

## Irish seafood sector grew over 7 per cent

Ireland's seafood sector grew by 7.4 per cent, contributing EUR 1.1 billion in GDP to the Irish economy, according to Bord Iascaigh Mhara's (BIM) latest annual report.

The report, entitled Business of Seafood and launched at the National Seafood Conference 'Winning in a Changing Environment', presents a detailed review of Ireland's Seafood Sector in 2016.

BIM report growth in the industry which has primarily been driven by another strong year of domestic seafood sales at EUR 380 million and an increase in private investment by seafood enterprises.

The report also details the significant value of the seafood landed and farmed around the country's coast.

"We have a valuable and sought after raw material that is in great demand on our key markets contributing EUR 376 million in fish landings alone, EUR 167 million in farmed fish and shellfish and employing 11,000 people in our coastal communities," pointed out Jim O'Toole, BIM's CEO.

O'Toole also said that the task facing the sector now is to build on this growth, add value and diversify to withstand current challenges including Brexit and that BIM will continue to provide supports to enable this valuable industry to achieve its full potential.

The conference attracted over 200 delegates from fishing, processing, retail and aquaculture sectors.

The conference programme is focused on BIM's priorities for the sector: skills, sustainability, innovation and competitiveness. Attendees included a range of experts across these fields of the Norwegian research agency Nofima, the European Commission DG Mare, the University College Cork, who will provide invaluable insights for the plenary sessions with panellists from all sectors of the Irish seafood industry.

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