



Statement of Consistency with the MSFD Directive

The Marine Strategy Framework Directive (MSFD) sets forth an ecosystem-based approach to managing human activities in the marine environment, aiming to protect, preserve, and ensure the sustainable use of marine resources across EU waters. Under the MSFD, Member States like Ireland are tasked with defining and monitoring the characteristics of a clean, healthy, and productive marine ecosystem, ensuring they meet the criteria for achieving Good Environmental Status (GES). Key areas of focus include biodiversity conservation, the health of fish populations, control of eutrophication, and the integrity of the seafloor.

Arramara Teo's proposed seaweed harvesting activities align with the objectives of the MSFD by implementing sustainable, low-impact practices that minimise disturbances to marine ecosystems. The harvesting operations are confined to rocky intertidal zones, specifically avoiding habitats critical to marine biodiversity, such as spawning sites and other sensitive areas identified through MSFD-mandated habitat mapping (see following Table). The temporary, small-scale nature of these activities ensures that there are no long-lasting impacts on seabed integrity or water quality, thereby eliminating any need for extensive discussions on construction, operational, or decommissioning phases.

The sustainable harvesting methods applied in this project do not contribute to any degradation of marine habitats or ecosystems. By following best environmental practices and operational protocols, the project supports Ireland's commitment to maintaining and enhancing GES, in line with the goals and standards set by the MSFD.



Attachment 4.6

MSFD Description	Assessment for Seaweed Harvesting	Impact	Mitigation
Descriptor 1: Biodiversity	The rocky intertidal areas of Inner Galway Bay North are rich in biodiversity. Harvesting may impact local species, but due to the scale, it will be minimal.	Minimal disturbance expected	Sustainable harvesting techniques/plans ensure minimal impact on biodiversity. Buffer zones around seal haul-out sites are in place.
Descriptor 2: Non-Indigenous Species	There is no introduction of non-native species associated with seaweed harvesting in this region.	No introduction of invasive species	None required.
Descriptor 3: Commercial Fish & Shellfish	Harvesting occurs in areas with commercial fish populations, but activities do not impact breeding, nursery, or fishing areas.	No significant impact on fisheries	A 200 m buffer zone around Aquaculture installations.
Descriptor 4: Marine Food Webs	Harvesting seaweed, an important habitat-forming species, could affect the local food webs.	Minor disruption expected	Ensure a strict sustainable harvest limit of 20% is implemented to protect Marine Food Webs.
Descriptor 5: Eutrophication	Seaweed harvesting does not contribute to nutrient enrichment.	Potential positive contribution	None required.
Descriptor 6: Seafloor Integrity	Limited to intertidal zones, so impacts on the seafloor are minimal.	No significant impact on seafloor integrity	None required.
Descriptor 7: Hydrographical Conditions	The scale of seaweed harvesting is small and does not alter hydrographical conditions.	No impact	None required.
Descriptor 8: Contaminants	No release of contaminants is expected during seaweed harvesting.	No impact	Compliance with best practices for fuel and chemical management.
Descriptor 9: Contaminants in Seafood	Seaweed harvested from the clean waters of Inner Galway Bay North is unlikely to accumulate harmful contaminants.	No impact	Regularly monitor water quality and WFD status to ensure safety.
Descriptor 10: Marine Litter	Harvesting does not introduce litter, and Arramara Teo complies with strict waste management practices.	No impact	Implement strict waste management protocols.
Descriptor 11: Underwater Noise	Noise generated from small vessels (e.g., 30 HP outboards) during harvesting may cause temporary disturbance to marine mammals.	Minor, localised disturbance	Motors are turned off (idle) during the harvest and only in operation when moving to and returning from seaweed beds. A 200m Buffer will be placed around known seal haul-out sites.

Table 1 - Analysis of MSFD descriptors.