‘Something Fishy’ is an education resource promoted by Inland Fisheries Ireland in conjunction with Blackrock Education Centre. The Programme is aimed at fifth and sixth classes in Primary School. It explores different aspects of fish life, e.g. water, fish, the life cycle of a salmon, fish stocks, angling, conservation of our rivers and lakes, invasive species and fish as part of the food chain. It is divided into three separate parts containing three essential elements: (1) Lessons in the classroom; (2) Fieldtrip to the river; (3) The Project or Competition.

The educational aspects of the project are managed by Blackrock Education Centre and by the local Education Centres taking part. The fieldtrips are managed by IFI. A Steering Committee representative of Blackrock EC and IFI oversees the running of the programme: Pat Seaver, Director for the Blackrock Education Centre and Suzanne Campion, Head of Business Development for IFI. The national coordinator for IFI is Mark Corps and Michael Kennedy is the national coordinator for the Education Centres.

The Something Fishy project is a dream project for schools. For the Teacher the lessons are based on the SESE Curriculum. It is an integrated programme which includes many teaching and learning experiences emanating from the Strands and Strand Units of Geography, History and Science in the new Curriculum. Notes for the teacher are included and they give the relevant background information and guidelines on working through the lessons. The lessons and notes etc. are available in Irish and English.

For the Pupil the project is an invitation to virtually leave the classroom in pursuit of learning, excitement, enjoyment and fun. The lessons transport the child’s mind to the waters of Ireland to discover the History, Geography and Science elements of the curriculum. The interactive website, www.somethingfishy.ie supports the project.

The aim of the programme is to educate children about the importance of the river environment with special emphasis on anti-pollution and anti-litter, water safety, invasive species and angling. The pupils are introduced to different fish species in our rivers and are advised on how we can work together to ensure water quality and conservation of fish and fishing in Ireland.
An integral part of the whole project is the visit by the pupils to the river, or a visit by the Fisheries Staff to the classroom. This is where the IFI and their dedicated staff come into their own. They are the experts and they have the children in the palm of their hands as they teach the values of life on the river and its environment. They encourage safety and awareness and explain the importance of water quality and ways of judging it and improving it. They demonstrate the importance of conservation and promote the anti pollution and anti litter message. Invasive Species, as a topic is introduced and the possible consequences discussed. The IFI officers take ‘kick samples’ with the children and explain the findings. They show samples of fish life in the river by ‘electric fishing’. This activity is very exciting for the pupils as they see young salmon, trout, eels and other species up close and they are allowed to touch and feel the caught fish. And then there is the opportunity for the pupils of reinforcing their learning in the classroom and on the fieldtrip with the various games, quizzes and demonstrations which are included in the special website, www.somethingfishy.ie

In some regions the ‘river’ is brought into the classroom. This is sometimes done when bad weather or unsuitable ground conditions do not allow for easy access to the river bank. The IFI officers in the Donegal EC catchment area do most of their work with the Something Fishy schools in this manner and provide an excellent alternative experience for the pupils. They come, fully equipped with fish, tanks, kick samples from the local river and other teaching / learning aids including a powerpoint presentation on the ecology of, and threats to, the local fisheries environment. They discuss ‘invasive species’ and show many examples of their devastating and destructive powers on water, plant and fish lives. The students are offered the opportunity of physically studying various forms of aquatic life from their local rivers, including insects, fish eggs and juvenile fish. Students are split up into small groups and given trays, containing locally sourced ‘kick samples’ of rocks and insects from the river bed. Each group
examines these samples and the various creatures are picked out and viewed through microscopes. The mobile fish tanks ensure the children get the chance to pick up and study these creatures in an interactive and fun-learning environment.

To complete their involvement in ‘Something Fishy’ the pupils are invited to take part in a Competition based on any aspect of their learning and experiences from the programme. (For 2012/2013 the theme for the project was “Invasive Species” which had to be dealt with, briefly, within the presentation.) The Class Project has to be presented digitally on a CD ROM, DVD, or USB memory stick or on a School Web Site. Local and National prizes are awarded.

Plans for the rolling out of the Something Fishy programme 2012/2013 started last August with a meeting in Blackrock Education Centre, attended by Pat Seaver BEC (Director), Suzanne Campion IFI (Director of Business Development), Mark Corps IFI and Michael Kennedy. Strategies were made and markers were laid down following discussions on such topics as:

- SF Project for 2012/13;
- Timeline for SF 2012/13;
- Education Centres to promote SF;
- The winning SF Project 2012;
- Budget;
- redevelopment of SF Worksheets;
- Future development of the SF Web Site.

