

MARINE TIMES

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Fishing Industry Needs a Fuel Subsidy, Otherwise, It Cannot Survive

The survival of the fishing industry is at stake. Every single fishing organisation in the State, producer organisations, the inshore sector, islands fishermen, the aquaculture sector, processors, exporters, have told the Minister for the Marine that emergency assistance is urgently needed to meet fuel costs which are making it uneconomic for boats to go to sea to fish.

Full report, comment and analysis inside this issue

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

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Damaging An Industry

Last month this paper warned that the Government cannot avoid responsibility for the serious problems faced by the fishing industry. There have been repeated warnings from industry representative organisations that its future is under threat - from the failure of the Government to get a satisfactory deal under the UK Brexit withdrawal from the EU; from the unfair impact of the Common Fisheries Policy on Irish fisheries; from the pressure of foreign fishing fleets in Irish waters; from the decommissioning programme which the Government wants to impose.

The list of problems faced is depressingly long. The industry is not the priority for Government that it should be. The seafood sector is essential to the food supply chain.

What will it take to convince the Government that the industry is vital to the nation?

That question can also be addressed to non-governmental environmental organisations whose vociferous attacks on the fishing industry have increased noticeably.

Protecting the environment is essential, voluntary organisations are entitled to their views and their work, aspects of which have been of national benefit.

However, their stridency of criticism, of making allegations often unproven and based on questionable data, is also a factor which can contribute to damaging the fishing industry.

"Overfishing" is a term regularly used

in attacks on the industry.

There is no section of the Irish fishing industry which supports illegal activities, nor the damaging activity of overfishing. The industry is tightly regulated. It has contributed to, devised, supported and implemented conservation projects.

Fishing industry people are those of the coastal communities, people who have been rightly praised for their commitment to helping others as evinced in various emergencies. They are people due respect for the economic value and food supplies that the industry, of which they are the core, provides to the nation.

The industry has not been as strong as it should have been in defending itself against unjust criticism. This is changing and it is time that it was changed.

Coastal communities deserve to have a future. They are due the same entitlement as other sectors of the nation to the future survival. This, in economic terms, has dependency on the fishing industry. Continuous blackening of the industry by NGOs which appear to have a particular bias against fishing is damaging, hurtful to families, to people with a long, traditional, cultural and proud involvement in fishing. Such criticism is not an encouragement to young people to become involved in the industry.

Fishermen go to sea and often work in difficult, dangerous, challenging conditions to provide seafood. They rarely receive the respect and recognition they deserve for their contribution to Irish life.

It is time that they did.

Decommissioning Scheme Is Not a Policy Success Claims West Cork T.D.

Attempts by the Minister for Agriculture, Food and the Marine, Charlie McConalogue, to portray applications made to the decommissioning scheme for fishermen as a policy success are "dramatically wide of the mark," according to Independent T.D., for West-Cork, Michael Collins.

The voluntary scheme, due to close on November 18 has received 24 applications that have been fully submitted, while a further 30 are at various stages of preparation, according to Deputy Collins.

After questioning the Minister at a Joint Committee on Agriculture, Food and the Marine debate on the Sustainability Impact Assessment (SIA) for Sea Fisheries, the Independent TD returned to the decommissioning issue during Priority Questions in the Dáil: "I will never accept the Minister's attempts to characterise the decommissioning scheme as a great success or as a sign of positive engagement by fishers, when the very reason that such a scheme is necessary is down to years of national political

neglect and international concessions to the EU. It should never have been necessary for our own boats to be tied up at the pier while foreign vessels are essentially given free reign.

"I find it astonishing that the Minister can speak about how the decommissioning scheme is being run concurrently with a series of schemes aimed at creating jobs in the seafood sector and in coastal communities.

"Can he not hear how absurd that sounds? It is as if he is blissfully unaware of how his own government and previous government have eroded the very capacity of fishing communities to survive."



Will Irish Fishermen Be Allowed Fish Spurdog Again?

The Minister has been questioned in the Dail regarding if he has plans to reintroduce a quota on spurdog after updated advice from the International Council for the Exploration of the Seas (ICES) to lift the prohibition of targeting, retaining on board, transshipping or landing spurdog or picked dogfish in the coming years.

Responding to the questions from TD's Mairéad Farrell and Pádraig Mac Lochlainn the Minister stated: "Under EU Regulation, it is currently prohibited to target, retain on board, tranship or land spurdog (also known as picked dogfish) in the waters around Ireland. While there is a very limited quota available for use only in pilot schemes designed to reduce by-catches, any such schemes are subject to European Commission approval and must relate to reducing by-catches of dogfish in other fisheries, i.e. the targeting of dogfish would remain prohibited.

"The stock was subject to high harvest rates for more than four decades, and fisheries were not managed during this time. The species is a long-lived, slow growing and late maturing species and is, therefore, particularly vulnerable to overfishing. Conservation measures in recent

years have reduced mortality significantly.

"The recent ICES scientific assessment gives a new perspective on the development of the stock and shows an increase in the biomass. As this stock is shared with the UK, the issue of removing spurdog from the list of prohibited species and setting a Total Allowable Catch (TAC) for the stock would have to be considered in the context of the upcoming EU-UK consultations on 2023 fishing opportunities for shared stocks.

"I am of the opinion that, following the positive scientific advice for the stock, this stock should be removed from the list of prohibited species. In the event that a TAC is set for spurdog, I will consider the management of Ireland's quota for this stock in consultation with the Quota Management Advisory Committee (QMCA)."

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Fishing Industry Needs a Fuel Subsidy, Otherwise, It Cannot Survive

Exporters Losing Multi-Million Euro Contracts

Marine Minister Says He Is “Reassessing the Issue”



Girl Jane returning to Castletownbere with her catch - Photo courtesy Anne Marie Cronin Photography

Report: Tom MacSweeney, Deputy Editor

The survival of the fishing industry is at stake. Every single fishing organisation in the State, producer organisations, the inshore sector, islands fishermen, the aquaculture sector, processors, exporters, have told the Minister for the Marine that emergency assistance is urgently needed to meet fuel costs which are making it uneconomic for boats to go to sea to fish.

The cost of fuel has increased considerably since the Ukrainian war was started by Russia's invasion on February 24. The price rose so quickly that the European Commission, in March, approved Member States introducing emergency fuel subsidy assistance to their fishing fleets to ensure continuance of food supplies.

While other States have done so, Ireland stands out as a country which has refused to give such support to its fishing fleet.

This is difficult to understand.

There have been several meetings between industry representative organisations and Minister Charlie McConalogue, where they were told that the matter was under consideration. It has remained so for several months.

In the Dáil on Tuesday, October 25

at Minister's Questions Time and at the Joint Committee on Agriculture and the Marine on the same evening, the Minister acknowledged that “it is important from a food security point of view that fishing is happening.”

Fishing ‘not at level it should be’

However, fishing is not “happening” at the level it should be at this time of year, according to the industry.

The Minister also said: “Our full quota has been fished month by month.”

This was contradicted by reports that there is less catching of fish.

John Lynch, CEO of the Irish South and East Fish Producers' Organisation told the MARINE TIMES: “The fuel situation is having a real effect. The boats are not fishing as hard as they were, they cannot afford to go to sea in many instances, it is not

economic. You can see the way the quotas are running, in the uptake, the catches are not being taken as they would be normally. This is a combination of the fuel, the uptake of the quota has slowed down, the tie-up scheme and the price of fuel which makes it uneconomic to fish, but the worst situation is the fuel crisis. Processors will be suffering from supply.”

Chief Executive of the Irish Fish Producers' Organisation, Aodh O'Donnell, said that when the catching sector was affected, other sectors of the industry would also be hit and coastal communities would suffer. Processors could be faced with having to import fish to supply their needs.

Processors have lost contracts

CEO of the Irish Fish Processors and Exporters Association, Brendan Byrne, told the MARINE TIMES: “We have a number of processors who in the past fortnight have lost multi-million Euro contracts that they would ordinarily get because our competitors that are subsidised are able to sell their product 15 to 20 per cent cheaper than us, because the catch-takers in their areas are getting fuel subsidies and they are also getting energy grants. So we are now losing market share on the Continent.”

“Fellow Member States have for several months received EU funds. The aid measures helped them reduce fuel costs by up

to 30 %,” said Patrick Murphy, CEO of the Irish South and West Fish Producers. “Ireland has failed to introduce this aid, which continues to create an uneven competitive playing pitch, as we still face higher fuel costs.”

“The industry needs to have a fuel subsidy deal, otherwise, it cannot survive,” says Sean O'Donoghue, Chief Executive of Killybegs Fishermen's Organisation. “Every sector has made that clear to the Minister.”

In late October boats were reported to be paying as much as €1.49 per litre for marine fuel in Donegal. Similar and, in some cases, higher prices were quoted elsewhere.

Minister McConalogue has been left in no doubt by the industry of the crisis. He has had several meetings with industry representative organisations who, in late October, said publicly they were “hopeful” the Minister was “about to announce a national fuel aid scheme for the Irish fleet.”

“We believe the Minister now agrees that escalating fuel costs are causing serious difficulties for the industry. EU funding is already in place to support such a scheme,” they said in a statement.

Dáil Debate

But in the Dáil on October 25, the furthest Minister McConalogue went was to say: “The spike in the price of fuel in recent

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weeks has caused me to reassess the issue.”

There was no commitment to an immediate scheme.

Questioned by Sinn Féin Spokesman on fisheries and the marine, Padraig MacLochlainn the Minister said that the industry “requested specifically of me that I would do a second month tie-up scheme this year to support the challenges with fuel for the whitefish fleet. I delivered promptly on that. It began in June and will run until the end of November and it is delivering €12 million into the sector to support the challenges relating to fuel. That is on top of the one month recommended by the seafood task force to respond specifically to Brexit.”

The industry has challenged him on that. Representative organisations say that Brexit has nothing to do with the fuel crisis and any funding for it was decided on before the Ukrainian war, so the €12 million he refers to has no relevance to the fuel crisis. “It is money allocated for the loss of catches under the Brexit/EU agreement, which agreement was a huge blow to Ireland, an agreement that was a government failure. It has nothing to do with the fuel issue. The Minister is trying to shift the focus from his refusal to help directly with the fuel crisis,” the MARINE TIMES was told.

Patrick Murphy of the Irish South and West said: “We did not ever ask our Minister for a second month’s tie up as the solution or even part of such in relation to crippling, rising fuel prices.”

In the Dáil Padraig MacLochlainn also made this point: “The funding for the tie-up

scheme comes from the Brexit Adjustment Reserve fund, not from the Exchequer. We have appealed to the Minister to explore both the Exchequer and the European Maritime and Fisheries Fund. There are resources in that fund that could be deployed here along with Exchequer funding. A package was announced in the Budget to address the cost-of-living crisis and the energy crisis for a range of sectors, but not for that of fishing.

“This sector is in crisis. The break-even price of fuel for the fishing boats was 60 cent per litre, but it has been at well over €1 for the best part of this year. That is just not sustainable. There needs to be urgent intervention. As the Minister is aware, every single fishing organisation in this State, in an unprecedented way, united together months ago. We have the producer organisations, the inshore sector, the islands fishermen, the aquaculture sector and even the FLAG organisations. They appealed for an emergency fund to help address the fuel crisis. When is the Minister going to introduce it? I again appeal to him to put money on the table to keep them at sea and delivering seafood for our people.”

Minister McConalogue did not answer that question, but again referred back to the disputed allocation of €12m.: “I have put money on the table, with the €12 million to fund the additional month of the scheme, which the sector specifically requested of me to address the fuel crisis and the challenges in that regard. I accessed that from the Brexit Adjustment Reserve fund, because that is bringing fresh funding into the fishing sector, rather than take it out of

the EMFF, which is already in the fishing sector and allocated. The option is still there. The European Commission has given flexibility to member states to use that maritime funding in liquidity aid and, therefore, I still have that option after bringing the €12 million into the sector, which is at play until the end of November through that additional month of the tie-up scheme.

“I have been monitoring the prices closely month by month. As I said, we cannot reduce the Excise given there is no Excise on marine gas oil but there is the State aid flexibility given by the Commission to use the maritime funding but that would mean using future funding for now and that is something that has to be considered carefully. I have been monitoring and assessing the situation, not least in light of the funding I have put in place being due to run out in November.”

