

DECLARATION

THE FOYLE AREA (CONTROL OF OYSTER FISHING) REGULATIONS 2008

SUSPENSION OF OYSTER FISHING IN THE FOYLE AREA

I, Sharon McMahon, Chief Executive Officer of Loughs Agency, Foyle Carlingford and Irish Lights Commission, hereby certify that The Commission is satisfied that it is necessary and expedient for the conservation and protection of native oysters (*Ostrea edulis*) to declare fishing for such oysters suspended in the entirety of The Foyle Area, as defined by The Foyle Area (Control of Oyster Fishing) Regulations 2008 as amended 2010, for the periods listed below.

“the defined mouth” in relation to the River Foyle, means the mouth of that river as defined by instrument dated 8th February 1864 made under section 17 of the Salmon Fishery (Ireland) Act 1863;

“Lough Foyle” means those waters in the Foyle Area bounded on the north or seaward side by an imaginary straight line drawn between Greencastle Fort in the County of Donegal and the Martello Tower at Magilligan Point in the County of Londonderry and bounded on the south by the defined mouth of the River Foyle;

“the River Foyle” means all of the River Foyle upstream of the defined mouth of the River Foyle;

“seaward of Lough Foyle” means those waters in the Foyle Area which lie seawards of an imaginary straight line drawn between Greencastle Fort in the County of Donegal and the Martello Tower at Magilligan Point in the County of Londonderry.

Dates of suspension of fishing in The Foyle Area

Fishing for native oysters (*Ostrea edulis*) is **suspended** in the entirety of The Foyle Area, as defined by The Foyle Area (Control of Oyster Fishing) Regulations 2008 as amended 2010, for the periods listed below:

- 29th February 2024 at 18:00hrs to 31st March 2024 at 18:00hrs

Reasons for suspension of fishing in The Foyle Area

In order to conserve stocks and reduce potential for fishing related mortality on undersized oysters, fishing of native oysters in the entirety of The Foyle Area will be suspended until 31st March 2024. Suspension of fishing is necessary in order to retain an acceptable biomass of spawning stock in the population for next season.

Removal of 100% of the stock above the minimum landing size is not sustainable. Removal of stock above minimum landing size must also not be to the detriment of significant proportions of stock below minimum landing size. It is advisable to retain a proportion of the spawning stock above 80mm in the fishery in order to allow for stock replenishment and the achievement of effective spawning for the 2024 spawning season. Removal of a large proportion of stock over 80mm from the fishery this season could have a significant negative impact on broodstock and could potentially have a highly detrimental effect on future recruitment to the population.

NOW THEREFORE

In pursuance of the said Regulations

I HEREBY SUSPEND OYSTER FISHING IN THE FOYLE AREA AS DEFINED BY THE FOYLE AREA (CONTROL OF OYSTER FISHING) REGULATIONS 2008 AS AMENDED 2010.

From:

- 29th February 2024 at 18:00hrs to 31st March 2024 at 18:00hrs

Signed: S. McMahon
(Chief Executive Officer)
Sharon McMahon

Dated: 19th February 2024