

Dear Sir or Madam,

Draft Marine Bill: objections on behalf of The Honourable The Irish Society

The Honourable The Irish Society is the owner of shooting and fishing rights in the Lower Bann estuary and on the foreshore of parts of Lough Foyle. The Society leases such rights to sporting clubs, angling clubs and individual fishermen, and the income from this contributes to its river management costs and charitable grants. In principle, the Society wishes to see the marine environment more adequately protected from damaging or illegal activities, like any other responsible body, but it has strong reservations about certain parts of this Bill.

We would like to register the Society's strong objection to the wording of Clause 24 (Byelaws for protection of MCZs), in particular the proposals 3 (d), (e) and (f) which are particularly unacceptable.

We are informed that the organisations comprising the NI Marine Task Force that is lobbying for this Bill to be passed do not include any organisation that is representative or supportive of wildfowling and fishing, such as the BASC or Countryside Alliance Ireland. This omission is wholly unsatisfactory, and as a result the Society can not offer its support to this proposed legislation.

Sustainably managed wildfowling and fishing on estuarial and coastal waters in NI is a long established and entirely legitimate activity enjoyed by hundreds of ordinary people from all parts of the community. We believe the government should not be considering legislation influenced by a one-sided lobbying group to diminish or take these rights away.

I would be grateful if you will include this email in your consultation responses, and I confirm to me that this has been done.

Yours Faithfully,

Edward Montgomery

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Edward Montgomery

Representative (Ireland)  
The Honourable The Irish Society  
&  
Director  
Fish Mourne Ltd