Deputy MacLochlainn: “France, Italy, Spain and Sweden - I am sure there are many other countries but these are the most prominent four - have all made interventions, through either subsidies or emergency supports to their fishing industries. I just do not understand why we have not deployed Exchequer funding in the way we have done for the rest of the economy, whether that is business or residential. I am appealing to the Minister to make an intervention with Exchequer funding primarily, or with European funding if necessary. There needs to be something on the table to keep our fishermen at sea and get them ready for next year.”

The debate concluded by the Minister

saying that “the spike in the price of fuel in recent weeks has caused me to reassess the issue, not least in light of the €12 million I have put in being due to expire at the end of November. It is a situation of which I am very much aware and I am engaging on it all the time with fishermen and women. There will always be asks for additional funding but when it relates to using future funding now, any measure has to be considered carefully to ensure it is appropriate and that is what I am doing.”

There was no indication of an immediate response. The Minister’s remarks might be taken to indicate that it could be the end of November before there would be any decision on direct aid to combat the fuel crisis.

So, who is opposing direct aid to the fishing industry?

Is it Marine Department officials and that the Minister cannot get approval for a scheme past their opposition? Why was there an indication, which the industry believed, that a scheme was about to be approved? Or, as has been suggested, is there opposition to assisting the industry at Cabinet level and could this be coming from the Green Party and its environmental policies?

.....
“The Minister has refused to offer any assistance to the seafood industry, failing to recognise the crisis, but at the same time granting aid to farmers.”

IFA Aquaculture Executive Teresa Morrissey - See page 13



Committed to Sustainability

The Clean Oceans Initiative is the umbrella name for a range of BIM and seafood industry supported programmes to minimise the impact their sector has on our oceans, including Fishing for Litter, Co-ordinated Local Aquaculture Management Systems (CLAMS), the new pilot Gear Retirement Scheme, shore and pier cleans.

Involvement in the Clean Oceans Initiative demonstrates the Irish seafood industry’s commitment to sustainability for a healthy ocean and contributes towards Ireland’s responsibilities under the UN Sustainable Development Goals and the EU plastics strategy.

For more information visit www.bim.ie or simply scan here:



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Minister Must Consult Fishing Industry on Offshore Wind Farms

The Irish fishing industry say they have a right to be consulted about offshore wind farms because it affects their livelihoods. Spokesperson Aodh O'Donnell says every industry needs to co-operate to reduce fossil fuels but "co-operation works both ways and we are not being consulted."

"Fishing interests are affected by both the location and operation of wind farms," says Aodh, who is chief executive of the Irish Fish Producers Organisation (IFPO). "Available charts indicate that most of the rich Irish Sea fishing area is targeted for turbine development. Fishing vessels could be displaced if there is an untrammelled development of Offshore Wind Turbines. Our industry has already taken too many hits, but proper consultation could allow us all to co-exist."

"However, Environment Minister, Eamon Ryan is reported to have signed off on six Irish Sea developments which will move to planning stage. There is unease that this appears to be rushed. In addition, we are of the view that no planning should proceed until the new Maritime Area Regulatory Authority (MARA) is established. There are issues around marine interests and socio-economic or environmental impact assessments. But there are also huge questions about foreign ownership of Irish energy sources, which could affect future energy security."

Mr O'Donnell was one of six fisheries representatives to take part in a fact-finding mission to a Floating Offshore Wind Farm in Kincardine, Aberdeenshire. The delegation also included, John Lynch of the Irish South and East FPO, Patrick Murphy of the Irish South and West FPO, Sean O'Donoghue, Killybegs Fishermens Organisation, Irish South and East FPO representative Kevin O'Donovan from Cork and Seamus Breathnach, representing the National Inshore Fishermen's Association (NIFA).

This visit was a first step in appraising new Offshore Deep Water Floating Turbine technologies and was arranged by an Offshore Renewable Energy (ORE) developer, Simply Blue Group. This visit was arranged to showcase the high output floating wind turbines and the option to locate these units in deeper waters and without being fixed to

the sea floor.

"The Aberdeen wind farm uses the current best in class 'floating' technology in this fast-moving area. This is an important consideration for Ireland as most of the planned developments are 'fixed' bottom arrangements that require shallower sea depths. Unfortunately, these targeted areas are also generally the most productive fishing and spawning grounds. These 'floating' technologies open up options for the location of turbine in deeper offshore waters. This will create less disruption to fishing activity and allow better co-existence with other marine interests too. Planning guidance in Ireland must steer developers towards less disruptive technologies."

"Given the offshore competition for space, we have to work hard and collaboratively to defend our members interests. Many of our vessels are involved in long established fisheries for species such as Dublin Bay Prawns - a valuable resource traditionally fished in the Irish Sea. These vessels now face uncertainty due to the planned development of Offshore Wind Turbines."

Aodh says a common complaint is the lack of adequate prior consultation. "Mutual respect must be given. For large wind farm developers, most of the first phase of applications for wind farms is in the rich Irish Sea fishing and spawning grounds. Unfortunately, international experience indicates that the colocation of Offshore Wind with trawl fisheries is not possible. At present we are experiencing a gold rush approach, as developers compete for space. We must work hard to defend our communities. We must avoid a lose-lose situation. The correct pathway must involve the recognition of traditional pre-existing fishing rights."

Mr O'Donnell says there is a lot of sea available for development. "But a land grab of traditional productive fishing grounds

is not acceptable. The Minister and Wind Farm industry need to take account of the rights of our fishers, who are often the last to be consulted."

"Our members are already facing serious uncertainty and a spatial squeeze in the competition for Irish fishing grounds", Aodh adds. "This is happening at a time when we are adapting to a serious loss of fishing opportunities already. Ireland contributed a 40% share of the total EU quotas given to the UK under Brexit. In addressing this reality, the sector must decommission 30% of our small whitefish fleet. Additionally, fishers will also have to face the prospect of 30% of Irish waters being classified as Marine Protected Areas by the end of the decade."

"We understand the Government's need to deliver on renewable energy commitments for 2030. Currently, our offshore energy generation in the Arklow Wind Farm

is 25 Megawatts. The government target of 7 Gigawatts by 2030 increases this capacity to 280 times its current size. This must not result in an unacceptable social cost which will drive the demise of coastal fishing families."

Aodh O'Donnell says "we all have a responsibility to be sensible. Adequate consultation with stakeholders is a prerequisite. We want to avoid making objections to planned development of the Wind Energy sector. But this development must be undertaken in areas with minimal adverse ecological and social impacts."

"We acknowledge and appreciate the efforts Captain Brian Fitzgerald and the Team at Simply Blue Group for arranging the visit. Deepwater floating turbines may form part of a solution. We have to steer a careful course to avoid being displaced losers in this push to take over our sustainably fished seas."

It Pays to Go Green and Blue with the Brexit Blue Economy Enterprise Development Scheme

Funding available for Renewable Energy Initiatives supporting the Blue Economy

Businesses in Ireland's coastal communities are being encouraged to apply for the Brexit Blue Economy Enterprise Development Scheme, with funding of up to €200,000 available for Renewable Energy Initiatives.

Under the Scheme, blue economy business operating within 10 kilometres of the coastline are being encouraged to go green and can apply for funding to support plans for controlling their energy costs and improving their sustainability.

With rising energy costs, renewable energy initiatives are a smart solution to reducing our carbon footprint, cutting costs, and improving energy security to enable development today without risking that of future generations.

With €25 million available, the aim of the Scheme is to stimulate growth in rural coastal communities post-Brexit. The Scheme is an initiative of the Government of Ireland and the European Union, and is being administered by Bord Iascaigh Mhara (BIM) and delivered through Fisheries Local Action Groups (FLAGs).

Brenda O'Riordan, BIM Regional Officer, said the scheme has already received some promising and innovative proposals across a range of blue economy businesses from seafood, coastal tourism, boat building and repair, to marine leisure and sport.

"Given spiralling energy costs we're seeing a lot of interest from a wide breadth of blue economy businesses across Ireland's coastal communities, particularly those, looking to go green," she said.

"From fishmongers putting photo-voltaic units on the roof of the business to supply power, and charter boat business upgrading their engines to hybrid/electric, to seafood companies looking at lighting, heating and refrigeration upgrades."

"With these grants, blue economy businesses can start to take greater control of their energy costs and become more sustainable by helping to reduce emissions and the impact on our environment."

The largest of its kind ever, the aim of this Scheme is to help address the economic and social impact of the withdrawal of the United Kingdom from the European Union for businesses operating in the blue economy and located in communities within 10km of the coastline.

In addition to capital investment grants of up to €200,000 the Scheme also offers Business Mentoring & Capacity Development grants and funding of up to €10,000 per applicant for Skills Development & Training.

Applicants must be a micro or small enterprise and projects must be completed by 30 Sept '23. Full details about the Brexit Blue Economy Enterprise Development Scheme, including how to apply, can be found at www.bim.ie



Sean O'Donoghue, Killybegs Fishermen's Organisation (KFO); Aodh O'Donnell, Irish Fish Producers Organisation (IFPO); Patrick Murphy, Irish South and West Producers Organisation (IS&WFPO); Seamus Breathnach, representing the National Inshore Fishermen's Association (NIFA); John Lynch, Irish South and East FPO (IS&EFPO); and Kevin O'Donovan, Irish South and East FPO on a fact-finding mission to the Floating Offshore Wind Farm in Kincardine, Aberdeenshire.

Endorse your Certificate of Competency with BIM

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.

BIM is an approved provider of maritime training on behalf of the Marine Survey Office.

To apply to endorse your certificate of competency please contact BIM to discuss and book any training you need. Contact details for BIM's two colleges are detailed below:

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National Fisheries College of Ireland,
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Irish fish producers' organisation

CFP Must Deliver Equity for Ireland

Aodh O'Donnell, CEO Irish Fish Producers' Organisation

The Common Fisheries Policy (CFP) needs a root and branch review which delivers equity for Ireland.

The Dept of the Marine report focuses more on how the CFP functions than its inequitable outcomes for Ireland. At the same time, the Irish fleet is forced to adapt radically to the adverse impacts of Brexit and cope with the ongoing fuel crisis.

We welcome efforts by the Dept and the Minister to work with the fishing industry to help achieve better outcomes under the CFP. The consultative forum set up for the report enabled stakeholders to articulate critical issues facing industry in a new post Brexit reality of lost quota opportunities.

A suite of strategic initiatives has been identified with thirty-five separate recommendations outlined. One key issue it addresses is the transparent application of Hague Preferences in setting quotas. Another key focus is on harmonised control and a much-needed application of a level playing field in enforcement.

Some of the more tangible initiatives include an industry-led push for long term swaps or quota leasing arrangements. Some Member States are unable to catch their quotas on a regular basis whilst Irish vessels are forced to remain at port. This proposal is predicated on a voluntary scheme to redistribute this scientifically supported unused EU quota. This rebalancing of the quota shares for Nephrops and other key whitefish quota stocks is a novel win-win approach. However, a strong political will and proactivity is needed to deliver this strategic initiative. A successful implementation would underpin the viability and resilience of the Irish demersal fleet.

For the pelagic segment there is an aspiration to achieve improved negotiation outcomes with Norway, the Faroe Islands, Iceland and the UK, and the EU. This push for a fairer share of the mackerel total allowable catch (TAC), coupled with an increased share of blue whiting TAC is commendable. We are mindful of constraints as Ireland relies on the political support of other EU states. A concern in this regard is the failure of the EU to impose trade sanctions on Norway and Faroes for their unilateral declarations in increased mackerel quotas. This inaction by the EU is perceived as a reward for the irresponsible IUU style of fishing which threatens the long-term sustainability of the mackerel fishery.

Blue whiting is an important targeted fishery for the Irish Fleet. A key recommendation revolves around the reduction in the annual EU transfers to Norway of 31,000 MT, which exclusively benefits other member states. The resultant Norwegian blue whiting quota exceeds the Irish TAC ninefold. Whilst the Irish Government has achieved considerable success in reducing the level of annual transfers, this 'cohesion quota transfer'

must be reduced. This blue whiting fishery is carried out heavily in Irish waters each spring by various fleets, whilst Irish vessels cease fishing early due to their low quota allocations.

