

Marine Institute Job Description

Position	Team Leader—Benthos Ecology
Contract	Contract of Indefinite Duration – upon successful completion of probation.
Service Group	Marine Environment & Food Safety Services (MEFSS)
Location	Marine Institute, Oranmore, Co. Galway, Ireland

Brief Description of the Marine Institute:

The **Marine Institute** is a non-commercial semi-state body, which was formally established by statute (**Marine Institute Act**, 1991) in October 1992.

Under the Act, the **Marine Institute** was given the responsibility:

“to undertake, to co-ordinate, to promote and to assist in marine research and development and to provide such services related to marine research and development, that in the opinion of the Institute will promote economic development and create employment and protect the marine environment”.

The **Marine Institute** is the national agency responsible for marine research, technology, development and innovation (RTDI). The **Marine Institute** seeks to assess and realise the economic potential of Ireland’s 220-million-acre marine resource; promote the sustainable development of marine industry through strategic funding programmes and scientific services; and safeguard the marine environment through research and environmental monitoring. The Institute works in conjunction with the Department of Agriculture, Food and Marine (DAFM) and a network of other Government Departments, semi-state agencies, national and international marine partners.

The vision of the **Marine Institute** is

The Marine Institute, as a global leader in ocean knowledge, empowering Ireland and its people to safeguard and harness our ocean wealth.

In order to achieve this vision, the **Marine Institute** has six service areas; (1) Oceans, Climate and Information Services, (2) Marine Environment & Food Safety Services, (3) Fisheries Ecosystems Advisory Services, (4) Irish Maritime Development Office, (5) Policy, Innovation and Research Support Services and (6) Corporate Services.

The Marine Institute 5 Year Strategic Plan (2018 to 2022) is available [here](#):

Harnessing our Ocean Wealth (HOOW) is an Integrated Maritime Plan (IMP) for Ireland. HOOW sets out a roadmap for the Irish Government’s vision, high level goals and integrated actions across policy, governance and business to enable our marine potential to be realised. Goal 2 of HOOW focuses on healthy marine ecosystems and specifically; to protect and conserve our rich marine biodiversity and ecosystems; manage our living and non-living resources in harmony with the ecosystem; implement and comply with environmental legislation (see www.ouroceanwealth.ie).

Brief Description of Service Groups:

This position will be based in Marine Environment & Food Safety Services (MEFSS) but will have significant interactions with other service areas within the **Marine Institute** particularly, **Fisheries Ecosystems Advisory Services**.

Profiles of these service areas are summarised below.

Marine Environment & Food Safety Services (MEFSS)

MEFSS provides government agencies, industry and other clients with food safety, environmental and fish health scientific services, primarily through the implementation of monitoring programmes and research programmes and the provision of advice and regulation. These services are largely in support of the remit of our parent department, the Department of Agriculture Food and the Marine (DAFM), and also support other departments and agencies such as the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage (DHLGH), the Environmental Protection Authority (EPA), the Department of Environment, Climate and Communications (DECC), the Sea Fisheries Protection Authority (SFPA), the National Parks and Wildlife Service (NPWS), and the Food Safety Authority of Ireland (FSAI)—amongst others.

Under the Marine Strategy Framework Directive 2008/56/EC (**MSFD**), MEFSS also supports DHLGH through data collection and reporting on **MSFD** descriptors 2, 5, 8 and 9, in coordination with reporting on other descriptors led by other service groups within the MI, in particular **Fisheries Ecosystem Advisory Services (FEAS)**.

Fisheries Ecosystem Advisory Services (FEAS)

The **FEAS** mission is to assess, research and advise on the sustainable exploitation of the marine fisheries resource and research and advise on sustainable marine aquaculture. The Service group operates a significant part of their services from the headquarters in Oranmore, Co Galway with additional port based facilities and a major research facility at Newport, Co Mayo.

FEAS scientific services are focused on the Seafood Sector which makes a significant contribution to the Ireland's Ocean Economy. Our key client is the Department of Agriculture Food and the Marine (DAFM). The services provided are focused on scientific support to key marine policy areas such as the **Common Fisheries Policy, the MSFD, NATURA 2000 and Marine Aquaculture**. **FEAS** also undertake a wide range of research focused on ecosystem understanding that will inform the advisory needs of the future.

A key output of **FEAS** is the annual Stock Book and the annual Shellfisheries Stock Book. These provide the latest assessment and scientific advice for the resources exploited by Irish vessels and is a key reference for the Governments sustainability assessment presented annually to the Oireachtas.

Summary of the Role:

This is primarily a technical role focusing on the execution of risk assessment methodologies as they apply to interactions between anthropogenic activities and the marine environment (particularly the benthic habitats and species). To this end, the successful candidate will be responsible for the preparation of Appropriate Assessment reports for Aquaculture activities in or near Natura 2000 sites and the presentation of subsequent advice as it relates to mitigation measures or monitoring activities.

