



Licence Ref: **MUL250018**  
(Please quote in all related correspondence)

27<sup>th</sup> February 2026

Maritime Area Regulatory Authority  
2<sup>nd</sup> Floor  
Menapia House  
Drinagh Business Park  
Drinagh  
Wexford  
Y35RF29

Via email: [licence@mara.gov.ie](mailto:licence@mara.gov.ie)

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

**Re:** Maritime usage licence application for traditional hand harvesting of seaweed resources along shorelines within Cill Ciaran Bay.

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I refer to correspondence received in connection with the above. Outlined below are heritage related observations/recommendations of the Department co-ordinated by the Development Applications Unit under the stated heading(s).

### **Nature Conservation**

NPWS has reviewed the Screening Assessment submitted in support of the proposed hand-harvesting of *Ascophyllum nodosum* and *Fucus vesiculosus* within *Cuan Cill Chiaráin*. While the NIS provides a general description of the activity and outlines a number of proposed management measures, NPWS considers that there are significant deficiencies which limit the ability to rely on the conclusions of no adverse effects on the integrity of the Kilkieran Bay and Islands SAC. NPWS would request that the Competent Authority should seek further information to inform the application and specifically address the following:

- An estimate of the proposed annual harvest (wet weight, tonnes) for each harvesting area and for the project as a whole.
- Clarification as to whether the proposal represents continuation of historical harvesting levels or an increase in effort or yield, with justification where relevant.
- The methodology for pre-harvest biomass and regrowth surveys, including survey design, indicators used, frequency, and personnel expertise.
- How survey outcomes will be used to determine when individual areas are opened, closed or extended in fallow under the proposed rotation system.



- GIS-based mapping (or equivalent) showing the precise overlap or proximity of proposed harvest areas to Annex I habitats within or adjacent to Kilkieran Bay & Islands SAC, including Reefs [1170] and Large Shallow Inlets and Bays [1160] (including seagrass and maërl if relevant).
- Clear identification of which harvest areas occur within the SAC boundary and which are outside but ecologically connected.
- How seasonal restrictions to protect seals and SPA bird species will be applied in practice (timing, triggers, and decision-making).
- How compliance with buffer distances for seal haul-outs and bird roosts/foraging areas will be monitored during operations.

Please provide a detailed statement addressing in-combination effects with other activities in *Cuan Cill Chiaráin* (including aquaculture, shellfisheries, recreational boating and other seaweed harvesting), and whether any coordination or spatial management arrangements are proposed.

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

The Manager  
Development Applications Unit (DAU)  
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[REDACTED]

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Development Applications Unit  
Administration