

COORDINATED LOCAL AREA MANAGEMENT SYSTEMS (CLAMS)

Introduction

Coordinated Local Area Management Systems (CLAMS) is an area management tool, system and journey for collaborative engagement of producers, coordination of good practices and for communicating the benefits of sustainable fisheries and aquaculture in shared waters and coastal environments.

CLAMS was developed and has been active nationally in Ireland for several years, sponsored by BIM, the Irish Fisheries Board and the Marine Institute, with the continuous support services of RS Standards.

RS Standards are pleased to be able to promote and offer CLAMS internationally. CLAMS is a proven model that uses collaboration to build resilience to benefit and support the ongoing sustainable development of the Aquaculture and Inshore Fisheries Sectors.

RS Standards has been adding further attributes to the CLAMS model including an optional 'CLAMS Online Portal' with managed working group and public access platforms for each CLAMS Group.

Why is CLAMS important?

Inshore area operators share common water bodies and natural resources. Water is a common vector connecting operators and an uncoordinated approach or mis-appropriate actions by one, can have serious consequences on the health and survival of fish stocks in the area.

There can be many diverse groups and an uncoordinated approach or poor planning by one user group can have serious consequences on the operations, profitability and security of others in the area. The ability for organisations to coexist with other types of development and operations is paramount to the future of the area.

Good aquaculture management and responsible fishing practices implemented by individuals are important but without a robust collaborative and coordinated approach, each will remain vulnerable to ongoing external and environmental pressures and individual efforts and working in silos will remain insufficient as a defence mechanism.

CLAMS is a system based but adaptable approach to area management and spatial planning, designed to allow producers to collaborate and coordinate activities that meet their own development and operational needs whilst respecting and understanding the needs and priorities of others.

CLAMS originated as an area management system for aquaculture in Ireland and has been in operation for over 20 years. It is a recognised system for building resilience, community integration and demonstrating transparency among stakeholders within the coastal zone.

The recent certification of Clew Bay CLAMS to the Global Aquaculture Alliance's Best Area Management Standard is testament of a world class aquaculture industry that operates to the highest standards in operational and sustainable development practices.

Whilst originally designed for aquaculture, the CLAMS model is also a valuable and applicable tool for inshore and artisanal fisheries who recognise the value of a coordinated approach to their collective operations.

RS Standards provide the building blocks and support the CLAMS projects and process, with extensive guidance materials and a range of practical implementation support tools which have been developed to help a CLAMS progress along the path from collaboration, area description, to risk assessment and improvement, towards achieving best practice operating systems.

RS Standards will help organisations navigate the process of creating area descriptors with sound policies and initiatives to gain recognition as responsible area managers and operators.

What are the benefits?

CLAMS is designed to be managed as a formal, tangible and collaborative journey, with benefits of resilience, business and environment protection and recognition for involvement and progress.

CLAMS can be used anywhere in the world and allows cohesive and organised management plans to be conceived and agreed by users within a specific geographic area. This provides for more successful marine spatial planning and the demonstration of good area management and biosecurity practices to both stakeholders and regulators.

CLAMS for Aquaculture

Best Practice Farm Certification gives assurance to a certain farm specific degree but CLAMS can offer a greater and wider system reassurance for the entire area. Producers can collaborate on common challenges and create agreements which can be continually updated and advanced. This also means engagement with other water users.

CLAMS for Inshore Fisheries

Area Inshore Fisheries groups can strengthen their existing forums and cooperatives by implementing CLAMS. CLAMS can serve as a tool for agreeing and vocalising the issues and development objectives of inshore fishery groups in a coordinated and coherent manner.

A coordinated and collaborative approach can build and reinforce resilience in response to a range of environmental, social and economic factors and constraints.

CLAMS Implementation

How does it work?

The initial CLAMS set up are facilitated by RS Standards. They work on a project basis to an agreed framework and then to a formalised, proactive and transparent stakeholder orientated management

system. Once created, the work and activity of a CLAMS Group can be largely self-defined based on common needs, challenges and priorities.

CLAMS development includes;

- A Working Group of Producers
- A delegated Facilitator
- A detailed Area Descriptor
- A Working Group priority setting management system
- An area risk assessment and management Tool Kit
- A Methodology for resilience
- A defence and promotional Strategy

As part of the development and recognition journey there is also a voluntary certification option for areas e.g. via the GAA standard for Area Management. This is only actioned if deemed of value to the participants and stakeholders.

The 'CLAMS Online' Portal

As a further development to the product service RS Standards has created a 'CLAMS Online' Portal for the creation and management of CLAMS groups. Each CLAMS group can have an added option of a CLAMS group platform on the 'CLAMS Online' portal.

'CLAMS Online' allows CLAMS groups the opportunity to log on and work together online in their own defined CLAMS group platform in a virtual but collaborative environment.

Members can collaborate, communicate and work together whilst not having to be in the same specific location.

Members can:

- collaborate online on working documents, discussion boards, priority settings.
- gain access to a library of area documents and other relevant documents.
- transparently promote and publish documents and progress initiatives on the public access platform for each CLAMS area.



More Information

RS Standards would like to invite interested parties to contact us and find out how CLAMS can offer solutions and benefits for the sustainable development of aquaculture and inshore fisheries in your region.