

MARINE TIMES

IRELAND'S LEADING MARITIME NEWSPAPER

JUNE 2022 - PRICE €3



Silent Valley heading home to Ardglass after a day on the high seas - Photo courtesy Christopher Feenan

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“Relative Stability” In Common Fisheries Policy Must Be Changed

Minister Acknowledges It Has Caused Damage to Irish Fleet

Report, analysis and interview inside this issue

Honesty the Best Policy

Cormac Burke, IFSA, reports on a recent visit to Brussels where the Irish delegation were praised by the DG Mare Director for its “honest and realistic” approach to seeking change and a fairer deal for Ireland - See page 18

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the fine Art of Marine Finance

by Art Kavanagh

Going Round in Circles

Why this obsession with going round in circles querying everything but achieving nothing???

I am becoming more and more disillusioned with the way we conduct business here. It has deteriorated so much in the past 2 years and the easiest excuse is to blame it on the Covid. There were certainly guidelines which needed to be followed and which I have no doubt protected people from harm and saved lives. We continue to see it used as justification for Bad Service which has become more normal and accepted than it should be.

Bad Service is Bad Service no matter what the reason and when the reason lessens and the service does not improve Bad Service graduates to being REALLY BAD SERVICE.

This has found its unfortunate way through many Civil Service departments, The Banks and even into private Health.

I personally have serious difficulty in having to beg for a service for which I am paying. Not through my Taxes as many

people constantly refer to as "We the Taxpayers"- but in earnings Net of Tax paid.

<O)))>

The SFPA appeared in front of a Dail Committee recently and showed quite clearly the complete lack of respect they have for the fishing industry, the representatives of the fishermen and most appallingly the elected members of the Government.

As I watched the video and read through the transcripts that became more obvious and I could not get the standard excuse used at the post World War trials "I was only following orders "out of my head.

It was clear from the Dail Committee who was giving the orders and the chilling statement of the attitude embodied in "We are Regulators not Negotiators".

That's their function as described on the website lads but can I suggest

that it might be easier to be a Regulator if you hold the respect of those you claim to Regulate?

You did yourselves no favours at the Dail Committee lads

GARDAI are also Regulators, but they don't visit every public house every day, or challenge every car that ventures out on the road – and dare I suggest it many local Gardai enjoy the respect of their local populations.

Just a tiny bit of mutual respect would work wonders but the "respect" on the SFPA side was well mirrored in the part of their opening Statement - later struck from the record. Very little respect there Lads!!!!

<O)))>

The dispute surrounding the building of the new Maternity Hospital rumbles on and we have argument for the sake of argument. You will find that many city properties are held under Leases- possibly the most famous being the St James Gate Brewery of the Guinness Organisation.

Can we confine discussion and effort to discussing things that really matter?

The Agreement has been vetted by all kinds of experts up to and including the Attorney General. I imagine he would appreciate the guidance of well known legals and dare I say it medical experts like "Doctors" Shortall and Cullinane.

Concentrate on important things lads - not things that have no material outcome. I think that if I were on the Board of the St Vincent's Trust I would be telling the Government to forget our site and build it somewhere else. That would close that argument and then we could spend the next few years trying to find someone to blame

The Children's Hospital is another example of what over management can lead to - and we hear very little about that now even though I suspect the problem and the cost overrun is getting worse day by day.

<O)))>

There are certain elements in the Dail at the moment who terrify me in their complete ignorance of commercial or financial reality.

I do however agree with them that the one way the housing problem can be solved is for the State to build houses. I and many of my peers grew up in "Council" estates

and over the years we were allowed to buy the houses from the State as thousands of people have done.

The problem may arise when they discover that you need building contractors to build these houses and the hatred of "Developers" will insist that those building the houses make no profit.

That's not the way it works lads!!!!

Also the rules governing Landlord/Tenant agreements will have to apply to the State owned properties and will create difficulties in collecting rents.

A Rental Tenancy agreement involves two parties. The owner who provides the house and the tenant who agrees to occupy it on agreed terms which include the payment of the rent.

Not sure that a tenancy agreement will allow the tenant to remain if the rent not being paid even if the house owned by the State.

<O)))>

The De Commissioning Scheme seems to be still stuck in the Bureaucratic Mud.

We are not clear where it is actually stuck – Brussels or Clonakilty.

It needs to be sorted lads and in a way that those who need it can avail of it without having to jump through too many hoops. De Commissioning by its nature means removing some of the Industry but for some it will be a Godsend.

The Fuel situation sadly may push some who had not previously intended availing of the Scheme to look more closely at it now

<O)))>

The problems being caused by the Fuel Costs are creating a whirlpool effect in the markets for fisheries because fewer boats are fishing there is more competition for the catch with the result that the price of fish in the retail outlets is reaching a point where it is not being bought in sufficient quantity.

People are suffering on and off the ocean and I hate it.

You are a noble industry and really don't deserve this.

What absolutely terrifies me is that I don't have the answers.

Stay safe everyone and be brave



St Jean Baptiste leaving Rossaveal - Photo by Enda Dirrane

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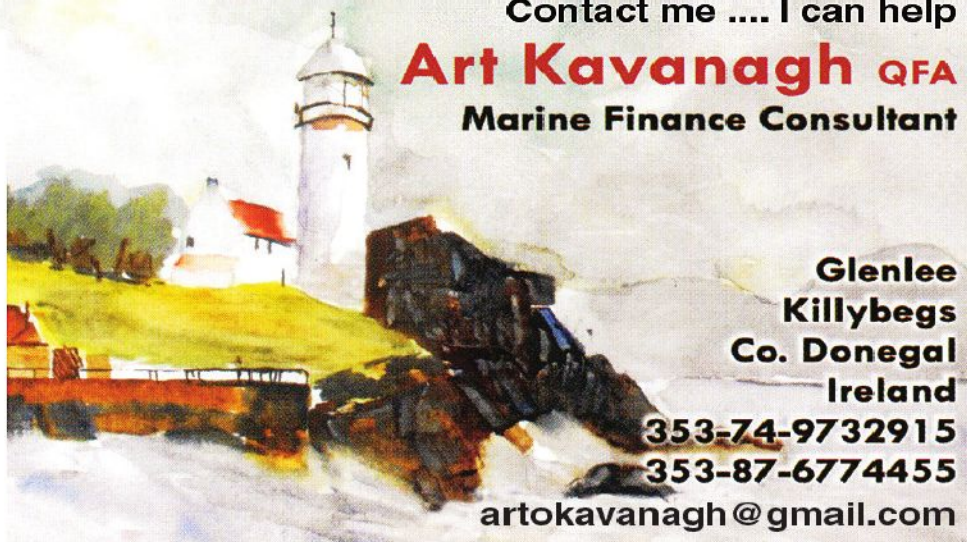
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Clifden-RNLI crew, fundraisers, families and colleagues alongside the new Shannon Class RNLB 'Saint Christopher' - See pages 16 & 17 for more photos and report -- Photo Mella Walsh

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Why Is Department Not Introducing EU-Approved Fuel Supports for Irish Fleet? Producer Organisations Warn That Food Security Could Be Threatened

Marine Times Reporter

The four leading fish producer organisations have warned that food security could be threatened if the Department of the Marine does not act immediately to introduce a fuel support scheme for the fishing industry.

The European Fisheries Commission has told Member States that one can be introduced under emergency provisions. However, with diesel fuel rising to €1.04 per litre as this edition of the Marine Times went to print – and two weeks after the EU gave approval – the Department of the Marine had failed to act. The breakeven cost of fuel for fishing boats, according to the EU, is 60 cent per litre.

“The resilience of the fleet is being challenged and we are disadvantaged that the fleet is not being supported during the fuel crisis,” said Aodh O Domhnaill, Chief Executive, Irish Fish Producers’ Organisation. “The Department need to engage on an urgent basis to introduce some form of implementation for the Irish fleet of these EU schemes.”

“The fuel problem is the main issue now and supporting the fleet to give food security to the country,” said John Lynch, Chief Executive, Irish South and East Fish Producers’ Organisation. “The fishing fleet is one thing and the processors are also hit. The cost of transport, fuel and energy is where the main issues are. The Commission is allowing Member States to compensate the industry for the fuel costs due to the war until the end of the year. We are looking urgently for a meeting to have this done and to set up a team to support the vessels to give food security to the country and to the European Union.”

“It isn’t today or yesterday that we have been pursuing this issue,” Sean O’Donoghue, Chief Executive of the Killybegs Fishermen’s Organisation, told the Marine Times. “The continuing huge price increase in fuel is not going away any day soon. We have had several meetings with the Commission since the invasion by Russia of Ukraine on the 24th of February. On the 23rd of March the Commission brought out

a suite of measures accepting that there was a huge issue around the Ukraine War and they invoked what they call the “Emergency Measures Provisions” which is under the European Maritime Fisheries and Aquaculture Funds. The Commission has declared and published that those conditions have been met and that puts the onus on the Member States to bring in measures under that declaration.

The Commission gave the Member States the guidelines on how to do that and said that the measures could be backdated to the 24th February when the war began. This was a short-term measure to be put in place until the end of the year. The Minister and the Department have to act on this. Otherwise there is going to be a difficult year with food security and that won’t be only in Ireland, but across Europe.”

A number of EU countries have brought in schemes to cover their fleets.

“The main fleets in other States are getting their additional costs covered, whereas the Irish fleet at the moment doesn’t have even one cent in regard to the situation and we don’t even have a scheme to help the Irish boats,” said Sean O’Donoghue.

“This is a competitive issue which puts our stakeholders at a source of significant disadvantage economically so we need a roll-out of support measures and this is consistent with the key feature of the Common Fisheries Policy and that is the notion of a level playing field for all,” said Aodh O Domhnaill.

“The industry deserves and must be supported. A situation must not happen where Irish boats cannot afford to go to sea because it is uneconomic,” said Patrick Murphy, CEO, Irish South and West FPO. “Food supplies must be protected. The fishing industry is a major supplier of food.”

Morale At “An All-Time Low” In Coast Guard Oireachtas Told

The Oireachtas Joint Committee on Transport and Communications is to request the Department of Transport and Communications and the Minister of State at the Department to recognise and meet with the Irish Coast Guard Volunteers’ Representative Group. This follows the Committee being told by the Group that morale is at “an all-time low” among Coast Guard volunteers around the country.

The Representative Group was established last year and says it has about a hundred members.

The Chairman of the Oireachtas Committee said it will follow up the issues which were identified by the Group. This was even though its view that the internal Coastal Unit Advisory Group (CUAG), set up within the Coast Guard to deal with volunteers’ concerns was not working satisfactorily, were challenged. This was by another Coast Guard member who said volunteers can engage with management on issues of dispute complaint and dismissal.

The Chairman of the Representative Group (ICGVRA), John O’Mahony (inset photo), was accompanied by its Group’s Assistant Chairman Bernard Lucas, who has served with the Doolin Coast Guard in County Clare. His wife, Caitríona, died during a rescue operation off Kilkee in Co Clare in September 2016. The Committee also heard from two other members of ICGVRA, Jim Griffin, who served as a volunteer in Dunmore East and from Vincent Farr from Cork. They all said they had been suspended as volunteers by the Coast Guard.

“There is despair felt by members who believe their grievances have not been justly dealt with and that they have no proper avenues of appeal. They have no right to go to the Workplace Relations Commission, no right to a union and cannot go to an Ombudsperson,” said Mr. O’Mahony. “When a dispute occurs and a team member is targeted whether legitimate or not, they are not allowed discuss the issues with other team members as they are bound by confidentiality mandates. This causes the team to become distant from each other because no local resolution is allowed.”

Bernard Lucas told the Oireachtas members that “volunteers can pretty much be dismissed by something like falling out of favour with an officer in command, or if they take a dislike to you. Volunteers are stymied from performing their duties by nonsensical constraints placed on them.”

Vincent Farr, ICGVRG Assistant Secretary, said volunteers were afraid to bring up legitimate issues because he alleged a culture of fear has been instilled by ICG management. “CUAG is not working. Management sets the agenda.”

Coast Guard management set up the Coastal Unit Advisory Group, known within the Coast Guard by its acronym CUAG, as a forum for volunteer members across the 44 units around the coast.

Mr. Griffin, Secretary ICGVRG, said that many criticisms made of CUAG were just dismissed.



The Volunteers’ Representative Group (ICGVRA) opinion that CUAG was not a satisfactory system was contradicted by a statement about the Coastal Unit Advisory Group (CUAG) to the Committee.

Michael Murray, a volunteer with Cleggan Unit and a CUAG Co-ordinator, said it can represent volunteers and engage with management on issues of dispute

complaint and dismissal. He said volunteers have sought and received independent HR representation, independent of coastguard management, who can give professional advice to volunteers. A designated grievance contact had been established to resolve minor complaints. “These are new procedures recently established,” he told the Committee. “CUAG now has six OIC (officer-in-Charge of a Unit) representatives and six non-OIC representatives.” He disagreed with statements by the Representative Group that CUAG is not representative of volunteers’ views or concerns.

“Volunteers have mandated CUAG to be their representatives and when they looked for feedback from volunteers they got a huge response from OIC’s and volunteers in relation to their role. I don’t want to be harsh, but the feedback we got in relation to CUAG’s role was 100% positive.”

The Chair of the Oireachtas Committee, Kieran O’Donnell, said they would write to Minister Hildegard Naughton, who has responsibility in the Coast Guard area and to the Department of Transport and Communications, outlining the concerns of the Volunteer Group, requesting that they be recognised and that they should meet the organisation. The Committee would follow up these matters, he said.



Mary Paul at Dunmore East - Photo by William Power

“Relative Stability” In Common Fisheries Policy Must Be Changed

Minister Acknowledges It Has Caused Damage to Irish Fleet

Marine Times Reporter

The Minister for the Marine says he is very much aware that the way in which the concept of ‘relative stability’ has been used to justify the low quota levels applied to Ireland in comparison with other nations fishing in our waters by the European Commission, is a major problem and is the core of the difficulties faced by the Irish fishing fleet.

“It has been applied for 40 years from the time when Ireland was an inshore industry and didn’t have the capability or the vessels that we now have. There have been a lot of attempts to change that. It needs to be changed for our national interest, for the future of the fishing industry, but it is a challenge, a big one, to get that change. It will be a tight battle, but one I am prepared to fight with the benefit of what the sector recommends from the Review Group which I set up,” he told the MARINE TIMES.

The Common Fisheries Policy Review Group which Minister Charlie McConalogue appointed is completing its report. It is to be presented to him this month.

The Group includes representatives of Producer Organisations, Inshore Fisheries, Aquaculture, Co-Ops, processors and environmental NGOs (non-Governmental Organisations). He gave it the task of making recommendations to him on the priorities for Ireland’s negotiating strategy “to focus on supporting the social and economic

health of our fisheries, dependent coastal communities, economic development in our seafood sector, delivering long-term sustainability of fish stocks and maximising protection of habitats and the marine environment.”

“Relative stability was established in the early 1980s. At that stage it was based on the catch sizes of Member States. That hasn’t changed since then. What has changed is our capacity to catch fish and the capacity of our boats. We were primarily an inshore fishing fleet at that stage. Our fleet would not have been as developed as it is now or had the capacity of other EU Member States. That impacted on our share in regard to ‘relative stability’ at that time because of our size.”

The leading fish producer organisations have called for the concept of ‘relative stability’ to be changed and a more favourable approach towards Ireland taken.

See the MARINE TIMES INTERVIEW with Minister McConalogue on Page 14



(Above): Ambitious II towing at the Smalls. Photo courtesy Gerry Moore
(Below): Atlantic Fisher - Photo courtesy Fintan Harrington



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Vacancy for a Local Contact - Castletownbere Coastal Operations Department

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Closing date is Tuesday, 21 June 2022. Please send CV and cover letter to Gemma Gegan at human.resources@irishlights.ie

Pringle Presses SFPA On Way Forward

Independent TD for Donegal, Thomas Pringle, pressed the Sea-Fisheries Protection Authority on the way forward to resolve issues around vessels landing catch in Killybegs at a recent Oireachtas committee meeting.

Deputy Pringle questioned the Sea-Fisheries Protection Authority (SFPA) executive chairperson, Paschal Hayes, at the recent meeting of the Committee on Agriculture, Food and the Marine.

Under questioning from Deputy Pringle, Mr Hayes confirmed that the competence to change the control plan lies with the European Commission, which is now reviewing a draft control plan submitted by the SFPA.

Deputy Pringle said: “The debate is whether the current industry-owned weighing scales can be given to someone acceptable to the SFPA to own and control for fish landings as well. The SFPA said they are happy to discuss options with the sector and are waiting for the sector to come back with proposals.

“I think the way forward must start with the sector bringing their proposals forward

to the SFPA,” he said.

The deputy also noted that “Article 107 of the control plan says 5 per cent of landings have to be checked and it goes on to say ‘all of some landings’ rather than some of all landings, which I believe would help maintain the availability of blue whiting for human consumption.” However, he said, the SFPA said that the wording prevents them from doing anything other than a whole landing of one vessel rather than a portion of each vessel.

Deputy Pringle said it will be around November before pelagic fishing resumes. “There’s time now to resolve things,” he said. “My town of Killybegs and fishing communities across the country are feeling the pain of these decisions. There needs to be movement to find a solution as a matter of urgency.”

MARINE TIMES

The Strong Voice for Ireland's Fishing, Marine and Coastal Communities

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Treating Ireland Fairly

This newspaper understands that an examination of the unused quotas by non-Irish nations held for Irish waters has been carried out by the Marine Institute and submitted to the Common Fisheries Policy Review Group established by the Minister for the Marine and which is to submit its recommendations to him this month.

