What is a FIP?

Fishery Improvement Projects provide a platform for fishermen, seafood buyers and suppliers to develop a strategy to improve a specific fishery by considering better policies and management over a given time period. Engagement in a FIP allows producers and processors access markets which demand sustainability and environmental credentials. The aim of a FIP is to improve sustainability within a fishery and progress to certification under the Marine Stewardship Council (MSC).

BIM have linked the participation of registered FIPs to BIM’s RSS standard (Responsible Sourced Seafood), under its 1st pillar: Responsible Fishing Practices. This link provides the opportunity for actions and participation in a FIP to be independently third party verified and certified.

Why a FIP?

Fisheries need a high level of organisation and funding to meet the rigor of international fishery sustainability standards. A FIP provides a starting point to organise participants in a fishery to ultimately achieve certification to international fishery based sustainability standards. Working with industry and Bord Bia (The Irish Food Board), BIM have identified 4 pilot FIPS. These are:

- Brown Crab
- Whitefish (Hake, Monkfish and Megrim)
- Nephrops
- Albacore Tuna
Get Talking and Participate!
- Get talking and participate!
- Find your stakeholders.
- Who has a role in making changes to improve a fishery?
- What information is available about the fishery?
- Is there a MSC pre-assessment available?
- Sign up and register your interest to join a FIP by contacting RSSstandard@bim.ie or 01 2144100.

Commit
Decide on actions to be done to achieve a credible FIPS.

Develop and Decide
- Using the MSC pre-assessment, identify the scientific gaps and assess the fishery’s environmental performance.
- Members decide on the scope of FIP.
- Set improvements actions and targets.
- Set timeframes and deadlines.
- Confirm project participants. Sign a Memorandum of Understanding that will be publicly available.

Get a Workplan
Improvements, and actions to achieve them, should generally be set within a five year timeframe.

Write the FIP Plan
- Templates are available from FisheryProgress.org, fill them out with the actions and improvements.
- Submit the FIP workplan and finance budget plan to FisheryProgress.org for external review.

Launch the FIP
- Participants and workplan are finalised and made public.
- Start your actions and keep your deadlines.
- Communicate your achievement.

Progress Tracking and Reporting
- Regularly track the work progress against the activities and outcomes in the work plan.
- These are publicly tracked on FisheryProgress.org.
- FisheryProgress.org requires supporting documentation every six months.
- Evidence for implementing your actions and improvements under the pillar, Responsible Fishing Practices is required for BIM’s RSS.

More details and resources can be found at the following websites:
- www.fisheryprogress.org
- Conservation Alliance: www.solutionsforseafood.org
- Marine Stewardship Council: www.msc.org
- Sustainable Fisheries partnership: www.msc.org/sustainablefish.org

Contact BIM for help with your sustainability performance at: RSSstandard@bim.ie

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