

Request for Observations on an application for a Maritime usage licence Ref: MUL240033

Proposed Activity:

MARA has received an application from Uisce Éireann for a Maritime Usage Licence under the Maritime Area Planning Act 2021 to conduct surveys to support a strategic modelling study of water currents within Galway Bay and the exposed coast extending northwest to Roundstone, County Galway and southwest to Loop Head Lighthouse, County Clare.

This project includes four phases: scoping, marine surveys, calibration and validation and scenario analysis. The marine surveys will collect the necessary hydrodynamic data. This data will then be used for the calibration of a hydrodynamic model to support a water quality assessment in Proposed Licence Areas

BIM Comments:

Fisheries comments:

It is noted the extent of the commercial fishing activity within the AIMU report attached to this application. The main concern from a fisheries context would be disturbance to fishing, and accidental entanglement with static fishing gear by the survey vessels, and/or by fishing vessels with the deployed survey equipment. However, the risk of damage to static fishing gear and deployed survey equipment is a more realistic one. Instances of this has happen historically, where strings of pots were reported as being towed by survey vessels.

Proposed survey work is to take place over a 4 year period (Figure 1). The main comment to make therefore is that early and continuous communication is made with stakeholders in the survey areas to avoid any conflicts arising from such incidents as stated above., more impacts on local potting fisheries.

Therefore, timely notification to notify fishers on the ground, through direct contact using the Irish Fleet Register [Sea-Fishing Boat Licence Applications, Forms and Conditions](#) should be taken. Additional, usual channels of communication, such as Marine Notices, the Producer Organisations such as the IS&EFPO, IIMRO, NIFA, local RIFF, all the relevant harbour port offices and local authority offices, and local media including Marine Times where possible covering the impacted area.

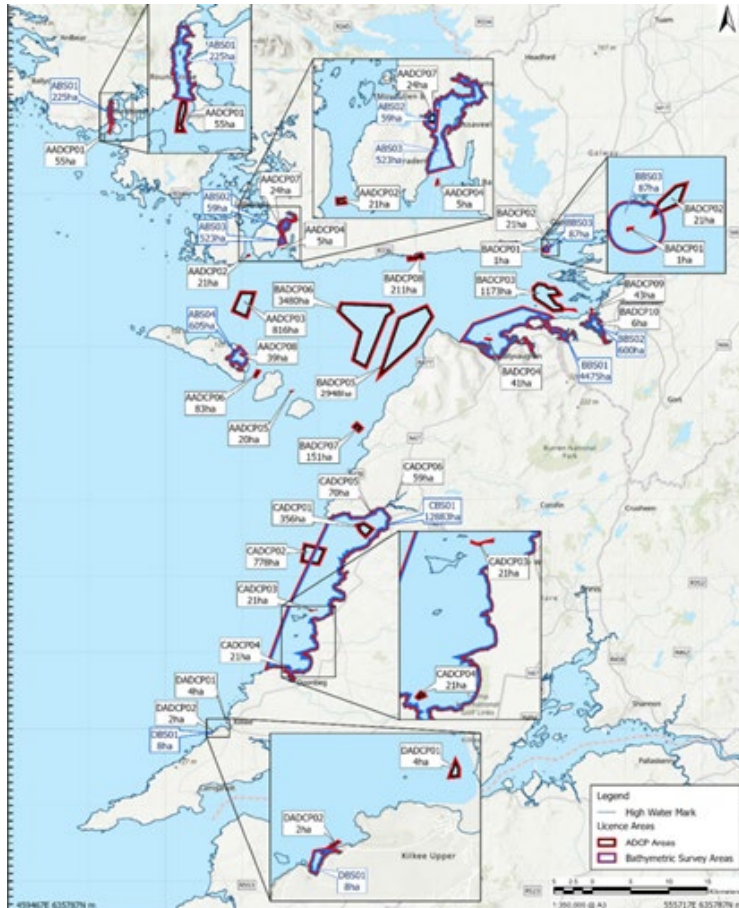


Figure 2: Uisce Éireann Shipwreck map providing an overview of the planned ADCP areas and Bathymetric survey areas.

Aquaculture comments:

BIM acknowledge the reference, and considerations provide in the AIMU report regarding aquaculture activities in the survey areas. In relation to any bathymetric scans or ADCP deployments within shellfish production areas the applicant would need to be cognisant of the presence of structures such as oyster trestles and navigational poles close to oyster licenced sites which will not be navigable directly above them even on high tides. Shellfish areas with mussel longlines will also have SUM marker buoys denoting their locations.

Also, Uisce Éireann are planning to do multibeam in multiple bays that have already been surveyed by INFOMAR (Figure 2).

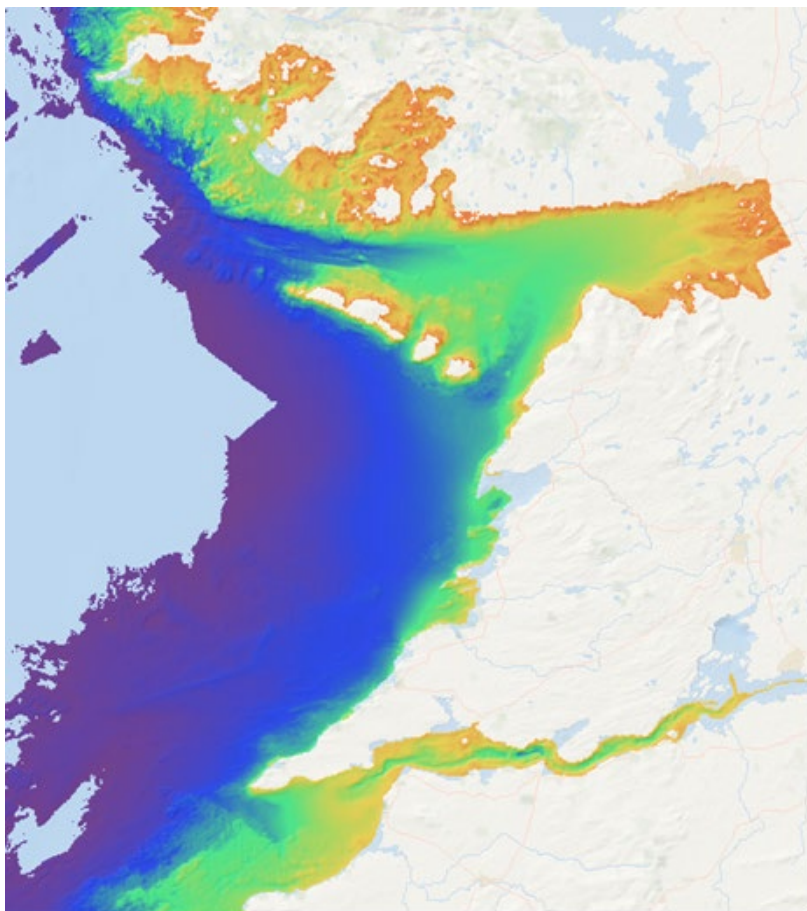


Figure 2: Existing Bathymetry data already surveyed from INFORMOR.