



“Restoration of the Lower Shannon SAC (Mulkear River) for Sea Lamprey, Atlantic Salmon and the European Otter”

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## Press Release

2<sup>nd</sup> January 2013

### 2013 Salmon Angling Season Underway

The salmon angling season got underway yesterday, New Years Day. The first Atlantic Salmon to be caught in 2013 has been reported from the Drowes River. The lucky angler was Mr. Timothy Dalton from Omagh, Co. Tyrone. The 4.5kg fish was taken on the Black Water section of the Drowes River in Co. Leitrim.

MulkearLIFE's coordinating beneficiary, Inland Fisheries Ireland, has announced that 94 rivers in the Republic of Ireland are open for salmon angling in 2013. Of the 94 rivers, 62 will be fully open while a further 32 will be open for angling on a “Catch & Release” basis.

Mr. Fergus O'Dowd T.D., the Minister of State at the Department of Communications, Energy and Natural Resources, has approved a suite of regulations and bye-laws which will govern the wild salmon fishery in 2013. These came into effect yesterday, 1 January 2013. Minister O' Dowd received management and scientific advice on the current status of Irish salmon stocks from Inland Fisheries Ireland. The Independent Standing Scientific Committee for Salmon (SSCE) assessed 152 rivers and advised that 62 rivers are open as a surplus of fish has been identified in these rivers, 32 rivers have been classified as open for angling on a “catch and release” basis only and 58 rivers are closed as they have no surplus of fish available for harvest in them.

The River Shannon will be open again in 2013 on a “catch and release” basis. Wild Atlantic Salmon must be returned but hatchery fish may be retained in line with national bag limits. There is a further measure being put in place with the use of orange tags for the hatchery fish. Each angler will get an orange tag which must be attached to the hatchery fish together with the normal blue tag. Subsequent orange tags will be made available when the head of the hatchery fish is surrendered to IFI. Details of this will be listed in the ESB Lower Shannon Fishing Permit.

MulkearLIFE is delighted to note that the Mulkear River will again be open with the same regime as 2012 for Atlantic Salmon, with a quota of fish similar to 2012.

#### Notes for Editors

1. High Resolution Digital Images are available to accompany this Press Release.
2. Interviews can be arranged with the Project Manager by using the contact details below.
3. MulkearLIFE is a new €1.75 million European Commission funded LIFE Nature project working on the restoration of the Lower Shannon Special Area of Conservation (with a focus on the Mulkear River catchment) for Atlantic Salmon, Sea Lamprey and European Otter. Further details may be viewed on the project website [www.mulkearlife.com](http://www.mulkearlife.com)
4. Inland Fisheries Ireland (Limerick) is lead partner together with the OPW and Limerick County Council. Additional funding support comes from National Parks and Wildlife Service. Other supporters include Teagasc, IFA, ICMSA, and local angling groups.

5. The project is one of the first and most important integrated catchment management projects in Ireland. It is a flagship EU LIFE Nature project –covering some 650 sq km which contain a variety of habitats and protected species. Much of the area is designated as a Special Areas of Conservation (SACs) under the EU Habitats Directive and forms part of the Natura 2000 Network.

**Issued by:**

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