

Social
Democrats

Holly
CAIRNS TD
Representing West Cork



Holly Cairns TD welcomes the High Court position on Bantry Bay Kelp harvesting.

Cork South West Social Democrat TD, Holly Cairns has welcomed the decision by Ms Justice Deirdre Murphy of the High Court that the licence to harvest kelp in Bantry Bay is not “operative or effective”. The Bantry Bay - Protect Our Native Kelp campaign have been working to oppose the granting of a licence for the mechanical harvesting.

Holly said:

“It is very timely that the environmental impact of industrial scale harvesting of Bantry Bay Kelp has been recognised during biodiversity week. This whole issue surrounding this controversy has been poor decision making that doesn't respect the value of our natural environment for coastal and island communities in West Cork.”

“Again, it was left to a community group to organise, fundraise, and go to court to ensure their voices were heard. We had the exact same thing with the Save Our Skibbereen campaign to stop the plastics factory. The state, Ministers in Dublin, and even County Hall make decisions with serious local impacts without properly consulting with communities involved. Ms Justice Murphy's comments illustrate how the state has not conducted proper trials of this process before granting licenses, despite expert advice. We need a planning system that starts with local people and supports their involvement”

“The High Court has said that the only way to know for certain what the environmental effects of mechanical harvesting of kelp will be is to conduct trials. Bantry Bay Protect Our Native Kelp expects legal battles will continue, but this is great news to get during international biodiversity week, it's a step in the right direction. In a single lifetime biodiversity has disappeared at an alarming rate and a year after the Oireachtas announced a Climate and Biodiversity emergency, no significant progress has been made.”

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“Too often we’re expected to run with something on the premise that it will create jobs, but it’s incredibly short sighted to do this at the expense of existing jobs. West Cork relies on its shores for two of our major industries, the fisheries and tourism. It shouldn't be left to communities to right these decisions. It takes incredible work, time and money, so massive shout out to Bantry Bay - Protect Our Native Kelp team and everyone involved in protecting the Bay.”

ENDS

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