A commitment was made by both Directors to support and promote Something Fishy for the year ahead by encouragement, enablement, communication and sponsorship.
The IFI staff members, involved in the promotion of ‘Something Fishy’, were quickly off the mark with their meeting at Lough Owel on Monday Sept. 3rd 2012. Discussions were had and decisions made on many different aspects of Something Fishy:

- Ideas and decisions emanating from the Meeting in BEC on 17th August…
- The details of school numbers that took part in the programme and the numbers of pupils who participated…
- The winning presentation submitted by Ballygarrett NS, Co. Wexford // copies to be given to all RBDs … (d) budgetary details // each RBD to be supported for 15 days x 2 staff // availability of fieldwork equipment // allocation of prizes …
- End of year school project // theme // format // criteria for judging…
- Possibilities of ‘fish books’ and posters for distribution as handouts…
- Timeline for the year…
- ECs participating…
- Discussion as to the type of schools involved // National Schools // Special Schools // Gaelscoileanna…
- Practical suggestions on classroom visits and river fieldtrips…
- Re-designed web site and new lessons……

The administration of Something Fishy promised good after this worthwhile and productive get-together of IFI officers.
Round 1 visits to the Education Centres followed:

- Co. Wexford EC…Sept 6th;
- Mayo ESC…Sept 13th;
- Co. Donegal EC…Oct. 1st;
- Carrick-on-Shannon EC…Oct.2nd;
- Sligo EC…Oct 3rd;
- West Cork EC…Oct 8th;
- Blackrock EC…Oct.9th;
- Navan EC…Oct 17th;
- Kilkenny EC…Nov 5th.

At all these meetings plans were drawn up for the successful promotion of the Something Fishy Programme by the staff of the Education Centres and by the IFI staff allotted to the job. Each Centre had its own approach to running the programme; the Education Centres focussing on 5th and 6th Class pupils in their catchment and the IFI officers targeting some of the ‘hot spots’ on the rivers. The protagonists in all areas had, in common, dedication to the cause and commitment to the education and river experiences of all the pupils taking part. The subjects debated and decided upon at these meetings included some of the topics, mentioned earlier, and many more:

- Finn Valley involvement with Loughs Agency support;
- Co-ordinated, integrated approach to SF;
- The availability of SF booklet;
- The importance of good contacts between ECs and IFI;
- Instructions for Local Coordinator;
- The importance of IFI honouring commitment to fieldtrips;
- Criteria for judging SF Projects;
- Protocol of engagement for schools;
- Insurance
- Parental permission for photographs to be taken
- Up to date contact details to be available to ECs and IFI
- School fully responsible for pupils at all times
- Teacher must remain in classroom with IFI members
- Acknowledgement of IFI anf ECs involvement to be credited in reporting
- Official wall-plaque for winning school
- Special requirements for students to be made known in advance of fieldtrip
- IFI officers and Local Coordinator are available for advice and help at project
National winner and local winner for each EC district to be acknowledged on SF website
IFI officers available on request for teachers summer courses
FAW to cater for SF participants in some special way
Schools to be ‘selected’ or ‘targeted’ and then invited to participate when take-up is poor.

The 2nd round of visits to the Education Centres were:
- Co Wexford EC…Oct 5th;
- Blackrock EC…March 4th;
- Co. Donegal EC…March 6th;
- Sligo EC…March 6th;
- Carrick-on-Shannon EC…March 7th;
- Mayo ESC…March 7th;
- Navan EC…March 25th;
- West Cork EC…March 25th;
Galway EC was visited on May 15th to discuss participation in Something Fishy for 2013/2014 and the outcome of that meeting was very positive.

During the year there have been many great achievements, activities and special highlights connected with Something Fishy. The most exciting and memorable of these must surely be the celebration of and presentation of prizes to the overall winning school, Ballygarrett National School, Co. Wexford, in the National ‘Something Fishy’ Competition, on Friday October 12th, 2012. The event took place in the Co. Wexford Education Centre, Enniscorthy. It was a great day. Guests of honour were the children themselves, accompanied by their teachers and some parents. They brought with them their winning, quirky presentation of “Fishylympics” which was based on the Olympic Games of 2012. Their interpretation of invasive species taking part in the games gave them the opportunity of ticking most of the boxes in connection with the understanding of Something Fishy. This was a great achievement for Mary Doyle NT and her pupils in Ballygarrett NS and for their local E.C. especially as the Co. Wexford Education Centre was the winning EC the previous year, also, making it the envy of the other ECs taking part, nationwide.
This was an auspicious occasion and was attended by many dignitaries. Minister of State, Fergus O’Dowd TD, was present and it was he who awarded the various prizes to the children. He spoke very favourably on the educational opportunities being afforded to schools by the Education Centres and the IFI. He complimented the winners and their teachers on their great achievements and he particularly praised the Education Centre in Enniscorthy for promoting the programme so successfully and the IFI staff for their great efforts in expounding their knowledge of river life to the children.

Also present on the day were: Paula Carolan, Director Co. Wexford Education Centre and her staff: Pat Seaver, Director Blackrock Education Centre; Ciarán Byrne, CEO, IFI; Suzanne Campion, Head of Business Development, IFI; David McInerney, Director SE River Basin District, IFI; Mark Corps, IFI; Paul Bourke, IFI; Stephen Byrne, IFI; Myles Roban, IFI; Michael Farnan, IFI; Morgan Rowsom, IFI; Tom Moorehouse, Enniscorthy Town Council Member. A special invited guest, the 4-time All Ireland winning Wexford Camogie All Star and member of the 3-in-a-row team, Catherine O’Loughlin, was there, also, and she presented each of the winning pupils with a ‘Something Fishy goodie bag’.