The Dept. of the Marine report is a clear and concise call to action and presents the Minister with a toolbox of ideas to drive change. A high degree of resolve and a whole of government approach is needed to lead and deliver on these key strategic initiatives. It's time to let the EU know we need our fair share.

Every Sector Will Be Affected by The Fuel Crisis

We are still waiting for a resolution of the fuel crisis.

There was hope that this would be resolved but there is still no immediate resolution at the moment and the industry is in a serious crisis as a result. When the catching sector is affected, other sectors of the industry will also be hit and coastal communities will suffer. Processors could be faced with having to import fish to supply their needs.

Irish fishermen have been very responsible in this matter, but an early decision is desperately needed. EU funding is already in place to support such a scheme, but to date, Ireland has failed to implement one. The survival of the entire fishing sector is at stake. The European Union has allocated unused funds in the European Maritime and Fisheries Fund (EMFF) to cover the additional fuel costs. Other Member States responded to this some months ago and received the EU funds. The aid measures helped them reduce fuel costs by up to 30 %. But Ireland lagged behind on this aid, which created an uneven competitive landscape, as we still face higher fuel costs. This left the Irish fleet at a serious competitive disadvantage which flies in the face of EU competition policies.

Forcing the Irish fleet to land catches elsewhere has put them in a 'lose-lose' situation.

The marine economy loses the supply of valuable raw material and this creates losses in onshore coastal employment. The economic spin-off is benefitting our competitors in France, a market traditionally supplied by fish caught by Irish vessels.

Losing quotas under Brexit already posed a challenge. Forcing our vessels to land valuable quotas in France because of cheaper fuel is a body blow to the marine economy and a further hollowing out of supply for processing.

We have made the case, and we remain hopeful that a national fuel aid scheme can be introduced urgently. Irish fishermen have been very responsible in this matter, but an early decision is desperately needed.



Killybegs Fishermen's
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What We Want Is That the Minister Will Do What He Promised

Sean O'Donoghue, CEO, Killybegs Fishermen's Organisation

We were very much part of this CFP report. Everything that we wanted in that report is in it, so it is really now up to the Minister to take that and to ensure that we get what we are looking for that because we are approaching this a lot different to the last three reviews. Because if the same thing is done three times in a row and it doesn't work, then trying to do the same thing again you can't be expecting a different result.

We now have the definition of what is needed. With all the burden sharing and other issues, what I want to see now is that the Minister will do what he said he would do - take what is there and make sure that when the discussions start in earnest next year that this will be the key document and he will get a much better outcome for the Irish fishing industry in terms of the CFP Review.

There are very intense negotiations at present on the mackerel Coastal States negotiations where there is no agreement yet on the share-out and we expect that the European Commission which is party to these negotiations will get a bigger share which would mean an increased share for us and reduce some of the effect of the 25 per cent reduction in our mackerel quotas. We are not waiting around for the CFP review to do that and there are a few other burden sharing issues that can be addressed in advance of the CFP Review. Brexit has changed the whole course in terms of relative stability and percentage share and that has to be addressed in the new CFP.

Fuel Costs

The fuel price is a number one priority at the moment about which I have consistently been after the Minister for this for months and pleading with him that the industry needs to have a fuel subsidy deal or, otherwise, the industry cannot survive.

It does not matter whether it is the pelagic, whitefish, shellfish sectors, it is the industry and it does have to have a scheme. I think we are finally getting some traction with the Minister on this so I am expecting that we will get a deal. Not to do so would absolutely be detrimental to the entire fishing sector. We are hopeful, but nothing has been told to us yet. It's not for the want of making every lobbying effort in this. We have all our figures and the European Commission supports us and the Commission has told the Member States that they can bring in a scheme under the European Maritime and Fisheries Fund. That allows for emergency measures and the Commission invoked it last March.

NGOs and EU Deep Sea Fishing

Referring to environmental organisations and NGOs criticism of the fishing industry I always believe in fact not fiction. Some of the statements coming from NGOs, not all of them to be fair we can't tar everybody with the same brush, but there are statements that have been made with no factual basis in science as such.

The European Commission brought in an implementing regulation that is not fit for purpose and not based on the science in closing areas, which will have a detrimental effect on Irish fishing. When you look at that regulation there are 46 areas that are actually not relevant in the 400 metres and that I find this incredible and the NGOs have been pushing this right, left and centre. We need things based on facts not on fiction.

I mentioned this way back several months ago and there was not much notice taken of what I said and we have been on this about the losing of areas on a whim when someone suspects things that are not scientifically proven. This implementing regulation can be changed quickly and should be changed. It does not have to go through the Council. We made it clear that the regulation is not fit for purpose. This does not conform with the main regulation.



IS&EFPO - Working For The Fishermen

The issue of burden-sharing must be dealt with by the European Commission to allow our industry to be part of the level-playing field for which the CFP was designed

John Lynch, CEO, Irish South and East Fish Producers Organisation

The final report of the CFP review group has presented Ireland with a definitive way forward and gives direction to the Minister and Government as to the expectations of an industry that has been battered and bruised by the Brexit Trade and Cooperation Agreement, which has resulted in tie up schemes and decommissioning.

The unfair share of quota gifted to the UK by Ireland in the TCA is clearly demonstrated in the report. The issue of burden-sharing must be dealt with by the European Commission to allow our industry to be part of the level-playing field for which the CFP was designed. However the report does not address Brexit alone, but also provides the Government with the necessary tools to achieve a fair and balanced share for Irish fishermen.

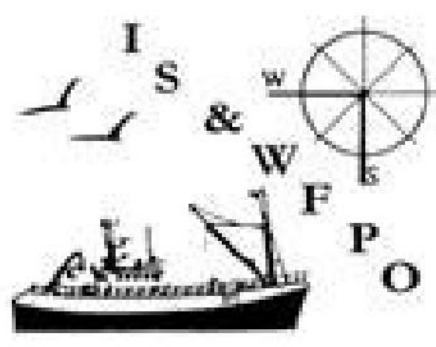
The review group report makes many relevant recommendations to the Minister and has examined in depth the approach which must be taken to achieve a level-playing field and a sustainable fishing industry which can survive long into the future. It states clearly that although the Commission are only committing to a report on the current CFP that some legislative changes may be required to address Ireland's situation.

A priority for the ISEFPO is to have the Hague Preferences adjusted and given a better legal standing to give Ireland the fair share of fish quotas most of which would be caught in the waters around Ireland to provide job security for the wider industry.

The CFP review group has given its recommendations on the many aspects of the Common Fisheries Policy from our position with quota share, Brexit, Hague preferences, socio-economic implications, aquaculture and the environment. To achieve a viable and sustainable fishing industry and taking account of all that has gone before the ISEFPO supports fully that the recommendations of this review report should be carried out to as full an extent as possible. In this regard we encourage the Minister and Government to use this report to its greatest advantages to improve the position of the Irish fishing Industry and achieve a better deal for Ireland in this CFP review.

Fuel Crisis

The fuel situation is having a real effect. The boats are not fishing as hard as they were, they cannot afford to go to sea in many instances, it is not economic. You can see the way the quotas are running, in the uptake, the catches are not being taken as they would be normally. This is a combination of the fuel, the uptake of the quota has slowed down, the tie-up scheme and the price of fuel which makes it uneconomic to fish, but the worst situation is the fuel crisis. This has been going on for months and there is still no resolution, no immediate help which the industry needs. It must be resolved and there must be a subsidy given quickly. The industry cannot continue to operate effectively without this support and fish supplies will be affected if there is not support to go to sea and catch fish. It is not economic for boats at present. Processors will be suffering from supply.



Minister, aid our vessels to keep fishing to retain the many jobs currently at risk in our catching and processing sectors, in Aquaculture and all the service jobs in our coastal communities

Patrick Murphy, CEO Irish South and West Fish Producers' Organisation

No person involved in our Industry from the smallest inshore vessel to our largest fishing vessel has not been affected by the increase in fuel and energy costs for the past nine months.

In response to the pleas from our fishing community we raised the issue not only at home with our Minister but through our membership within European advisory Councils and our fellow Producer Organisations raised this with the European Commissioner Virginijus Sinkevičius and in person with members of his DG Mare department.

As a result of our consultation, action was taken and within a few weeks they evoked Article 26.2 of the EMFAF Regulation 2021/1139 which provides for 'in case of exceptional events causing a significant disruption of markets,' compensation to operators of the fishery and aquaculture sector for their income foregone or additional costs.

This allowed Member States to use unallocated or unspent funds from a Member State's European Maritime Fisheries Fund (EMFF). As a member of the Operational Programme monitor committee we were briefed on the EMFF budget and were told there was 6.6 million Euro unallocated.

The Seafood representatives from all the seafood sectors met with Minister McConalogue in June with the specific issue of financial aid to our sector where we were told there was unallocated money within the 2014-2020 EMFF, but the amount was 5.5 million Euro in total.

We have met the Minister four times in the past 8 months to repeat our joint request for the immediate introduction of a national scheme to compensate the operators of the processing sector, fishery and aquaculture sector for the increased costs of production, processing and marketing caused by the effects of the military aggression of Russia against Ukraine, as set out in the Commission's technical note of March 2022.

In the meetings with the Minister all representatives outlined to him the crisis that was forcing serious disruptions to businesses in the Seafood Industry from the smallest Island fisherman to the largest pelagic vessels in the catching sector, from

the daily increases in prices paid by those operating in the Aquaculture sector to the massive increase in operating costs for the processing sector to such an extent that businesses were forced to cease operating and job losses are evident across the sectors.

Following our most recent meeting with the Minister and his officials in October his opening address to industry was his continuing assessment of the situation and his acknowledgement action may now have to be taken.

Fellow Member States have for several months received EU funds. The aid measures helped them reduce fuel costs by up to 30 %. Ireland has failed to introduce this aid, which continues create an uneven competitive playing pitch, as we still face higher fuel costs.

It is also understood the Minister has confirmed €5.5 million of unspent funds will be either spent in other areas or be required to return this unspent money to Europe.

We have made the case that a national fuel aid scheme must be introduced urgently and there are no other areas that are as such critical importance as providing a level- playing pitch to compete with our visiting foreign fleets who have the support of their Ministers' providing them with aid of up to 30 cent per litre.

Irish fishermen have been very responsible in this matter, but an early decision is desperately needed.

As we their representatives clarify, we did not ever ask our Minister for a second- month's tie-up scheme nor that we felt this was the solution or even part of such in relation to crippling rising fuel prices.

I ask this of our Minister - Please follow this joint request from all of Ireland's Seafood sector and look to aiding our vessels to keep fishing and retain the many jobs currently at risk in our catching sector, processing sector, Aquaculture and all the service jobs we support in our coastal communities!

Your Community. Your Industry. Your Paper.
 editor@marinetimes.ie www.marinetimes.ie WhatsApp: 087 7989582

BIM Invites Gear Suppliers to Round Table on Single Use Plastics

Bord Iascaigh Mhara (BIM), Ireland's Seafood Development Agency will host a round table meeting for producers and suppliers of fishing and aquaculture gear in Ballybofey, County Donegal on 30th November 2022 to explore the opportunities arising from the new Single Use Plastics (SUP) directive.



Rod Cappell, Poseidon, who is working with BIM on the national gear classification report for the Clean Oceans Initiative

The main objective of this event is to support national gear suppliers in preparing for the SUP directive and the required data reporting that is an integral part of it. The group will discuss the Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) Scheme, part of the SUP directive due to come into place in December 2024. Also up for discussion will be potential ways of reducing the costs involved in the Scheme.

BIM has confirmed two guest speakers to share their experiences of setting up EPRs with a particular emphasis on the importance of strong data management.

Elizabeth O Reilly, Head of Environmental Compliance and Membership of the EPR scheme for Waste Electrical and Electronic Equipment (WEEE) in Ireland will outline how they designed an EPR with the Department of the Environment, Climate and Communications as well as the membership structure of their EPR.

Hildur Hauksdóttir is sustainability officer with the Association of Fisheries Companies (SFS), Iceland. SFS represent the Icelandic fishing industry, aquaculture sector and fishing gear suppliers. Hildur will outline the strategic agreement that they have developed with Nofir, a Norwegian company that recycles equipment from fishing and fish farming activities. This material is directly shipped from Iceland through the proactive SFS network.

