



Licence Ref: MUL250011

(Please quote in all related correspondence)

25 February 2026

Maritime Area Regulatory Authority
2nd Floor
Menapia House
Drinagh Business Park
Drinagh
Wexford
Y35RF29

Via: licence@mara.gov.ie

Referral under Regulation 42(6) of the European Communities (Birds and Natural Habitats) Regulations 2011

Re: Maritime usage licence application for hand harvesting of *Ascophyllum nodosum* seaweed from the intertidal shoreline at Kenmare Bay, Co. Kerry.

A chara

I refer to correspondence on 5 December 2025 received in connection with the above.

Outlined below are heritage-related observations/recommendations co-ordinated by the Development Applications Unit under the stated headings.

Nature Conservation

The National Parks and Wildlife Service of the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage has reviewed the Natura Impact Statement (NIS) submitted in support of the proposed hand-harvesting of *Ascophyllum nodosum* within Kenmare River Special Area of Conservation (SAC) (Site Code: 002158). While the NIS provides a general description of the activity and outlines a number of proposed management measures, the National Parks and Wildlife Service considers that there are significant deficiencies which limit the ability to conclude that the “proposed works do not pose a risk adversely affecting the integrity of any



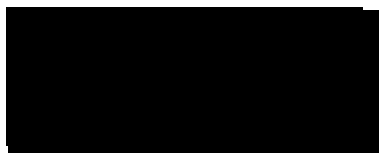
Natura 2000 site, either alone or in-combination with other plans or project". The National Parks and Wildlife Service would request that the Competent Authority should seek further information to inform the application and specifically address the following:

- Mapping and quantification of harvesting areas in relation to Annex I habitats [1160] Large Shallow Inlets and Bays and [1170] Reefs, including the proportion of each habitat affected within the SAC.
- Clarification of how the annual harvest limit (1,826 wet tonnes) will be distributed spatially and temporally, including maximum harvesting frequency per shoreline section and enforcement of recovery periods.
- Site-specific baseline information for *Ascophyllum nodosum* within proposed harvesting areas, or justification for the applicability of literature-based recovery assumptions to Kenmare Bay.
- Further detail on assessment and management of disturbance risk to Common Seal (*Phoca vitulina*) and Otter (*Lutra lutra*), including defined seasonal restrictions and triggers for cessation of activity.
- A detailed biosecurity protocol, including cleaning procedures, compliance checks, and contingency measures for invasive non-native species.
- A concise monitoring framework specifying indicators, reporting frequency, thresholds for action, and mechanisms for adaptive management.
- Further clarification of cumulative effects with other activities within the SAC, including aquaculture, recreation, and other seaweed harvesting.

You are requested to send any further communications to this Department's Development Applications Unit (DAU) [REDACTED]@npws.gov.ie, or to the following address:

The Manager
Development Applications Unit (DAU)
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Wexford
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Amy Thornton
Development Applications Unit
Administration