

SALMON WATCH IRELAND

Press Release 26th May 2010

SALMON WATCH IRELAND GRAVELY CONCERNED BY MINISTERIAL ANNOUNCEMENT ABOUT RESUMPTION OF SALMON FISHING IN CASTLEMAINE HARBOUR

Salmon Watch Ireland is gravely concerned by the announcement by Minister Conor Lenihan TD yesterday (25 May) that he is to licence draft net fishing for salmon in Castlemaine Harbour, Co Kerry, for research purposes.

If this truly is a scientific initiative confined to 2010, limited to 800 salmon and under the close control of the Marine Institute, the Central Fishery Board and the South Western Regional Fisheries Board then important information about this mixed stock fishery may be gained. If, however, and in response to local pressure, it is a disguised means of reintroducing mixed stock fishing for salmon in Castlemaine Harbour then it will be a breach not only of the Government policy to end such fishing adopted in 2006 but also of Ireland's obligations under the EU Habitats Directive and to the North Atlantic Salmon Conservation Organisation.

The Minister will be well aware from his own scientific advisers that salmon stocks in many of the rivers flowing into Castlemaine Harbour are under severe stress already and are unable to bear the burden of mixed stock exploitation. Salmon Watch Ireland will be monitoring the situation closely and calls on the Minister to include representatives of the Kerry Angling Federation, for reasons of transparency, to be included in the CFB, MI, SWRFB and commercial fishery interests group that is to draw up the details of the scheme.

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