The MARINE TIMES sought to see a copy of this document, but was refused by the Institute, which directed us to the Group, from where it was not obtainable because their report to the Minister had not been completed.



5 year old Padraig Coyles aboard the Silver Leaf out of Ballycastle, Co. Antrim

That is understandable.

The document, as far as the MARINE TIMES understands, shows the level of non-uptake of total quotas. In the case of one nation, the figure is considerable, we understand.

This highlights the inequity of the basis of the CFP which the European Commission and the countries in possession of unused quotas use to justify holding onto them – ‘relative stability.’

As Marine Minister Charlie McConalogue points to in his interview with the Marine Times in this edition – “relative stability” is based on the state of the Irish fishing industry 40 years ago – small, inshore and without the number and capability of vessels which those nations that gained access to Irish waters had.

Ireland made concessions, disastrous to the fishing industry, to gain accession to the then Common Market.

Time and again this concept of ‘relative stability’ has been used to deny Ireland fairness and equality of opportunity, a supposed basic tenet of the EU.

We say “supposed,” because, were fairness to be applied, ‘zonal attachment’ should replace ‘relative stability’ and allocate to the Irish fishing industry the catches it should have in its own waters.

These are not EU waters, they are an Irish resource to which Irish fishermen are denied equality of opportunity.

The Irish fishing industry is being gradually destroyed, a culture and tradition eroded.

This must be halted and corrected. Too much has been conceded.

‘Relative stability’ must be ended and replaced by fairness and equality. That is what the Irish fishing industry seeks and must get.

It is progressive that the industry and the government should move together to achieve this.

The Common Fisheries Policy Review Group may have a way to do so through the Hague Preferences, recognition of the extremely bad way in which the Irish industry was treated and is suffering from Brexit and through the unused quotas of other nations, which should be returned to Ireland, not held in perpetuity by those who are, essentially, using an Irish natural resource for their own benefits, while denying them to the nation which should be entitled to them in natural justice – Ireland and Irish fishermen.

European Commission – please take note!

Aidan Cotter Appointed as New Bord Iascaigh Mhara (BIM) Chair

Minister McConalogue has announced the appointment of Aidan Cotter as Chair of Bord Iascaigh Mhara (BIM). BIM is the State Agency that helps to develop the Irish seafood industry by providing technical expertise, business support, funding, training and promoting responsible environmental practice.



Mr Cotter has been appointed following a Public Service Appointment Service (PAS) process from 17 May 2022 for the period of three years.

Minister McConalogue said “I am very pleased that Aidan Cotter has undertaken the important role as Chair of BIM. BIM provides an essential service in supporting and developing the seafood sector and Aidan will lead the work of BIM during this particularly challenging period dealing with the impacts of the EU/UK Trade and Co-operation Agreement and high fuel prices. I am fully satisfied that Aidan’s experience in both his executive role in leading Bord Bia and his wide experience in supporting and growing the food sector in Ireland ensures that he has the skills and experience for this important role. He will bring dedication and leadership to this role to realise the full potential of the seafood sector.”

Aidan was appointed by the Minister as chairperson of the Seafood Task Force in March 2021 and completed a comprehensive report in October 2021 – Navigating Change, the Report of the Seafood Task Force. The Task Force examined the implications of the EU-UK Trade and Cooperation agreement for the Irish fishing industry and to make recommendations. Implementation of many of the approved schemes and initiatives recommended by the Task Force is now being undertaken by BIM, working closely with the Department.

Aidan Cotter previously served as CEO of Bord Bia – The Irish Food Board - from 2004 until 2017, having earlier served the organisation in Dusseldorf and London. As CEO, he initiated significant strategic change across the organisation, covering a period which saw the sustained expansion of Ireland’s overall food and drink exports, the extension of its office network eastwards into the Middle East and Asia, and the establishment of its state of the art, globally connected Consumer Insight Centre.

In 2012, he initiated and led the launch of Origin Green, the world’s first national sustainability programme for food and drink, firmly establishing Ireland’s environmental credentials and its international reputation as a world leader in sustainability.

He served as Chairman of Slaney Foods, a joint venture between ABP Foods Group and the Fane Valley Group from 2017 to 2021 and currently Chairs the Plastics Action Alliance. He is a practicing barrister.

A massive thank you to all who sent photos, news & views - we try our best to publish as much as possible in each issue. If you have photos, news & views that you would like to see in the Marine Times please do email them on to us at editor@marinetimes.ie or you can WhatsApp us on 087-7989582

Endorse your Certificate of Competency with BIM

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The CEOs - News and comment from Chief Executives of the Fish Producers Organisations

The costs of fuel could challenge the resilience of the Irish fleet, one of the Chief Executives, who are very concerned about the escalating costs of marine diesel, tells us on this month's news and comment from the CEOs of the Fish Producers' Organisations. They call for urgent action by the Department of the Marine to introduce a fuel cost supports system, which the EU has approved and there is a warning that the situation is so serious that it could threaten food supplies.



The Minister and the Department have to act on this. There is an urgency. The Irish fleet must be given fuel costs support,
– Sean O'Donoghue, Chief Executive, Killybegs Fishermen's Organisation.

The real urgency facing the industry is the fuel crisis in the light of the Ukraine War.

It isn't today or yesterday that we have been pursuing this issue. As of today, marine diesel in Ireland is €1 and 5 cent. The EU Commission have already told us that, looking at the break-even point for the fishing industry in the entire European fleet, you are talking about 60 cents per litre so there is no way in the wide, earthly world that vessels can continue to fish. They would be totally uneconomic as such.

I know there has been a temporary tie-up scheme brought in for the demersal vessels for the next months, but the problem with that is that has got nothing to do with the Ukraine War. It is all to do with Brexit and the huge losses incurred in both the pelagic and the demersal fleets in terms of transfer to the UK. On top of that we have the continuing huge price increase in fuel which is not going away any day soon.

To be fair to the Commission we have had several meetings with them since the invasion by Russia of Ukraine on the 24th of February. On the 23rd of March the Commission brought out a suite of measures accepting that there was a huge issue around the Ukraine War and they invoked what they call the "Emergency Measures Provisions" which is under the European Maritime Fisheries and Aquaculture Funds.

The Commission has declared and published that those conditions have been met and that puts the onus on the Member States to bring in measures under that declaration.

The Commission gave the Member States the guidelines on how to do that and said that the measures could be backdated to the 24th of February when the war began. This was a short-term measure to be put in place until the end of the year.

The Minister and the Department must act on this. Otherwise, there is going to be a difficult year with food security and that won't be only in Ireland, but across Europe.

As far as I am aware a number of the other Member States are very active in bringing in schemes to cover their fleets, so that you will end up with the main fleets in the other States getting their additional costs covered, whereas the Irish fleet at the moment doesn't have even one cent in regard to the situation and we don't even have a scheme to help the Irish boats.

There is an urgency about this, and it must happen that there is support given to the Irish fleet.



"The resilience of the fleet is being challenged and we are disadvantaged that the fleet is not being supported during the fuel crisis. On the review of the CFP we need more even and fair re-balancing of quota to take account of the amount of quotas that were transferred from Ireland."

– Aodh O Domhnaill, Chief Executive, Irish Fish Producers' Organisation.

Key issues being addressed at the moment are the whole issue of the Common Fisheries Policy Review. It's a question of trying to get some positive outcomes as part of that process, just getting fairer quotas in so much as we have been disproportionately hit by the Trade and Co-operation Agreement in terms of our transfers.

We have 'relative stability' since the CFP was set up and it is very much a fixed position. We have the Hague Preferences which were intended to assist Ireland because of the Agreement we entered into when the other European countries were given access to our waters. So we need to maintain the Hague Preferences, but we also need to see what can be done to improve our situation to take account of the fact that we have taken a disproportionate hit as part of the Trade and Co-operation Agreement which hasn't been rectified. We have the Brexit Adjustment Reserve which was provided to us by Europe, but essentially that's just a stop-gap measure. What we need is a more even and fair re-balancing of quota to take account of the amount of quotas that were transferred from Ireland.

The other really pressing issue in the industry at the moment is the fuel crisis. The resilience of the fleet on economics is being challenged. It becomes uneconomic on the present cost of fuel. We have support measures for the sector approved by the EU and the Department need to engage on an urgent basis to get some form of implementation for the fleet of these EU schemes.

The situation comes for most of the fleet at a very difficult time. Some of the other Member States have introduced schemes to help their fleets. This is a competitive issue which puts our stakeholders at a source of significant disadvantage economically so we need a roll-out of support measures and this is consistent with the key feature of the Common Fisheries Policy and that is the notion of a level playing field for all.

We're disadvantaged at the moment that our members are not being supported on the issue of marine diesel and the cost.



Irish fish producers' organisation



"Access to a fair share of the fish and wealth from our own waters has been denied to our fishing fleet and fishing communities by 'relative stability'."
– Patrick Murphy, Chief Executive, Irish South and West Fish Producers' Organisation.

Proposals for urgent change to the Common Fisheries Policy were put to EU Commission officials in Brussels by a delegation of fishing representatives at an event organised by MEP Chris MacManus and his staff which gave Irish fishermen and organisation representatives the opportunity to present their case for a more just resource sharing of fish in Irish waters at EU level.

Ireland has some of the richest fishing grounds in Europe within its Exclusive Economic Zone but due to the decades old Common Fisheries Policy of 'relative stability' access to a fair share of the fish and wealth from our own waters has been denied to our fishing fleet and fishing communities. This is not sustainable and goes against the wider principles of the Common Fisheries Policy and the European Union in terms of reducing carbon footprint and of the economic and social linkage between those catching the fish and the communities closest to those fishing grounds.

The process of reallocating annual unused/uncaught fish quota within the EEZ of Member States from the fishing fleets of the relevant EU Member States to national fishing fleets under the principles of 'zonal attachment' should be started. The annual quota of fish allocated to national fishing fleets under the Common Fisheries Policy should be examined on a species-by-species basis and the basis of allocation should be changed from 'relative stability' to 'zonal attachment' in line with the wider principles of the Common Fisheries Policy and the European Union in terms of reducing carbon footprint and of the economic and social linkage between those catching the fish and the communities closest to those fishing grounds. The Hague Preferences were brought in to recognise the geographical locations of nations closest to where the fish are. Therefore, the nations closest to the fish should not suffer more than others. Those Preferences were designed for the countries closest to the resource. So any fish reallocated under those should come to us and the system should be rebalanced to Ireland where they are in the Irish area. Any countries that are not catching their allocation, that they have more than they need which is proven over a period, then that should be reviewed.

There is no mechanism in the CFP to allow this and that should be changed. The effects of climate change on the movement of stocks also needs to be considered and studied. Will fleets have to follow species movements? More species which did not appear in Irish waters before are now arriving here. That is something that has to be looked at.



Killybegs Fishermen's
ORGANISATION LTD.



"The fuel problem is the main issue now and supporting the fleet to give food security to the country."
– John Lynch,
Chief Executive,
Irish South and East Fish
Producers' Organisation.

The fuel problem is the main thing. The fishing fleet is one thing, and the processors are also hit. The cost of transport, fuel and energy is where the main issues are.

The Commission is allowing Member States to compensate the industry for the fuel costs due to the war to the end of the year. We are looking urgently for a meeting to have this done and to set up a team to support the vessels to give food security to the country and to the European Union. It particularly affects the whitefish fleet where the margins would be small enough.



IS&EFPO - Working For The Fishermen

New Scheme to Stimulate Growth in Rural Coastal Communities With €25m in Funding Available

BIM launches €25 million Brexit Blue Economy Scheme to benefit Ireland's Blue economy

Bord Iascaigh Mhara (BIM), Ireland's Seafood Development Agency, has announced the Brexit Blue Economy Enterprise Development Scheme is officially open for applications for grant funding to enable coastal communities to restructure, reconfigure, retrain, and diversify post-Brexit.

An initiative of the Government of Ireland, and administered by BIM, the Brexit Blue Economy Enterprise Development Scheme aims to counter the adverse economic and social consequences of the withdrawal of the United Kingdom from the European Union on businesses operating in the blue economy and located in communities within 10km of the coastline.

The Scheme, the largest of its kind ever, will have a €25 million budget available for the years 2022 and 2023, funded under the EU Brexit Adjustment Reserve.

The Scheme will be delivered through the existing Fisheries Local Action Groups (FLAGs). The Fisheries Local Action Groups uniquely focus local development funding specifically for areas within 10kms of the sea around the entire coast, precisely the communities that are most impacted by Brexit.

The Scheme is one of the recommendations of the Seafood Sector Taskforce, established by Minister for Agriculture, Food and the Marine, Charlie McConalogue T.D. in March 2021 to mitigate against the impacts of Brexit on the wider Irish seafood industry and coastal communities.

Welcoming the announcement Minister Charlie McConalogue said: "The blue economy is the beating heart of Ireland's rural coastal communities. This new Scheme is designed to help strengthen and rejuvenate those communities by giving businesses an opportunity to apply for funding for their blue economy activities in areas including seafood,

coastal tourism, boat building and maintenance, marine recreation, and renewable energy initiatives."

Stimulating entrepreneurial activity, providing mentoring to help businesses adapt and find new opportunities and helping people train or retrain to allow them to keep and use their marine skills within the blue economy will enhance the profitability and economic viability of these community's post Brexit. Grants of up to €200,000 are available and can be used to cover capital investment projects, along with mentoring and training.

In Ireland, 1.9 million people live within 5km of the coast and many communities along the Irish coast depend on industries including tourism, fishing and aquaculture. Launching the Scheme Jim O'Toole, CEO BIM, referred to the unique identity of Ireland's coastal communities and how this latest scheme will help to stimulate already established businesses, and new business ideas, in these communities.

"The seafood sector is an important contributor to Ireland's coastal communities and combined with other blue economy activities, gives Ireland's coastal communities a unique and rich heritage - for those who live and work in them and for those who visit. This new scheme will help these communities adapt to new market realities in the post-Brexit landscape by stimulating further growth of the blue economy."

Full details about the Brexit Blue Economy Enterprise Development Scheme, including how to apply can be found on bim.ie

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Reflections at Castletownbere - Photo courtesy Anne Marie Cronin Photography

Documents Saved from the Public Record Office Fire of 1922 to Be Conserved

Funding from Dublin Port Company to conserve historic port records

Dublin Port Company is supporting the State's effort to recover from the Four Courts fire of 1922 by funding the conservation of 200-year-old records concerning Dublin Port.



Orlaith McBride, Director of the National Archives; Conservator Jessica Baldwin and Eamonn O'Reilly, Chief Executive, Dublin Port with some of their 200 year old records recovered from the Four Courts fire of 1922.

On 30 June 1922, the Public Record Office of Ireland at the Four Courts was destroyed in the opening engagement of the Civil War. In the aftermath of the fire of 1922, over 25,000 sheets of paper and parchment were retrieved from the rubble. These records, which date from the fourteenth to the nineteenth centuries, are known as the '1922 Salvaged Records'. They are now held at the National Archives.

Most of this collection remained unopened until the last five years. As the successor of the Public Record Office of Ireland, the National Archives is a Core Partner in the Beyond 2022 project—an all-island and international research programme hosted at Trinity College Dublin and funded by the Department of Tourism, Culture, Arts, Gaeltacht, Sport and Media under Project Ireland 2040. The project is working to reconstruct what was lost in 1922.

During a recent investigation of unopened parcels of salvaged records through the Beyond 2022 project, archivists identified five parcels of significance to the history of Dublin Port. Now, with generous support from Dublin Port Company, these records are being restored by the conservation team at the National Archives of Ireland. The conservation work is being undertaken by the Beyond 2022 Project Conservator, Jessica Baldwin, under the guidance of Zoë Reid, Keeper, Public Services and Collection. The documents all show some evidence of damage from the heat of the flames, as well damp and rain from exposure to the weather following the fire. Despite the damage, conservation will mean that documents not seen for 100 years can soon be consulted again by historians and the public.

The thousands of sheets of paper are historically significant both as survivors of the

destruction of 1922, and as fresh evidence for the historical development of Dublin Port. These papers create an incredible snapshot of the bustling life of the busy port with hundreds of people from around the country, from ports in Killybegs, Strangford and Youghal coming to collect salaries, pensions and trade in goods. They contain details on salaries and compensations, and many names of inspectors and collectors of customs taxes. They provide accounts about wine, bounties on beef and pork, allowances on silk, detail repayments of taxes on fish, ash, salt, and linen.

For example, over 50 documents relating to the Bounty Payments for Fish in the summer of 1817 give a fascinating insight, as they include information on the ship, listing crew members and detailing the size and type of catch. These are important details of trade and commerce in Dublin Port that do not exist elsewhere.

Following the conservation, the documents dating from 1817–1818 will be available for research and suitable for digitization. Speaking about the partnership, Minister for Tourism, Culture, Arts, Gaeltacht, Sport and Media, Catherine Martin TD said: "This partnership between Beyond 2022, the National Archives and Dublin Port is an important and significant one. The process of saving the recovered records from the fire at the Public Record Office in June 1922 is a flagship project under the Government's Decade of Centenaries Programme led by my Departments Commemorations Unit.

"The care that staff in the Public Record

Office demonstrated over 100 years ago in their mission to save as many records as possible is now being continued by a highly skilled and committed team of archivists and conservators working together to uncover and reveal a snapshot of what life looked like at Dublin Port in 1922."


Eamonn O'Reilly, Chief Executive, Dublin Port, said: "Our own rich archive is an important and actively used resource which we routinely rely on to tell the story of Dublin Port. We are delighted now to be able to add to the additional archive materials related to Dublin Port which the National Archives holds by supporting the conservation of records recovered after the burning of the Four Courts a century ago."

