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From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 20 August 2021 02:08
To: IFD Public Consultations
Subject: Submission re Draft Designated Salmonid waters Bye law

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While I welcome the idea to designate our Great western lakes to preserve and protect salmonids I have some serious concerns about the content of the proposed byelaw.

The Great western lakes are the only remaining brown trout fisheries left in western Europe and their designation is critical to save them for future generations.

However, the proposed bye law fails on several points. First of all the designation lacks any conservation objectives or management plan for these important lakes. When you consider these fisheries have been invaded by roach, bream and only recently we have discovered dace in the Clare river there is no indication if salmonids will take precedence over any of these invasive species in the proposed document.

At the moment all of these invasive species are being afforded higher levels of protection than salmonids and without the clarity that brown trout and salmon will take precedence in terms of conservation objectives the designation is a pointless exercise.

The proposed bye law will allow the Minister to change or stop any aspect of fisheries management going forward which means inland fisheries Ireland will have to conduct any future management plan knowing that at any stage they can be side-lined putting the main species under protection at risk.

The fact that the proposed bye law uses the wording salmonid is also wrong as many of our unique fisheries have only brown trout present and are void of salmon or sea trout. For example Lough Carra, Lough Mask, Lough Arrow, Lough Sheelin are all incredibly important unique fisheries but should be listed as brown trout fisheries and not salmonid fisheries.

I am in a fortunate position that I make my living from some of these amazing fisheries, I spend on average 150 days on the great western loughs as a professional fishing guide.

My clients travel from all over the world to experience what we have to offer, amazing waters, beautiful Brown trout that rise freely in unbelievable settings.

I have unfortunately witnessed the demise of these unique fisheries over the last 25 years. You need only look at what has happened to Lough Carra.

Catch returns have dropped significantly on all our waters. visiting anglers and local anglers alike complain about how hard it is to catch trout on our great western loughs.

Government must act now. The bye law presented for consultation lacks clarity, disempowers Inland Fisheries Ireland and fails to state what conservation objectives are and for what species.

An order of priority in terms of species protection along with a long term fisheries management plan has to be enacted and clearly committed to.

I sincerely hope that through this consultation process the DECC will realise how important, unique and special our wild trout fisheries are.

We are the last country in Western Europe that can offer such an amazing resource to wild brown trout anglers from all over the world.

The future of our incredible waters are at stake here. I implore you consider carefully how we manage our fisheries best for future generations.

Yours sincerely,