A fundamental piece of information to support the roll out of the SUP directive is the classification of aquaculture and fishing gear used in Ireland. As the industry is

different in each European country, different national gear classifications must be produced. BIM technical staff will work closely with gear suppliers to map the different gears used and generate an agreed classification that can be referenced for the reporting requirements associated with the directive.

Dominic Rihan, BIM's Director for Economics & Strategic Services said, "BIM will work with the sector to generate strong data and insights, giving gear suppliers the ability to minimise the impact of the EPR on their businesses while creating opportunities for retired gear as a valued waste material".

Rod Cappell of Poseidon, is assisting BIM in developing this classification. Commenting on this work, he says, "Working closely with Irish producers of fishing and aquaculture gear ensures the sector is involved in the design of a reliable gear classification. This will be key groundwork for the annual data collation and Extended Producer Responsibility scheme."

BIM is already working closely with national ports and harbours to collect material and data to address the needs of the SUP directive. While this is a new requirement for fisheries and aquaculture in Ireland, there are a number of ideas that can be adapted from existing EPR Schemes. Through this approach it is hoped the impact of the EPR can be minimised and the business case for a circular economy around plastics from retired fishing gear realised.

NOVEMBER PROMOTION

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Minister's Group Says There Must Be Legislative Changes in the CFP EU Indication That This Will Not Be Done "At Odds with Past Practice"

Analysis by Tom MacSweeney

The Common Fisheries Policy Review Group report, published last month, has made Ireland's case for a full review of the EU's CFP very clear.

In summary, the Group established by Marine Minister Charlie McConalogue, says it is "imperative" that the European Commission introduce legislative changes in the Policy.

The Group's extensive Report challenges the Commission's indication that it does not intend to introduce such changes and makes clear that the Irish view is that there is "necessity for legislative change and review of the CFP."

Ireland's case for fairness and equality of treatment between all Member States is made to counteract the present CFP provisions under which the industry here has low quotas, compared to other EU nations and has suffered considerably. The Review Group makes Ireland's case reasonably stating that, for the benefit of the entire European fishing industry, change is needed in the Policy for the benefit of the entire European fishing industry.

The need for legislative change for the future of Ireland's fishing industry cannot be doubted, because of low, unfair quotas in its own waters.

The Review Group included representa-

tives of producer organisations, the National Inshore Fisheries Forum, the aquaculture industry, co-ops, the seafood processing industry and representatives of environmental NGOs. It was chaired by former Secretary General of the Department of Agriculture, John Malone assisted by Micheál Ó Cinnéide, former Director of the MI and EPA and Donal Maguire, former Director BIM.

Minister McConalogue has forwarded a copy of the Review Group Report to EU Fisheries Commissioner, Virginijus Sinkevičius, who is responsible for the CFP Review.

Mr. McConalogue said the substantial changes in fisheries policy resulting from the adoption of the EU-UK Trade and Co-operation Agreement require that,

"internally within the EU, a comprehensive review of the CFP be carried out that would support changes to deliver a fair and equitable policy. The Review Group report clearly demonstrates that there is a need for legislative changes in the current."

The background to all of this stems from December 2021 when the European Commission launched a consultation on the ten-year review cycle of the CFP, inviting stakeholders to contribute to two reports. The first would provide information and

opinion for a Commission report required under article 49 of the CFP's basic regulation; the second for a similar report under article 48 of the Common Organisation of the Markets in

Fishery and Aquaculture. Launching these consultations, the Commission described the objective of the 2022 CFP report as to "address the functioning of the CFP and look at how its implementation could be strengthened."

However, the Commission has appeared to change that objective by intimating over the past year that it does not intend to introduce any legislative changes to the Policy. This attitude has not been fully explained. Is there pressure from the bigger EU fishing nations which do not want changes that would affect their existing quota entitlements?

Reports compiled by the European Commission as part of the 10-year review cycle in 1992, 2002 and 2012, were accompanied by reforms of the CFP including legislative changes.

The Irish CFP Review Report, submitted to Minister McConalogue, says that the Commission's attitude is at odds with past practice.

Report without legislative changes will not address critical issues confronting European fisheries

"It is inevitable that on this occasion too, that the Commission will have to introduce some legislative changes on foot of its report," says the Minister's Group.

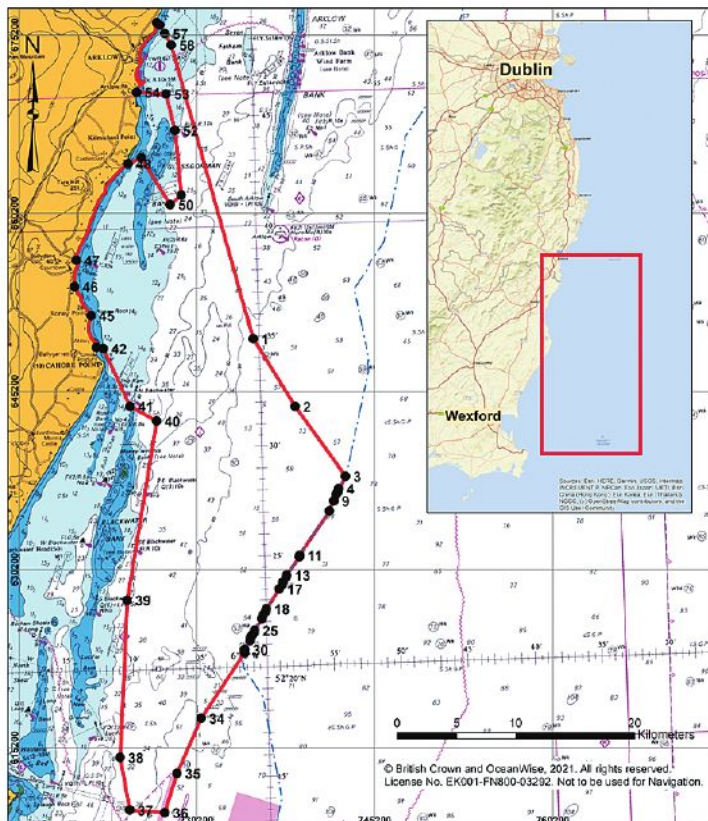
"This will require agreement by the Council and the European Parliament under ordinary legislative procedure. The CFP Review Group considers that given the inevitable need for legislative change, there



PUBLIC NOTICE INVITATION FOR PUBLIC SUBMISSIONS OR OBSERVATIONS ON APPROPRIATE ASSESSMENT

Notice is hereby given pursuant to Regulation 42(13) of the European Communities (Birds and Natural Habitats) Regulations 2011, as amended, of an application for a foreshore licence submitted by Shelmalere Offshore Wind Farm Ltd. in relation to an offshore wind farm under development off the coast of counties Wicklow and Wexford, reference number FS007261.

This application is for site investigation works required to inform the engineering and design of a potential offshore wind farm, Shelmalere Offshore Wind Farm, and associated export cable route. The objective of the site investigations is to gather sufficient geophysical, geotechnical, environmental, archaeological and ecological information to inform development of a potential offshore wind farm and export cable route within the Foreshore Licence Application Area. The Foreshore Licence Application Area is shown on the map below.



The Minister for Housing, Local Government and Heritage is responsible for making a decision on the application and the Minister may either grant, approve or consent to the application with or without covenants, conditions or agreements, where applicable, or refuse the application.

The Minister has determined, in accordance with Regulation 42(6) of the European Communities (Birds and Natural Habitats) Regulations 2011, that an Appropriate Assessment is required in respect of the proposed plan or project. A copy of the Screening for Appropriate Assessment is available at:

<https://www.gov.ie/en/foreshore-notice/a43ef-shelmalere-offshore-wind-farm-site-investigations-off-counties-wexford-and-wicklow/>

The Minister will make a determination as to whether or not the proposed plan or project would adversely affect the integrity of a European site in accordance with Regulation 42(11) of the European Communities (Birds and Natural Habitats) Regulations 2011 and, in doing so, shall have regard to the matters in Regulation 42(12).

In this regard, in accordance with Regulation 42(13), any person may make a submission or observation to the Minister concerning the proposed project within 30 days of the date of this notice. The Minister shall have regard to any submissions or observations received during the public consultation.

A copy of the application, map of the proposed project, the determination that an Appropriate Assessment is required in respect of the project, the Natura Impact Statement, and the other information and documentation relevant to the application, are available for inspection for 30 calendar days, between 1 November 2022 and 30 November 2022, free of charge at:

- Wexford County Council, County Hall, Carricklawn, Wexford, Y35WY93. Open 9am-1pm & 2-5pm Mon to Fri.
- Arklow Municipal District Council, Castle Park, Arklow, Co. Wicklow, Y14FX63. Open 9am-4pm Mon to Fri.
- Wexford Garda Station, Mulgannon, Wexford, Y14H392. Open 24/7.
- Courtown Harbour Garda Station, Ballinray Lower, Courtown Harbour, Co. Wexford, Y25P239. Open 10am-1pm Mon to Fri & 10am-1pm Sat & Sun.
- Rosslare Garda Station, Station Road, Rosslare, Wexford, Y35AY79. Open 10am-6pm Mon to Sun.

This documentation and information is also available on the Department's website, at:

<https://www.gov.ie/en/foreshore-notice/a43ef-shelmalere-offshore-wind-farm-site-investigations-off-counties-wexford-and-wicklow/>

Members of the public who wish to make a submission or observation in writing concerning the proposed project may do so between 1 November 2022 and 30 November 2022 (quoting ref: FS007261) to the Minister for Housing, Local Government and Heritage, Foreshore Section, Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage, Newtown Road, Wexford, Co. Wexford or foreshoreORE@housing.gov.ie. The closing date for submissions is close of business (17.30) on 30 November 2022.

Take notice that material to which the Minister shall have regard in making the Appropriate Assessment determination will be published on the Department's website. In this regard, the Department wishes to draw attention to its policy on defamatory material that may be contained in submissions it receives, which may be found at: <http://www.housing.gov.ie/planning/foreshore/public-participation-foreshore-consent-process>

Dated this 1 November 2022

is a compelling case for a deeper review of the CFP. A report without the necessary legislative changes will not adequately address the critical issues, both current and emerging, confronting European fisheries. These include:

- The adverse and disproportionate impacts of Brexit
- The social and economic sustainability of fisheries dependent coastal communities and the economic development of the seafood sector. The CFP Review Group contend that to adequately reflect the existing policy, the implications of all major impacts to the CFP (including Brexit) as well as all major policy changes must be accompanied by a publicly available appropriate socio-economic impact assessment
- The energy crisis and other emergencies confronting the European seafood sector.
- Food security
- Climate change
- Biodiversity loss
- The protection afforded to habitats and the marine environment (MPAs)
- Growth and intended scales of Offshore Renewable Energy (ORE)
- Structural aid, in particular the measures necessary to assist the seafood sector address the issues of climate change and associated pressures on the marine environment as a resource and a workplace
- Agreements with third countries
- Other potential changes set out in the body of this report which fall within the competence of co-legislation

Ireland's sacrifice accounts for 51% of the total Brexit transfers

The Review Group quantifies the total loss to Ireland of the EU's Brexit Agreement with the UK: "Ireland contributed 34% by volume and 40% by value of the real economic cost of fish transfers to the UK. The next nearest Member State in contribution terms, Germany, contributed just 24% by volume and 21% by value. In the case of Western Mackerel alone, Ireland's sacrifice accounts for 51% of the total Brexit transfers. This CFP Review Group contend that the implications of all major policy changes must be accompanied by a publicly available socio-economic impact assessment. Such an approach would inform the adoption of necessary measures to more equally apportion the real cost of Brexit between Member States. Such measures should be designed to lessen the socioeconomic impact on those who depend on fishing activities, wherever they operate within the EU."

Hague Preferences

On the Hague Preferences the Report notes that this system recognised Ireland's heavy dependence on stocks fished in the waters around Ireland by providing increased share of designated stocks when these fall below a certain level application of agreed rules. Notwithstanding the fact that Ireland has, in general, always received its preference shares where Hague Preferences have been invoked, the Group

nonetheless recommend that the issue of Hague Preferences be fully addressed once and for all in the CFP. "Following Brexit, the benefit Ireland receives from its Hague Preferences has been reduced, or irrevocably lost. Ireland is the only Member State that saw a nett loss of transfers under the Hague Agreement following Brexit. This outcome is at odds with the objective as established in the CFP which states that the "relative stability of fishing activities, given the temporary biological situation of stocks, should safeguard and take full account of the particular needs of regions where local communities are especially dependent on fisheries."