Orlaith McBride, Director of the National Archives, said: "The conservation of these records represents a significant contribution to the State's key legacy project from the Decade of Centenaries. The National Archives as successor institution to Public Record Office has held these records, salvaged from the fire in 1922, in its care for almost 100 years and has now begun the process of conservation. This support from Dublin Port is invaluable in terms of allowing us to progress this work."

Dr Peter Crooks, Trinity College Dublin and Academic Director of the Beyond 2022 project, said: "As each page of these fascinating archives is restored, another page of Irish history is returned to the public record. These documents provide a fascinating insight into everyday life 200 years ago - not only in Dublin, with its extensive trading network, but also across Ireland at large."

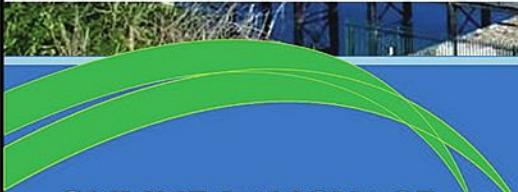


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The Men's Sheds movement came to Ireland from Australia, the Irish Men's Sheds Association being formed in 2011. There are now 400 'sheds' around the country and, from time-to-time, I've met some of their 12,000 members. In the June edition of the MARITIME IRELAND RADIO SHOW, I am featuring the work of one of those sheds which is preserving a particular aspect of fishing tradition.

Allihies is "the last village at the end of the beautiful Beara Peninsula in West Cork, sitting between an impressive rocky mountain range and the rugged Atlantic". That description is by the people of Allihies themselves, who include the Men's Shed that is a strong part of the community.

There is a lot of pride in the peninsula's culture and tradition of fishing and the sea, being a big part of the area's history.

Allihies was once a big copper mining community, at one stage bigger than fishing, but the coastal location means it has always been proud of its maritime tradition. Former and retired fishermen are a major component of the Men's Shed. So it is no surprise that there is a lot of satisfaction in Allihies at the completion of a fishing boat restoration project which began three years ago.

Castletownbere fishing port is off to the east on the other side of the peninsula and to the south is Dursey Island, where a seine boat had lain unused for about eleven years. The boat is sixty to seventy years old.

Next month the oldest resident on the island, Jimmy Harrington, will be 81 and he is central to this story.

"We were looking for a project and the boat was given to us by Jimmy. We have members who are former fishermen and were delighted to get it," David Dudley of Allihies Men's Shed told me. "Our plan for its restoration was affected by the Covid pandemic. That closed the Shed and we were held up for about two years. When we got going again, this has been a great project."

Seine boats were used extensively around West Cork for netting, potting and other traditional fishing activities. The boats would have been up to 27 feet long. This one is shorter at 18 feet. Inshore fishing was strong when they were in use. Herring and mackerel were caught.

Historical records of the area describe "huge shoals of pilchards that came to the comparatively warm, sheltered waters of the West Cork islands during the summer months. There were curing stations in fishing villages to prepare the fish for sale. There was a lot of employment in a vibrant fishing industry and there could be two boats using a seine net, such were the catches."

Stocks of fish at that level are less evident these days, unfortunately.

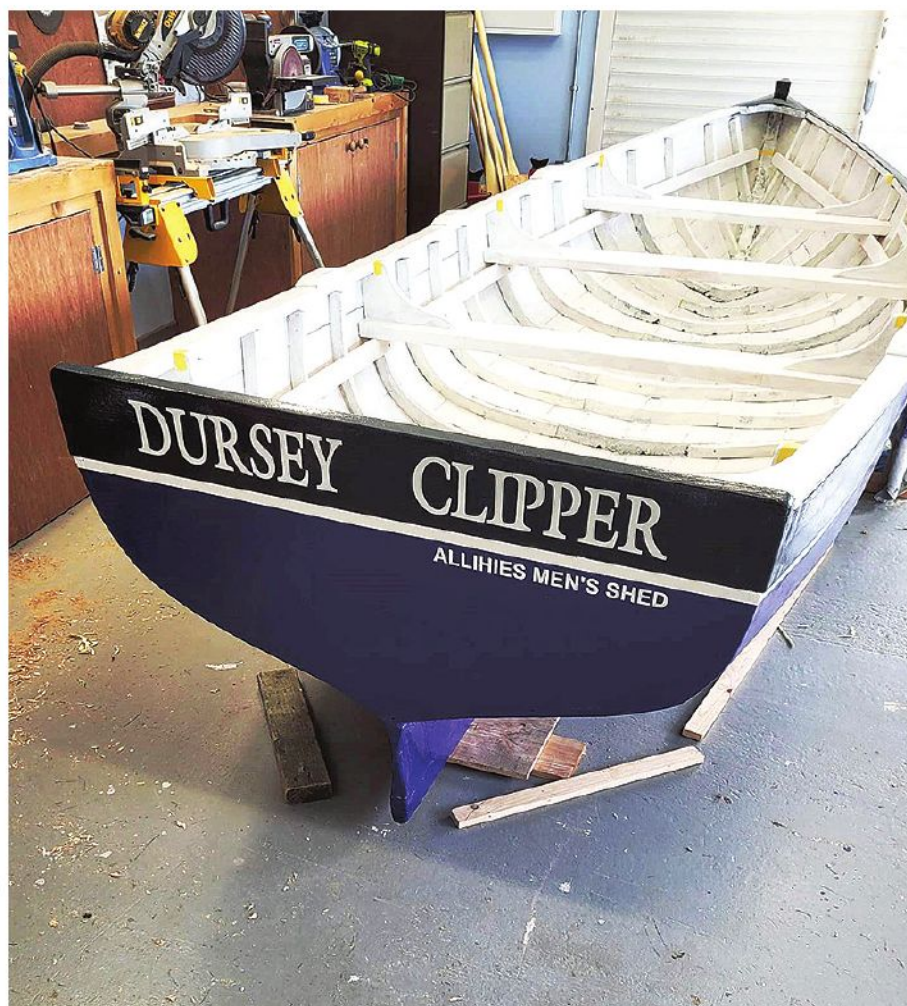
The restoration of the former Dursey Island boat is magnificent, carried out with loving care, preserving the traditional vessel.

"There was a lot of work, hull planking, fitting the stem post, caulking, filling, faring, sanding, priming and painting. We lost over two years on the project due to Covid and

this old girl was in a worse condition than we initially realised. It was a big undertaking for us but we have got there," the Shed members say.

Painted in blue with a topsides broad, black line, the boat has been named, which required quite a bit of discussion before the men of the shed agreed on it.

"We pondered and mulled over the name for the past month and couldn't agree.. When the most active members were in attendance, we whittled it down to a short list and put it to a vote. 'Dursey Clipper' won out. 2nd place was 'Oilean Buoi' and 3rd place was 'Dursey Fisher,'" the Shed announced.



The launching ceremony for the Allihies Men's Shed traditional fishing boat, 'Dursey Clipper,' is scheduled for Sunday, June 12, at 2 p.m. It will take place at Garnish Pier. "There will be refreshments and singing of sea shanties on the day. All welcome," says the Shed. Castletownbere Rowing Club will be in attendance and will row the boat.

That will be some celebration. I have been invited to "do the official launch," which I am very much looking forward to.

The Beara fishing community from olden days will be remembered.

Maintaining maritime tradition is important.

Also on this month's programme, former seafarer Tommy Breen from Arklow will tell me why he and his brother

have composed a ballad about the worst fishing tragedy the famous Wicklow Port experienced. And we'll play the ballad, "Calling Me Home."

Roddy Cooke, who is now on the Aran Islands ferry from Rossaveal will tell me how those who worked for the Bell Lines Shipping Company operating out of Waterford gathered to remember that company and its ships. People who have put the names of deceased relatives on the new lifeboat at Clifden, Co. Galway, will describe their emotion when it arrived and they saw the names on its hull. We'll go to the home of the "small family oriented sailing club run by volunteers with a love for sailing," who feel the people of Ireland are ready to hear more about the sport of sailing.

As always, a programme with a wide variety of maritime views, opinions and stories, highlighting the importance of Ireland's marine sector.

The MARITIME IRELAND RADIO SHOW is issued on the first Friday of each month.

The programme website is: www.maritimeirelandradioshow.ie and the Email: maritimeirelandradioshow@gmail.com

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New Flagship River Cruise Experience Officially Launched in New Ross

The Three Sisters Cruise Company Limited have officially launched the Barrow Princess River Cruise Experience at New Ross marina.



On a bright and breezy afternoon, Three Sisters Cruise Company Limited welcomed dignitaries from across the Southeast to New Ross Marina for the official launch of the Barrow Princess river cruise experience.

Master of ceremonies, Tony Ennis welcomed guests and thanked all who contributed to bringing this new service to fruition. Tony, of Ennis & Co Business Consultants, himself involved in the project since inception, spoke of the significant investment that this unique innovative undertaking required, not just financially by Declan, but in cooperation and collaboration across county boundaries of all the parties involved. To represent this joint collaboration, Deputy Mayor of Waterford City and County Council, Cllr Seanie Power and deputising for New Ross Municipal District Chair, Cllr Michael Sheehan, cut the ribbon together with Declan officially launching the new venture.

The Barrow Princess will operate a bespoke flagship tourism river cruise experience, between New Ross town in County Wexford and Waterford City. This is a unique, innovative undertaking of scale. The company's Managing Director is Mr. Declan Bates (pictured below), who has a

long history of marine-based enterprises.

The service will operate between Mid-March and Mid-October annually. Funding was obtained under the LEADER programme through Wexford Local Development to assist in refurbishing the boat to the standard required for a passenger vessel.

The tourism cruise experience is based on the natural amenity of the river Barrow, the Waterford estuary, the River Suir, and the south east tourism hubs of Waterford City and New Ross, Co. Wexford. This waterway is uniquely steeped in Ireland's history from the Viking invasion, the Norman Conquest and the passage of time and events to the present-day stunning architecture of the Rose Fitzgerald Kennedy bridge. Passengers will have the choice to start their cruise from New Ross Town with its ever-expanding tourism offerings or from Waterford City a key tourism centre in the Southeast.

Eamonn Hore, Wexford County Council Director of Service, expressed his delight with the arrival of the Barrow Princess to the marina in New Ross stating that "The river cruises offered by this beautiful boat are a fantastic addition to the many charms

and attractions of New Ross and the majestic River Barrow. I would like to wish Declan and his team every success with this wonderful venture".

Speaking at the event, owner Declan Bates said "We are delighted to be here today. We have been working on this project since 2013 and it is a very proud moment for us to officially launch the Barrow Princess River Cruise experience today. We could not have done it without the support of Wexford Local Development/LCDC, Wexford County Council, Waterford City & County Council, the Port of Waterford Authority, Failte Ireland, Ennis & Co consultants, Prolines Naval Architects & Marine Surveyors, and Arklow Marine Services and those who got onboard with the idea from the very start and saw the potential, Sean Reidy and Eamonn Hore in particular, and of course the many other suppliers, family and friends and our hard-working crew who have supported us along the way. We are happy with the service offering we now have in place, the reviews we have received to date have far exceeded our expectations. We are delighted that the cruises have been so well received by the public and look forward to welcoming locals and visitors alike aboard."

Declan has for many years operated a successful ferry business between Kilmore Quay and The Saltee Islands in County

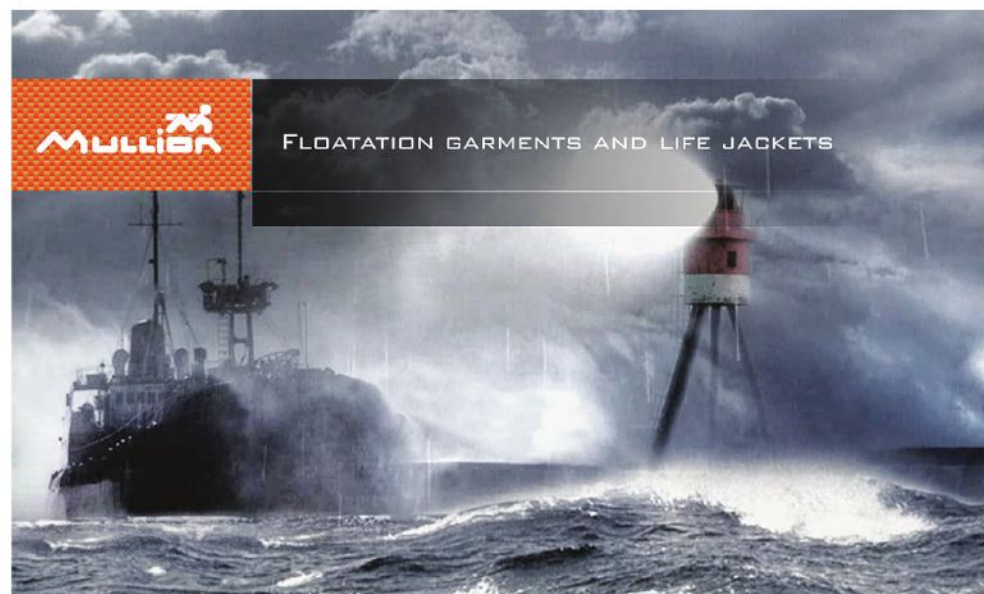
Wexford, the Saltee Ferry (www.salteeferry.com). He has previously been involved in commercial fishing out of Kilmore Quay. From a family of entrepreneurial seafarers, Declan's passion began as a young boy working with his father Willie. The family tradition continues today with Declan's own son Willie skippering a commercial fishing trawler and his grandsons crewing with Declan during the summer holidays.

Declan is passionate about the wonderful tourism potential of Wexford's magnificent coastal waters and rivers and believes huge potential exists to showcase and share our marine & river environment to international & domestic visitors alike.

After a long search by Declan for a suitable boat, the vessel was found for sale on the Isles of Scilly, where it was in operation as a much-loved island passenger ferry boat. Formerly known as the Voyager of St Martins, the vessel was built in 1995 at the boatyard of C. Toms & Son Ltd at Polruan near Fowey in Cornwall, it is 17m long, and 5m wide. It has been completely refurbished and includes the addition of the new upper deck, lounge below and the new wheelhouse. The works were carried out by Arklow Marine Services. It is fully fitted with all the latest technology and safety equipment. The boat is licenced to carry 75 passenger and 3 crew.

Following the official ceremony, guests enjoyed refreshments and a majestic mini cruise along the Barrow River to the Rose Fitzgerald Kennedy Bridge.

Full details about the Barrow Princess can be found at www.barrowprincess.ie



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Irish Aquaculture Needs Coherent, Realistic, Ambitious Policy and Legislative Reform



IFA's Aquaculture Executive, Teresa Morrissey, says Ireland does not have an ambitious policy for aquaculture

IFA Aquaculture

IFA Aquaculture has recently been participating in the Common Fisheries Policy Review Group as appointed by Minister McConalogue in February of this year. The purpose of the Review Group is to examine the issues that arise for Ireland in the review of the Common Fisheries Policy.

The common fisheries policy (CFP) originally formed part of the common agricultural policy (CAP), but it developed a separate identity in 1970. Aquaculture was included in the CFP in 2013 but it was not defined as a principal area in the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union (TFEU). This is reflected on the Commission's website on the CFP - "The current CFP focuses on the management of fisheries, and it includes aquaculture". There are marked differences in the overarching policy approach between the CAP and the CFP reflecting that fishery is a hunting activity on a common property and agriculture is a farming activity. Thus the CAP aims, inter alia, to increase agricultural productivity whereas the CFP aims to preserve fish stocks/manage fisheries and to promote sustainable aquaculture.

The CFP references to aquaculture, on the other hand, only include non-binding EU strategic guidelines, Member States multiannual national strategic plans, the open method of coordination and the European Maritime Fisheries and Aquaculture Fund (EMFAF). Aquaculture is a farming activity conceptually similar to agriculture and has fundamental differences to capture fisheries. The current stagnation in the development of a sustainable EU aquaculture is a direct consequence of such non-binding approach.

Irish Aquaculture production is very good value for the amount of licenced area we currently have. In the BIM Business

of Seafood 2021, we see that 90km² of licenced area yields 38000 tonnes worth €175 million in value to the Irish economy, the majority of that value (€109 million) coming from Irish Organic Salmon. This value and volume of Irish aquaculture production could be significantly increased by optimising the licenced aquaculture space we already have and allowing licence conditions to adapt to innovative, efficient aquaculture production systems. Most importantly, unlike targets and speculative statements on increasing aquaculture production in the past, we need to be more specific, ambitious and realistic.

In short, we are lacking a coherent, realistic, ambitious policy for aquaculture, followed by appropriate legislative reform. The policies and objectives that we do have in relation to aquaculture are non-binding and non-specific in terms of targets and are coupled with numerous policies and regulations that are not streamlined. The long-term objective for EU aquaculture should be recognition as a principal area in the TFEU and for it a standalone common aquaculture policy should be developed. In the meantime, the CFP could have similar aims for aquaculture as the CAP for agriculture amended with an aim in particular for sustainable production growth. The CFP should aim to set coherent, realistic, ambitious objectives for the development sustainable aquaculture which are binding on Member States.

Finally, any review of the CFP must be aligned with the National Strategic Plan for Sustainable Aquaculture in order to facilitate the aquaculture industry to become more resilient, competitive and delivers the opportunity to grow sustainably. The National Strategic Plan for Sustainable Aquaculture must be published immediately to facilitate policy coherence with CFP objectives as part of the CFP review – this is our primary National policy in relation to Irish Aquaculture which is much delayed and is now vital that we see this document go to public consultation and be published as soon as possible.



