Alab, Info

From: Sean Collins [redacted]
Sent: Friday 30 October 2026 19:41
To: Alab, Info
Subject: Formal Objection to Proposed Aquaculture Licences – Ballyness Bay, County Donegal

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Completed

CAUTION: This Email originated from Outside of this department. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognise the sender and know the content is safe. Otherwise Please Forward any suspicious Emails to Notify.Cyber@agriculture.gov.ie .

Dear Members of the Aquaculture Licences Appeals Board,

I am writing to formally express my strong objection to the granting of aquaculture licences for commercial shellfish farming in Ballyness Bay, County Donegal.

Ballyness Bay is an area of exceptional natural beauty and ecological importance. Its beaches, sandflats, coastal habitats and wildlife are valuable assets that deserve the highest level of environmental protection.

I wish to raise the following concerns:

1. Protection of Wildlife and Biodiversity

Ballyness Bay provides important habitats for wild birds and other marine wildlife. I am particularly concerned about the potential impact of commercial shellfish farming on feeding grounds, intertidal habitats and protected species.

I request that all relevant environmental assessments fully consider the potential disturbance to wildlife, including cumulative impacts from multiple aquaculture operations, and demonstrate compliance with the EU Birds Directive and Habitats Directive.

2. Introduction of Non-Native Species

I am concerned about the introduction and cultivation of non-native shellfish species, particularly Pacific oysters, and the possibility of their establishing populations outside designated cultivation areas.

The potential consequences for native marine ecosystems, biodiversity and habitat balance must be independently assessed before any licences are granted.

3. Environmental Damage and Pollution

Commercial shellfish farming could introduce additional plastic waste, discarded equipment, marine litter and disturbance to sensitive coastal habitats.

I am also concerned about the potential effects of aquaculture infrastructure and associated activities on sediment movement, water quality and the wider marine environment.

4. Protection of Ballyness Bay's Natural Landscape

Ballyness Bay is one of County Donegal's most beautiful coastal locations and forms part of the wider Wild Atlantic Way tourism experience.

Large installations of oyster trestles and other commercial aquaculture infrastructure could significantly alter the natural appearance and character of the bay.

This would potentially diminish its attractiveness to visitors, photographers, walkers, wildlife enthusiasts and the local community.

5. Public Access and Community Interests

Ballyness Bay is used for walking, swimming, fishing, boating, birdwatching and other recreational activities.

I am concerned that commercial aquaculture operations could interfere with public enjoyment of the bay, including through increased vehicle movements, operational noise and restrictions affecting access to parts of the shoreline.

The interests of the local community should be given substantial consideration in any licensing decision.

6. Transparency and Environmental Accountability

I believe that the concerns raised by local residents and environmental campaigners deserve careful and impartial consideration.

I request that the Board ensure that all environmental evidence, public submissions and potential cumulative impacts are properly examined before any final decision is made.

Conclusion

Ballyness Bay is a precious natural resource that should be protected for present and future generations.

In my view, the potential environmental, ecological, recreational and economic consequences of industrial-scale shellfish farming raise serious concerns.

I therefore respectfully request that the Aquaculture Licences Appeals Board refuse the proposed aquaculture licences unless it can be clearly demonstrated, through rigorous and independent assessment, that the activities will not adversely affect protected habitats, wildlife or the ecological integrity of Ballyness Bay.

Thank you for considering my objection.

Yours faithfully,

Sean Collins
[redacted]