The EU is being left in no doubt that Ireland has contributed a disproportionate amount towards the quota transferred to the UK under the terms of the Brexit TCA.

This is equivalent to 34% by volume and 40% by value of the overall economic cost of Brexit. Ireland transferred about 15% of the total value of its 2020 fisheries quota to the UK. Proportionally, this is substantially more than that of any other Member State. If the transfer of quota arising from Brexit were evenly divided across all Member States with fishing rights, it would involve a 5.8% transfer per Member State. While quotas were cut by an average of 13% Ireland's two most important fisheries, mackerel and Dublin Bay prawns were cut by 26% and 14% respectively.

Ireland is the only Member State that saw a nett loss of transfers under the Hague Agreement following Brexit.

Hague Preferences Report Recommendations

+ The European Commission should issue a definitive list of Irish preference shares. 17 The European Commission should issue a definitive explanation of how these are translated into quotas.

+ Based on the principle established in recital 35 of the Common Fisheries Policy, Ireland's Hague Preferences for existing stocks should be revised upwards and Hague Preferences for additional critical stocks should be introduced to fully redress the imbalance caused by Brexit.

+ In the case of western mackerel, Ireland's Hague Preference should be increased by an amount equivalent to that previously available to the UK in both the North Sea and Western Waters components of this stock.

Extracts from the Report:

• The Common Fisheries Policy should be amended to ensure that the implications of all major changes are accompanied by an appropriate socio-economic impact assessment designed to safeguard and take full account of the particular needs of regions where local communities are especially dependent on fisheries and related activities

• Noting that the principle of relative stability stipulates that fishing opportunities should be based on a predictable share of the stocks for each Member State with the intention of ensuring the relative stability of fishing activities, the CFP Review Group recommend that where that relative stability of fishing activities is altered, as has been the case with Brexit, measures should be taken to redress any imbalance so created

• Burden sharing should be included as a principle of the Common Fisheries Policy taking full account of the particular needs of regions where local communities are especially dependent on fisheries and related activities

Aquaculture

There is a detailed section on Aquaculture which includes: "Aquaculture is seen by the practitioners as being poorly and unsympathetically managed at a national level. The problems cited included difficulties with dealing with complex multi-agency licensing regimes and the fact that there are perceived incompatibilities and inconsistencies of interpretation and understanding between the operation of certain types of aquaculture and the achievement of some of the conservation objectives of marine Natura 2000 sites."

MPAs Environment and NGOs

Marine Protected Areas, environmental issues and the attitude of NGOs (Non-Governmental Organisations) towards the fishing industry are detailed.

Markets

A small number of submissions from retailers to the Group said that fish supply was at an all-time low and there was very little fresh fish entering the domestic market. A concerted effort must be made to increase domestic supply and demand.

Monitoring

Other submissions said that more effort should be invested into monitoring control measures for foreign vessels in Irish

waters. Equally there were calls from the public that more monitoring is needed of all fishing including that of Irish vessels. Points were raised about overfishing of non-quota inshore stocks, illegal trawling below 800m, high grading on supertrawlers and the lack of MPAs.

Quotas and Relative Stability

Most submissions from the fishery sector identified the disproportionate distribution of quota following Brexit and that all efforts should be made to realise a better quota share for Ireland. It was suggested by the majority of submissions that unused quota in Irish waters by other MSs should be redistributed to Ireland and a mechanism for this should be found. The CFP foundation on fishing track record and the 'unfair' distribution of quota is seen as the starting point of the demise of the Irish fishing industry which once thrived and kept local fishing communities vibrant. Amongst many fishers the common message was that the CFP is an 'unfair discriminatory fisheries policy'. NGOs focussed more heavily on the environmental pillar.

INDUSTRY RESPONSE

For response to the publication of the report from the industry see THE CEOs and IIMRO columns in this issue of the Marine Times (Pages 8, 9 and 13).

All submissions made to the CFP Group are referenced in the Group's extensive Report, dated July, but which was not published until October 4. It is available for download on the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine website.



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Irish Aquaculture Inflation Challenges Cannot Continue To Ignored



IFA Aquaculture Executive Teresa Morrissey contrasts how Minister for Agriculture, Food and the Marine, Charlie McConalogue, has favoured farmers, but ignored assistance to the seafood industry.

IFA Aquaculture

The Minister has refused to offer any assistance to the seafood industry, failing to recognise the crisis, but at the same time granting aid to farmers.

It has been recently reported that Fisheries organisations are now 'hopeful' that Minister McConalogue is about to announce a national fuel aid scheme for the Irish fleet. They believe the Minister now agrees that escalating fuel costs are causing serious difficulties for the industry – this is welcome and necessary support for the Irish fishing industry during the current fuel crisis.

As I have spoken about numerous times in recent months, earlier this year the European Commission activated a crisis mechanism of the European Maritime, Fisheries and Aquaculture Fund (EMFAF), to enable Member States to grant financial compensation to aquaculture and fisheries operators for income foregone and additional costs due to the current market disruption. So far, the Minister has refused to offer any assistance to the seafood industry, failing to recognise the crisis, but at the same time granting aid to farmers under schemes such as the Fodder Support Scheme which cost €56 million which has been extended in the recent Budget 2023, because he recognised the crisis caused by the Russian invasion of Ukraine.

So now we seem to be reaching a point where the same Minister, recognises the current Ukraine crisis has knock-on impacts for both the agriculture and fisheries sectors and quiet rightly is proposing to support both sectors through this crisis – he cannot credibly be of the view that the same crisis does not affect Irish Aquaculture producers at the same time.

After weathering a difficult economic climate due to Brexit and Covid-19, aquaculture businesses are now facing increased costs and an ongoing inflation crisis, with fish feed, electricity and energy, raw materials all having increased costs of between

30-60%. This is not sustainable for Irish Aquaculture operators and some businesses will no longer be profitable unless there are significant supports during this time of crisis to assist with spiralling input costs – the seafood sector has been neglected by the Irish Government and the Minister cannot continue to ignore the sector.

IFA Aquaculture are once again calling on the Government to consider these funding mechanisms made available by the European Commission to assist Irish Aquaculture operators affected by these severe cost increases. A 'Temporary Crisis Scheme' to allow for financial compensation to operators in the aquaculture sector for their income forgone and additional costs incurred must be made available to ALL aquaculture operators affected by the Ukraine crisis and eligibility criteria must reflect that – this must be done without delay.

IFA Aquaculture Conference and AGM Date Announced for February 2023

IFA Aquaculture will host its annual conference and AGM at the Kilmurry Lodge Hotel, Limerick on Thursday 23rd February 2023. The event will take place on the eve of the Skipper Expo taking place at the UL Sport Arena on Friday 24th and Saturday 25th February.

A full agenda for the day will be issued in advance of the event but will include an update on the next EMFAF programme, the National Strategic Plan for Sustainable Aquaculture, along with a brief on relevant issues relating to the sustainable development of Irish Aquaculture.

Details on registration for the event and information regarding the AGM for IFA Aquaculture members will also be issued in advance of the event.

Accommodation can be secured by contacting the Kilmurry Lodge Hotel directly or booking online via their website using the promo code IFAAGM23.



None of IIMRO's proposals made the final report which is a major missed opportunity for Ireland and dependent fishing communities for the next CFP period.

IIMRO Does Not Support the Common Fisheries Policy Review Group Report

By Seamus Bonner, IIMRO Secretary

IIMRO participated in the Common Fisheries Policy review group which aimed to discuss issues that were relevant to Ireland and to inform the Minister for the Marine in preparation for the review and upcoming negotiations.

IIMRO raised a number of vitally important issues for the island, small-scale and inshore fleets, including the current failures in implementing the CFP:

- The need for strengthening of the CFP for small scale and inshore fleet segments.
- Failure to implement Article 17 of the CFP to allow access to the fishery resource.
- Co-management and the need to include fishers and communities in the management and decision making process.
- The need to retain fishers and support new entrants to the industry to ensure continuity and food security.

- Relative stability and the unsuitability of use of track record as a fishery management tool.

- The lack of support for islands as outlined in the CFP.

- The lack of joined-up thinking between the CFP and EU environmental regulations.

Unfortunately, none of IIMRO's proposals made the final report which is a major missed opportunity for Ireland and dependent fishing communities for the next CFP period.

As such IIMRO cannot and will not support the report as presented.

The Irish Islands Marine Resource Organisation (IIMRO) is an island-based fishery producer organisation. It is a member of the North West Waters Advisory Council and affiliated to the Low Impact Fishers of Europe (LIFE) organisation and Comhdháil Oileán na hÉireann - The Irish Islands Federation.

Website: www.iimro.org
Twitter: @islandsmarine



Ros Ard - Photo J Rafferty

Your Community. Your Industry. Your Paper.

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Tom MacSweeney Maritime Diary



All mariners know that there is more than one type of fog which can be encountered at sea. Amongst them is radiation fog, forming in the evening when heat absorbed by the Earth's surface during the day is radiated into the air. Advection fog can be dense and long-lasting as warm, moist air blows over a colder surface. Frontal fog, a warm front precipitation falling into colder air, causes fog near the surface.

There is also fog ashore, thin or thick, causing people to have difficulty in seeing through it.

"Fog is very terrible. It comes about you before you realise and you are suddenly blind, dumb and cold," wrote Anne Morrow Lindbergh, the wife of decorated pioneer aviator Charles Lindbergh who was herself an aviator and writer.

So fog creates a lot of problems – at sea, in the air, on land and amongst those who have 'fog of the mind.'

With a foggy mind you see nothing but fog. Brain fog is characterised by confusion, forgetfulness and lack of mental clarity.

This condition appears to affect some of the country's NGOs, the non-governmental organisations, who spend time attacking the fishing industry. Anti-fishing publicity, articles, social media postings, have increased noticeably.

Until recently the fishing industry has not had a high profile record of countering such attacks, as a result of which it has suffered in public perception.

The industry has changed with the advent of stronger voices from producer organisations and other representative groups.

That it has become more active in responding, initiating public demonstrations this year and defending itself, appears to have angered some of those environmental organisations. From what I see, hear and receive, there appears to be an increasing stridency.

'Overfishing' is an allegation used regularly, but often without acknowledgement of the regulation of the fishing industry in Ireland. Not often referenced is the impact of non-Irish fleets on stocks in Irish waters.

The core point is ignored – that it is not in the interests of Irish fishermen to see species wiped out. Adequate stocks which allow for catching of fish is essential for the industry to survive and to thrive. Preserving them is in the interests of fishers. The industry has been involved in conservation.

Coastal communities are an important part of this island nation. The fishing industry is economically essential to them.

Fish is a seafood, a valuable part of the food chain for humans. To have a fishing industry should be considered vital for an island nation.

Environmental organisations have their place in the nation, their voices on varying topics have, at times, proved that. But the increasing stridency of anti-fishing statements from some of them has reflected lack of balance and accuracy.

No one defends illegal or damaging actions, industry organisations have made that clear.

"Respect" is defined as "due regard for the feelings, wishes, the rights of others, the admiration elicited by their abilities, qualities, or achievements."

While respecting the contribution of environmental organisations to the nation, respect for the people of the coastal, fishing communities is a required balance.

