



July 31, 2026

licence@mara.ie

RE: MUL260047 – Wexford County Council

A Chara,

The Marine Divisions of the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine (DAFM) welcome the opportunity to provide comments on the application submitted by Wexford County Council for a five-year licence to facilitate site investigation surveys associated with the proposed N11/N25 Oilgate to Rosslare Harbour Scheme.

It is essential that the sea-fishing and aquaculture sectors are fully recognised and given a high priority as a long-standing, pre-existing, and traditional activity in the marine environment as the proposed surveys are being evaluated.

Fishers and aquaculture site holders are primary food producers dependent upon certain marine areas which are particularly important for food production. This primary production is critical to supplying the downstream indigenous seafood processing and export industries and in sustaining the livelihoods of coastal communities. The importance of these primary and secondary food production activities is reflected in the Government's Food Vision 2030 policy.

To inform the DAFM comments, the observations of the Marine Institute (MI), Bord Iascaigh Mhara (BIM) and Sea Fisheries Protection Authority (SFPA) on the application were requested.

BIM acknowledge that the proposed works will have minimal impact on aquaculture sites downstream from the proposed activity. However, there are two blue mussel licensed sites in close proximity (<https://dafm-maps.marine.ie/aquaculture-viewer/>). The MUL application overlaps directly with a recently issued bottom mussel license T03/074B/N (<https://www.gov.ie/en/department-of-agriculture-food-and-the-marine/collections/shellfish-licences-wexford/>) and the licensee should be contacted regarding the proposed survey.

The MI advise that as area of proposed operations is small (2.5 km²) and short duration, the surveys should not interfere with any fishing activities or have significant impact on any commercial fish species or aquaculture.

SFPA also note the proximity to shellfish aquaculture in lower Wexford Harbour including blue mussel (*Mytilus edulis*) and Pacific oyster (*Magallana gigas*). However, the physical surveying

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techniques proposed as part of this MUL will result in negligible increase in turbidity and sedimentation within the immediate vicinity. Therefore, there are no probable negative impacts of shellfish production areas expected based on the surveying techniques outlined in this application.

DAFM recognises that the developer's aim is to promote co-existence and minimise potential disruption to commercial fishing activities in the area. The evaluation of potential impacts of the surveys on commercial sea fishing activities needs to be given consideration within the context of the requirements set out under the Maritime Area Planning Act and the National Marine Planning Framework (NMPF). The principles in the NMPF of avoiding, minimising, or mitigating impacts on access to existing activities (including specific policies on Fisheries and Aquaculture) should be followed and any proposed development activity should incorporate the principle of maximising coexistence with established activities in marine areas.

All relevant fishing organisations should receive any applicable Marine Notices, and be made aware of any proposed works, at the earliest opportunity to ensure the optimum coordination of activities and to limit potential disturbances to fishing activities to the greatest extent possible.

Please also find attached documents from the MI, BIM and SFPA which provide further comments for consideration.

Yours sincerely,

Marine Divisions
An Roinn Talmhaíochta, Bia agus Mara
Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine