

An Bord Achomharc Um Cheadúnais Dobharshaothraithe  
Aquaculture Licences Appeals Board



## Submission from Salmon Watch Ireland

30 April 2018

Cúirt Choill Mhinsí, Bóthar Bhaile Átha Cliath, Port Laoise, Contae Laoise, R32 DTW5  
Kilminchy Court, Dublin Road, Portlaoise, County Laois, R32 DTW5

Guthán/Telephone: 057 8631912 R-phost/Email: [info@alab.ie](mailto:info@alab.ie) Láithreán Gréasáin/Website: [www.alab.ie](http://www.alab.ie)



## **OHara, Mary**

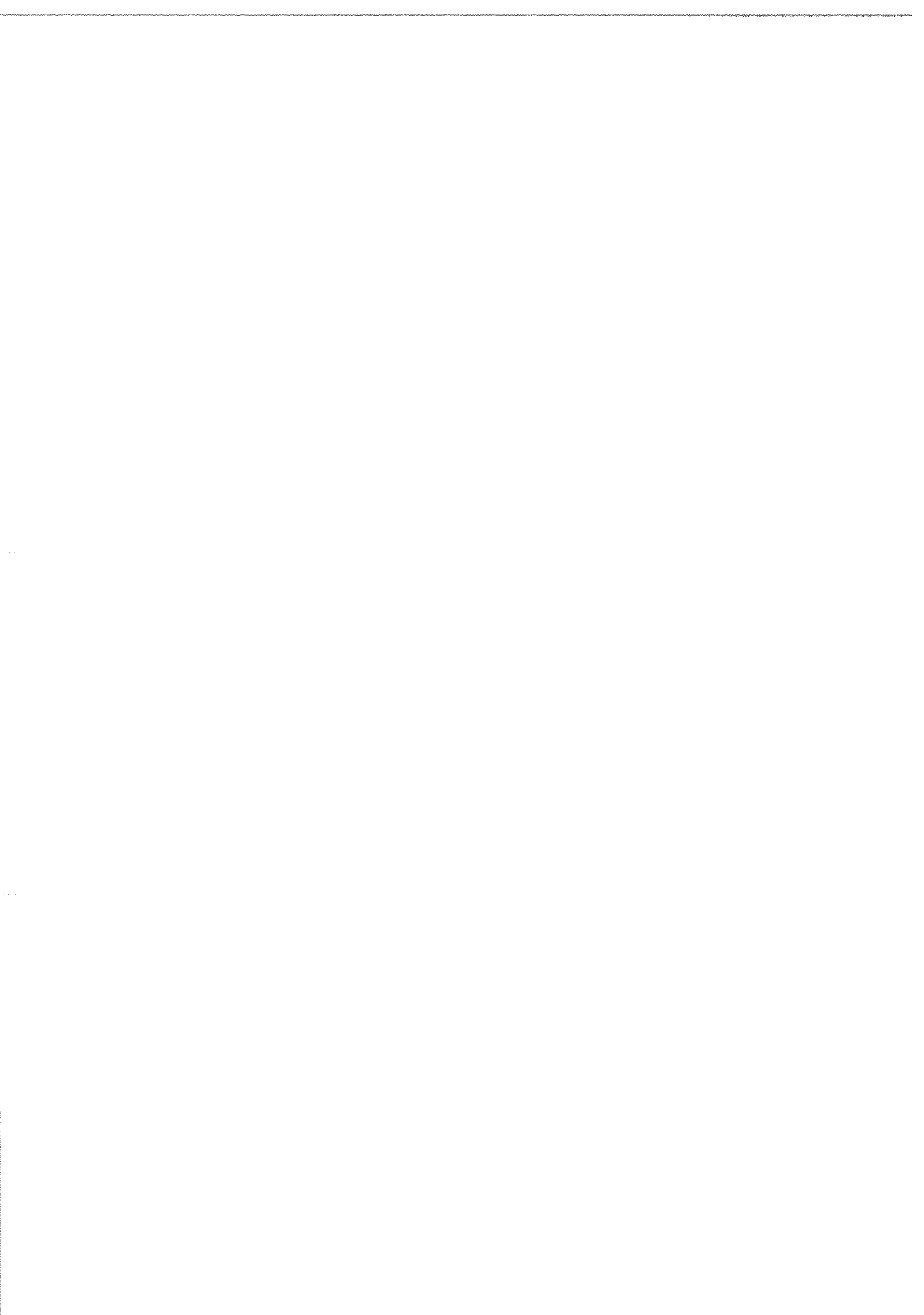
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**From:** Niall Greene  
**Sent:** 30 April 2018 11:08  
**To:** Marv Ohara (Alab)  
**Cc:** 'Peadar O'Maolain'  
**Subject:** Appeal AP2/10/2015  
**Attachments:** 180430 Response to ALAB re Shot Head.pdf

Dear Mary

Attached is our response to the Marine Institute reports you included with your letter of 10 April. A signed copy of our comments is in today's mail.