Members of Inward Ardroom who took part in An Taisce Annual Spring Clean organised by Westpoint Shellfish Ltd. This is their 30th year involved in cleaning their beaches and roads. Photo by Ger Lynch features Micheal Kethur, Marian Lynch, Westpoint Shellfish Ltd., Susanne McCluskey, Lizzie Stewart, Margaret Kethur, Christine Twinem, Jill Harrison, Kathy Lynch, Patrick McCluskey and Roger Harrison. Group members who were absent from the photo were Marianne Kloppe, Laura Hatton, Angela Gardner, Kerry Kilner and Lotte Vox.

Howth School of Fish

Dorans of Howth launch the "Howth School of Fish Visitor Experience", an authentic fishing and maritime tourist attraction now open on the West Pier in Howth, Co. Dublin.

This new Howth based activity for tourists is both educational and fun. It includes elements of locally sourced sea to plate food tastings and highlights the sustainability of Irish seafood. This new culturally significant tourist experience will enhance Howth as a sustainable tourist destination, encouraging tourists to spend more time in the area.

The experience offers 2 hours, half day and full day programs for local and international tourists and corporate groups. The facility also invites chefs and cookery groups for tailored "Meet the fisherman", experiences to attend workshops to learn about sustainable and seasonal seafood stocks and how to cook them. Packages offer interactive talks, hands on activities with rope splicing, oyster shucking and fish boning on the menu. The weather during the official launch gave a great backdrop for a boat trip to Ireland's Eye to see the local seals, cormorants, puffins and the hidden caves.

Educational groups of all ages and genres are invited to the Howth School of Fish to learn about aquaculture, history and biodiversity, with tailored packages available for primary, secondary and third level students.

Speakers at the launch of the Howth School of Fish included Sean Doran, CEO Dorans of Howth, ex fisherman and MD Howth School of Fish; Tracey Floyd, Co-Founder Howth School of Fish and Fishing Industry Expert and Chloe Green,

Fishing Industry Expert.

Speaking at the event, Sean Doran said, "Howth is an important location on the new Dublin Coastal Route, and a haven for accessible tourism with great rail, bus and cycle routes. Our aim with Howth School of Fish is to add to the sustainable tourism offering in the area with a unique experience employing retired fishermen who will entertain visitors with real tales from the fishing industry".

Tracey Floyd added, "It is more important now than ever to keep the history, stories and skills from the Irish fishing industry alive. In a world where protecting biodiversity and climate action are high on all our agendas, this blend of aquamarine education and tourism, is unique not only in Ireland but also in Europe, and we are very excited to finally launch after the Corona Virus pandemic halted our plans for two years".

This project will support job creation in the area, employing retired fishermen and increase revenue for local businesses. The addition of a maritime museum in Autumn will create further jobs and there are more development plans in the pipeline for 2023.



www.howthschooloffish.ie



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THE MARINE TIMES INTERVIEW

This month the Minister for the Marine, Charlie McConalogue, will be given the report of the Common Fisheries Policy Review Group which he set up in February to examine issues that arise for Ireland and the fishing sector in particular, in the review of the CFP by the European Commission, which is scheduled to be completed by the end of this year.



“Most of all I want fishermen to be able to catch what Ireland should be entitled to catch in the significant waters we bring to the EU.”

The Minister has given the Group, which includes representatives of Producer Organisations, Inshore Fisheries, Aquaculture, Co-Ops, processors and environmental NGOs (non-Governmental Organisations), the task of making recommendations to him on the priorities for Ireland’s negotiating strategy “to focus on supporting the social and economic health of our fisheries, dependent coastal communities, economic development in our seafood sector, delivering long-term sustainability of fish stocks and maximising protection of habitats and the marine environment.”

What does the Minister think are the possibilities for achieving a review of the CFP which would favour Ireland?

MARINE TIMES Deputy Editor, Tom MacSweeney, talked to Minister McConalogue about the issues involved and the European Commission’s attitude towards the Irish fishing industry.

“Relative stability” has been applied by the European Commission for forty years to prevent any changes in the Common Fisheries Policy.

It has been identified by the fishing industry as an unfair and discriminatory attitude against Ireland, derived from a period when the Irish industry was much smaller. It was a time when the Irish Government, negotiating membership of the then Common Market, conceded a level of access to Irish waters that displayed lack of understanding, appreciation and, perhaps even, ignorance, amongst the Irish negotiators of the immense value of what they were so easily discarding.

The MARINE TIMES has highlighted this as the core problem which has been destructive of the Irish fishing industry. So, when I talked to Minister McConalogue, it was a dominant point during the interview.

The Minister made it clear to me that he is very much aware that Ireland’s difficulty is the manner in which ‘relative stability’ has been used to justify the low quota levels applied to Ireland in comparison with other nations fishing in our waters by the European Commission.

“It has been applied for 40 years from the time when Ireland was an inshore industry and didn’t have the capability or the vessels that we now have. There have been a lot of attempts to change that. It needs to be changed for our national interest, for the future of the fishing industry, but it is a challenge, a big one, to get that change. It will be a tight battle, but one I am prepared to fight with the benefit of what the sector recommends from the Review Group which I set up.”

I ask him for his view on the point we have made in the MARINE TIMES, that the European Commission and the bigger fishing nations are using ‘relative stability’ to allocate quotas in Irish waters is akin to colonialism by bigger nations towards the assets of a smaller one?

“We’re not a small nation when it comes to fishing waters. We bring very significant waters to the European

Fisheries Policy so while we may be small in our land-mass, we are not small in the water resources we bring to the fisheries policy. When Ireland engages at European level, from the fisheries point of view, we engage as a very significant player. We want more of the fish that are caught in our waters. That’s the core objective of everything I do and try to achieve. I very much agree with all of our fishers on that we need to improve our quota situation.

“Relative stability was established in the early 1980s. At that stage it was based on the catch sizes of Member States. That hasn’t changed since then. What has changed is our capacity to catch fish and the capacity of our boats. We were primarily an inshore fishing fleet at that stage. Our fleet would not have been as developed as now, or had the capacity of other EU Member States. That impacted on our share in regard to ‘relative stability’ at that time because of our size.”

That is surely, the central issue which the European Commission has been ignoring and which it continues to use - a basis that no longer exists. Therefore, is it not discrimination against Ireland? That is what fishing organisations have told the MARINE TIMES.

Minister McConalogue says he wants to bring to the fore the issue of how ‘relative stability’ is applied on a basis that existed 40 years ago.

“I have been bringing that to the fore as part of my arguments in relation to the Common Fisheries Policy Review. I very much look forward to the contribution and strategy in this regard from our fishers. I will be leading the fight to have that adjusted. Fishers will be central to how that is approached. I try to work hand-in-hand with them on the battles we have at European level.”

From this, it seems to me a collective approach targeting this point is needed.

The best approach is to work with the industry on an agreed strategy, the Minister says.

That is positive, but how does he feel about Irish boats forced to tie-up in port because they don't have enough quota to fish, while non-Irish boats can arrive into the same ports and offload fish catches for export to their home countries, with disgruntled Irish fishermen having to watch that happen?

"Every fisher wants to be fishing and I want them to be fishing and that is what I have been trying to achieve, fighting the battle at EU level. But we do have a challenging starting point in that it was forty years ago, based on the strength of our fishing fleet then versus other fishing fleets at that stage. It is challenging to make significant changes and to gain wins and to make differences. It will be a tight battle and challenging, given our experiences in the past. The biggest and most valuable thing we want is more fish and that is my main aim to achieve and that is what I want to deliver, to secure the future of our coastal communities and the fishing industry."

But there was no positive achievement on the Brexit negotiations which worsened the situation of the Irish fishing industry and, again, the bigger nations seemed to get what they wanted, while Ireland didn't.

Minister McConalogue accepts that the Brexit outcome was "very disappointing and concerning," but says that can be used to show that Ireland's quota allocations must be improved in the CFP review.

"As a result of Brexit and the Trade and Co-operation Agreement there has been a big impact on our fisheries. That imbalance and the outcome of Brexit must be addressed. We have lost the most significant quota with 15 per cent between now and the end of 2026 because of Brexit. Our situation must be improved in regard to quota. I want to work with the industry to achieve this. We must work together."

We discuss 'zonal attachment' as a concept instead of 'relative stability.' Minister McConalogue says his view is that Ireland has a better right to get a bigger share of the fish in our waters than any other country. "But that means other countries will have to concede share to Ireland and that will be a difficult and tough fight because no country wants to give up quota."

He cites his work in gaining some concessions – on blue whiting and on mackerel – and tells me of battles with Danish government representatives over mackerel.

"I was accused by the Danish Fisheries Minister of carrying out a 'Midnight heist' that achieved more quota for Ireland. This was over the Danish mackerel quota which we wanted to have assessed and reviewed to increase our national quota. We brought this to the fore and forced the EU to review the situation. Work has been on-going at EU Commission level to assess the case we put. I continue to battle at each Fisheries Council meeting to try to achieve an outcome where we could improve our mackerel quota."

"The big battle and the big opportunity is potentially in the Common Fisheries Policy Review. There have been a number of reviews, of course, which didn't achieve any change. My intention, in working with the industry, is to try and achieve change and indeed particularly to bring our case in relation to Brexit and the disproportionate burden share that we are carrying coming out of Brexit which, compared to the losses of other Member States, is much higher. We have lost the most significant quota - 15 per cent between now and the end of 2026 because of Brexit. That is something in particular I want to address."

Several fishing representatives have told me they believe the Minister is committed to supporting the industry and working with it, but also indicated some doubt that the same approach exist amongst all Department officials.

Minister McConalogue is definitive - his approach is the best way - to work with the industry.

He adds that, while the CFP review is the big issue ahead, he fights for the Irish industry monthly at EU Commission meetings.

Increasing the share of quota has come up often as a topic while we talked on this phone interview prior to the Minister going to attend a Cabinet meeting.

He tells me that "it is a privilege to be Minister for the Marine. I come from Inishowen, near Greencastle and the importance of the industry to that area is obvious. I value hearing and discussions with the industry and explaining the work I am doing. Most of all I want fishermen to fish and to be able to catch enough fish, to catch what Ireland should be entitled to catch in the significant waters we bring to the EU."

SFPA - Stretch Creditability to Galactic Levels with Their Appearance at The Oireachtas Committee



Brendan Byrne, Chief Executive of the IFPEA maintains that they will have a professional engagement with the SFPA as opposed to their desire to have a "healthy friction" between both parties.



It stretches creditability to a point never witnessed by many observers, the contents of Sea Fisheries Protection Authority (SFPA) opening statement to the Oireachtas Committee for Agriculture, Food and the Marine, so stated a very senior politician after the appearance of the SFPA.

The SFPA Stated the following "the only way in which fishery products might be weighed in Killybegs following landing to Northern Ireland, would be through a Common Control plan programme between UK and Ireland approved by the EU Commission. It is important to reiterate, no such Common Control plan programme has ever existed, either before or after Brexit"

The defence the SFPA presented is based on trying to convince us that everything is normal and there is nothing new to see here. But, it would be correct to suggest that over 230,000 landings of fish would have occurred in the north of Ireland over the past 25 years, these particular landings of fish made up of demersal, pelagic and shellfish were processed in Irish Fish processing factories during that period. Yet, only two landings of fish during this entire period warranted action on the part of the competent authority. In the words of the SFPA "to the lack of a common control plan between UK and Ireland" - covering the period "before or after Brexit"

The IFPEA consider this to be the 0.00001% rate of application for a non-existent or to this point a fictional regulation, which the SFPA are now trying to convince us and the Oireachtas committee existed all along – in the real world this is the equivalent to the schoolboys' excuse "that his dog ate the homework"

In terms of the landing into Derry, the SFPA are in effect calling into question the work integrity of the competent authority of Northern Ireland, while at the same time the SFPA are adopting multiple incredible and alternative positions in terms of the status of the northern designated ports, the spirit of the protocol and status of Northern Ireland in the broader terms of the TCA – the situation is completely farcical if not downright bizarre on their part. The first hour of the committee proceedings showed to all that observed how weak and unbelievable the position adopted by the SFPA on these landings really is.

The SFPA, are intentionally targeting and singling out two fish processing factories due to the fact they highlighted the gross unfairness of the regime for weighing blue whiting enforced on them by the SFPA. This very point was made by numerous speakers at the meeting and it was further stressed by the committee members that the media attention it seems has forced the SFPA to act for some unknown reason with the resulting actions of the SFPA not based on law or regulation but on emotion and that is what is completely

wrong about these events.

This was tangibility demonstrated by the wording of their opening statement, when due to the intervention of Deputies Padraig Mc Laughlin and Pearse Doherty, the SFPA opening statement had to be withdrawn, as it was singling out processors. The inclusion of such remarks in the opening statement is further proof of the attitude and mentality within the SFPA, there is nothing new here in how the SFPA interact with industry and that is the real problem; this authority is rapidly becoming unmanageable in terms and to the extent it interacts with industry. The embarrassment of withdrawing their statement at least will demonstrate openly to all, the real side of the SFPA.

The IFPEA are shocked at how the SFPA seemed to think it appropriate to either base or describe their relationship between themselves as regulator and industry as being based on a "healthy friction".

We for our part as an Association of fish processors and exporters, categorise our relationship with the SFPA as "professional and respectful" and there is absolutely no need to have friction as a term of engagement or for the basis for interaction between them as a control authority and the industry in general. To base your engagement with industry in terms of "friction" is self-defeating and confrontational in nature from the outset.

Initially, the SFPA stated Derry was outside of Ireland and that fish landings "could not be transported from outside Ireland to fish processing plants within Ireland", and they are suggested these rules existed all along – even put it in writing. But, the SFPA are stating "that fish landings can take place without a common control plan and the competent authority of Northern Ireland are the agency with the authority on this matter". So, the representatives of the SFPA clearly stated that at the Oireachtas Committee hearing - well that really clears thing up for us all.

It is easy to understand why various reports into the capabilities of the SFPA have come to the similar conclusions; that they are not fit for purpose and the dial has to be reset to nought. The Oireachtas committee appearance raised serious questions as to the immediate future direction of the SFPA, that ultimately will be matter for the Houses of the Oireachtas.

Independent oversight is immediately required for the SFPA, and if that requires legislative change as the Sea fisheries and Maritime Jurisdiction Bill is seriously flawed in that regard – that will be eventually a matter for the Dáil and our politicians to deal with.

The 3-hour examination of the SFPA by the Oireachtas committee has shown to the entire country the short comings of the SFPA, industry already knows them too well for we are working with them on a daily basis.



The first 'Launch a Memory' lifeboat St. Christopher put on service in Ireland came home to an emotional welcome in Clifden, Connemara. The RNLI lifeboat carries the names of 10,000 loved ones on its hull, submitted by members of the public following a special fundraising initiative by the charity. Photos by Andrew Downes, Xposure.



(Above); Shane Walsh from Ballycotton Co. Cork finding his fathers name on the first 'Launch a Memory' lifeboat St. Christopher.
(Below): Aaron Donnelley, Aoibhe Murphy and Riona Murphy from Armagh remembering Niall G Quinn, at the first 'Launch a Memory' lifeboat St. Christopher.



Cian Mullen, Sky Road Clifden finding a family name on the St. Christopher.



Clifden RNLI Bring Their New 'Launch A Memory' Lifeboat St. Christopher Home to An Emotional Welcome

Clifden RNLI's new all-weather Shannon class lifeboat arrived to an emotional welcome from crowds gathered in the Connemara community to see it complete its week-long voyage home from the charity's All Weather lifeboat centre in Poole. The lifesaving vessel is the first 'Launch a Memory' lifeboat to be put on service in Ireland. The *St. Christopher* carries the names of over 10,000 people on its hull, which were put there by members of the public through a special 'in memory' fundraising initiative for the charity.

The lifeboat arrived into the West of Ireland town on the afternoon of Saturday 14th May in a flotilla made up of Achill Island lifeboat, Clifden's inshore lifeboat and the station's relief Shannon class lifeboat, along with a group of local vessels. Friends, families and supporters lined the quayside to get a glimpse of the new €2.4 million search and rescue asset which arrived bathed in sunshine.

The main part of the arrival was held on Sunday 15th May with the new lifeboat beached at Clifden. The Shannon is the first modern all-weather lifeboat propelled by waterjets which allow it to operate in shallow waters and be intentionally beached. After the tide had receded the 10,000 names on the lifeboat hull were visible and members of the public who had sponsored names were able to view them up close. The names made up the letters RNLI and the number of the new lifeboat, 13-43.

The lifeboat was funded through a legacy from the south-east of England and will be officially named in a ceremony to be held at a later date. The ten thousand names were provided by people pledging a minimum donation of €30/£30 to have their loved one's name recorded onboard a working search and rescue lifeboat off the Irish coast. Hundreds of people made the trip to see the lifeboat up close with some travel-

ling over from the UK. It was an emotional trip for many who brought photographs of their loved ones with them.

Clifden volunteer lifeboat crew collected their new lifeboat in Dorset a week before and sailed it home to Clifden with stops at Plymouth, Penlee, Ballycotton, Kinsale, Valentia and the Aran Islands. While in Penlee the Clifden lifeboat crew paid their respects to the eight crew who were lost from there on 19 December 1981 while attempting to rescue the crew and passengers onboard a stricken coaster.

Commenting on the arrival, Clifden RNLI Lifeboat Operations Manager John Brittain said, 'The weekend was the culmination of a lot of hard work by the volunteers in Clifden. To receive a new lifeboat is an incredibly exciting time for a station but to receive a launch a memory lifeboat, which carries the names of so many loved ones, is a great privilege and an honour for everyone here in Clifden.'

'We have been so moved by the stories shared with us in the run up to the arrival and we now take each one of these names out to sea with us every time we launch. We are so grateful of the public's support of the work we do as we continue to save lives at sea.'