Ciarán Byrne CEO, IFI and Pat Seaver, Director BEC spoke to the assembled group with words of congratulations and praise for the winners and words of thanks and appreciation for all concerned with the promotion of the project. Both were very appreciative of the enthusiastic support for the project which is so evident throughout the year and throughout the Regions.
The children were presented, on the day, with the Something Fishy Perpetual Trophy. This trophy is a very special Bog Oak Trophy, sculptured by Michael Casey. Michael is one of Ireland’s top artists in wood, especially bog oak, yew and pine. His work can be found all over the world, in the homes of the rich and famous, in churches, financial institutions and public buildings. His sculptures can be seen outside the terminal building in Dublin Airport, outside the Bórd Na Móna headquarters in Newbridge, at Mullingar General Hospital, in the Céide Fields Centre in Mayo and at the Mater Private Hospital, in Dublin. In the past his sculptures have been presented to such special people as, Nelson Mandela, Yasser Arafat, Charles J. Haughey, President Bill Clinton and Pope John Paul II. So this is a very special trophy. The children were presented, also, with a special trophy for their school and a cheque for €500.

Eight Education Centres presented projects for the National Project Competition at the end of June 2013. The quality of entries this year was outstanding with the various interpretations of the Something Fishy Programme. Many different methods were employed in the presentations, including art, music, verse, drama, dance, powerpoint, animation and research. All projects were presented digitally and the judges spent several hours studying the work done. In the end all were agreed that the overall winner was Ayr Hill National School, Ramelton, Co. Donegal. They presented a worthy project and an excellent body of work on their local river Leannan, in the good old fashioned style of research, observation and
recording. The Leannan is a 30 mile long river, flowing from the heart of the Glendowan Mountains to Lough Swilly at Ramelton. Ayr Hill is a mainstream, co-educational primary school under the patronage of the Presbyterian Church and it has 56 pupils on the rolls. The presentation to the National Winner will take place in the Co.Donegal Education Centre, Donegal on Friday October 11th 2013.
Observations / Conclusions

The whole Project for 2012 / 2013 has been a great success, in my opinion. In total one hundred and eleven schools took part. Although this is the least number of schools participating for many years the quality of the work being done in the schools and on the fieldtrips is phenomenal. All these schools have been facilitated in providing education at its best. Wonderful learning experiences have been achieved and solid work produced. Confirmation and proof of this is evident in the delight of the teachers and also in the quality of the projects that have been handed in for the Competition. These experiences and accomplishments could not have been achieved without the expert help of the local co-ordinators and IFI officers.

The quality of work being done by IFI staff in the classrooms and on the river bank is excellent. These people make the lessons come alive on the river bank and send children back, inspired, to their class-rooms, excited, full of ideas and eager to get on with the work. They do a wonderful job and succeed in guaranteeing that Something Fishy is not just another, ‘boring’ school lesson. They give the children a concrete interpretation of what they have learned in school and an opportunity to question the experts and challenge their own ideas. Every year there is a new energy and a renewed commitment to the programme by the IFI staff, involved.

An extract, taken from the report of the West Cork EC, expresses the expertise of the IFI officer involved and the satisfaction of the EC and the schools participating. This observation is a good sample of the high standing that the IFI officers are held in throughout the programme.

1. The river visits were a highlight for all schools with each one run most professionally by Michael McPartland.
2. Michael McPartland facilitated the river visits in a most professional manner with great pedagogical skills and understanding of the age group and gender profiles of the young people involved. This was reflected in the manner in which he facilitated the session through dialogue, presentation and activities alternating over approx. 15 minute spans. He has great attention to detail with Health and Safety procedures as a priority at all times. Michael is an integral part of the success of this project for West Cork.

There is an ever increasing sense of partnership, a substantial bond, building up between the ‘Something Fishy’ partners which is very noticeable. This connection is nurtured by meetings and regular contacts and is based on the understanding of the work to be done by the Education Centre, by the IFI and by the Schools concerned. It will continue to develop with all the partners working together and having respect for each others responsibilities and expectations.

The use of the local Education Centre for the Presentation of the National Trophy and Prizes to the winning school in the Project Competition is very satisfactory. The EC is happy to celebrate the victory and is easily accessible to the school concerned. The whole occasion becomes a major event which generates a great sense of importance and pride for the local community.

One negative outcome of the Something Fishy programme this year was the non-facilitation of fieldtrips to 19 participating schools, all of which had completed the lessons in the classrooms. There were different reasons for this omission but it was mainly due to the fact that the IFI officers required time off work or were busy elsewhere.

