

MI Observations on MUL230015 - Uisce Éireann - South Cork Coast between Cork Harbour and Roaring Waters Bay.

Jonathan White – Marine Institute – Version 1 – 30/10/2025

Summary

The Seafood Climate Unit of DAFM requested MI observations on possible impacts that Marine Usage Licence ref: MUL230015 might have on the seafood sector, i.e. fish stocks, fisheries, aquaculture, or the environments on which they rely. The application submitted on behalf of Uisce Éireann in application for a maritime usage license to conduct marine survey work

South Cork Coast between Cork Harbour and Roaring Waters Bay, in support of a model study to establish compliance of existing and future Uisce Éireann assets with relevant legislation and inform future investment decisions, supporting design and consenting of wastewater infrastructure.

Proposed monitoring operations include up to nine seafloor mounted ADCPs and salinity-temperature recording instruments, boat deployment of CTD casts with concurrent surface water sampling and ADCPs, pier mounted tide gauges and bathymetric survey using single, multibeam sounders, LiDAR and GPS rover

A license duration of five years is sought.

The Maritime Usage Area is split across 6 areas totalling 1,847 ha.:

- Area A off Kinsale Harbour - 471 ha
- Area B off Courtmacsherry Bay – 354 ha
- Area C off Clonakilty Bay – 205 ha
- Area D off Glandore Bay – 305 ha
- Area E by Toe Head – 366 ha
- Area F around Roaringwater Bay – 146 ha

Some of the survey area, totalling 55 km², adjoins to the shore,

Submission includes:

- Supporting information for screening for Appropriate Assessment
- Natura Impact Statement
- Assessment of Impact on the Maritime Usage Report
- Annex IV Species Risk Assessment

Having reviewed the MUL application documents, FEAS notes the site overlaps or is in close proximity to marine/coastal SACs and SPAs (see <https://dafm-maps.marine.ie/aquaculture-viewer/>).

As noted in the application, the indicated areas are coincidental with spawning and nursery grounds of a range of commercial fish species, including:

Cod Nursery Ground ; Haddock Spawning Ground; Hake Nursery Ground; Herring Spawning Beds, Grounds and Nursery Grounds; Horse Mackerel Nursery Ground; Mackerel Nursery Ground; Whiting Nursery and Spawning Grounds; Nephrops Ground

Independently, the proposed survey operations should not substantially interfere with fish stocks, fishing activities or aquaculture activities in the area. It is assumed that the necessary notices to mariners / fishing vessels will be made regarding the deployment of seafloor monitoring devices.

There is potential for cumulative impacts between these and other survey activities that may be active in the local vicinity and/or near timeframes.