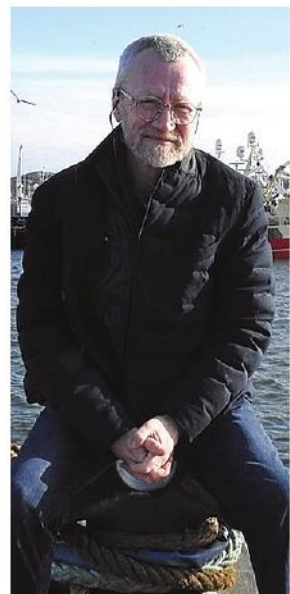


Ava and Sean O'Malley Clifden at the first 'Launch a Memory' lifeboat St. Christopher



Portrush RNLI Station Mechanic Dave Robinson was awarded a Vellum by HRH the Duke of Kent for his role in saving the life of a teenage boy in the sea off Portstewart Head in 2020. The lifeboat mechanic attached himself to a heaving line before jumping into the turbulent water and bringing the exhausted young man to safety. Lifeboat crew at Portrush RNLI are receiving two awards from the Institution for the rescue. Along with the Vellum for Dave Robinson, the Coxswain Des Austin, will receive a Chairman's Letter of Thanks for 'his professionalism, seamanship, and leadership under severe pressure' during the rescue. He will receive his Letter at a presentation to be held locally later. RNLI coxswains involved in the Lily B rescue Eugene Kehoe, Coxswain – Kilmore Quay Lifeboat Station (Bronze Medal), Roy Abrahamsson, Coxswain/ Mechanic – Dunmore East Lifeboat Station (Bronze Medal), Eamonn O'Rourke, Coxswain – Rosslare Harbour Lifeboat Station (Bronze Medal). The volunteer lifeboat crews who responded to the call out will each receive Medal Certificates. Castletownbere RNLI Coxswain Dean Hegarty was presented with a Bronze Medal for Gallantry for his part in the dramatic rescue of a fishing crew in October 2018. In challenging conditions, the Castletownbere crew saved the lives of six fishermen. A local presentation on a future date will see the crew involved receive RNLI framed Letters of Thanks. (Report and photo on page 23)

Honesty the Best Policy



Cormac Burke, Chairman of the IFSA reports from a recent visit to Brussels where the Irish delegation were praised by DG Mare Director for its “honest and realistic” approach to seeking change and a fairer deal for Ireland



For the first time in over 20 years, this week saw a delegation representing all sectors of the Irish fishing and seafood sectors, including inshore, demersal, pelagic, processing, exporters and industry service companies (a total of six national industry groups, two co-ops and vessel skipper/owners) come to Brussels to meet those at the highest level of EU fishing policy and regulation.

And while this opportunity was made possible to the Irish industry by Sinn Féin's MEP Chris MacManus and SF Spokesperson on Fisheries Deputy Padraig MacLoughlainn TD, these men were keen to point out that all they were doing was 'opening the door' for the Irish industry and then take a back seat while the delegation put Ireland's case to the powers that be and, to their credit, that is exactly the format that took place.

Much background work and hours of strategy meetings amongst this delegation had taken place prior to the trip and, with general consent amongst the group that this was an important opportunity to maximise, it was decided that six speakers be selected, each to present a different topic in a short presentation which would then leave enough time in the two one-hour meetings for a response and reaction from both the Director of DG Mare Charlina Vitcheva and Director Directorate Fabrizio Donatella and, at the subsequent meeting, Pech Co-Ordinator Joao Pimenta Lopes.

The most important tactic agreed by the delegation was that nothing would be achieved by demanding immediate changes to the Common Fisheries Policy (CFP) or the BREXIT TCA - both of which have seen Ireland suffer greatly as a result - but to try to present workable solutions instead of problems and to offer the Commission possible ways of helping Ireland without any great changes to the system as it currently stands.

Cards on the table: For both meetings, Chris MacManus MEP made the introductions and opened with a summary of why this delegation was in Brussels and

how important it was that these EU decision-makers took on board their concerns and proposals.

* First speaker up was myself as Chairman of the Irish Fishing & Seafood Alliance (IFSA), setting the tone with a presentation on how the people of the Irish fishing industry (inshore, demersal & pelagic, as well as the people of Ireland's rural coastal communities) have become disheartened and disillusioned with the entire process of decades of poor representation from Irish officials at EU level and are always led to believe that everything is the fault of the EU when it is known that is not always the case.

When questioned for proof or witness to such poor representation, I replied "history is my witness; 25 years of failed annual quota EU/Ireland deals is my witness; and Ireland's mindset of going into such talks with a starting point of anything less than a 15% quota reduction is a success while other nations were going into the same talks with a starting point that anything less than a 15% increase was a failure - this is my witness".

* Second delegation speaker was Patrick Murphy of the IS&WFPO who laid a clear and reasonable proposal to the meeting that a course of action that lay open to the EU Commission for immediate support for Ireland was the issue of currently unused quota by other Member States in Irish waters.

Records over the past five years and longer show that several Member States with quotas in Irish waters are only utilising 70% of this allocation and that, under the terms of zonal attachment (which the EU Commission used in its negotiations with the U.K. in the BREXIT deal) such unused quota should be returned to the nation of who's waters the quota is fished in.

This was an excellent example of 'bringing solutions and not problems' to the EU Commission and something that could be made a reality without any loss of current catch levels to any other Member State but that the combined small percentages of such unused quotas returned to Ireland could amount to a major difference to the Irish fleet.

* Greencastle fisherman Gerard Kelly was next and in his presentation asked that

urgent examination of the fact that the EU Commission does not allocate the Irish fleet any quotas in the EEZ's of other Member States when such a huge proportion of the fish in Irish waters (over 80%) is allocated to the fleets of these same Member States.

* The IFPO's Aodh O'Donnell called for an EU Commission level review that the annual quota of fish allocated to the Irish fishing fleet under the CFP on a species-by-species basis be changed from the traditional 'relative stability' to the system of 'zonal attachment' in line with the wider principles of the CFP and the European Union in terms of reducing carbon footprint and of the economic and social linkage between those catching the fish and those actually closest to the fishing grounds.

* The next topic was Atlantic bluefin tuna and Patrick Murphy again took the chair and requested examination into the opportunities to allocate Ireland a quota for BFT which are scientifically proven to be in abundance in the Irish EEZ and are in fact feeding in Irish waters and impacting Irish fish stocks.

He cited the fact that Norway recently used this science to show the rising stock biomass of BFT, recognised by ICCAT, to gain themselves a quota but then requested that they catch this quota in Irish waters and, with Japan sending tuna vessels all the way to fish in the international waters to the west of Ireland's EEZ it is clear that this is yet another resource that exists in Irish

waters that everyone, except Ireland, seems to be getting a benefit from.

* Sinn Féin TD Deputy Padraig MacLoughlainn then took on the important issue of 'flags of convenience' and asked the EU fisheries directors if they had examined the threat to EU food security from an increasing amount of quota being under the control of one or two major companies - companies which at some stage could be taken over by non-EU interests (Russia for example) and how the current policy of relatively stability has permitted this to happen and how a policy of zonal attachment could reverse it.

* IFPEA CEO Brendan Byrne then presented a strong case for Ireland in the pelagic sector and explained that, since 2014, Iceland and the Faroes get 15.6% of the global mackerel quota but that the present scientific advice clearly indicates that this share to these two countries is unjustified as mackerel stocks are no longer in their waters and that in order to catch this quota they must do so in international waters.

Therefore a case can be made, without the need for any change to the CFP, for the top slice to be reduced from 15.6% and that a further case exists that the mackerel quota taken back from Iceland and Faroes can be then redistributed to Western Waters as these are the areas which have been most affected by BREXIT. An added advantage of this approach means that as well as Ireland, the Member States of France, Germany, Netherlands and Denmark would also gain and therefore they would support this proposal at EU level.

YOUR INDUSTRY NEEDS YOU!

The Irish Fishing & Seafood Alliance (IFSA) continues to lead the fight for justice for Ireland's fishing industry and the coastal communities who rely on it.

The IFSA is a non-profit organisation that receives no funding from any source other than the generous support from fishing vessels, processors, ancillary service companies and individuals.

YOUR support would be greatly appreciated and annual subscription rates are only €20 for an individual, €100 for an inshore vessel or sole trader and a modest rising scale for larger vessels and companies (email ifsacormac@gmail.com for further details on this).

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Mr Byrne also referenced Ireland's blue whiting minuscule quota in its own waters and stated that the EU currently has 41% of the global blue whiting quota but that 30% of this has been traded away to Norway under other EU deals, leaving Ireland with less than 30,000 tonnes of this quota in its own waters while Norway holds in excess of 250,000 tonnes in Irish waters - this must be reviewed and addressed urgently and that, once again, other Member States such as Netherlands, France and Denmark would also gain from such a renegotiation and redistribution of quota.

* Finally, Greencastle owner/skippers Cara Rawdon and Frank McClenaghan addressed Ireland's urgent concern over access to Rockall that is being denied to the Irish fleet (by Scottish authorities) since BREXIT. They explained that the loss of this access has resulted in Irish vessels being seasonally displaced and having to operate on other grounds that would normally get a rest at certain times of the year and that this situation is now putting added pressure on the stocks on these grounds.

At both the DG Mare and PECH meetings, the directors were quick to acknowledge that this Irish industry delegation had come with honest and 'workable' proposals and that an approach of demanding immediate changes to the CFP or BREXIT TCA agreement would have achieved nothing as such demands would have been politically and logistically not possible.

Responding to many of the topics raised, DG Director Charlina Vitcheva was too diplomatic to become embroiled in the national issue of the Irish industry believing it has very poor representation at EU levels from its officials but she clearly stated that, at this very moment in time, Ireland is "bottom of the table" and "the last in line" with regards submitting its application proposals for funding under the EMFAF scheme (previously known as the EMFF) and that time was running out and ALL other nations had by now submitted their applications.

While Madam Vitcheva was at pains to point out that DG Mare "do not make promises that we cannot guarantee", she was nonetheless clearly impressed that this delegation which she recognised as "a full and comprehensive representation of the Irish fishing industry sectors" - had made clear and fair cases for consideration and, while not all of the proposals could be "repaired immediately" there were definite opportunities for some actions, particularly in relation to the matter of currently unused quota held by other Member States in Irish waters which could be returned to the host nation without any other nation losing any of what it is currently catching.

She also made clear that despite what the Irish industry may believe, the EU Commission, DG Mare and PECH continue to be acutely aware of how Ireland has, and continues to, suffer as a result of BREXIT and they welcome any opportunities, such

as the points raised during this meeting, that they can help Ireland if it is within their power to do so.

Meanwhile PECH co-ordinator Joao Pimenta Lopes said that this Irish delegation was like "a breath of fresh air" as it was good to hear from those on the ground and at the grass roots level of the industry in Ireland.

Both Madam Vitcheva and Mr Lopes expressed an interest that a follow-up meeting is held with this same Irish delegation and that they would be willing to come to Ireland for this meeting and to see for themselves the current problems.

Those who predicted that this delegation would achieve nothing or not gain anything from DG Mare and PECH through this visit have certainly been left with egg on their faces.

What most impressed these EU decision-makers was the unity of so many different representatives speaking in frank and honest terms and also that the delegation did not 'kick the door down' and make unreasonable demands.

None of us expected to suddenly come home with bucketfuls of additional quota and a promise that everything would be fixed from this one visit, but I believe we exceeded our expectations in planting some seeds towards achieving not just 'tea and sympathy' from the EU but having the opportunity to provide these decision-makers with what they themselves described as "workable solutions".

Praise must also go to those Irish MEPs who participated at different stages of these meetings, including Chris MacManus, Colm Markey, Barry Andrews, Clare Daly and Mick Wallace, as well as five other MEPs who sent representatives to attend and report back.

Finally, while the speakers / presenters Chris MacManus, Cormac Burke, Gerard Kelly, Patrick Murphy, Aodh O'Donnell, Brendan Byrne, Padraig MacLoughlainn, Cara Rawdon and Frank McClenaghan all played a vital part in the proceedings, it should not go unnoticed that the supporting role played by Oliver McBride, Tom Cunningham, Niall Connolly, Johnny Mythen, Conor McGuinness, Clare O'Callaghan, Rose Conway-Walsh, Stevie Coneely and Martin Coneely was equally, if not more important as they doubled the delegation's efforts in off site conversations with MEPs and the media.

It's a bit early for any celebrations just yet but there can be no denying that the foundations have been laid for a new relationship with the EU Commission - one based on understanding and a sense of justice.

Once again a massive thanks to Sinn Fein, Chris MacManus MEP, Padraig MacLoughlainn and their hard-working co-ordinating and communications team for making all of this possible.

The Common Fisheries Policy Needs To Be Reformed

Seamus Bonner, Secretary, Irish Islands Marine Resource Organisation Producer Organisation



A report on the operation of the CFP is not sufficient to address the weaknesses that are decimating both the resource and the industry.

Without meaningful reform fisheries are destined to become concentrated in the hands of a small number of industrial operators with serious implications for food security, island and coastal communities and the environment.

As we come to the end of the current CFP period IIMRO are proposing a number of changes to the way the current CFP is implemented. A full review will give the opportunity to highlight areas that are not working and to strengthen the foundation that everything else is built on; the catching sector.

A recent vote in the European Parliament PECH Committee <https://bit.ly/iimroeupecha17> to change the way that quotas are allocated by member states is a welcome first step in recognising that change is needed. This must be followed up by concrete action so that young people can consider a career at sea and ensure that our fishing and maritime traditions are continued. The use of track record as a management tool is rewarding unsustainable behaviour, excluding the majority of the fleet and must change to a differentiated system of management.

Shocks caused by COVID-19, BREX-

IT and now a new fuel price crisis have emphasised that the CFP needs the flexibility to be able to deal with the unexpected. Experience to date has shown the current CFP falls far short of what is required. New mechanisms that are able to respond and adapt to rapidly changing circumstances need to be incorporated into all levels of the CFP including funding programmes such as the EMFAF.

The lack of action on the fallout of the current fuel crisis is going to put a lot of fishing operations out of business with the consequent demise of dependent shore based operations. The fuel cost for many vessels has already passed break-even point, and with no resolution in sight, or swift action by the government, there will be a collapse in businesses and further pain among island and coastal communities.

It is vital that our representatives at Government and within the civil service insist at EU level on a full review of the Common Fisheries Policy, as anything short of that will be a disaster for the industry and dependent communities.

The time for review is now.



Photo courtesy IIMRO

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Native Oyster Nursery Aims to Save Species from Extinction

Hundreds of native oysters have returned to Belfast Lough as part of efforts to bring the ‘ocean superheroes’ back from the brink of extinction.

The ambitious restoration project, officially launched by Ulster Wildlife to mark Endangered Species Day, sees approximately 700 mature oysters (*Ostrea edulis*) suspended in cages under the pontoons of Bangor Marina, creating the first native oyster nursery of its kind on the island of Ireland.

As sea temperatures warm over the coming months, the 24 nursery cages will generate millions of oyster larvae which will settle on the seabed, helping the native oyster population recover while also boosting biodiversity and improving water quality in Belfast Lough.

Belfast Lough once supported a prolific native oyster fishery. However, overfishing, habitat loss, disease, pollution and invasive introduced species contributed to the population becoming extinct and the fishery closing in 1903. Since then, 100 years of surveys failed to document one living specimen, until 2020 when researchers from Bangor University and Queen's University Belfast discovered 42 live oysters at six sites around the Lough.

Heidi McIlvenny, Marine Conservation Manager at Ulster Wildlife, who is leading the project, says: “We are still unsure how or why native oysters returned to Belfast Lough, but it indicates that the environmental conditions are right for them to establish here again. But, if they are to bounce back, they need our help.”

“The biggest barrier to the recovery of the native oyster is a low number of mature reproducing oysters. The nurseries we have established at Bangor Marina are full of mature oysters that will act as larval pumps, increasing the number of oysters in the Lough and helping to restore this incredible ocean superhero for years to come.”

Boosting the Lough's fragile oyster population will also bring important benefits for other marine life, Heidi says.

“A single oyster can filter up to 200 litres of seawater, equivalent to a bathtub, per day, significantly improving water quality and reducing pollution levels. The larvae once established will also create healthy native oyster reefs in the lough, providing shelter and food for an abundance of marine wildlife, including commercially fished species, along with potential carbon storage.”

Special permissions were granted to relocate the shellfish from Loch Ryan in Scotland, which were screened for disease and cleaned on arrival before being installed in the nurseries.

Volunteers will conduct ‘health checks’ every week to ensure the oysters are thriving in their new homes. Monthly biodiversity surveys will also track changes in marine life in and around the nurseries, which form their own unique micro-habitat.

The native oyster nursery will release millions of larvae into Belfast Lough, boosting the endangered species, creating natural reefs for other marine wildlife and cleaning gallons of seawater every day.

Kevin Baird, Harbour Master at Bangor Marina, says: “We are delighted to be supporting the recovery of our most threatened marine species. Housing the oyster nurseries under the pontoons is an innovative use of the space we have available and is a great opportunity for the marina to become an outdoor classroom, where people of all ages can get hands-on with marine conservation in an urban environment.”

The oyster restoration project is funded by the DAERA Challenge Fund.

Artemis Technologies' 100% Electric Foiling Workboat Takes to the Sea

Artemis Technologies, the global leader in green maritime innovation, has just released the first pictures of its 100% electric, high-speed foiling workboat prototype on Belfast Lough.

The vessel was designed and built to include the production specification drivetrain, battery and flight control components consumers will eventually see in the finished workboat. With big goals set for 2022, this announcement brings Artemis Technologies one step closer to providing high-speed zero-emission maritime transport to the masses.