Tom MacSweeney's Maritime Ireland Radio Show & Podcast

Supported by the MARINE TIMES and issued on the first Friday of each month. You can listen on the MARINE TIMES website www.marinetimes.ie and on Apple, Spotify, Amazon, Google and other Podcast Services. It is also broadcast on 17 Community Radio Stations around Ireland

BROADCAST STATIONS:

DUBLIN SOUTH 93.9 FM; DUBLIN CITY FM 103.2 FM; DUBLIN NEAR FM 90.3 F; DUBLIN LIFFEY SOUND FM 96.4FM; DUNDALK FM 97.7 FM; ERRIS FM 90.8 FM KILKENNY CITY RADIO 88.7 FM; RADIO CORCA BAISINN SOUTH WEST CLARE 92.5-94.8 FM; CONNE-MARA COMMUNITY RADIO 87.8 FM and 106.1 FM; ATHLONE COMMUNITY RADIO 88.4 FM; CRY 104 FM YOU-GHAL; WEST CORK FM; BERE ISLAND 100.1 FM; KINVARA FM; COMMUNITY RADIO CASTLEBAR 102.9FM; WEST LIMERICK 102 FM; TIPP MID WEST RADIO 104.8 FM AND 106.7 FM

Programme website: www.maritimeirelandradioshow.ie Email address: maritimeirelandradioshow@gmail.com



Students from Scoil Realt na Mara from Cromane, Co. Kerry enjoying the buzz of getting a tour of Ireland's newest research vessel RV Tom Crean. They were presented with their Explorers Ocean Champions schools award (Category winner: THE BEST OCEAN LITERACY CREATIVE SCHOOL PROJECT) by Minister for Education, Norma Foley - TD at Dingle during the official commissioning service for the RV Tom Crean.



Upcoming Courses 2022



Rialtas na hÉireann
Government of Ireland

NOVEMBER

- GMDSS General Operators Radio Certificate
1st November - 12th November
NFCI Castletownbere
- STCW Medical Care Aboard Ship
7th November - 11th November
NFCI Castletownbere
- STCW Fire Prevention and Firefighting
8th November - 10th November
NFCI Castletownbere
- Enhanced Safety Training
10th November
NFCI Greencastle
- Three Day Basic Safety Training
14th November - 16th November
NFCI Greencastle
- Three Day Basic Safety Training
16th November - 18th November
Coastal Training Unit 1,
Rossaveal, Co. Galway
- STCW Advanced Firefighting
21st November - 25th November
NFCI Greencastle
- Navigational Command & Control (Fishing)
21st November - 2nd December
NFCI Castletownbere
- Three Day Basic Safety Training
22nd November - 24th November
NFCI Castletownbere

- Enhanced Safety Training
22nd November
Coastal Training Unit 1,
Rossaveal, Co. Galway
- Enhanced Safety Training
24th November
Coastal Training Unit 1,
Rossaveal, Co. Galway
- STCW Medical Care Aboard Ship
28th November - 2nd December
NFCI Castletownbere
- GMDSS Short Range Radio Certificate
24th November - 30th November
Coastal Training Unit 1,
Rossaveal, Co. Galway
- STCW Medical Care Aboard Ship
28th November - 2nd December
NFCI Greencastle

DECEMBER

- Navigational Control Course (Fishing)
28th November - 9th December
NFCI Greencastle
- Three Day Basic Safety Training
6th December - 8th December
NFCI Castletownbere
- Three Day Basic Safety Training
6th December - 8th December
Coastal Training Unit 1,
Rossaveal, Co. Galway

- STCW Medical First Aid
7th December - 9th December
NFCI Castletownbere
- STCW Fire Prevention and Firefighting
7th December - 9th December
NFCI Greencastle
- STCW Fire Prevention and Firefighting
12th December - 14th December
NFCI Castletownbere
- Three Day Basic Safety Training
12th December - 14th December
NFCI Greencastle

Greencastle College - Maria McCarron
T: +353(0) 749381068 E: maria.mccarron@bim.ie

Castletownbere College - Della O'Sullivan
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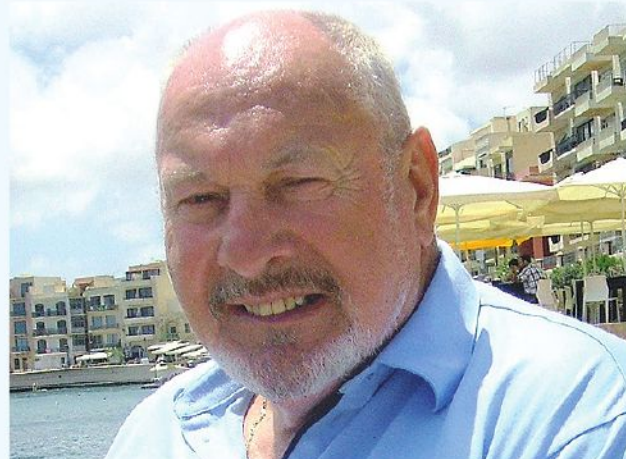
THE MARINE TIMES INTERVIEW

The Brixham Trawler Influence on Dublin Port

Tom MacSweeney talks to Cormac Lowth about his book on the history of the Ringsend sailing trawlers



In my days on the reporting staff of *The Irish Press* and its sister newspapers, *The Evening Press* and *The Sunday Press*, as a newcomer to Dublin, I bought ray in batter in a fish and chip shop in Ringsend and was told that the area was also known as 'Raytown,' which reflected its history as a fishing village.



A short distance from the city centre, it was originally a long narrow peninsula separated from the rest of Dublin by the River Dodder estuary. On early maps, its name is given as 'Rin-Aun,' translated as 'the point of the tide.' Later it became Ringsend, but local history also refers to it as 'Irishtown,' reflecting a time when native Irish were kept outside the city walls.

That is an interesting contrast to what Cormac Lowth makes the focal point of his book about that part of the capital which is resonant with maritime history.

"It is a special place," Cormac Lowth tells me, recalling that along the River Dodder and into Ringsend there were once many boatyards and, amongst the vessels they built, were Brixham Trawlers. There are descendants still living in Ringsend of fishermen and their families who originally came from Brixham, names such as Bartlett, Saunders, Elliott and others are a proud part of the history of the area also.

Brixham is a fishing town, the smallest and southernmost of the three main population centres on the Devon coast in South West England, from where came the Brixham Trawlers, wooden, deep sea sailing fishing boats built in the 19th century and renowned for their speed. Described as "heavy displacement boats of 60–80 foot length on deck, gaff-rigged, with a long straight keel, straight vertical stem and a low freeboard to ease the handling of the nets, the town once had a fleet of 400, with distinctive red sails."

"They could stay at sea in weather and keep fishing when other boats would be heading back to port, they could fish in deep water and had mechanical winches aboard and were very different from other vessels that were around Dublin and on the East Coast generally," Cormac says. "So when the first of them arrived in Ringsend in 1819 they proved very successful and they were copied and their method of fishing by locals. A great many of them were built in Ringsend, along the style of the Brixham Trawlers."

Beam trawling under sail had been started by a fishing company formed in Dublin through public subscription which bought seven Brixham Trawlers to use on the East Coast to supply the Dublin Fish Market. The trawlers came with their crews and, in some cases, the families of crewmen who subsequently settled in Ringsend.

Unsurprisingly, "there were some initial setbacks with the locals," Lowth records, "but they quickly realised this was a better, more efficient way of fishing in deeper water to supply the market with catches which their existing boats weren't able to do."

The "Ringsend sailing smacks" as they were called had a very successful period of a hundred years until 1919

when the development of steam trawling and motorised vessels began to change things. Between 250 and 300 of the Brixham-style trawlers were operating during the period, Cormac estimates. "It was a natural transition to build them locally in the boatyards at Ringsend and along the Dodder, but there was also an interchange of boats and people between Ringsend and Brixham."

"Trawling under sail was still done into the 20th century, but their age was changing with the advent of steam trawling and more guaranteed ways of staying at sea and fishing deeper waters.

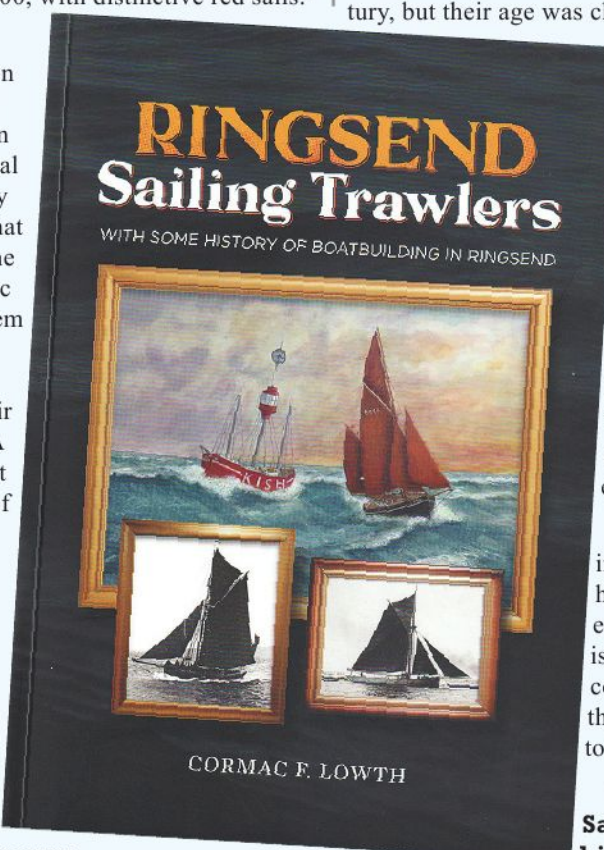
"I first heard about all of this activity in 1957 when I was 13 and my father bought a half-deck fishing boat which we converted into a motor-sailer over a couple of years through Ringsend. There were a number of older fishermen who used to congregate and I heard about the 'fishing smacks' in their conversations and I've had an interest ever since."

Cormac Lowth, who served in the Merchant Navy, maritime historian, has written and lectured extensively on marine topics. He is also an artist and his new book's cover illustration is his painting of the *Kincora*, the last sailing trawler to be built in Ringsend.

The new book "Ringsend Sailing Trawlers, with some history of boatbuilding in

Ringsend," is at present a limited edition of 500 copies, available on eBay or by contacting him on Email: cormacflowth69@gmail.com

• Enda Conneely, the subject of our October interview, is the Irish Islands Marine Resource Organisation (IIMRO) representative on the offshore renewable group, Seafood /ORE. He is a former chef and operator of the Fisherman's Cottage restaurant on Inisheer in the Aran Islands.



Ireland's New Research Vessel RV Tom Crean Commissioned in Dingle

The RV Tom Crean was commissioned at a special event in Dingle Harbour. Ireland's latest marine research vessel has been named the RV Tom Crean after the legendary Irish Explorer from Kerry, who undertook three ground-breaking expeditions to the Antarctic in the early years of the 20th Century.

The RV Tom Crean will be based in Galway and will enable the Marine Institute to continue to carry out vital surveys that contribute to Ireland's position as a leader in marine science. The research vessel will carry out a wide range of marine research activities including expanded fisheries surveys, seabed mapping, collect data to support marine spatial planning, climate change related research, environmental monitoring, deep water surveys, and undertake research in the Atlantic Ocean with our EU partners.

Minister McConalogue speaking at the commissioning said: "I don't need to remind anyone here today that Ireland's oceans are vital to our economy, our environment, and many aspects of our daily lives. The RV Tom Crean will undertake

essential scientific work, which will support many of the projects outlined in the Programme for Government; including fisheries assessments (so crucial to our coastal communities), food security, offshore renewable energy, marine spatial planning, marine protected areas and assist the State in addressing the challenges of climate change."

The new research vessel is a silent vessel, capable of operating throughout the Irish Exclusive

Economic Zone (EEZ) and will replace the RV Celtic Voyager, which was Ireland's first purpose-built research vessel which arrived in 1997. The vessel makes much less underwater noise than traditional vessels, reducing the effect of noise on fish populations while surveying and sampling, so that a more accurate stock assessment can be made.



Great Great Grand children of Tom Crean April Rose and Padraic Cronin at the commissioning ceremony of the RV Tom Crean in Dingle. (Insert photo): The godmother of the RV Tom Crean is Aileen Crean O'Brien, granddaughter of Tom Crean.

Dr Paul Connolly, CEO of the Marine Institute, speaking about the RV Tom Crean said: "We are delighted to name our new research vessel after Tom Crean as it gives recognition to an Irish explorer of international renown whose life was packed with amazing feats of Antarctic bravery, determination and courage. The Institute appreciates the support of the descendants of Tom Crean in this decision. Our new multi-purpose research vessel will enhance Ireland's capacity to undertake international collaborative research to acquire the ocean data and knowledge essential to managing our vast marine resources."

The RV Tom Crean will be at sea for 300 operational days each year – heading to sea for at least 21 days at a time – and aims to accommodate up to 3000 scientist days annually and is designed to operate in the harsh sea conditions of the Atlantic.