I have really enjoyed another year as National Co-ordinator and I would like to thank Suzanne Campion IFI, Mark Corps IFI and Pat Seaver BEC for their continued support and cooperation. Likewise I
would like to acknowledge the great welcome I receive around the country from the members of IFI and the Education Centres who work so well for Something Fishy. What all these people have in common is dedication and commitment to the work of Something Fishy. The good will that goes with this project is very evident. All schools involved are on to a winner and I suspect that the members of IFI, in their contact with the children, appreciate the opportunity it gives them too. The quality of learning they impart in such an enjoyable and practical way is the envy of most teachers. It is universally acknowledged by the teachers involved, that this experience at the hands of the IFI staff is the highlight of the project. I look forward to being part of Something Fishy team in the coming school year 2013 / 2014.

Date: 22/07/2013

Michael Kennedy. (National Co-ordinator)

Reports from the Education Centres

Report 1

West Cork Education Centre
June 2013
(Copy of Email)

Dear Michael,

I hope that all is well with you and that you are enjoying the fine sunshine over these days.

Firstly, thank you sincerely for your help and support with the Something Fishy project again this year.

It has been a success story for West Cork Education Centre again this year.

With regard to feedback and Evaluation, the following comments may be helpful:

1. Schools embraced this project with enthusiasm.
2. The Classroom visit by the Inland Fisheries Officer (Michael McPartland) gave added value to the commencement of the project for schools. Pupils have traditionally and continue to value the word of the ‘outsider’ to the world of the Classroom. Interaction between teachers, pupils and experienced filed personnel is to be encouraged within the guidelines of child protection etc. Rather than just a classroom visit, this initiative presents a model where the classroom visit offers an introduction to the process ahead.
3. The website was most helpful for teachers and the response to the interactive lessons was very positive.
4. However, despite being advised by letter, many teachers were not aware of the online resources until we contacted them directly or the Inland Fisheries Officer visited the schools. It would be useful to notify all primary schools of this resource as it can support the SESE programme well even outside of the Something Fishy project.
The river visits were a highlight for all schools with each one ran most professionally by Michael McPartland.

Michael McPartland facilitated the river visits in a most professional manner with great pedagogical skills and understanding of the age group and gender profiles of the young people involved. This was reflected in the manner in which he facilitated the session through dialogue, presentation and activities alternating over approx. 15 minute spans. He has great attention to detail with Health and Safety procedures as a priority at all times. Michael is an integral part of the success of this project for West Cork.

The competition is a very worthwhile part of this initiative but fails to attract all schools to partake. While competition is not necessary for learning to take place it might be worth exploring possible report structures which could be used to evaluate the learning while also adding a focus to the existing project. In this way, schools will have a report of the project undertaken in written or digital format. Recently, we have had the experience of a primary school submitting a film for our FIS festival based on the Something Fishy river visit. I am cognisant of the opportunity for this through the competition route but would recommend that there would be a reporting structure for all schools involved.

The connectivity between Something Fishy co-ordinator, Inland Fisheries Officer, Education Centre Director and Administrator and the schools is key to the success of this programme. The experience for West Cork has been one of regular contact and updates with all partners equally informed.

Michael, I hope that the above offers you a flavour of our thoughts.

Regards,

Mary O’Donovan

Mary O’Donovan
Director
West Cork Education Centre
023-8856756
Mayo Education Centre wrote all 181 primary schools in its administration area in September 2012 inviting them to take part in the Something Fishy Programme. An information evening also took place (mid October 2012) in Mayo Education Centre for primary school principals and again principals were informed of the Something Fishy Programme and invited to take part in all of some of the programme. Resulting from contact with schools 14 schools responded indicating interest in taking part.

Those interested schools are as follows:

- Holy Family NS, Newport, Co Mayo
- Kinaffe NS, Swinford, Co Mayo
- Manulla NS, Manulla, Castlebar, Co Mayo
- Scoil Naomh Pádraig, An Chlochbhreac, An Fháirche, Co na Gaillimhe
- Cloonliffeen NS, Ballinrobe, Co Mayo
- Snugboro NS, Snugboro, Co Mayo
- Coill a tSiáin SN, Coill a' tSiáin, Tuar Mhic Eadaigh, Clár Chlainne Mhuiris
- Cross NS, Claremorris, Co Mayo
- Gortjordan NS, Gortjordan, Co Mayo
- Fahy NS, Fahy, Westport, Co Mayo
- Barnacarroll NS, Barnacarroll, Co Mayo
- Louisburgh NS, Louisburgh, Co Mayo
- Taugheen NS, Taugheen, Co Mayo
- Killeen NS, Carrowniskey, Louisburg

Later however, Taugheen NS and Killeen NS contacted us to let us know that they had to drop out of the programme. We could not make contact with two other schools to see if they took part in the programme, those were - Coill a tSiáin SN, Coill a’ tSiáin, Tuar Mhic Eadaigh; and Scoil Naomh Pádraig, An Chlochbhreac.

**A total of 10** schools took part in the programme.
The nature of the 3 part programme meant that schools could take part in all or some aspects the project. The uptake for each specific part of the programme is detailed as follows:

**Lessons:** All 10 schools indicated that they were interested in the Lessons element of the programme.

**Field Trip:** All 10 schools indicated that they were interested in the Lessons and the Fieldtrip components of the programme.