The 11.5 metre vessel named “Pioneer of Belfast” is powered by the revolutionary Artemis eFoiler® system, which enables the prototype to fly over the water, using significantly less energy than a conventional workboat with high-speed re-charging technology also developed.

Launched from the company's research and manufacturing facility in Belfast Harbour, the prototype is currently undergoing sea trials to verify its technical capabilities match those from the company's digital twin simulations, ahead of the launch of Artemis Technologies' small workboat range next month.

The company which is a spin-off from



Heidi McIlvenny, Marine Conservation Manager at Ulster Wildlife, and Kevin Baird, Harbour Master at Bangor Marina, examine one of the 24 native oyster nurseries housed underneath the pontoons to help the species bounce back from extinction. This is the first native oyster nursery of its kind on the island of Ireland.

the Artemis Racing America's Cup team, has attracted significant UK Government and private investment, and has partnered with Northern Irish organisations on a mission to help deliver a sustainable maritime future.

Iain Percy, double Olympic sailing gold medallist and chief executive of Artemis Technologies said: “It was a truly joyous moment for our dedicated Belfast workforce when the champagne was broken on her bow and Pioneer first took to the water.

“Over the last five years we've assembled experts from the worlds of motorsport, aerospace and high-performance yacht racing who have worked closely with local talent to deliver the first of many such vessels that will leverage Belfast's rich maritime history and place the city at the centre of green ship-building industry.”

Romain Ingouf, Technical Director of Artemis Technologies, continued: “We've been recording the performance of the workboat against its gasoline powered sistership. Our first foiling day was in a North Easterly wind blowing 25kts with very steep sea state. Although we have simulated the two vessels very accurately, the performance and ride comfort was still mind blowing.

“We are measuring energy efficiency, ride comfort, wake creation and of course, tracking the amount of fuel used by the sistership at different speeds, across a wide range of weather conditions. Belfast Lough is the perfect testing ground. This like-for-like testing enables us to quantify the various commercial and operational benefits of the Artemis eFoiler® system, as well as the emissions saved by the 100% electric ‘Pioneer of Belfast’.

David Tyler, Commercial Director of Artemis Technologies, commented: “This prototype, a first of its kind in the commercial workboat sector, is the largest electric foiling vessel in the world. Pioneer has already achieved regulatory approval, having been issued with a UK Loadline Exemption on the basis of meeting MCA's Workboat Code through equivalence and rigorous risk assessment and mitigations.

“We're now at a crucial time for not only the Artemis Technologies business but for the future of maritime transport. ‘Pioneer of Belfast’ is just the beginning; we have several high-speed zero-emission vessels in development that will transform the commercial workboat and city-to-city passenger ferry sectors over the coming decades.”



Scallop Discos - UK Marine Scientists Discover 'Global First' Breakthrough for A Low Impact Scallop Fishery



Dr Rob Enever and Jon Ashworth skipper of the FV Three Jays

A partnership between marine scientists and fishermen in England's South West has uncovered a new environmentally friendly fishing method for catching scallops using innovative illuminated pots which have been dubbed 'scallop discos'.

Currently, most commercial scallop harvesting is carried out using dredges, a fishing method which is widely reported to cause extensive harm to sensitive marine habitats and species. This discovery, a global first, paves the way for the creation of a new low-impact inshore fishery which could reduce the pressure from damaging scallop dredges.

Scientists from Fishtek Marine, a world leader in bycatch prevention technology, made the discovery whilst trialling 'PotLights' which are small underwater lights used to 'bait' crab and lobster pots. They were invented by the Devon-based company to

protect fish stocks by replacing the need to use fish to bait pots.

Working with Jon Ashworth a fisherman based in Newlyn, Cornwall, Dr Rob Enever and his Fishtek team discovered that the lights, combined with specially modified pots, were attracting unprecedented numbers of scallops in addition to the crabs and lobsters that Jon was targeting.

Scallops have 200 tiny eyes, so the lights proved irresistible to the shellfish. **Dr Enever said:** "I couldn't believe my eyes! I was sceptical that it would work, but the

first time we hauled the pots and saw the scallops inside we knew we had discovered something significant. It was so exciting that I could hardly sleep for a couple of nights!"

Funding from the UK government's Seafood Innovation Fund delivered by the Centre for Environment, Fisheries and Aquaculture Science (Cefas) and Natural England, allowed further trials

in which Dr Enever's team tested several pot designs and proved the PotLight technique consistently attracts scallops. This

discovery is just the beginning of an exciting work programme which, with further development, could transform commercial scallop harvesting.

Fisheries Minister, Victoria Prentis, said: "It is great to see Fishtek Marine benefitting from our Seafood Innovation Fund, and developing a world-first method for catching scallops in an environmentally sustainable way. The funding is supporting innovation, helping industry use cutting edge technology and protecting the marine environment."

Suzanna Neville, Seafood Innovation Fund programme manager at Cefas, said: "This is an important project that has the potential to make a real difference to the

sustainability of the scallop fishery. The opportunity to transform commercial scallop harvesting has been made possible by providing funding for the development of early stage ideas. This is exactly the sort of innovative project that the SIF was set up to support, helping the UK lead the way in developing a sustainable seafood sector."

With the help of local fishermen, pot makers and scientists from the Universities of Exeter and York, the team is developing two new pot designs specifically for retaining scallops attracted by the PotLights and is experimenting with different coloured lights. Each small light is powered by two rechargeable AA batteries. They are clipped inside each pot and can be used multiple times.

Results of the trials have now been peer-reviewed and published in the journal 'Fisheries Research'.

Pete Kibel, co-founder and director of Fishtek Marine said: "The potential of this new approach to scallop harvesting is massive, offering notable benefits to the marine environment while creating a new commercial opportunity to fisheries around the world."

He added: "Ultimately, the success of the trial is further evidence that collaboration between industry, scientists and government bodies can drive product innovation and underpin sustainable fishing efforts."

Jon Ashworth skipper of the FV Three Jays said: "The first day out was just excitement after excitement. Pretty much every pot that we hauled had scallops in them and yet every haul without lights had no scallops. It was conclusive, there and then. To have proven that lights can be used to catch scallops has got to have some awesome implications looking forward."

Bryce Stewart, senior lecturer at the University of York commented: "This is one of the most exciting research findings I have been involved with in my career. We knew scallops were sensitive to light, but not that they could be attracted in this way. These findings have the potential to provide a valuable and low impact boost to inshore fisheries."

Fishtek now plans to work with other inshore fishermen around the UK to develop the scallop potting technique with the aim of establishing a commercially viable low impact fishery.



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news from **Castletownbere**

Helen Riddell



Stella Maris heading out from Castletownbere - Photo: Anne Marie Cronin Photography

RNLI Award

Dean Hegarty, Coxswain of Castletownbere RNLI has been presented with a Bronze Medal for Gallantry by the RNLI's President, The Duke of Kent, at a special ceremony held at St James's Palace in London.



Dean was at the helm of the successful rescue operation on October 10th 2018, which saved the lives of the six crewmen on board the 25m fishing vessel, Clodagh O. The vessel had got into difficulty in a Force 9 gale at The Pipers, an area immediately south-west of the harbour entrance to Castletownbere. The lifeboat crew realised that the fishing vessel was located in a precarious position. With the weather deteriorating, there was only a short window of opportunity to save the men before the vessel would hit the rocks or cliff face and be lost.

Dean made the decision not to take the crew off the boat but instead establish a towline in breaking 4-5m swells. He skilfully manoeuvred the lifeboat into position and holding it steady in mountainous seas, as the lifeboat crew on deck established a tow on the first attempt. Once inside the safety of the harbour two local tugboats helped to secure the boat alongside the pier.

Dean was among three other Coxswains from RNLI crews in Ireland to receive the prestigious accolade. A local presentation will be made in Castletownbere in the near future. Commending those who received awards and those who will receive awards locally, Anna Classon, RNLI Head of Region for Ireland, said: "The RNLI does not give out awards for gallantry lightly and to receive one is a great privilege. Everyone in the region is extremely proud of our lifeboat crews involved in these three rescues for their brave actions that together saved the lives of 18 people."

Michael Dwyer Festival

The Michael Dwyer Festival is returning to Allihies, on the weekend of June 10th, 11th and 12th, following a two-year absence due to the pandemic. The festival commemorates the late Michael Dwyer, a renowned traditional musician from Cailroe, Ardgroom who died in 1997. The festival features a full programme of performances and workshops. For further details see the Michael Dwyer Festival Facebook page.

Castletownbere Tidy Towns

With the Tidy Town judges due to visit soon, the Castletownbere Tidy Towns Group are asking all of the businesses and residents in the town and surrounding areas to keep their own area outside their buildings clean and tidy and if possible put out some flower pots and window boxes and help improve the town's overall Tidy Towns points. Anyone who would like to volunteer with the group is asked to email tidytownscastletownbere@gmail.com with their phone number and they will added to the group. The group is entirely voluntary, and meets on Mondays or Thursdays from 6.30pm to 8.00pm.

Memorial Talk

Professor James Walsh from the University of Colorado will give a talk on the Leadville Miners Memorial at the Allihies Copper Mine Museum on Thursday June 9th at 8pm. The memorial which is currently being developed recognis-

es the Irish community who are buried in unmarked graves in the Evergreen Cemetery, Leadville Colorado, many of whom were immigrants from the Beara Peninsula.

Boat launch

Allihies Men's Shed will launch their fully restored traditional fishing boat on Sunday June 12th at 2pm at Garnish Pier. The boat, named the Dursey Clipper, will be rowed by the Castletownbere Rowing Club and Dursey Boat Trips will also be in attendance as support boats. Refreshments will be available, and the Allihies Singers will sing sea shanties. All are welcome to attend. The project received funding from BIM Flag Funding. (see more on page 11)

Graveyard Masses

The annual graveyard masses in Beara will take place in St Finian's Foildarrig on Friday July 29th, at St Mary's Droum on Friday August 5th and at St Michael's Bere Island on Sunday August 7th.

Art Exhibition

The Hold, will open on Bere Island on Friday 17th June at 3pm, at the Drill Hall, Rerrin, and documents the lives of twenty four Bere Island women throughout the Covid-19 pandemic and the hold the island has on them. The women, formed a collective - Bere Island Women Create - and during lockdown worked remotely with award winning island artist Mary Sullivan to use art as a way to express their lives as island women. The exhibition will run until Sunday 26th June, opening daily from 10am to 5pm.

Castletownbere Active Retirement Group

The Castletownbere Active Retirement Group have re-launched their weekly yoga sessions which take place every Monday from 4.00pm to 5.00pm at Pam's Studio behind the Circle K garage. For further details contact Mairead Murphy at 086 1258848.

International Fishing and Maritime News

Overfishing Is Declining in Europe But Progress Is Uneven

IFREMER, the French Research Institute for Exploitation of the Sea, based in Brest, in its "Status of Fish Populations in Europe" for 2022 says that "overfishing is declining, but progress is uneven from-region-to-region."



During the French Presidency of the European Union Council, Ifremer partnered with the Fisheries, Seas and Coasts Department of the Institut Agro; the Flanders Research Institute for Agriculture, Fisheries and Food and the Irish Marine Institute to evaluate the fish populations in Europe.

"Overfishing may be on the decline, but the European objective of 100% sustainable fishing by 2020 has not been reached," the Institute said. "Furthermore, climate change is inevitably affecting fish, their distribution has changed, their food is scarcer and their growth is impaired. Climate change presents a number of challenges for resource management and preservation, which is why scientists are committed to finding solutions."

The report from its Scientific, Technical and Economic Committee for Fisheries confirms trends observed in the Atlantic over the past 20 years - overfishing is falling.

It says that, in the Northeast Atlantic area, 72% of fish populations are not over-exploited. Fish biomass has been increasing continuously since 2007 and was 33% greater in 2020 than at the beginning of the 2000s for the best-tracked populations.

It was more than 50% greater for other populations that were subject to less tracking.

However, in the Mediterranean 86% of populations are over-exploited and "the situation remains critical," according to Ifremer. "Despite faint signs of improvement in recent years, fishing pressure remains too high, close to double the target value advised for management under the Maximum Sustainable Yield principle. In total, 29 of the 34 fish populations evaluated in the report are still consid-

ered over-exploited. That is 86% of stocks. Many species remain poorly-tracked and understood.

"Climate change has direct effects on marine biodiversity. It changes species' distribution, reduces their available food and stunts their growth. Each year the ocean absorbs between 30% and 40% of the CO2 that human activity releases into the atmosphere. This excess CO2 causes ocean acidification which weakens the water's concentration of calcium carbonate that is essential for plankton, corals, molluscs and many other calcifying marine organisms that use it to build their shells or internal skeletons. Good fisheries management is crucial for limiting negative effects on fished populations and increasing their resistance."

Shetland Fishermen Call for Protection of Stocks Against Windfarms

The Shetland Fishermen's Association which says it represents the interests of over 120 fishing vessels has called for Scottish Government protection of vulnerable fish stocks in the development of offshore windfarms.



It has produced maps of areas about which it is concerned and says that "many planned offshore windfarms could wreak havoc with key spawning and nursery grounds for important fish stocks." The series of maps have been produced to show

"the overlap between proposed areas of development and sensitive ecosystems for young fish."

"The maps were created," the Shetland Association says, "by using the Scottish Government's own data. They reveal that several windfarm areas will impact the spawning and nursery grounds of Scotland's most valuable pelagic fish stocks such as mackerel, herring and blue whiting. For Scotland's most popular fish, haddock, only 2 of 18 areas earmarked for turbine installation under the government's ScotWind and INTOG (Innovation and Target Oil and Gas) Leasing Rounds are outside that species' spawning or nursery grounds."

"We appeal to the Scottish Government and to offshore developers to undertake a full programme of research to more fully understand the impacts of anchoring offshore wind farms in the middle of fish spawning grounds," SFA's Daniel Lawson said. "Ministers must adopt the precautionary principle and apply it. While the fishing industry does not contest the concept of more offshore renewables, this rush towards development means that mistakes will be made, with Scotland's productive and pristine fishing grounds potentially paying the price. Our government says it wants to support coastal communities, to build a world class fishing nation and to protect the health of Scotland's fish stocks. Our community relies on a sustainable fishing industry."

"Encouraging offshore windfarms without a full understanding of their impact is a real threat to the sustainability of those stocks. Evidence is also mounting of the negative impact on shellfish species from offshore turbines and associated cabling. Scientists have demonstrated that brown crabs suffer from biological changes and altered migratory habits as a result of electromagnetic fields from underwater power cables, while lobsters risk developing life-limiting deformities. Fishermen are now questioning whether Ministers or Marine Scotland took spawning grounds into account in their rush to auction off vast areas of sea to multinational energy firms."

Fish Farming at Sea On 100,000-Tonne Vessel

Atlantic salmon and local Chinese species are to be tested in a 100,000-tonne ship which has been designed as a mobile fish farm for the Chinese company, Qingdao Guoxin Development Group.



The 249-metre long vessel looks like an ocean-going oil tanker and has been designed to withstand the worst storms where it is expected to operate in the South China and Yellow Sea regions. Qingdao Guoxin plans to build four similar vessels and eventually to have fifty, though they may not all be as big as the first which has been handed over to the company after sea trials. The ship is to operate "far out to sea, allowing any sludge to be easily dispensed with," according to the company. The first harvest is expected later this year. It is not

yet clear what type of fish will be cultivated, but the company indicated that there would be trials with Atlantic salmon and yellow croaker, the latter a species unique to China.

Vietnam Fish Exports Predicted to Increase

Vietnamese fish producers are expressing confidence about increasing exports onto the world market this year.

Fisheries and aquaculture exports are expected to have generated \$2.8 billion to \$3 billion in the second quarter of 2022. This is predicted to be a year-on-year increase of 36% to 38%, according to the Vietnam Association of Seafood Exporters and Producers.

Salmon Off the Menu

Salmon was taken off the menus of 200 pubs around the UK last month because it had become too expensive.

Pub chain Young's said they would replace salmon with trout, which would be less expensive for customers. "The rise in the cost of salmon has been steep," said CEO Patrick Dardis. The chain's decision was regarded as significant retail-led resistance to high rises in salmon prices.

Norwegians Settle Case in U.S. Over Price of Salmon

Norwegian salmon companies have reached a settlement of \$85m in a class action in the United States over alleged anti-competitive behaviour. The companies, including Mowi, SalMar, Lerøy and Grieg, insist there is no basis for the US allegations, dating back three years. Equivalent to £67.6m., the settlement is subject to Court approval in the Southern District of Florida.

The case was brought by seafood distributor Euclid Fish Company, together with a number of other American companies, alleging that the Norwegians had "often and erroneously claimed that cost increases justified the price increases, but their own data disproved this alleged justification."

Mowi, SalMar, Lerøy and Grieg said in a joint statement: "Although the defendants reject that there is a basis for the allegations and consider the lawsuits to be unfounded, all of the defendants involved in the class action lawsuit in the case against direct buyers, after a mandatory mediation process, accepted a settlement offer from the direct buyers."

Technology Must Be Used to Warn of Algal Blooms

The Sustainable Aquaculture Innovation Centre was introduced by the Scottish Government to drive growth in areas of key economic and social importance in Scotland. At a conference for seafood producers, the importance of using technology to tackle algal blooms was described as essential for fish farmers.

Many producers are still using manual

water quality sampling and microscopic analysis to detect whether harmful algal blooms are present in the waters. SAIC said that industry and experts agree that a greater focus on technology could hold the key to regular, real-time data collection and the development of early warning systems.

