

MI Observations on MUL230037- Uisce Eireann- Newport Bay and Clew Bay Co. Mayo.

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: MUL230037 might have on the seafood sector, i.e. fish stocks, fisheries, aquaculture, or the environments on which they rely. The application was on behalf of Uisce Eireann in application for a maritime usage license to conduct marine survey work in relation to a Model Scoping Report to inform the outfall discharge location for a proposed new Wastewater Treatment Plant to serve the Newport agglomeration in County Mayo. Operations to be conducted within Newport Bay and Clew Bay covering an area of 279.67 km² and adjoining the shore.

This application is for:

- Acoustic Doppler Current Profile (ADCP) Meters will be deployed – for a minimum of 35 days up to 12 weeks, weather dependent
- Near-bed Temperature and Salinity sensors will be included in bed-mounted ADCP.
- Tide gauges, attached to existing fixed structures where possible and in weighted/anchored housing if seafloor positioning is needed.
- Water quality sampling will be by buoy mounted equipment or via remotely controlled boat – automatic sampler may be deployed or samples taken manually depending on access.
- Weather stations, tide and river gauges, and water sampling programme for a 12-month period.

No permanent works, survey equipment will be in place for a temporary period only, removed after completion of the survey.

Submission includes:

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

As noted in the application, the survey area is located in proximity of:

- Achill Sound South (Shellfish, IEPA2_0029) (adjacent to the licence area)
- Clew Bay (East of Old Head) (Shellfish, IEPA2_0006) (within the licence area)
- The locations of surveys proposed are within designated shellfish waters.

The area is also coincidental with two SACs.

The contractor will liaise with local fishermen to avoid impacting on fishing activities where possible and equipment marked with buoys to enable clearly identified by fishermen active in the area.

The indicated area includes spawning and nursery grounds of a range of commercial fish species, including:

Cod Nursery Grounds; Herring Spawning Area; Horse Mackerel Nursery Ground; Mackerel Nursery 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 monitoring devices and bathymetric survey activities.

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