

**North West Regional Inshore Fisheries Forum**  
**Chairperson - Eamon Dixon, Carne Nash, Belmullet, Ballina, Co. Mayo - 087 7743404**

EPA Licensing Programme  
Office of Climate Licensing & Resource Use  
PO Box 3000  
Johnstown Castel Estate  
Co. Wexford



21st July 2015

Dear Sir

In relation to Public Notice published in Regional Newspaper for Sligo Harbour Dredging and Dumping at Sea of Dredge Spoil. This application is for a Dumping at Sea Permit made to the Environmental Protection Agency Licensing Programme.

The members of the North West RIFF who are democratically nominated and elected to represent the Inshore Fishermen of Counties Mayo and Sligo. In total we represent 250 licenced and registered vessels in Mayo and Sligo. These vessels range in size from 5m -20m and mainly fish for Crustaceans, Mackerel and Whitefish in the waters of Sligo, Mayo and Donegal.

We note from the application by Sligo County Council that it is their intention to dump the Dredge spoils on our Fishing grounds. We will not tolerate any dumping of Dredge material from the Sligo Harbour at the co-ordinates indicated by the Council on their Map. We feel this will have devastating effects on our Fish stocks, especially as this is one of our more lucrative areas for Brown Crab. Furthermore we have grave concerns in relation to the drift of light silt and sand which will be raised up in the water column when suction and backhoe dredging will be done in the harbour area, owing to tides and currents this may drift a long distance and affect our juvenile lobster, crab nursery areas near the shore. Our Fishermen in Sligo and Mayo have put back 7000kg Sligo 2000, Mayo 5000kg) of Lobster per year for conservation purposes under the BIM National v-notching programme.

We as part of the consultation process with Contractors employed by Sligo County Council have stated that we will not tolerate any dumping at sea unless the Dumping takes place at co-ordinates 55°00 N and 10°20 W .we feel that only at these depths will the silts and boulders be far enough away that it may not impact on our Fish Stocks.

We urge the EPA not to grant a licence to Sligo County Council and it contractors unless the dredge spoils are brought to this area we have outlined.

We also would ask the EPA to make it a condition of any dumping at sea permit that they may consider giving to any County Council in our area North West, that the Contractors and the County Council would meet the Representatives of the NWRIFF to discuss any dumping at Sea in our area.

We also would urge that any contracted vessel partaking in Dumping at Sea would carry an observer on behalf of the Fishermen to observe each load being dumped and that the vessel would be equipped with a tracking Device so as it movements could be monitored by those with interest in this operation.

We also would urge the EPA to supply to us the breakdown of the proposed dredge spoil from the dredge site outlining the toxins/Heavy metals it may contain.

*Eamon Dixon*

**Eamon Dixon**  
**Chairperson, North West Fisheries Forum**