Dr Connolly continued: "The ocean is

essential to life on earth. It produces half the oxygen we breathe and is a major driver of our weather. We need the best quality data, science and advice to inform decisions on the big challenges facing society – mitigating the impacts of climate change, protecting and restoring ocean biodiversity, and realizing the full potential of our ocean economy. The new vessel will be used by the Marine Institute, other state agencies and universities to gather essential data that will be used to deliver the scientific advice for fisheries assessment, offshore renewable energy, marine spatial planning, marine protected areas and addressing the challenges of climate change."

The vessel design incorporates the latest proven technologies to ensure that it operates as efficiently as possible, with reduced fuel consumption and minimising the vessel's environmental impact and carbon footprint.

marine.ie

Our ocean is our greatest national resource

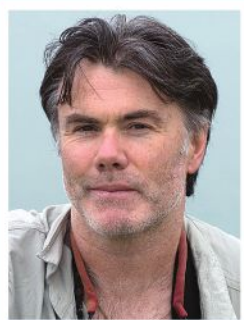
Ár n-aigéan an acmhainn náisiúnta is mó atá againn



Foras na Mara
Marine Institute



Kevin Flannery of Dingle Oceanworld presenting a plaque to Captain Kenny Downing and Michael Gillooly - Director of Ocean Climate and Information Services on the commission of Tom Crean in Dingle.



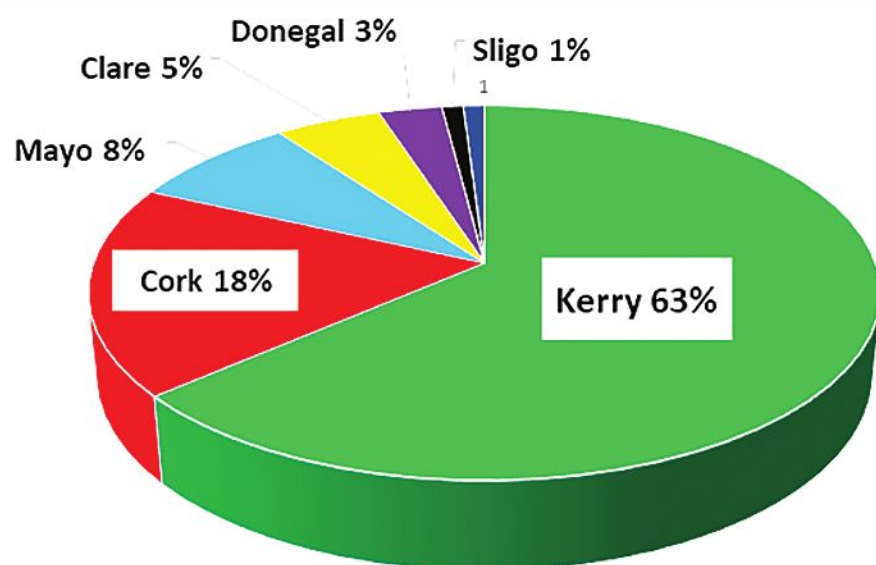
Irish Whale and Dolphin Group



"The most significant development of 2022 was with the Caribbean breeding area" writes Padraig Whooley, Sightings Officer at the Irish Whale and Dolphin Group.

Humpback Whale Review of "Whale Track" Season

The Irish Humpback Whale Catalogue received funding support from the Patagonia Grant Aid "Tides Foundation" which has been put to good use this field season. Our field work to date anyway has been mostly in West Kerry, which of course reflects where most humpbacks have been recorded this year (Chart below).



Now in the middle of the Atlantic "hurricane season", we find ourselves on the receiving end of one low pressure weather system after another, and it seems unlikely that too much will change in the coming weeks; although November may yet see an improvement in the weather and some late season whale sightings, so it's premature to write the season off entirely.

The fact remains however that our 2022 humpback season has been very different to recent years, with just 73 validated sightings to date, down 50% on 2021; which goes some way towards explaining their absence from the Cork coastline this summer. Given that they arrived right on cue in the usual west Cork haunts in mid-April, it remains something

of a mystery as to why exactly they left the area for a whole three months, as countless land-based watches and commercial whale watching trips in formerly productive "whale grounds" failed to produce a single humpback sighting between June 13th and September 17th.

What was bad news for West Cork may have been good news for other sites along our western seaboard, as humpbacks are increasingly being recorded in areas, where in recent decades their sightings were few and far between. So we are using these pages to put out a special request to fishers in this area, who have seen or perhaps even photographed a humpback whale (or indeed any species), as IWDG would very much appreciate hearing from you.



Humpback with common dolphin in Broadhaven Bay, Mayo. Photo: Tom Breathnach

But one thing we know about the humpbacks returning to Irish waters... dare we refer to them as "Irish" humpbacks, is that as their catalogue grows in pre-eminence as a key monitoring indices, so too do our discoveries. So a quieter than usual domestic season hasn't meant that things were quiet on the International matching front, as 2022 produced some wonderful matches that linked individuals such as #HBIRL45, 59 & 67 to the high Arctic feeding area between Tromsø and Finnmark in Northern Norway; whilst at lower latitudes we almost doubled the number of matches to the Cabo Verde breeding ground, with matches of #HBIRL59, 83 & 84 to the Island of Boa Vista.

The single most significant match of 2022 however was none of the above, but our first match to the Caribbean breeding area, when one of the earliest animals on the Irish Catalogue #HBIRL06 aka "Loopy" was matched by our colleagues at Allied Whale, who curate the North Atlantic Humpback Whale Catalogue, to the Silver Banks off the Dominican Republic. This whale was photographed during a US NOAA-National Marine Fisheries Service's survey, when this partial fluke was obtained in February 2004. The same whale was photographed here some eight months later by the Irish Naval Service off Loop Head, Co. Clare on October 11th 2004. So even though this is a retrospective match based on a photograph taken some 18 years previous, its importance can't be overstated, as it places individuals from the "Irish" population in both the two known North Atlantic breeding areas.

While humpbacks are the focus of this piece, it's worth mentioning that sightings of our most frequently recorded rorqual, the smaller minke whale, are also down on our 2021 figures, as indeed are those of much larger fin whale. A decline in sightings can sometimes be explained by poor weather during the summer period when we typically receive most sighting reports, the summer of 2022, despite a shaky start, will however go down as a record breaking one, so it's difficult to see how the "weather effect" can explain this decline. Perhaps we need to explore whether there was a reduction in the biomass of forage fish such as sandeels, sprat and herring, whilst having to admit that interpreting either the movements of whales or a reduction in their sightings isn't an exact science and the drivers behind these changes are likely to be complex and multi factorial.

We'll have plenty of time over the long winter ahead with our colleagues and research collaborators, both at home and abroad, to review outstanding images and clean up the Irish humpback catalogue, which currently stands at 120 recognisable individuals. As always IWDG extend a huge thanks to all IWDG members, Whale Watch/Marine Tourism boats and crew in Counties Cork, Kerry, Clare, Galway, Mayo & Donegal, for sharing their PhotoID images with the Irish Humpback Whale Catalogue.

www.iwdg.ie

Developing Marine Tourism In West Cork

Having sold two of its vessels - the fast Ferry Dún na Séad II and the Dún Aengus, Cape Clear Ferries in West Cork is buying the Spirit of Doolin from O'Brien's Ferry Company in Clare. This will replace the previous fast ferry, while the Dún Aengus is being replaced by another purchase, the Carraig Mhór.



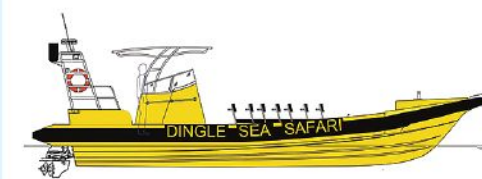
Manager Séamus Ó Drisceoil says the company is upgrading its fleet and "working with Comharchumann Chléire Teo and other service providers to develop an outstanding maritime tourism experience based around the Fastnet Rock and Cape Clear Island. This will bring new business to the Island and its mainland hinterland."

Spirit of Doolin is a modern stylish vessel with 200-passenger capacity. It will operate mostly from Schull to Cape Clear and around the Fastnet Rock Lighthouse."

The vessel called to Baltimore and Cape to be shown to the island and local community. The purchase is subject to approval trials.

Dingle Sea Safari Expanding Their Fleet for 2023

Due to demand Dingle Sea Safari are expanding their fleet for the 2023 season!



It is with great excitement that they announced that construction has started on their brand new state of the art rib 'Endeavour' due for delivery for the 2023 season!

Custom designed by director Jimmy Flannery in conjunction with Redbay Boats, this vessel is designed with greater comfort in mind for both crew & passengers & fitted with the most modern fuel efficient YANMAR MARINE INTERNATIONAL Diesel engines will make this vessel the most modern passenger rib in the country!

This will bring Dingle Sea Safari's fleet to 4 RIBS for the 2023 season.

This development has been made possible partly with grant aid from the Brexit Blue Economy Enterprise Development Scheme - Project Type 1

Scoil Cholmchille Primary School in Malin Win the Marine Institute's Explorers National Ocean Champions Award



Charlie McConalogue TD, Minister for Agriculture, Food and the Marine presented the Marine Institute's Explorers Ocean Champion winning national award to Jack McLaughlin (Past Pupil), Noah McDaid, Lily Doherty and Gavin McColgan (past pupil) representing their school Scoil Cholmchille in Donegal, stating the Marine Institute Explorers Ocean Champion awards recognise the effort, commitment and collaboration of the children, their teachers, and the wider community, working together to learn about the importance of the ocean, as well as our unique maritime culture and heritage.

Pupils of Scoil Cholmchille primary school in Malin, Co Donegal have been presented with the inaugural national prize for the Marine Institute's Explorers Ocean Champions Award by Minister for Agriculture, Food and the Marine Charlie McConalogue TD.

Congratulating the pupils, Minister McConalogue said "the Explorers Ocean Champion awards recognises the effort, commitment and collaboration of the children, their teachers and the wider community, working together to learn about the importance of the ocean, as well as our unique maritime culture and heritage. I warmly congratulate all of the children of Scoil Cholmchille on winning this award for creating what is a unique and inspirational project and wish to thank their teachers and members of the local community in Malin who assisted them".

As part of the Explorers Ocean Champion Project and Awards initiative, the Programme Manager, Camden Education Trust, and the Explorers Programme outreach teams have worked with 28 primary schools, reaching up to 3,500 children and 124 teachers across 13 coastal counties, creating 'healthy ocean' projects covering themes from STEM, outdoor education, through to the arts and ocean literacy.

Minister McConalogue added, "I am delighted to see so many schools from across Ireland participating in the programme and I want to congratulate all the children who completed Ocean Champion projects around the country. Projects such as this enable a shared understanding of the impact the ocean has on our lives, as well as the impact we

have on the ocean and helps to ensure that we are better informed to protect and manage this valuable resource."

School principal Mary Harkin welcoming the award said; "We are absolutely delighted to have won the national prize for the Explorers Ocean Champion Award. Our pupils are innately interested in the maritime heritage of their local coastal area and are keenly aware of the importance of the sea, as a life-giving source, as well as being very conscious of the dangers inherent in making a living from the sea. We view this award as testament to the close working, supportive relationship between the school and the local community and we would like to dedicate this award to all those from the area who have lost their lives to the sea."

For their project 'Save our Seas', the children learned about the links between the local community and the marine environment. They also engaged in real marine science activities taking and examining plankton samples from the ocean, learning the lifecycle of salmon, and also studying local seaweeds. The children created songs, 'Save our Seas' posters and engaged with local traditional boat builders led by John Bonner and their community, to learn about boats and local fishing practices.

The Marine Institute Funded Explorers Education Programme has been delivering marine-themed modules to classes for nearly 15 years. The Explorers outreach team brings together scientists, teachers, outreach teams and communities together, inspiring the education network to create marine leaders and ocean champions.

Patricia Orme, Corporate Services Director, Marine Institute said: "Collaborative school projects that involve the community and which have cross generational

engagement such as this one, build understanding of the ocean and our unique maritime heritage. I want to congratulate the children and teachers from Scoil Cholmchille and also thank the local Community for their enthusiasm and generosity in sharing their knowledge and experience. We also want to congratulate the other teachers and children who took part in the school projects around Ireland. From beach cleans, working with musicians to create impactful songs, to creating public notice boards at beaches, all of the projects highlighted the importance of our marine resource and enabled communities working together to come up with inspiring solutions."