Niall Greene  
Chair of the Board  
Salmon Watch Ireland



# SALMON WATCH IRELAND

6 SUTTON CASTLE, SHILMARTIN ROAD, D13 NN20  
DUBLIN 13, IRELAND  
[CHAIRMAN@SALMON.IE](mailto:CHAIRMAN@SALMON.IE)  
PHONE: +353 1 832 4892 MOBILE: +353 86 826 9222

30 April 28

Ms Mary O'Hara  
Secretary  
Aquaculture Licences Appeals Board  
Kilminchy Court  
Dublin Road  
PORTLAOISE  
Co Laoise R32 DTWS

**Your reference: AP2/10/2015 Site reference TO5/555**

Dear Ms O'Hara

I refer to your letter and enclosures of 10 April.

The following points referred to in pages 21 and 22 of the Report of the Oral Hearing Chair (AP2/1-14/2015) ('the Report') have not been adequately addressed by either the receipt of a supplementary EIS from Marine Harvest Ireland in relation to (1) below or by ALAB's examination of the item listed in (2):

1. ***“Before making a determination pursuant to section 40(4) of the Fisheries (Amendment) Act 1997, the Board should request a supplemental EIS addressing the following matters:***
  - ***The risk of sea-lice infestation of wild salmonids migrating from/to the Dromagowlane and Trafask Rivers, and any resulting implications for local freshwater pearl mussel populations, based on available research and data;***

- ***An assessment of the potential impact of salmon farm waste on water quality, having particular regard to the maintenance of 'good water status' as required under the WFD***”.

The use by the Marine Institute of clearly selective scientific papers about the impact of sea lice on wild salmonids must not be allowed to continue. The reliance by the Marine Institute on a very narrow range of highly contested scientific papers which purport to exonerate salmon farming from any impact on wild Atlantic salmon is clearly an attempt to impinge on the integrity of the licensing process. Dr Gargan's evidence to the Oral Hearing (summarized on pages 10 and 11 of the Report) outlines the scope of an alternative and internationally accepted analysis of the sea lice question that is entirely at odds with that of Marine Institute scientists and needs to be fully considered by ALAB.

In relation to the assessment of water quality, it should be noted that the added pressure of the Shot Head site must be examined in the light of the overall combination and cumulative effect of all polluting activities both within the bay and all activities on land associated with urban waste water discharges, single waste water discharges, agricultural activities and land use change including forestry activities and drainage activities.

2. ***“Before making a determination pursuant to section 40(4) of the Fisheries (Amendment) Act 1997, the Board should make every effort to consider the potential impacts of large-scale farmed salmon escapes”***.

The report into the large-scale escape of farmed fish in Bantry Bay in 2014 has still not been released to the public and it is not possible, therefore, for ALAB to make an informed opinion about the effectiveness of the design of the Shot Head farm.

In relation to the reports regarding the Harbour Seal and Otter we are not in a position to comment on the specifics of the impact on their conservation status of interaction with the proposed development. However, especially in light of the observation regarding the interaction of seals with deterrents as mentioned on page 8 of the Technical Advisor's Report: Supplementary Briefing Note Common seal *Phoca vituhria vitulina*, that ***“The possibility of acoustic deterrents causing hearing damage to individuals from the***

**species, then such impacts must be given a weighting equal to that which would apply within a protected site. A precautionary approach should always be adopted and consents ought only be given to plans or projects when there is certainty that no further adverse impacts on critically endangered species will occur.**

In the Bantry Bay setting any further cumulative adverse impacts on the declining *Margaritifera* population should not be permitted. Their populations are in decline and their geographical range is contracting. The Shot Head project cannot be considered in isolation from the already existing pressures on *Margaritifera* populations in the local rivers.

Yours sincerely

Niall Greene  
Chair of the Board  
Salmon Watch Ireland

***Glengarriff Harbour and Woodland SAC cannot, however, be excluded***” it would be wise for ALAB to further refer this matter in order that an Appropriate Assessment might take place.

### ***Ex situ effects***

A plan or project that is not in or even adjoining a Natura 2000 site can still require appropriate assessment. For example, certain types of development in a marine environment could adversely affect the integrity of a Natura 2000 site located adjacent to the development. These are known as ex situ effects and should be considered in the context of the observation regarding the interaction of seals and acoustic deterrents.

We await these supplementary reports and caution that the receipt of same will require adequate time to examine in-depth the substance of both reports.

### ***Margaritifera margaritifera***

The loss of a substantial cohort of the *Margaritifera margaritifera* salmonid hosts cannot be mitigated by any known substitute or mitigation measures. No expert evidence has been advanced as to how the loss of salmonids, particularly anadromous sea trout, can be adequately compensated. In these circumstances, the indirect impacts on *Margaritifera* due to loss of host salmonids cannot be reversed.

This represents an unacceptable risk to the *Margaritifera* populations of the Trafask, Drumgowlane and Mealagh rivers particularly in the light of the precarious status, both nationally and internationally of this species. No such risk should be countenanced particularly in the light of the already known cumulative effects of the decline in salmonid populations and their impact on the *Margaritifera* populations.

Assessment of this impact has been entirely inadequate and regardless of whether the species occurs in protected areas or not this project represents an unacceptable risk to its survival in this area.