**Project:** 9 schools expressed interest initially in taking part in the project element.

## Outcome of the Something Fishy Programme 2013

We followed up with all the schools, the outcome is as follows:

**Lessons:** All 10 schools did the Lessons component of the Programme.

**Field Trip:** There seems to have been an issue with regard to the Fieldtrips. Just 3 schools got to go on a fieldtrip.
- Cloonliffen NS, Ballinrobe – went to Cong Hatchery. Twice! They loved it.
- Louisburg NS - went on a fieldtrip, but not with the Fisheries Officer. One of the children’s parents works in Delphi and arranged it. The loved it and are going back again in the autumn.
- Cross NS, Claremorris, Co Mayo.

Gortjordan NS – got a call to arrange fieldtrip nut could not take up the offer at the time.

4 of the schools – nobody from Fisheries contacted them in relation to arranging a field trip or a school visit.

Many schools felt that the field trips would be better earlier in the year not so close to schools closing for the holidays.

I understand that the Fisheries Officer dealing with our catchment area had some difficulty this year that required time-off work. This probably left contact with the school a bit too late in the school calendar for a decent outcome.

However, many of the schools expressed a keen interest in going on a fieldtrip or school visit with the Fisheries officer at a future date.

**Project:** Just one school submitted an entry to the Competition. This was sent to Blackrock Ed Centre for consideration.
One school did do a project and got completely involved internally in the class but did not wish to take part at competition level.

Having spoken to all the participating schools, many of them felt that the deadline for the competition was very close to the end of school term. As there is so much to finalise at the end of the school year, they felt the timing would be better suited to another time when there wouldn’t be so much pressure on staff to get things completed.

It may be worth considering (it is only my suggestion by the way) an Awards element as opposed to a Competition. It has been our experience that there can be a better participation rate when you take the competitive nature out of things. It’s only a suggestion.

I hope this helps you in terms of feedback.

Kind regards,

Gráinne McConnell
Mayo Education Centre
Phone: 094 9020700

Report 3

Carrick on Shannon Education Centre
(Copy of Email)

Michael,
In the previous email I forwarded the list of schools with details of whether or not they received a visit from IFI staff.

The schools that engaged with the project found it very beneficial. Schools were delighted with the visit and input of our co-ordinator Elizabeth Brady.

We know that the schools were contacted late in relation to participating in the project and as a result the timeframe was very tight hence a lot of schools didn’t get to submit a project. However this will be rectified in September as our brochure will be ready to send to the schools in September and at that stage schools will have an opportunity to apply for the project.

Some schools were also put off by having to submit in digital format. They would have liked more guidelines on this.
Our Co-ordinator Elizabeth Brady our chairperson Joe Bambrick and I visited the three schools that received a prize Sacred Heart NS Granard 1st, Scoil Samhthann Ballinalee 2nd and St Mel’s NS Ardagh 3rd. We employed a photographer to capture the presentations and I will forward a copy of these to you. We enjoyed visiting the schools and meeting the pupils who had worked on the projects. In one school we also met parents and members of the BOM as our visited co-incided with their end of year mass. The winning project is being posted this evening so it should be in Blackrock on Friday. Let me know if you need anything else. 

Best wishes

Catherine Martin  
Director 
Carrick on Shannon Education Centre  
Marymount  
Carrick on Shannon  
Co. Leitrim 

Tel: 071 9620383  
Fax: 071 9621471  
Email: cmartin@carrickedcentre.ie  
Website: www.carrickedcentre.ie

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<td>St. Mel’s NS, Ardagh</td>
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<td>Drumlease NS</td>
<td>Dromahair, Co. Leitrim</td>
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<td>Diffreen NS</td>
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<tr>
<td>Lenamore National School</td>
<td>Legan, Co. Longford</td>
<td>Yes</td>
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Above are the responses from the schools regarding whether they were visited by the IFI or not.
Report 4

Something Fishy Annual Report Letterkenny District 2012 – 2013

After the Something Fishy Programme launch in September 2012 I arranged to meet with the Director of the Donegal Education Centre Mrs. Sally Bonner to discuss what area we were going to target this year. We decided to cover the schools in the Fanad area and one school which we missed in Ramelton the previous year. As there is no longer a regional co-ordinator for the Something Fishy Programme Sally Bonner takes the time out of her busy schedule to accompany me on the first visit to the schools. I find this a great help as Sally is always well received by the school principals and teachers. I would hope that this partnership will continue in the years ahead.

A total of seven schools were visited and the programme was delivered to 215 children.

1. St. Davadogs National School, Tamney, Fanad
2. Drumfad National School, Kerrykeel, Fanad
3. Caishel National School, Fanad
4. Doaghbeg National School, Portsalon
5. Croaghross National School, Portsalon
6. Scoil Choluim National School, Ballyheerin, Fanad
7. Ayr Hill National School, Ramelton

Drumfad National School requested a field trip to the Tullaghobegley River which flows from Lough Altan and is situated at the foot of Mount Errigal. I also arranged for the class to visit one of the largest smolt hatcheries in the country which is situated downstream of Lough Altan. Philip O Donnell the manager of the Marine Harvest hatchery gave the class a detailed account of how the hatchery operates and the class was able to see the grading process taking place, they also had the opportunity to touch and hold the fish. I took the school on a river walk on the Tullaghobegley which runs beside the hatchery. We looked at the habitat and we carried out an electro fishing survey. I took a kick sample and broke the class into groups where they identified the different macro invertebrates present.

