels of sea lice have been detected at five different fish farming facilities in Donegal so far this year.

Monthly reports from the Marine Institute show facilities in the county breached recommended government levels 14 times from January to October this year.

The worst offender was the Marine Harvest farm on Lough Swilly which breached the recommended levels of sea lice on seven occasions, followed by the McSwynes Ocean Farm Ltd facility in Donegal Bay which had four breaches of the government limits.

The Eany Fish Products farm at Inver Bay and Marine Harvest facilities at Mulroy Bay and Cranford all breached the limits once.

The Swilly and Mulroy farms recorded levels of sea lice more than five times the recommended level in September.

When a farm breaches the limits the Marine Institute issues a notice to carry out a sea lice treat-

ment.

The reports have been released by Don Staniford, a leading campaigner against fish farms and their impact on wild salmon populations.

Mr. Staniford visited fish farms in Ireland last month including Marine Harvest farms in Donegal.

In recent weeks two international scientific reports have linked sea lice infestations at salmon farms to the decline in wild salmon numbers. A report by the Proceedings of the Royal Society B, found that 39 per cent of wild Atlantic salmon were victims of sea lice.

Mr. Staniford, a member of the Global Alliance Against Industrial Aquaculture, said the latest National Survey of Sea Lice on Fish Farms in Ireland revealed that 50 per cent of Irish salmon farms breached sea lice levels in 2011 compared to 40 per cent in 2010 and 24 per cent in 2009.

"The public has a right to know that the Irish salmon farming industry is already being plagued by severe sea lice infestation," he said.

"Cost wise, feed and sea lice miti-



gation costs have increased compared to 2011. High mortality in the 2012 harvest generation influenced the cost level in the period and will increasingly do so going forward."

Marine Harvest Ireland say they are audited 14 times a year by the Marine Institute and these reports are a matter of public record. In a statement issued to the Donegal Democrat/ Donegal People's Press, the company said: "We note that the control protocols in respect of

sea lice operated by the Marine Institute on behalf of the State are more advanced than those operated in other jurisdictions as the inspection regime is totally independent of the industry; data obtained as a result of inspections is published; and treatment trigger levels are set at a low level. These controls are widely accepted as representing best practice internationally. Marine Harvest Ireland conforms fully with this leading pest control strategy."

The Marine Institute said its monitoring and control strategy works to reduce the development of infestations.

It said there has been a downward trend in sea lice levels detected on salmon farms since 2008. All notices to treat were complied with and corrective action was taken in all cases, it said.

"During the Spring period from March to May this year, out of 113 inspections 15 had levels above the treatment figure and the farms were issued a notice to treat. All notices to treat were complied with and corrective action was taken in all cases," the institute said.

Tributes paid to the late Donal MacLochlainn

TRIBUTES have been paid to Donal MacLochlainn, a well-known business man in the county, who passed away last week.

The Lifford man had a wide range of interests in business and in his community. He was a partner in the Letterkenny accountancy firm Stewart and MacLochlainn and was also a director in Donegal Oil and John Molloy Ardara, Ltd. He was one of the founders of Highland Radio and was the first chairman of the station. He was also a founding member of the Letterkenny Rotary club, the Letterkenny Chamber of Commerce and the Habinteg Sheltered Housing complex in Lifford.

He was also involved in the Donegal Historical Society and in his local area was a member of the Strabane Lifford Commission, Lifford Tidy Towns committee and Lifford Association for Tourism, Commerce and Heritage.

A keen golfer he was a member of Portsalon and Strabane golf clubs.

Highland Radio station manager Charlie Collins, said Mr. MacLochlainn was an innovative and forward thinking person. "He was a man who was ahead of his time in terms of business and how business should be done. He was a great people's person and loved engaging with people. He was very much up to speed with everything that was happening in the world around, close to home and further afield." Mr. MacLochlainn is survived by his wife Rita, children John and Suzanne, grandchildren Ciara, Conor, Alison and Lauren and his sister Lorna.



Caroline McAnally, teacher, Frank McBrearty, Donegal Mayor and Suzanne Tinney, Waste Awareness Officer Donegal County Council with Joe Quinn, Little Angels Special School, Letterkenny who was runner-up in the Primary Senior Section at the Donegal County Council's Schools Environmental Competition and Exhibition. Photo: Clive Wasson,

Wind farm plan for Laghey

Planning permission is being sought for an 11-turbine wind farm in south Donegal.

M.D. South Windfarm Ltd. is seeking a ten year planning permission for the development of eleven turbines at Lough Cuill, Meenadreen and Croaghnameal, Laghey.

The turbines would have a hub height of up to 74 metres and a rotor diameter of up to 93 metres. The overall height of the turbines will not exceed 115 metres. The development will also comprise of hardstandings, an electrical compound and substation building, associated site roads and site works.

It is proposed to source all stone from two on site borrow pit areas

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