The candidate will be responsible for initiating monitoring programmes or research studies relating to aquaculture activities in Natura sites, as necessary. Such studies will include, among others, assessing interactions between aquaculture activities and SCIs in Special Protection Areas.

In addition, you will be required to prepare Natura screening reports for a range of activities under the Natura 2000 legislation, specifically as it relates to Aquaculture and/or Foreshore applications and activities.

The successful candidate will be required to have expertise in benthos (or benthal) ecology and principles underpinning ecosystem service provision.

The candidate will be responsible for the day-to-day management of the Benthos Ecology Unit within MEFSS to ensure the following areas of service delivery:

- Review of and preparation of annual summary of Finfish Aquaculture Benthic Monitoring reports for DAFM
- Oversight and management of all MI benthos invertebrate data and databases
- Provision of benthos ecology advice on Finfish and Shellfish licencing.
- Broad advisory and data requests to MI specifically relating to benthos ecology
- Sampling, Data Collection, Analysis, Reporting and provision of expert advice for Water Framework Directive relating to benthos macro-invertebrate quality element for transitional and coastal waters
- Participation on relevant ICES Working groups and committees.
- Provision of expert advice as requested for MI input to Marine Strategy Framework Directive relating to benthos ecology

In addition, you will provide general environmental advisory support to the MEFSS team and the MI broadly and participate in relevant MI Matrix teams established to fulfil MI strategic and operational goals.

The delivery of technical advice requires an experienced marine scientist with a good working knowledge of a range of marine sectors and their environmental interactions. A good working knowledge of relevant National and EU legislation including, the Fisheries (Amendment) Act, 1997 (as amended) and associated Regulations; Habitats Directive 92/43/EEC, European Communities (Birds and Natural Habitats) Regulations 2011, relevant marine data sources as well as strong analytical skills and the ability to communicate clearly and concisely both in writing and verbally is also required.

Principal Tasks:

- Using relevant risk analysis frameworks, oversee the preparation of Appropriate Assessment reports of aquaculture operations in Natura 2000 sites, as requested by DAFM.
- Input to the provision of written objective and independent advice to DAFM on aquaculture licence applications particularly as it relates to benthic ecology.
- Input to the provision of written objective and independent advice to DAFM and DHLGH on foreshore licence applications.
- Oversee the preparation and submit to DAFM an annual review of Benthic Monitoring reports at finfish aquaculture sites.
- Development of sampling plans and collection of samples, as required, with EPA for WFD.
- Ensure tenders for WFD sample collection and sample analysis are prepared and are consistent with corporate governance requirements.
- Ensure WFD sample collection and sample analysis and reporting requirements are carried out by contractors in compliance with Tender specifications and contract.
- Report, with colleagues, to EPA and DHLGH in relation to the WFD transitional and coastal waters macro-invertebrate quality element monitoring outputs.
- Manage budgets in relation to core activities and externally funded activities in line with MI governance and

procurement practices.

- Prepare for and participate on annual Winter Environmental Survey (WFD sampling) on board Celtic Voyager (or successor Vessel).
- Carry out site visits in relation to Natura assessments, aquaculture licencing or WFD monitoring, as necessary.
- Advise on MI input to the Marine Strategy Framework Directive Descriptors, including D2 - Non-indigenous species.
- Advise DAFM on the production of Natura AA Conclusion statements.
- Attend meetings with DAFM, as required.
- Prepare and evaluate tenders for research project and/or monitoring interactions between aquaculture activities and Natura features (habitats and species).
- Liaise with contractors in relation to the production of Natura assessments, particularly as they relate to Special Protection Areas (SPA) and Special Conservation Interests (SCI).
- Participate, as Ireland member, in Aquaculture related and other relevant ICES expert groups as agreed with Manager.
- Manage the work programme and mentor the members of the Benthos Ecology team, e.g., PMDS, Time and Leave Management etc. in line with MI policies, Management Information Systems and Practices.
- Attend regular MEFSS Team meetings, as required.
- Participate in relevant MI Matrix teams, as required.
- Provide regular activity reports to Section Manager.
- Work in a safe manner, adhering to all required safety policies and practices in place.
- Perform other duties as relevant to the position and grade, as assigned by the Section Manager-Licencing and Policy Advice, Director of MEFSS, the CEO of the Institute, or its senior management team.

Reporting Structure:

The successful candidate will report to the Section Manager Licencing and Policy Advice in MEFSS.

Contacts:

Within the Marine Institute:

Chief Executive Officer, Director of MEFSS, Directors, Managers and Teams within the Institute.

Outside the Marine Institute:

External contacts including Government Departments – DAFM (parent department), DHLGH, DECC, Agencies, contractors and other experts and stakeholder, other partner agencies and Departments, 3rd level research organisations. International contacts will likely include the ICES, EU Commission and other European and International Networks.