Projects were submitted by Drumfad, Scoil Choluim and Ayr Hill. The standard of the projects were excellent but Ayr Hill Ramelton (074 9151512) was a clear winner and will go forward to represent Donegal in the National competition.

The Something Fishy Programme was a huge success this year and the Fanad community made us feel very welcome and they were amazed that Fishery Officers would take the time visit the schools and talk to their children.
During the class visits and subsequent visits there after I was able to invite them to attend the FAW events that were planned. I would estimate that 15 children from these schools attended the event at Lough Fern.

Owen Kelly
IFI Letterkenny

**Report re Something Fishy Ballyshannon 2013**

We attended 10 schools during the 2013 something fishy programme.

- St Macartans Bundoran 53 pupils
- Robertson Ballintra 35 pupils
- Holy Family Ballyshannon 19 pupils
- St Ernans Ballintra 26 pupils
- Bruckless ns Bruckless 30 pupils
- Killaghtee Dunkineely 27 pupils
- Dunkineely ns Dunkineely 30 pupils
- Meenanerary ns Carrick 18 pupils
- Frosses ns Frosses 24 pupils
- Carrick ns Carrick 48 pupils

Total numbers of pupils 310

Staff: Paul Gallagher, Dara Timpson, and Hugh Gillispie

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**Report 5**

**Co. Wexford Education Centre:**
**Something Fishy Report 2012 / 2013**

The “Something Fishy” national programme is jointly organised by Inland Fisheries Ireland and Blackrock Education Centre, to promote, in selected schools, the use of the ‘Something Fishy’ online lessons and tasks. The objective is to promote the work of the IFI in the context of the primary school curriculum. Something Fishy is aimed at fifth and sixth classes and strives to create awareness of the fisheries’ resource and to highlight the importance of the children’s local environment and fishery habitat. The Co. Wexford Education Centre was one of the nine National Education Centres to be selected to
participate and the project was rolled out here in September 2012. The academic work started in the class-
rooms of the schools taking part, from then onwards:

**Something Fishy: 2012 / 2013….Co. Wexford Education Centre.**

**Barrow Catchment Schools.**

St Canices NS. :: 051-422813 :: Rachel O Donnell
Gusserane NS. :: 051-562107 :: Tony Heuston
Clongeen NS. :: 051-565713 :: Geraldine O Sullivan / Siobhán Maher
St. Leonards NS. :: 051-562570 :: Martin Kennedy
Shielbaggan NS. :: 051-562410 :: Patricia Foran
Duncannon NS. :: 051-389206 :: Martin Lyons
Ballyhacket NS. :: 051-389368 :: Mary McDonald
New Ross CBS :: 051-421064 :: Brian MacMahon / Áine Waters

**3 Schools at source of Barrow:**

Rosenallis NS. :: 057-8628663 :: Jackie Hyland
Clonaslee NS. :: 057-8648334 :: John O Sullivan / Siobhán O Donohue
Ballyfin NS. :: 057-8755225 :: Michael Maloney / Shane…. 

**Slaney Catchment Schools.**

Caim NS. :: 053-9255534 :: Claire Ruth // 087-2717547
Caim NS. :: 053-9255534 :: Brendan Fitzpatrick
Galbally NS. :: 053-9247622 :: Siobhán Boyle
Ballyhogue NS. :: 053-9247677 :: Róisín Dawson
Oylegate NS. :: 053-9138509 :: Mark Kelly
Glenbrien NS. :: 053-9138398 :: Marion Maher // 087-6133423
Monageer NS. :: 053-9234453 :: Andy Hanrahan
Rosslare NS. :: 053-9132501 :: AnnMarie Carty // 087-6355960
Hacketstown NS. :: 059-6471199 :: Gabriel Keane
Knockananna NS :: 059-6471364 :: Ann Gartland

As coordinator, I visited all these schools by November 2011 and had discussions with the relevant teachers and the pupils in their classrooms. I was happy to get the opportunity of explaining the programme and encouraging a robust approach to the lessons. I went through the programme in a way that I felt would stimulate the children’s interest and at the same time be of assistance to the teachers. I distributed CDs on ‘From Source to Sea’ and ‘Catch and Release’ and I explained about the end of year ‘Project’ competition and the Fieldtrip to follow later.

Follow-up visits were made to the schools in the New Year to promote the work and to encourage the efforts. During the busy part of the project I was weekly in contact with the different schools as part of their overall support system. I explained the importance of presenting a class project at the end of the year and I was available to help them through any problems they encountered in dealing with Something Fishy. I requested each school to get maximum publicity for (a) the Project, (b) the Co. Wexford Education Centre and (c) IFI, at local level, by having reports written up in the local Papers with photographs of their visits to the rivers and details of the overall project and work done in school.

