



Bord Iascaigh Mhara
Irish Sea Fisheries Board

Preliminary Seed Mussel Survey of Cahore Point (shore) and the Rusk Channel – 12/05/15 to 21/05/15

Vessel: MV T'Burke (BIM), Skipper John Murphy, Survey Officer Nicolas Chopin

Equipment: 400 kHz side scan sonar, 1 meter dredge.

Area surveyed: Along the shore in front of Morris Castle and in the Rusk Channel from Buoy N.2 to the North Blackwater buoy.

Survey summary:

Seed mussels regularly settle in the area between the shore and the Rusk Bank; a small bed was found last year in this location. Tows were conducted in the area during the survey but no seed was found, only old bivalve shells and stones with few urchins and starfish appearing in the dredges. No side scan sonar data was collected following those results.

Following last year's post-fishing survey in the Rusk Channel at the end of September; it was decided to look at the condition of the seabed after the winter. No seed from last year was found and the ground doesn't seem to have changed (similar features as that recorded in the early 2014 survey).

The survey was extended further south in the channel, a large amount of starfish were found in 4 tows (TC 14, 15, 17 and 18). Young seed was found on stones and on bryozoan (1 to 3 mm, TC 13 and 24), but only in small quantities.

The Rusk Channel is always challenging for survey between strong current and static fishing gear; a large area had to remain un-surveyed due to the large amount of pots.

Bottom type:

Gravel/ small stones and sand in the channel. Shells and sand along the shore.

Recommendations:

Again, it is very early to have an accurate idea of the available seed mussel in Cahore for the 2015 fishery. However the signs mirror that of this time in 2014 but this doesn't guarantee that it will produce a bed. As for the Long Bank and Wexford approaches, D-larvae were still in the water up to mid-May. Again starfish are already well established in the area. More surveys will take place later in the season.

Nicolas Chopin

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Notes for the map:

TC stands for Tow Cahore

Dgd stand for dredge