“Early warning is essential for fish farmers looking to mitigate the impact of sudden blooms of algae at sea” was the message from discussions at the ‘Global HAB Workshop: Industry Perspectives’ hosted by SAIC. This was part of an event organised by the University of Strathclyde; University of Glasgow and the Scottish Association for Marine Science. Sector experts shared insights about the impact of HABs, mitigation techniques, feeding regimes, clean water upwelling, oxygenation systems and bubble curtains.

Thames Goes from Biologically Dead to Clean

Seahorses are back in the River Thames according to ecologists, who have reported that it has been changed from ‘biologically dead’ to clean. That has taken 60 years. Although it’s not crystal clear the river which runs through London is now described as one of the world’s cleanest city rivers.



Seals have now been spotted in the Thames

In 1957 it had been declared incapable of sustaining life. In the years since, stricter legislation, better water quality monitoring and innovative barge-mounted “bubblers” designed to reoxygenate water, have helped the world famous waterway. 125 species of aquatic wildlife, including seahorses, have now been identified in the river, as well as seals swimming there.

In the ‘Conversation’ Newsletter Ecologist Veronica Edmonds-Brown writes that there can be “no resting on effort.” Toxic pollution, plastic waste and medications dissolving down drains, as well as a heavily over-burdened Victorian-era sewer system, are among problems threatening to reverse the decades of hard work.

Norwegian Government Threatens Fishing Communities

Municipal Mayors from coastal fish farming communities in Norway have joined forces with the seafood industry to protest against a change to the way in which the government calculates the value of aquaculture licences.

The Norwegian government wants to value licence, for wealth tax purposes, at current value rather than at cost. The Mayors say will lead to higher taxes hitting, in particular, smaller family firms. The municipal leaders travelled to Oslo to register their opposition at government buildings and have warned it could result in locally-owned businesses falling into foreign hands. Overseas businesses are exempt from paying Norway’s wealth tax. The Mayors’ action has been backed by the employers’ organisation Seafood Norway.

Norway’s parliament, the Storting wants to change the tax system for older licence permits. That will have serious consequences for established companies according to Seafood Norway. “The government has failed to take the necessary steps to ensure fish farming continues to have different styles and sizes of ownership,” it said.

First ‘Plastic Neutral’ Fishery in The World

Portuguese fishermen in the Azores have received formal certification as the first ‘plastic neutral fishery in the world.’ The designation was developed by the International Pole and Line Foundation in association with the Azores Ocean Observatory and the Azores Fishermen’s Association. The IPNLF describes itself as a worldwide group representing the interests of pole and line fishermen in international tuna fisheries.

Fishermen who participated had to record and document their gear and weigh and record discarded plastics collected at sea during fishing operations. To become ‘plastic-neutral’ a fishery had to remove as much or more fishing gear than it discarded, lost or abandoned annually in the marine environment. The Azores Fisheries Observer Programme says it collected data on fishing-gear loss from the pole and line fishery from 2019 to 2021. Fishermen landed 412 kgs. more marine plastic litter, including buoys, nylon, cables and multifilament nets than they took to sea, it said.

Entrepreneurs With New Business Ideas Sought for Aquatech Innovation Studio Programme

Bord Iascaigh Mhara (BIM) funded initiative with Cork investment firm Hatch has had several successes to date

Applications are being sought for the fourth Bord Iascaigh Mhara (BIM) Aquatech Innovation Studio programme - due to take place part-time in Kerry and Dublin, with a site visit to Bergen in Norway - later this year.



Jennifer O'Brien, a former participant on the BIM Innovation Studio programme, with one of the products from her Sea & Believe plant-based seafood range.

The Innovation Studio, delivered by aquaculture accelerator Hatch, and supported by the European Maritime Fisheries and Aquaculture Fund, is an equity-free programme to develop commercial scalability, technological readiness and an industry fit for projects that aim to increase the sustainability of aquaculture – whether in Ireland or further afield.

The 37 start-ups that have been through the programmes in the last four years now employ over 160 people and have raised over €13 million to date. Participants have gone on to fund businesses in seaweed, genetics and specialist technology for meat and seafood processors.

Successful applicants this year will have the opportunity to connect with a global network of aquaculture industry experts to validate their ideas, understand key market insights, learn to pitch for investment and effectively interact with customers.

Aquatech can involve everything from AI sensors and satellites to aquaculture systems for species, but it also has ability to revolutionise small-scale production and safeguard food security.

Since the launch of the initiative, BIM, Ireland’s seafood development agency and Hatch, the company behind the world’s first aquaculture accelerator programme, have together helped to foster a notable rise in the number and revenues of the country’s aquaculture entrepreneurs.

This year’s in-person programme has a brand-new format, with participants spending two to three days a week over the course of July in Kerry and Dublin, and the programme also include a site visit to Bergen later in the year.

Richard Donnelly, BIM’s Innovation and Development Manager, said that Ireland is one of the global leaders in the aquatech development sector: “Contingents from other countries have made site trips here to see the work and innovation that is going on. But more importantly, Ireland is also exporting this expertise and knowledge, with several spin-out companies and outposts in other parts of the world.

“This programme, which we run with Hatch, is a fantastic way for someone with an interest in the area - or an idea they want to test – to come onboard and learn a huge amount.”

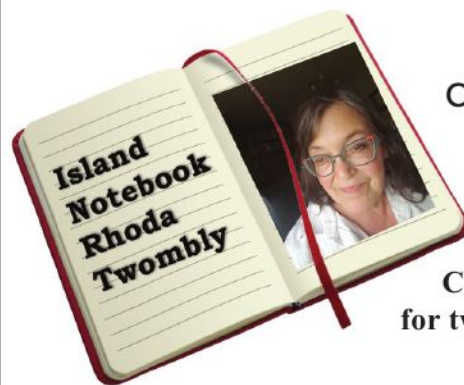
Wayne Murphy, co-founder and managing partner at Hatch, said that participation in the 2022 Innovation Studio is a fantastic way to trial an aquatech business idea or see if it can be brought to fruition:

“As well as a chance to meet and learn from aquaculture industry experts, potential investors and business development gurus, participants will have the opportunity to travel to Bergen to visit other initiatives, expand their international networks and experience life in one of largest aquaculture ecosystems in the world.”

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The latest developments on the offshore islands reported by Rhoda Twombly, Secretary Comhdháil Oileán na hÉireann, the Islands' Federation.

All-Irelands On the Islands!

Covid put a stop to the Islands All-Ireland Football Tournament for two years – but it was back with a bang last month to kick-start summer on the offshore islands.

There was great excitement amongst participants and supporters not only because of the competitions between island rival teams but because this was the first opportunity for many to meet up socially for a long time. Islanders from Clare Island, Inishturk, Inishbofin, Arranmore, Inis Mór, Bere Island and Whiddy Island gathered on Bere Island ahead of the tournament that saw the Clare Island team take the 2022 Ladies' Cup while the men of host island Bere walked away champions of the men's competition.

Gorgeous Beach on Inis Oírr Gets Blue Flag

Inis Oírr had very encouraging news recently when their gorgeous beach was awarded a Blue Flag for the first time.

"We're very proud of all the hard work to date and look forward to having lifeguards 7 days a week now for summer. Blue Flag recognises the high quality of Inis Oírr water, and facilities such as public toilets, bins and information regarding heritage, history, flora, and fauna," noted Chloe Ní Mháille, Bainisteoir, Comhar Caomhán Teo. Inis Oírr also has a Green Coast award while Cill Mhuirbhígh, Inis Mór retains their Blue Flag.

Whiddy Island

Whiddy Island Community Centre was the host for the launch of Creative Places: West Cork Islands.

Creative Places is an initiative of the Arts Council that seeks to encourage and support long and short term traditional and contemporary arts projects as well as projects incorporating digital technology, radio, and podcasting.

This will include development companies in West Cork, particularly Bere Island Projects Group, Sherkin Island Development Society, Comharchumann Chléire and Uillinn: West Cork Arts Centre. The programme runs from 2021-2024 and will no doubt inspire and initiate projects that benefit not only the islands but the wider community.

Clare Is An Island – Meet Me There!

A unique fund-raising event took place at the end of May - "Meet me on Clare island" – for which participants swam or kayaked from Roonagh Pier in Mayo out to Clare Island, a distance of about 7.5kms to raise money for 3 charities: Irish Motor Neurone Disease Association, The Boyne Fishermen's Rescue and Recovery Service, and BUMBLEance Children's National Ambulance Service. Over €20,000 was raised and people can donate until the 29th of June at https://www.idonate.ie/fundraiser/11431092_meet-me-on-clare-island-2022.html

Bere Island

Congratulations to the Bere Island Project Group who are the Co Cork winners in the heritage category of the Good Causes awards of the National Lottery in recognition of their great work on the heritage sites on their Island. Well done to all involved!

Climate Conversations

The Department of Environment, Climate, and Communications is organising focus groups to participate in the 2022 Climate Conversations and are keen that representatives of island communities take part, adding island voices to the consultation.

As part of the effort to create a carbon-neutral Ireland by reducing carbon emissions by 51% by 2030 and to becoming a net zero and climate neutral economy by no later than 2050, the government is seeking the opinion of communities and experts throughout the country on how to change the way we live and work to a more climate-friendly scenario.

Island communities have been selected as a focus group as offshore islands have "communities that are hard to reach in some respect; perhaps their physical location makes it difficult for them to participate in policy discussions or the group is not typically included in climate dialogues. We believe that the island community deserves a voice in these discussions..." This is a unique opportunity for islanders to contribute to the discussion on climate change. The in-person and on-line conversation takes place the 9th of June and will feed into the Climate Action Plan 2022.

Questions In The Dáil

There have been two issues of interest to the offshore Islands raised in the Dáil and by Parliamentary Question recently. A PQ from Eamon Ó Cuív asked Minister Humphries if it is intended to have the administration of Leader 2023-2027 for the offshore islands treated as one lot, as was done in the Leader programme before the current programme.

This is very important as the current structure does not consider the offshore islands all together in one group: under this funding system, the delivery company must deal with 4 LCDC's in 4 regional areas as well as working as Implementing Partners with 4 LAGS involving 6 Evaluation Committees. It is easy to see that this creates added costs, time, and work burden to administration.

The question posed by Deputy Cuív, as well as by Deputies Doherty and Farrell in the Dáil, was not definitively answered by Minister Humphries, whose answer stated that the preparation of the design and delivery of the next LEADER were underway with engagement between the Department officials and stakeholders. The answer does state that areas to be covered by the Local Action Groups will be considered as part of the ongoing programme design phase. Comhdháil Oileán na hÉireann has made representations to Government on the matter and awaits further developments.

Why No Public Transport Price Reduction for Islanders?

Also of interest is the fact that islanders do not receive the 20% price reduction on public transport introduced by Government to offset in a small way the increasing cost of living due to fuel price increases.

This was raised in the Dáil by Deputy Cuív who also emphasised that time was running out on this benefit as the scheme is to finish in about two months. The reply from MOS James Browne did not address the fact that while the ferry service is under PSO and the price reduction would be for islanders only no action to reduce the fare had yet been taken. The MOS stated that to reduce the fare could "put existing contracts into disrepute" and that the matter had been referred to the Attorney General. It seems doubtful that this will be resolved before the end of the scheme.



Blue Flag beach on Inis Oírr Photo Cormac Coyne

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Naming Season



Niamh Stephenson, Media Manager for the RNLI rounds up a busy month of new arrivals and the end of an era at Wicklow



It's lifeboat naming season in the RNLI and we are right in the middle of all the action. As I write this, we have just done two D-class ceremonies at Courtown and Fenit and we will be doing another at Dun Laoghaire in a few weeks. The St Christopher has just arrived in Clifden (see pages 16 & 17). Add to those, two Atlantic class lifeboats at Lough Ree and Union Hall and don't forget the Shannon lifeboat at Dunmore East.

We also have the fruits of a partnership between the RNLI and the Inland Waterways Association of Ireland (IWI) which has resulted in a shared home for the two organisations in Athlone. The site of the new build is located on the shores of Lough Ree and will be home to Lough Ree RNLI. It was the original home of the Rice family, who generously bequeathed the site to the IWI with the wish that the organisation would benefit from its use. By the time you read this I have no idea where we will be on the timeline, but we will have a lot of happy stations and supporters.

Unusually, both Courtown and Fenit's new lifeboats are going by first names. Courtown RNLI officially named its inshore D class lifeboat, *Frank*. Fenit RNLI named theirs *Lizzie*.

Courtown's lifeboat initially went on service in January 2020 and is funded by Frank and Kathleen Watkin, who together shared a love for the sea and sailing in particular. After Frank died and with no immediate known relatives, Kathleen decided she wanted at that point to put some funds into the charity that saves lives at sea rather than wait. The next lifeboat being built was partially constructed at the RNLI boatyard in East Cowes on the Isle of Wight. It was arranged for Kathleen to visit and see the lifeboat she would later name *Frank*, in the final stages of its construction. This D class lifeboat is now the thirteenth lifeboat on station in Courtown since the lifeboat was re-established in 1990.

The Fenit lifeboat *Lizzie* is named after Liz Fraser, who was born in Southwark in 1930 and who was a well-known and much-

loved British actor, starring in many roles on stage and screen over a career spanning decades. Her early TV work was in Dixon of Dock Green, and Hancock's Half Hour and then on to four Carry On films before a final performance at the age of 87, in a role on the popular English crime drama, Midsomer Murders.

This is an incredible testament to the important of legacies to the RNLI and both Lifeboat Operations Managers' reflected this in their remarks.

In Courtown Lifeboat Operations Manager, Sam Kennedy, accepted the lifeboat on behalf of the station, 'When the crew arrive here, and get kitted-up, and head out to sea, we'll have peace of mind because this lifeboat will help to keep them safe, as they save others. So, on behalf of all the station volunteers, I would like to thank Kathleen and the late Frank. Your generosity has given Courtown a lifesaver.'

In Fenit Lifeboat Operations Manager Gerard O'Donnell said, 'This is a great and proud day for us. We are very sad to say farewell to our past lifeboat, the Sonya and Bradley, which served us well for the past 12 years and we look forward to writing a new era in the history of Fenit lifeboat station with this new lifeboat which has been gifted to us.'



The honour of naming the lifeboats fell to Liz Bandey, a close friend of the donors for Courtown's lifeboat Jan Bolt, the Fenit's administration officer and wife to the late station mechanic Bob Bolt.

Attending both ceremonies was Anna Classon, the RNLI's new Head of Region for Ireland. The Donegal woman has worked for the RNLI for many years and started her career in fundraising. Anna is currently visiting all the stations around the coast and inland and is keen to meet as many of the volunteers as she can to learn about their RNLI.

Honourable mention must also be made to the Coxswains and Station Mechanics from Dunmore East, Rosslare Harbour,

Kilmore Quay, Castletownbere and Portrush RNLI respectively, who were presented with gallantry awards by His Royal Highness (HRH) The Duke of Kent, in recognition of their lifesaving roles in rescues off the coast of Wexford, west Cork and Antrim. The Duke – the RNLI's President – attended a lunch for a number of volunteers and employees with their partners at St James's Palace in London during which the group from Ireland received four RNLI Bronze Medals and a Vellum for Gallantry. We are understandably very proud of them.

Brendan Ends an Era at Wicklow

Finally, it's the end of an era at Wicklow RNLI as station mechanic Brendan Copeland retires after his final callout, which took place on his very last day in post.



There was a trip to Dun Laoghaire harbour to bring Wicklow RNLI's Shannon class lifeboat back to station after a lift-out and hull clean when as the lifeboat was departing for Wicklow, a call came in for a motor cruiser that had suffered engine failure in a busy shipping lane in Dublin Bay. With Wicklow lifeboat close by and the vessel a danger to traffic at Dublin port, Wicklow lifeboat diverted to assist brought the cruiser to the nearest safe port.

Brendan had hoped to retire quietly, but that was never going to be the plan. He has retired after thirty-one years with the RNLI, helping to save 23 lives and assisting over 334 people. A former lighthouse keeper with Commissioner of Irish Lights, he joined Wicklow RNLI as a volunteer in 1991. In the early years he served on both lifeboats as a crew member and emergency mechanic. In 2007 Brendan was appointed Wicklow RNLI's full time station mechanic, a position he held for the last 15 years.

His role involved a wide range of duties that included maintaining the Tyne class lifeboat, *Annie Blaker*, a labour of love he continued up to Friday 5 April 2019, when

she was officially retired as the last operation Tyne in the RNLI Fleet.

Brendan has gone to sea on countless callouts during his time with the lifeboat and one 'shout' that stands out to him occurred in the early hours of 22 March 2013 after a fishing vessel with three crew lost power and was in danger of being washed ashore east of Wicklow head. He recalled later, "*Annie* was launched and I can honestly say as we went around the pier the sea was boiling. We managed to get a line to the boat which was larger than *Annie* and towed it back to Wicklow, it felt like we were in a teapot that was being shook to make the tea stronger."

Brendan took part in his last afloat exercise on the lifeboat on Saturday 28 May and as Wicklow lifeboat returned to station, a flotilla of local boats and Arklow lifeboat accompanied Brendan into Wicklow Harbour. From the East pier the arrival was witnessed by a large turnout made up of Brendan's family, friends and his lifeboat family, while a lone piper played as the boat passed and the Dublin based Coastguard helicopter made a flypast. As the lifeboat reached the south quay berth a line of local emergency services lined up in a guard of honour sounded their sirens as the lifeboat passed.