Stephen Byrne, IFI and his team were in charge of the schools in the Slaney catchment and John Flynn, IFI and his staff looked after the schools in the Barrow catchment. These IFI officers are totally dedicated to their job and make every effort to make their encounters with the children as interesting and as educational as possible. They were ‘available’ to the schools throughout the project for any help required. They visited most of the schools before December. This was a very welcome support to the
teachers and it gave the IFI staff the opportunity of introducing themselves and explaining their work. Fieldtrips were facilitated by IFI between March and May, in the main. This experience, on the river bank, proved to be the highlight of the programme for most teachers and pupils. It is one thing to be told about pollution and conservation in the classroom, but getting children out on a river bank, so they can experience it for themselves, has a much greater impact. Here they meet the guardians of the rivers, the IFI officers and standing next to a stream that has been, often, used as a dumping ground for so much rubbish can have an important effect. To look at the health of the river in a more scientific way, the students were able to try the techniques of kick sampling to establish the quality of the water and electro fishing to see samples of fish living therein.

This year, the Co. Wexford Education Centre facilitated 21 schools in taking part in the programme although three teachers opted out during the period. This gave five hundred students approx. the opportunity of being informed and educated on water quality, fish, the environment and angling. An important element of the experience was ‘Invasive Species’ and it was, also, the theme for the end of term class project. Nine schools presented entries for the competition and the standard of work done by the pupils was very high. Duncannon National School was awarded 1st prize in the local contest and their project was sent to Blackrock EC to represent us in the National Competition.

One very special day in the Something Fishy calendar for the Co. Wexford EC was the Presentation of the National Award for the Something Fishy Competition in Enniscorthy on Friday October 12th. Ballygarrett N.S., with their quirky presentation of “Fishylympics” was the National Winner. This was a great achievement for Mary Doyle and her pupils in Ballygarrett and for our own E.C. especially as the Co. Wexford Education Centre was the winning EC the previous year, also, making it the envy of the other ECs taking part, nationwide.

This was an auspicious occasion and was attended by many dignitaries. Minister of State, Fergus O’ Dowd TD, was present and it was he who awarded the various prizes to the children. He spoke very favourably on the educational opportunities being afforded to schools by the Education Centres and the IFI. He complimented the winners and their teachers on their great achievements and he particularly praised the Education Centre in Enniscorthy for promoting the programme so successfully and the IFI staff for their great efforts in expounding their knowledge of river life to the children.

Also present on the day were: Paula Carolan, Director Co. Wexford Education Centre and her staff: Pat Seaver, Director Blackrock Education Centre: Ciarán Byrne, CEO, IFI: Suzanne Campion, Head of Business Development, IFI: David McNerney, Director SE River Basin District, IFI; Mark Corps, IFI; Paul Bourke, IFI: Stephen Byrne, IFI: Myles Roban, IFI: Michael Farnan, IFI: Morgan Rowsom,IFI: Tom Moorehouse, Enniscorthy Town Council Member. A special invited guest, the 4-time-All Ireland winning Wexford Camogie All Star and member of the 3-in-a-row team, Catherine O’ Loughlin, was there, also, and she presented each of the winning pupils with a ‘Something Fishy goodie bag’.

I would like to acknowledge the great help and co-operation I received from Paula Carolan, Director Co. Wexford E.C. Her vision for the success of the programme was a prerequisite for its accomplishments. Schools were facilitated in providing education at its best. Paula was always available, throughout the year, to help in the promotion of the work in hand and she completed the programme herself by visiting all the students, in their schools, who presented end of term projects for the ‘Something Fishy Competition’. I would like, also, to thank Helen Kirwan and her office team for all their assistance.
Sincere thanks also, to the IFI officers who worked so well with the schools throughout the year, all eager to promote the ethos of the programme and determined to make it successful.

Something Fishy is a wonderful project. The lesson plans are well designed. They are informative, interesting, straightforward and enjoyable to use. The fieldtrip is an excellent educational experience which is enjoyed by all. I have received positive feedback from all the schools. I am happy to be able to facilitate such a programme as coordinator.

Michael Kennedy.
July 2013.

