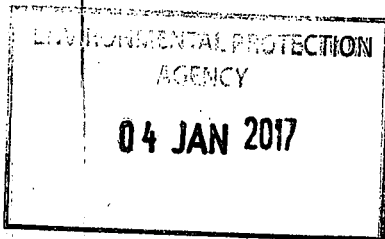


Sub no. 1.



Environmental Licensing Programme  
Office of Environmental Sustainability  
Environmental Protection Agency  
PO Box 3000  
Johnstown Castle Estate  
Co. Wexford

Waterfront  
Killybegs  
Co. Donegal

01 January 2017

Re: Dumping at Sea of dredged material from Killybegs harbour.

Dear Sir / Madam,

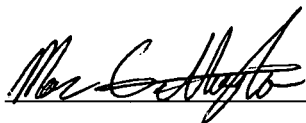
I am writing to express grave concern at the proposed dumping of dredged material from Killybegs harbour at sea in the same location where material was disposed of during the 2002 construction of the new harbour extension. In the years prior to the initial dumping I along with other small fishing boats trawled for whitefish and prawns in the local waters of Donegal Bay. Following the dumping of the dredged matter from the harbour this fishing was decimated. Whitefish stocks in the bay declined sharply presumably displaced by the plume of debris descending around them. The prawn stock situated around St. Johns Point was wiped out and has never recovered. I also fished lobster crab pots at this time and the catches of these also crashed simultaneously. These events also correspond to losses experienced by several fish farms along the St Johns Point area at this time.

It has taken a long time for the whitefish and shell fish stocks in the bay to recover from this 'pollution' and unfortunately the prawn stock still has a long way to go before it could be described as healthy again. The rate and timing of the decline of these fisheries which had endured for decades points to a single cause and for my part I am in no doubt it was the dumping of the dredged material. The dumped material cast a visible plume all around the bay turning the water at the surface a dull brown colour. This was also reported by a number of angling boats fishing in different locations throughout the bay. Static nets and the nets on my lobster pots which would be stationed at or near the seabed were covered in a murky black substance which had never been experienced before.

In the weeks and months after the dumping I crossed the dump site many times, never was there any indication that any of the dumped material descended in that location. The depth at the dump site was no different to the water depth in the surrounding area indicating that the material was carried through the water column by tide and currents and minimal amounts making it to the bottom in the chosen dump site.

While development of the harbour area is to be encouraged it certainly must not come at the expense of the wider environment and the health of our fish stocks. I do believe in other locations around the coast the dredged material has been taken ashore and disposed of in a responsible manner which would seem the prudent thing to do. It would be reckless in the extreme to allow the harsh consequences of past dumping be repeated and certainly no permit for dumping should be granted for this purpose again.

Yours Faithfully



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Marc Gallagher

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