**Environmental impact assessment cannot be confined solely to the provisions of the Habitats Directive. Where the risk of significant impacts is identified, particularly on vulnerable environments and**



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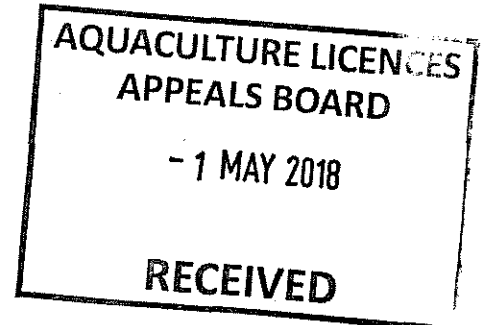
DUBLIN 13, IRELAND

[CHAIRMAN@SALMON.IE](mailto:CHAIRMAN@SALMON.IE)

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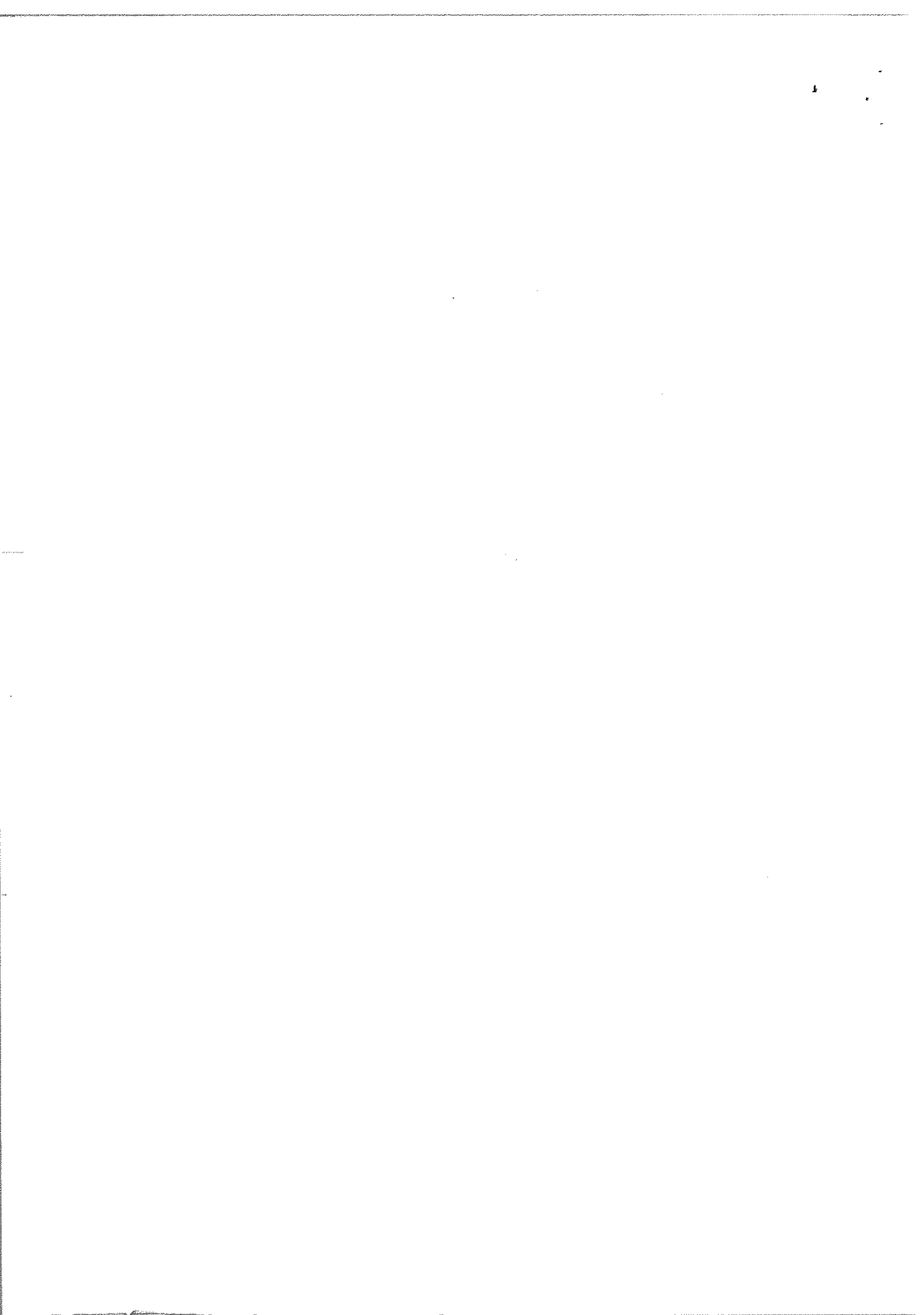
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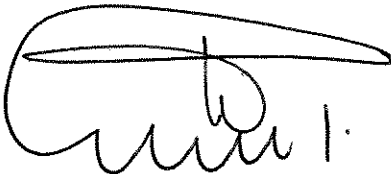
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Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Niall Greene', with a large, sweeping horizontal stroke above the name.

Niall Greene  
Chair of the Board  
Salmon Watch Ireland

