

Press Release July 21st, 2011

Two men convicted for illegal netting of Salmon in the Waterford Estuary

At a sitting of the District Court held at Ardavan, Co. Wexford on the 20th of July 2011, Judge Donnacha O' Buachalla convicted Richard Butler Junior and Richard Butler Senior, Duncannon, Co. Wexford for illegally drift netting for Salmon in the Waterford Estuary. All drift netting for Salmon has been made illegal on conservation grounds since 2006. The offences took place at approximately 3am on the 27th of August 2010.

During evidence Fishery Officer Maurice Browne and Assistant Inspector Fran Igoe explained how Mr. Richard Butler Junior and Mr. Richard Butler Senior were fishing with a 390 yard long drift net and in possession of Salmon in the Waterford estuary near Duncannon on the night of the 27th of August. Judge Donnacha O' Buachalla convicted the two men on two separate counts, imposed fines totalling €1,000 and awarded Inland Fisheries Ireland costs of €1181.60 and expenses of €356.80. Mr. Richard Butler Senior had previously been licenced to fish for Salmon before the introduction of the ban on drift net fishing. Mr. Richard Butler Junior had fished as a nominee on this licence.

Mr. David Mc Inerney, RBD Director of Inland Fisheries Ireland, commended the dedication of the fishery officers in protecting the vulnerable salmon stocks. 'The success of the conservation measures implemented since 2006 can now be seen as the Nore reopened to angling and commercial fishing in 2009 and the Suir in 2011' he stated. ' This activity is an environmental crime'.

It is widely known that netting for Salmon in the Estuary is illegal and any such illegal netting could have devastating consequences on our valuable Salmon resource, even the closure of the fishery once again due to inadequate spawners reaching the spawning beds. Such a closure would impact on recreational angling and the livelihoods of commercial fishermen, angling tourism providers and the sustainable economic development of the region. Commercial salmon fishing, subject to licence and quota, is permitted by fishermen who have not availed of the Salmon Hardship Scheme.

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Notes to Editor