

Macroalgae in the Republic of Ireland

Licensing and Permitting

Wild Harvest: A foreshore consent (licence) must be obtained from the relevant Ministry (Foreshore Unit, Department of Environment, Community and Local Government DECLG) for activities such as seaweed collection conducted on the foreshore. Licences last five years and are subject to an annual fee payable to the government. The Department recommends that applicants first consult with them prior to any application. A key consideration is whether the project requires an Environmental Impact Statement to be generated under an EIA process.

Longline cultivation: The DAFM issues licences for commercial aquaculture activities, including the cultivation of seaweed. Applications for a licence should be made directly to the DAFM. Here, applicants must be able to demonstrate that they can undertake the proposed activity with a high degree of professionalism. Under the old system there were two types of licence: aquaculture and trial licences. A new system is currently being rolled out where applications fall into one of seven templates.

The contacts are provided here:

	Licensing authority / contact
Wild Harvesting	Foreshore Unit, Department of Environment, Community and Local Government DECLG http://www.environ.ie/en/Foreshore/ApplyingforaForeshoreConsent/
Commercial aquaculture	Department for Agriculture, Food and the Marine (DAFM) www.agriculture.gov.ie/

Planning

Any development on the foreshore will require planning permission from the Local Planning Authority even if a license is granted by the government. In cases where certain developments are proposed, the applicant may be asked to prepare an environmental impact statement (EIS) if the activity presents significant environmental effects. Where an Environmental Impact Assessment is required, planning applications should be submitted directly to An Bord Pleanála

Regulatory Issues

Regulatory issues are very much dependent on end use of biomass. Please consult the relevant factsheet for further information.

Factsheet #15. Algae as Feedstock for Energy Generation - European fuel quality and other bioenergy legislation are explained

Factsheet #16. Algae as Feedstock for Chemicals - this covers REACH and other pertinent legislation

Factsheet #17. Algae as Feedstock for Food or Feed - FEMAS and other regulations for entering the food chain are described in more detail.

Key Points to consider:

1. What is the size of the planned operation: marine and terrestrial footprint?
2. What services exist already on the site? Is this a new operation or change of use?
3. Is the site located environmentally sensitive areas / sites of special scientific interest?
4. What species of macroalgae will be grown in relation to what is already present in the ecosystem?
5. What are the offshore and onshore requirements?

First step:

- Contact DECLG and/ or DAFM

Key Points to consider:

1. What size is the facility?
2. Is the site located close to dwellings / environmentally sensitive areas / sites of special scientific interest?
3. Are any discharges produced by the site?
4. What services exist already on the site?
5. Is the site likely to cause nuisance - e.g. noise above levels of agricultural machinery / odour / light above dense street lighting?

First step:

- Contact Local Planning Authority

Key Points to consider:

1. What inputs have gone into the production process: are any classified as waste?
2. What is the target end use of the algal biomass?
3. What further processing steps are required?