



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

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## Press Release

24<sup>th</sup> October 2011

### MulkearLIFE presents at Inland Fisheries Ireland Conference

MulkearLIFE was delighted to be afforded the opportunity to make a short presentation on the work of MulkearLIFE at the first ever IFI Staff Conference which took place on Friday last, 21st October 2011 in Athlone. The presentation, to well over three hundred IFI staff colleagues, focused on the work of MulkearLIFE over the past two years to restore the lower Shannon SAC for Sea Lamprey, Atlantic and European Otter.

The instream work of the project and its partners in Limerick County Council and the Office of Public Work on the Mulkear, Newport, Bilboa and Annagh rivers was highlighted. This work which has been planned under the guidance of Dr. Martin O’ Grady has been highly successful in 2011. The presentation included an overview of the nature of the problems being addressed in the Mulkear catchment, the instream works being installed and the benefits accruing from this work not just for salmonids but for other species and riparian biodiversity generally.

The short presentation also briefly outlined MulkearLIFE’s work to improve the upstream passage of sea lamprey. This focused on the project’s sea lamprey tagging and tracking in 2010 and 2011 and the installation of new sea lamprey fish passes on Annacotty and Ballyclogh weirs in 2011 which have been successful in greatly enhancing the upstream migration of sea lamprey.

The conference also included interesting presentations on the Celtic Sea Trout Project ([www.celticseatrout.com](http://www.celticseatrout.com)) and on the growing problem of invasives throughout Ireland’s waterways. This included an input on MulkearLIFE’s sister LIFE+ project CAISIE ([www.caisie.ie](http://www.caisie.ie)).

This conference was the first time, since the establishment of Inland Fisheries Ireland on the 1st July 2010, that the entire staff had come together. It was therefore a great privilege for MulkearLIFE to be afforded an opportunity to share its work with the wider IFI family.

The conference was also addressed by Mr. Brendan O’Mahony, IFI Chairperson, who thanked all the staff of IFI for their considerable input into the IFI Corporate Plan and the many challenging targets set within the plan. Inland Fisheries Ireland, CEO, Dr. Ciaran Byrne, outlined the IFI Corporate Plan and noted that the principal function of IFI is the protection, management and conservation of the inland fisheries and sea angling resource. He noted that the Corporate Plan is an important milestone in the transition to the new management structure in inland fisheries.

MulkearLIFE would like to express its sincere appreciation to the organisers of the IFI Staff Conference for a great day and great opportunity for the project to share with others the important work taking place in the Mulkear catchment.

## 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.mulkearlifeproject.com](http://www.mulkearlifeproject.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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