Report 6
Blackrock Education Centre

The project this year got off to a slow start due to the fact that I was only asked to coordinate well into term 2. The extremely early Easter was another complicating factor, as many schools were having Confirmation before the Easter break.
However six schools eventually came on board, and began working on the website lessons. Initial visits were made to all schools. They all embraced the project with great enthusiasm, and were universally very complimentary about the lesson contents on the Something Fishy website.
The visits to all the classes involving the Fisheries Officer Des Chew were a great success due to his wonderful rapport with the children, his wide knowledge, and not least his sense of fun! The work already put in by the teachers and the children was very much in evidence.
The highlight, however for each group was the visit to the river. In our case this was a stretch of the river Dodder only about 4 miles from the centre of the capital city. It was really stimulating and educational for the children to see the wide variety of trees, plants, and birds along the riverbank in a busy suburban setting. The experience was greatly enhanced by the knowledge and enthusiasm of the fisheries officers who accompanied us. Many thanks to Josie, Maurice, Fergus and of course Des! We were really lucky on all the river visits to be blessed by good weather, - cold on some days, but always dry. The children were really thrilled with the ‘electro fishing’ The opportunity to see and actually handle the fish up close was terrific (and that was just me!) I was delighted to see that there were native brown trout in a river so close to the heart of the city. It was very educational too to see the effect of some of the invasive species, and the need for vigilance. The children really took this on board.
Overall the project was a very positive experience for all the classes involved and we got five very interesting projects entered into the competition. One school had to drop out as they were involved with The National Childrens Choir and the time schedules clashed. They did however request that they be ‘allowed in’ next year!
All the schools involved expressed the desire to do the project again, with another class in the future. I would like to commend the commitment of all the teachers who embraced the project wholeheartedly, despite the pressures of time. The general consensus was that it is a really worthwhile educational project to do and above all the children involved enjoyed it and had fun!!

Phil Caulfield.
Coordinator for Blackrock Education Centre. July 2013
We have reached the end of another very successful year of the Something Fishy Project in Navan Education Centre. We had a total of twenty schools taking part in the programme this year.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>School</th>
<th>Address</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>SN San Nioclás Dundalk</td>
<td>Nicholas Street</td>
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<tr>
<td>Gaelscoil na Rithe</td>
<td>Domhnach Seachnaill</td>
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<tr>
<td>St Brigid’s Special School</td>
<td>Dundalk</td>
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<tr>
<td>Oristown NS</td>
<td>Kells</td>
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<tr>
<td>St Patrick’s NS</td>
<td>Ughtyneill Moynalty</td>
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<tr>
<td>Scoil Naomh Eoin</td>
<td>Clonmagadden</td>
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<tr>
<td>Kilmainhamwood NS</td>
<td>Kells</td>
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<tr>
<td>St Paul’s PS</td>
<td>Abbeylands Navan</td>
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<tr>
<td>Scoil Naomh Buithe</td>
<td>Tenure dunleer</td>
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<tr>
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<td>Castletown Kp Navan</td>
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<tr>
<td>St Oliver Plunkett NS</td>
<td>Blackcastle Navan</td>
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<td>St Fiach’s NS</td>
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<td>Rathregan NS</td>
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<td>Robinstown Navan</td>
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<td>School Lane Collon</td>
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<td>Knocktemple NS</td>
<td>Virginia Co Cavan</td>
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<td>Kinnegad NS</td>
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I visited five of these schools and did a session with the teachers involved on using the Something Fishy website. I also talked to the teachers about entering for the competition, which all of them agreed to do.

Fionnuala McCabe and Jerry Wynne Inland Fisheries Eastern Regional Board agreed to do field trips for six of the Meath schools. Josie Mahon and Ronan O’Brien Inland Fisheries Eastern Regional Board agreed to do field trips for four of the Louth schools.

The field trips were planned for early May, but, while all of them took place many of them had to be rescheduled to near the end of May because of bad weather. As a result of this many of the schools who had promised to enter the competition withdrew as they felt they didn’t have enough time after the field trip to prepare their projects. Only one of our
schools sent in and entry as they were lucky enough to have their field trip at the beginning of May. I was very disappointed because I think that taking part in the competition is important to consolidate the knowledge gained from doing the lessons on the website and doing the field trip. Because field trips can’t start before 1st May I would suggest that the schools should do the programme with 5th classes and they should have until the last day of term to hand the projects into the Education Centre. The local and national judging could then take place during the summer holidays. The results could be back in the Education Centre by the first day of the new school year. A prize giving ceremony could then be arranged by mid September which would cause no problems if the Programme is confined to 5th class students.

Kind Regards

Séamus McDermott
Local Co-ordinator Something Fishy
Dangan,
Thomastown,
Co. Kilkenny.
3/7/2013.

Dear Michael,

I brought the “Something Fishy” programme to 7 schools this year, working out of Kilkenny Education Centre. 2 of these schools, Holy Family N.S. Templetuohy and Kilvemnon N.S. were in Co. Tipperary, 2 in Co. Carlow, Holy Family Girls N.S., Askea and Bishop Foley N. S. (both Carlow town) and 3 in Co. Kilkenny, Urlingford N.S., St. Mary’s N.S., Thomastown and Glenmore N.S. Two classes took part in both Thomastown and Glenmore.

Due to a family bereavement I did not get started as soon as planned but all schools had been visited by the end of April. Also due to illness and other reasons the staff of IFI were later than planned. They did, however, visit the schools and, as usual, did an excellent trip and presentation.

Unfortunately, while some Projects were planned and, in some cases, even commenced, none materialized. This was disappointing but understandable and I know that this time of year is a very busy and demanding time for Teachers. However, the programme was very well received in all the schools and my backup from K.E.C. was, as always, excellent.

With very best regards,
Joe Dunphy.