I've shamelessly borrowed Tommy Dover's (Station Press Officer) words for the above but I want to add my own for Brendan, who I now count as a great friend. He taught me so much about lifeboats. I am always focused on the people (as Brendan was too) but he reminded me that the lifeboats themselves were important too. He felt that the lifeboat had a soul and would bring the crew home no matter what. He always had absolute faith in his lifeboat, no matter the conditions and on this was right. When he spoke of the station's lifeboat it was always as another member of the crew, so when the Tyne was leaving Wicklow (the last-ever in the RNLI's fleet) I begged him to do the media interviews. He was adamant he wouldn't, and I was just as adamant he would. He did them, reluctantly, and he was as brilliant as I knew he would be.

When one journalist finished interviewing him on camera, they turned to me as Brendan was walking away and said that was one of the most moving things they had heard. I agreed and I knew I was right to make him do it, even if he still hasn't forgiven me. Enjoy your well-earned retirement Brendan and don't be a stranger!



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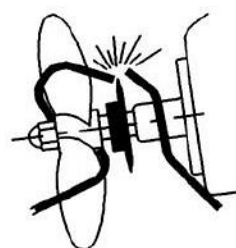
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Gilthead Seabream (*Sparus aurata*) Captured by the MFV Argonaut IV in the Celtic Sea off Co. Cork

Declan Quigley reports

On 21st March 2022, the MFV Argonaut IV (DA22) [Skipper: Anthony Conlon, Drogheda, Co Louth] captured a Gilthead Seabream (*Sparus aurata*) weighing 2.36kg and measuring 51.0cm total length (TL) [48.5cm fork length –FL] while demersal seine netting at a depth of 99m in the Celtic Sea, off Co Cork (ICES VIIg, 31E1; 51.3517°N, 8.1681°W) [Fig. 1].



Figure 1. Gilthead Seabream (*Sparus aurata*) captured by the MFV Argonaut IV (DA22) in the Celtic Sea off Co Cork (21.03.2022) [Photo Anthony Conlon]

The Gilthead Seabream (GHSB) is primarily found in tropical and warm temperate waters of the Eastern Atlantic, ranging from Denmark (Kattegat; 55.8453°N, 11.3596°E) [rarely] southwards via the Mediterranean and Black Sea (rarely) to NW Africa (Mauritania; 20.9000°S, 16.8330°W), including the offshore islands of Madeira and Canaries.

The GHSB is a euryhaline eurythermal species, found in both marine and brackish water environments such as coastal lagoons and estuarine areas, particularly during the initial stages of its life cycle. Born in the open sea, juveniles migrate in early spring towards coastal waters where food is more abundant and temperatures are higher. Very sensitive to low temperatures (lower lethal limit 4°C), adults return to the open sea during late autumn where they breed and over winter at depths down to 150m, while young fish remain in relatively shallow waters at depths down to 30m.

The GHSB is a *protandric hermaphrodite*; males reach maturity at 1-2 years of age (20-30cm TL) prior to undergoing sex-reversal as functional females at 2-3 years of age (33-40cm TL). During the breeding season, which extends from April to May in the Bay of Biscay, females batch spawn 20-80,000 eggs every day over a period of up to 4 months. The species spawns pelagically, most probably in group-aggregations in mid-water. The relatively long planktonic larval stage, which lasts around 50 days at 17-18°C (most likely longer at lower temperatures), undoubtedly facilitates widespread dispersal. Indeed, it is possible that GHSB found in Irish waters may be derived from planktonic larvae carried into Irish waters from spawning populations in the Bay of Biscay.

Adult GHSB are mainly carnivorous, feeding on a wide range of zoobenthos, particularly molluscs (e.g. Razor Clams, Oysters, and Mussels), decapod crustaceans, and annelid worms, which they can easily crush with their well-adapted molar dentition. Indeed, in some areas, the species is regarded as a pest causing significant economic damage to coastal shellfish farms.

In the Bay of Biscay, GHSB grow rapidly over the first few years, reaching a weight of 1.4kg and a TL of 45cm at 5 years of age. Under optimum conditions, the species is known to reach a maximum TL, weight and age of 70cm, 17.2kg and at least 14 years respectively.

Up to the early 1970s, the GHSB was considered to be a rare vagrant in Irish, UK and other NW European waters. However, over the last two decades, the species has been recorded with increasing frequency along the south coast of Ireland, English Channel, SW Wales, and southern North Sea.

Although there are many historical references to the occurrence of GHSB in Irish waters dating from the late 18th century they are regarded as unreliable due to taxonomic confusion among many different species of Seabream (*Sparidae*), the use of multiple synonyms and possible misidentifications. The first authenticated Irish specimen was found dead in a tidal pond in Bantry Bay, Co Cork around 1867. It was 52 years later before the next specimen was recorded in June 1941 off Cork, and over 32 years later, before another specimen, weighing 460g and measuring 28cm, was captured on rod & line during April 1972 at Ardmore, Co Waterford.



Figure 2. Juvenile GHSB 5.9g, 8.7cm, Ballymacoda, Co Cork, 26.08.2003 (Photo Declan Quigley)

Figure 3. Juvenile GHSB captured on rod & line in Clonakilty Bay (08.08.2018)



GHSB first began to appear in Irish waters with increasing regularity during the early 2000s. A small fish, weighing c.227g, was captured on rod & line at Aghada Power Station in Cork Harbour during 2001, and over the next five years several more rod-caught adult-size fish were reported from a wide range of coastal locations along the south coast, including Kilmore Quay (Co Wexford), Cunnigar (Co Waterford), Cork Harbour, and Courtmacsherry (Co Cork). During the same period, juvenile GHSB were recorded during beach seine surveys at Ballymacoda (Co Cork) [August 2003] (Fig. 2), Ventry (Co Kerry) [September 2003], Malahide (Co Dublin) [October 2004], Wexford Harbour

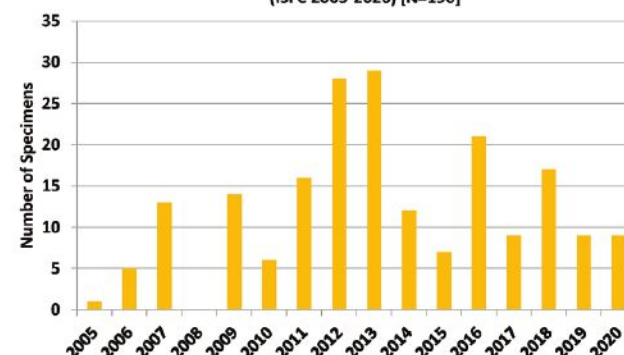
(April, June, July 2006), and Broad Lough (Co Wicklow) [September 2008]. Several juveniles were captured on rod & line in Clonakilty Bay during early August 2018 (Fig. 3).

Although relatively few GHSB have been recorded further northwards, isolated records of both juveniles and adult-size fish from Malahide (Co Dublin) [October 2004], Inver Bay (Co Donegal, January 2005), Broad Lough (Co Wicklow) [September 2008], Portstewart (Co Antrim, October 2009), Inis Mor (Aran Islands, Co Galway, June 2016), Waterfoot (Red Bay, Co Antrim, November 2017) [Fig. 4], Carlingford Lough (Co Down, September 2018), and Benmore (Co Derry, February 2021) suggest that the species may be gradually increasing its range in Irish waters, perhaps in response to increasing oceanic warming.



Figure 4. GHSB captured on rod & line at Waterfoot, Red Bay, Co Antrim (19.11.2017)

Figure 5. Annual numbers of rod-caught specimen GHSB (ISFC 2005-2020) (N=196)



The GHSB was first included by the Irish Specimen Fish Committee (ISFC) in its list of eligible rod-caught species in 2006 at a minimum qualifying weight of 1.4kg. Since then, a total of 196 specimens have been ratified up to 2020 (Fig. 5), including the current Irish Record, weighing 3.505kg, captured by Jeremy Coleman in Dingle Harbour (Co Kerry) on 17.08.2013 (Fig. 6). The current UK Rod-Caught Record, weighing 4.692kg, was captured in 1995 by Colin Carr in the Salcombe Estuary (Devon). The current IGFA World Record, weighing 7.36kg, was captured by Jean Serra in the Florn Estuary (Brest), NW France during October 2000.

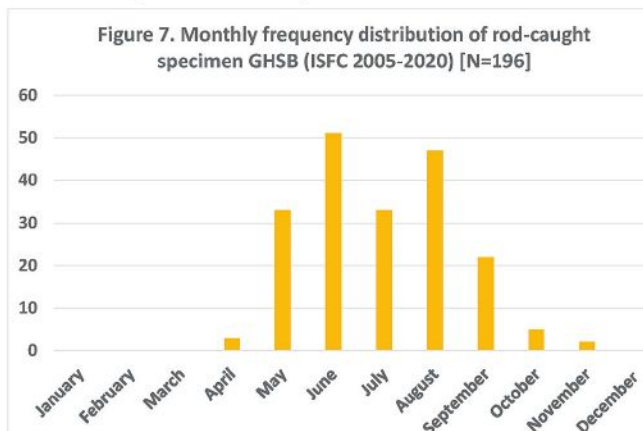


Figure 6. Former ISFC GHSB rod & line record 3.24 kg, Cork Harbour, 10.09.2007 (Photo Robert McClean)

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All of the Irish rod-caught specimens were captured between April and November (Fig. 7). However, the vast majority (95%) were captured between May and September, undoubtedly coinciding with the period of maximum angling effort, and prior to the offshore migration of adult fish into deeper water during the winter months.



Apart from one isolated specimen captured at Portstewart (Co Antrim), all of the Irish rod-caught specimens were recorded along the south coast (Wexford to Kerry), particularly from Co Cork (87%), and notably from Clonakilty (45%), Rosscarbery (21%), and Cork Harbour (15%) [Fig. 8]. The vast majority of specimens were captured on lugworm (54%) and crab (27%). Only 8% of the specimens weighed ≥ 3 kg. The TL range of all specimens was 41-68cm.

Despite the large increase in Irish rod-caught specimens over the last two decades, relatively few GHSB have been reported by commercial fishing vessels. Apart from the current fish captured by the *MFV Argonaut IV* off Co Cork, there are only four previous reports of commercially-caught

fish. During March 2004, the *MFV Enterprise 1* (WD137) captured a small fish weighing 250g and measuring c.15cm TL while dredging for mussels in Wexford Harbour. During September 2004, c.40-45 fish were captured in a gill-net off Mizen Head, Co Cork. During January 2005, a specimen weighing 350g was captured by the *MFV Amethyst* (Skipper: Cathal McGowan, Killybegs) in a *Nephrops* trawl at a depth of 40m off St John's Point, Inver Bay, Co Donegal (Fig. 9), and during September 2009, a fish weighing 1.7kg was captured by Kieran Healy in a net off Crosshaven, Co Cork.



Figure 8. Rod-caught GHSB from Cork Harbour, 11.06.2009 (Mick Hennessy)

Wild GHSB have been commercially exploited by inshore artisanal fisheries throughout its natural range for millennia, particularly in the Mediterranean, where the species has long been regarded as a highly prized food fish. However, wild fisheries production, which increased from 200 tonnes in 1951 to a peak of 9,654 tonnes in 2001, could not satiate the increasingly unsustainable global demand for this high-value species. Following the successful development of GHSB farming technology during the 1960s, aquaculture production increased exponentially from 10 tonnes in 1970 to 258,754 tonnes in 2019. Aquaculture production is centered in the Mediterranean Sea. During 2019 the top

ten aquaculture producers were Turkey (38.5%), Greece (21.4%), Egypt (13.9%), Tunisia (7.0%), Spain (4.8%), Italy (2.8%), Croatia (2.6%), Cyprus 2.0%, Israel (1.1%), and Albania (1.0%).



Figure 9. GHSB captured by Cathal McGowan (MFV Amethyst) off St John's Point, Inver Bay, Co Donegal, 27.01.2005 (Photo Declan Quigley)

Although GHSB may become an increasingly important commercial by-catch species in Irish waters in the years ahead, especially if the current upward trend in oceanic warming continues, it is possible the species may also have negative impacts on inshore shellfish farming industry.

Declan is always interested in receiving reports about rarely recorded and/or unusual species in Irish waters (WhatsApp: 087-6458485; declanquigley2021@gmail.com).

Gigantic Kraken Sea-Monsters 'Found' On Beaches in Mayo and Around Ireland

Celebrating European Maritime Day (21st May), the Marine Institute's Explorers Education team joined forces with families and children, creating a Gigantic Kraken sea-monster on the local seashore Old Head Beach Louisburg, Fallduff, Old Head, Co. Mayo.

Over 150 children and families took part in building Kraken sand sea-monsters on five beaches around Ireland including Galway, Mayo, Kerry, Waterford and Dublin. With sighting's made of these sandy beasts, some containing plastics from the shore and some three metres long, marine experts from the Marine Institute's Explorers outreach team said, "many different deep-sea animals periodically wash up on the seashore, though these monsters were a little more fragile, and a bit sandy in substance,"

"The Kraken legend is so engaging for children and adults alike. Today we have used the idea of a large mythical sea monster, which according to legend is found in the deepest parts of the ocean, to highlight marine life from the seashore to the deepest parts of the ocean. Building the Kraken sculptures from sand, seaweed and marine debris washed up by the tide, also highlighted the real monster of the sea – the rubbish found on beaches and in the ocean, as well as our carbon footprint that impacts on Ocean," said Edmond Aylward, Explorers Education Officer from Leave No Trace - Ireland.

Maritime Day, which is organised by the European Commission, is fast becoming

ing a key annual event around Europe that helps to raise awareness towards a healthy and prosperous sea and ocean.

"Congratulating the team in generating a wave of Kraken monsters around Ireland, reminds us of the importance of reusing and recycling where we can. Unfortunately, every minute of every day, the equivalent of one truckload of plastic enters the sea around the world. Celebrating our local seashore's remind us of the joy we can have on the beach, but also encourages us all to think about how our actions impact the environment and ocean," said Cushla Dromgool-Regan from Camden Education Trust and strategic manager of the Explorers Education Programme.

The Marine Institute's Explorers activities are included in the European activities celebrating European Maritime Day, with over 600 events in 28 countries taking place across Europe this year.

For more information about the Explorers Education Programme see www.explorers.ie.

The Explorers Education Programme is funded by the Marine Institute, Ireland's state agency for marine research and development.



Rob and Paul Cunnane from Claremorris had a Kraken time celebrating European Maritime Day, having been chased by a giant squid, completing a beach clean, and creating a Gigantic Kraken sea-monster, all with the Marine Institute's Explorers Education team on Grattan beach. Photo Cushla Dromgool-Regan



Sauveur Du Monde - Photo by Donal Healy

Safe Manning Legislation

BIM urges owners and skippers of 15m vessels and above to endorse Certificate of Competency as transitional period for compliance with new Safe Manning Legislation ends.

As the transitional period for compliance with Safe Manning legislation ends, Bord Iascaigh Mhara (BIM), Ireland's Seafood Development Agency is urging all skippers of vessels of 15 metres in length and above that hold a Second Hand Limited (SHL) certificate, to ensure their Certificate of Competency is endorsed for service as Second Hand Special.

Skippers and owners should check whether they need a second crewmember with a Certificate of Competency to be on board to comply with the regulations.

Information on certificates of competency and endorsements may be obtained at www.seafarers.ie. At least 12 months of sea service is required to obtain an endorsement to a SHL certificate.

Safe manning relates to the safe operation of fishing vessels and takes account of the safe navigation of the vessel, operations, machinery, and maintenance. On December 19th 2019 it became a legal requirement for all fishing vessels of 15 metres in length and above, to apply a safe manning document from the Marine Survey Office (MSO) and Department of Transport. Application forms are available

from Gov.ie (MSO Application forms- FV Less than 500gt)

BIM is an approved provider of maritime training on behalf of the MSO. Its two National Fisheries Colleges of Ireland in Greencastle, Co Donegal and in Castletownbere, Co Cork and its mobile Coastal Training Units deliver training to fishers throughout Ireland, to support a safe and professional industry.

To apply to endorse your certificate of competency contact the Mercantile Marine Office at the address below or to find out more information, please contact either of the BIM colleges by email or phone.

Mercantile Marine Office (MMO):
Maritime Services Division, Irish Maritime Administration, Department of Transport, Leeson Lane, Dublin 2, D02TR60. T: +353 (0) 1 6783480. E: Admin@seafarers.ie

BIM National Fisheries College of Ireland: Greencastle, Co Donegal. T: + 353 74 938 1068. E: maria.mccarron@bim.ie

BIM National Fisheries College of Ireland: Castletownbere, Co Cork. T: + 353 27 7 1220. E: della.osullivan@bim.ie

National Fisheries Colleges of Ireland



Upcoming Courses 2022

JUNE

- Enhanced Safety Training (1 day):
9th June - Greencastle
- Three Day Basic Safety Training:
13th - 15th June - Greencastle
- Navigational Control Course (NCC):
13th - 24th June - Greencastle
- Advanced Fire Fighting:
20th - 24th June - Castletownbere
- GMDSS GOC Radio Course:
20th June - 1st July - Greencastle
- Medical Care Aboard Ship:
27th June - 1st July - Castletownbere

JULY

- GMDSS SRC Radio Course:
4th - 6th July - Greencastle
- Navigational Control Course (NCC):
4th - 15th July - Castletownbere
- STCW Medical First Aid Aboard Ship:
11th - 13th July - Greencastle
- Three Day Basic Safety Training:
18th - 20th July - Greencastle

SEPTEMBER

- Three Day Basic Safety Training:
5th - 7th Sept - Greencastle
- Medical Care Aboard Ship:
12th - 16th Sept - Castletownbere
- STCW Personal Safety & Social Responsibility:
15th Sept - Greencastle
- Commercial Scuba Diving:
26th Sept - 21st Oct - Castletownbere

NOVEMBER

- Surface Supply Diving:
31st Oct - 25th Nov - Castletownbere

Greencastle College
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