Education, Professional or Technical Qualifications, Knowledge, Skills, Aptitudes, Experience, and Training

Essential:

- Minimum of an honours Degree in a relevant subject in the area of marine, environmental, biological sciences.
- A minimum of **three years of post-qualification work experience** across a broad range of marine sectors including in the area of environmental monitoring, research or advice.
- Demonstrated knowledge of Environmental Risk Analysis Frameworks.
- Experience of working with relevant environmental data sources and technical documents which form the basis of risk analysis.
- Demonstrated knowledge of relevant National and EU legislation; to include, Fisheries (Amendment) Act, 1997 (as amended) and associated Regulations; Environmental Impact Directive 2014/15/EU, Habitats Directive 92/43/EEC, Birds Directive 79/409/EEC and, European Communities (Birds and Natural Habitats) Regulations 2011.
- Demonstrated ability to communicate science based knowledge effectively to a range of audiences in both written and oral formats.
- Experience in applied research and collaborations between industry, scientific and development bodies.
- Proven experience in project development, implementation, management and delivery – including financial management with effective governance, procurement, budgeting and reporting.
- A high level of computer literacy including the use of standard MS Office software packages.
- Proven Report Writing Skills to include a demonstrated ability to review technical documents.
- A demonstrated ability to organise and conduct field work including research at sea aboard a variety of boats and research vessels.
- A full clean Driving License.
- Willingness to attend meetings in Ireland and abroad.

Desirable:

- A post graduate qualification in marine science, environmental science, planning or geospatial science.
- Experience in leading and managing research projects from proposal stage through to completion.
- Familiarity with the Irish aquaculture industry and other relevant marine sectors e.g., Offshore Renewable Energy, Seaweed Harvesting.
- Familiarity with ecosystem service frameworks.
- A publication record in field of benthos ecology and/or benthic invertebrate taxonomy.
- An understanding of the importance of communications in project development and results dissemination with demonstrated excellence in both written and spoken English with a range of audiences.
- Understanding of available marine data as a basis for improved ecosystem based advice and decision making tools.

Training:

A range of training will be provided as required, both on the job and through appropriate courses. Training needs will be identified using the **Marine Institute's** Performance Management & Development Framework (PMDS).

Special personal attributes required for the position:

- Demonstrates energy, dynamism reliability and a positive attitude
- Demonstrated analytical skills and the ability to review and disseminate high volumes of data and information in a timely manner.
- Takes ownership of tasks and is determined to see them through to a conclusion.
- An ability to work in an organised manner and progress work independently, managing time effectively to deliver multiple outputs on time.
- An ability to manage a multi-disciplinary team and shared resources working across multiple programmes and projects.
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- A collaborative and open approach to project and programme success.
- The ability to remain focused when multiple important deadlines coincide.
- Solutions orientated with excellent initiative and problem solving skills.
- Self-sufficiency, while being a good team player.
- Excellent interpersonal skills.
- Possesses sound, balanced judgement and strong analytical abilities.
- Possess a diplomatic manner, with the ability to resolve issues before conflict occurs with stakeholders.
- Ability to effectively communicate in written and audio-visual formats.
- Strong leadership qualities.

Salary:

Remuneration is in accordance with the Public Sector, Department of Finance approved Salary Scale for Team Leader, with a starting salary of €63,275 (as at October 1st 2020) per annum pro-rated with time worked. You will become a member of the Single Public Service Pension Scheme if you are not currently a member of a public sector pension scheme (or have not been a member in the past six months). Cognisance will be taken of terms if employment if you are currently employed in the public sector or have been within the past six months.

Annual Leave:

The annual leave entitlement for a Team Leader is 27 working days per annum pro-rated to reflect time worked. Annual leave entitlements are exclusive of Public Holidays. All leave must be approved by your manager or their authorised representative; in advance of being taken and in line with Marine Institute leave policies.

Duration of Contract:

A contract of indefinite duration will be issued for this role, at the discretion of the Marine Institute and subject to effective performance and satisfactory completion of 12-month probation period.

How to Apply:

A C.V. and letter of application, summarising experience and skill set applicable to the position should be emailed to recruitment@marine.ie or posted to Human Resources at the **Marine Institute**, Rinville, Oranmore, Galway. All correspondence for this post should quote reference **MEFS/Benthos Team Lead/2021**

Closing date for applications

All applications for this post should be received by the Marine Institute in advance of **12 noon on 27th January 2021**. Please note that late applications will not be accepted.

Use of Data - all personal data and the information submitted for this application will be used solely for the purpose of this campaign, after which it will be deleted in line with our General Data Protection Regulation Policy and data retention schedule. All information will be treated with the strictest confidence and accessed only by those involved directly in the campaign.

The Marine Institute is an equal opportunities employer