Awards by Category:

Overall winner of the Marine Institute's Explorers Ocean Champion School 2021-2022: 'Award of Excellence for the Best Healthy Ocean' school project in Ireland: Scoil Cholmchille, Malin, Co. Donegal.

Award of Excellence – Outdoor Education: S.N. Réalt na Mara, Rosses Point, Co Sligo - 'The H.O.M.E Project'

Award of Excellence – Ocean Literacy Creative Project: Scoil Réalt na Mara, Cill Orglan, Co Kerry - 'We are Ocean Champions'

Award of Excellence – Cross Curricular & STEAM: Scoil Íosaif Naofa Oranmore Boys NS, Oranmore, Co Galway - 'Ocean Award Because We Care'

Award of Excellence – Cross Curricular & STEM: Rathmichael Parish NS, Rathmichael, Co Dublin - 'The Marine Team'

Judges Award: Claddagh National School, Galway City, Co Galway - 'Our Oceans, Alive and Healthy: Song and Podcast'

The Presidents of Ireland and Portugal Visit Ireland's New State of the Art Research Vessel RV Tom Crean in Dublin



President of Portugal, Marcelo Rebelo de Sousa and Irish President Michael D. Higgins pictured enjoying their visit to the newly commissioned research vessel RV Tom Crean berthed in Dublin's docklands.

The Marine Institute was delighted to welcome the Presidents of Ireland, Michael D. Higgins and Portugal, Marcelo Rebelo de Sousa on a visit to the newly commissioned research vessel RV Tom Crean berthed in Dublin's docklands.

President Higgins and President de Sousa met with the Minister for Agriculture, Food and the Marine, Charlie McConalogue, the CEO of the Marine Institute, Dr Paul Connolly, and the Institute's Chairperson, Dr John Killeen.

The Portuguese and Irish delegations were given a tour of the new marine research vessel, after it returned from a fisheries assessment survey in the Celtic sea, following its commissioning in Dingle, Kerry on October 6th. Marine Institute staff outlined the state of the art technology on the ship. This will greatly enhance Ireland's capacity to undertake many diverse ocean science surveys, participate in international collaborative research projects and acquire the ocean data and knowledge essential to inform and inspire the sustainable management of our vast marine resources.

Representatives of the several government Departments including the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine, the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage, the Department of the Environment, Climate and Communications, Department of Foreign Affairs along with several Marine Institute staff were present on the vessel. The itinerary included a short meeting to discuss emerging ocean policy areas in Ireland and Portugal and how improved cooperation on ocean science and research can benefit policy, our people and our planet.

Minister Charlie McConalogue said, "We are honoured to welcome President Higgins and President de Sousa to the RV *Tom Crean*, to showcase the technology on our new state of the art research vessel and to discuss the importance

of ocean science. This vessel gives Ireland the capacity to deepen our understanding of the ocean and to put sustainable seafood as one of the key components of our ocean science agenda."

The global policy landscape has radically changed over the last few years, driven by COVID19 and the impacts of the war in Ukraine. The ocean has the potential to address many of these new policy areas including food and energy security and climate change. Science has a key role to play and cooperation between Atlantic countries will be key. This presents great opportunities for Ireland and Portugal in the ocean science space. The informal discussions on the ship focused on sustainable seafood, how we manage our ocean space (marine spatial planning), how we protect marine biodiversity (marine protected areas), offshore renewable energy and how the ocean impacts climate change.

Dr Paul Connolly, CEO of the Marine Institute said, "Ireland and Portugal are on the frontiers of the Atlantic and given the importance of the ocean to our very existence, these discussions are critical. We have developed a strong working relationship with Portugal over the years and this State Visit builds on these strong ties and paves the way for more cooperation particularly in relation to EU funded projects on the Atlantic."

In June of this year, the Marine Institute and the Instituto Português do Mar e da Atmosfera (IPMA) signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU), designed to build on their long established cooperation and to build new partnerships particularly in relation to strategic cooperation on Atlantic Ocean research.

The implementation of cooperation within the MoU's framework will include capacity building, training and exchange of expertise and staff, and developing strategic alliance to build research proposals. It also includes conducting joint research projects, co-organisation of conferences, seminars and workshops.

25 Years of Marine Stewardship Council

Fish Stocks More Abundant When Sustainable Says MSC

Over the past year the sustainable seafood industry has once again shown great resilience in the face of disruption, according to the Chief Executive of the Marine Stewardship Council which is marking its 25th year of existence.

"The sustainable seafood industry has shown continued resilience in the face of the on-going Covid pandemic and supply chain issues arising from the Russian invasion of Ukraine. Against this backdrop, the volume of catch from MSC certified fisheries increased in 2021-22 to 12 million tonnes or 15% of all assessed wild marine catch.

This year marks the MSC turning 25, which has been "an extraordinary journey," according to CEO Rupert Howes. "This year's annual report shows the enormous impact our partners have had on the sustainable seafood market, but also the challenges ahead.

"We are humbled by what our partners have achieved over the last 25 years and determined to play our part in tackling the challenges ahead. Fisheries engaged with the MSC are responsible for, among other things, 74% of the wild white fish catch, 57% of tuna, 83% of global wild salmon catch and 14% of global wild lobster and crab catch. Our annual report reflects the enormous progress certified fisheries and commercial partners have made over that past quarter-century," says CEO Rupert Howes.

"Commercial organisations partnering with the MSC continue to be visionaries of the sustainable seafood movement. The MSC has gone from celebrating the launch of the 100th MSC labelled product in 2002 to 20,447 products in 2022. These blue-labelled products are found in 62 nations worldwide, through 46,277 sites that hold an MSC Chain of Custody certificate and have a retail value of US\$12.28 billion."

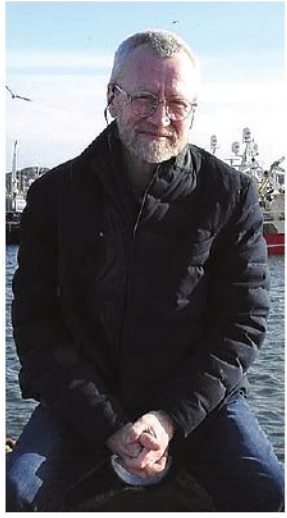
Analysis of fish stocks targeted by MSC certified fisheries were found to perform better against key sustainability criteria than those targeted by fisheries without certification, according to new research published in the peer-reviewed journal "Frontiers in Marine Science". This examined publicly available data on the abundance of 80 fish stocks targeted by MSC certified fisheries against data on more than 90 stocks where fisheries lack MSC certification. It covered a wide range of species, including tuna, small pelagic fish and whitefish and the geographic areas of East and West Coast Canada, Japan, the Pacific Ocean, Southern Africa, East Coast USA and the Atlantic Ocean.

Dr Rohan Currey, Chief Science and Standards Officer at the Marine Stewardship Council, said: "Accelerating progress to tackle the challenge of overfishing remains an urgent priority globally. We know how to solve this problem. This research demonstrates that implementing best practice in fisheries management, as required by the MSC Fisheries Standard, can deliver sustainable outcomes. Governments, fishery managers, fisheries and indeed all who champion sustainable fishing practices, will be encouraged by these outcomes.

"The findings reinforce that consumers can have confidence that seafood products carrying the MSC blue label come from fisheries that are well-managed with stocks that are not overfished and remain within sustainable limits.

"As overfishing continues to rise, with more than a third (35%) of the world's fish stocks overfished, well-managed fisheries are critical to addressing this challenge. Fisheries that are managed sustainably are also more productive in the long-term, ensuring a vital source of protein-rich food for the planet's growing population."

Environmental Organisation Attempts to Prey on Gullible Public



Cormac Burke, Chairman of the Irish Fishing & Seafood Alliance says that a recent IWT anti fishing industry article has “more holes than a trawler’s net”



A recent article (Oct 16th) by the Irish Wildlife Trust (IWT) accuses several fishing industry representatives of being ‘in denial of the facts’ and claims that, in particular, the Irish Fishing & Seafood Alliance are ignoring the statements of ICES on fisheries in the Northeast Atlantic.

The IWT article, with the dramatic attention-grabbing headline of “Toxic Denial”, attempts to portray the Irish fishing industry as nothing more than pillagers of the sea who hold no regard for the environment, the status of fish stocks or for the future management of the marine resource in general.

But in trying to do so, it is unfortunate that the IWT (a) use reports on Marine Protected Areas (MPAs) that have already been debunked by internationally-acclaimed senior scientists; (b) refer to the “overfishing” of several species of fish that in fact are not commercially fished by any Irish vessel; (c) castigate industry representatives such as myself and Patrick Murphy for their comments while they themselves [IWT] release statements without any author’s name and hide their identity behind that organisation’s title so that they cannot be directly held accountable for the intentional poorly researched articles they produce (unlike the industry people they are attacking who are at least willing to put their names to their comments).

The ‘expert report’ that the IWT are basing their ‘data’ on was in fact completely debunked by scientists in December 2021 and was then retracted by its authors - (see sustainablefisheries-uw.org/flawed-mpa-science...) - leading to a further comment by scientists that “Retraction of flawed MPA study implicates larger problems in MPA science” — in a nutshell, science says that there is, in reality, absolutely no evidence that the fishing industry creates more carbon than the aviation industry, in fact the opposite is true.

And, while the IWT sneer at the statement by IS&W-FPO CEO Patrick Murphy that this industry is constantly “wrongfully accused” of overfishing, they also complain of my opinion as IFSA Chairman on the lack of genuine research into the need for MPAs, they cherry-picked a few dramatic statements without any basis.

The term ‘overfishing’ is used several times in IWT statements and yet apparently not once have they checked to see how fishing is actually monitored, recorded and regulated in this country.

Within the context of the EU fisheries regime, Ireland has the most rigid fisheries monitoring system and the highest rate of compliance throughout the EU.

Every fish stock has its quota (which is based on ICES advice to the EU Commission every year) and every vessel going to sea knows its allowance for that trip for each species - mandatory on board cameras observe at-sea activities; every time the net is hauled and the fish handled the volume and quantity must be recorded in an electronic logbook; the location of ALL vessels, via an AIS system, at all times

is observed and recorded by the monitoring authority; and when the vessel comes ashore, the catch is checked by the authorities to ensure it tallies with the logbook. And in the case of the larger pelagic vessels (mackerel, scad, herring) this bulk fish must be weighed at the pier side and again checked in the fish processing factories.

In essence, it is virtually impossible for any vessel in the Irish fleet to ‘overfish’ without being caught and facing serious penalties which could amount to hundreds of thousands of euros.

Meanwhile IWT claim that spurdogs are a “declining species due to overfishing”, but here’s a fact that any fisherman in Ireland could have told them: Since 2009 when Fisheries Commissioner Maria Damanaki sanctioned the banning of the commercial catching of all members of the shark family (a regulation brought in to cease the activities of foreign longline vessels who were targeting sharks purely for their fins), there has been zero TAC quota for spurdogs in Ireland (or elsewhere in the EU).

Indeed the slightest effort of research by the IWT would have brought them to the very recent (Oct 4th) article in The Fishing Daily that the same ICES organisation that the IWT seem to hold in such esteem is now recommending a re-opening of the spurdog fishery with a NE Atlantic quota of 17,355 tonnes for 2023 and 17,855 tonnes for 2024.

Also, while selecting bits and pieces of ICES data to suit their own agenda, the IWT unsurprisingly seem to have missed this one, from an ICES 2019 report: “The main pressures on the Northeast Atlantic ecosystems all originate from vessels, either fishing, military activity, or shipping.

“However, in regard to fisheries, strong management measures are in place to prevent overfishing, to allow stock recovery, and to protect vulnerable species and deep-water stocks” - ICES 2019 report.

All in all, the appearance of this IWT piece of propaganda on their website (right under the ‘donate to the IWT’ tab of course) is nothing more than another attack on an already over-regulated industry and it has less to do with environmental concern than it has to do with an agenda of scare-mongering the public and gathering more donations - but hey, when do these people ever let the truth get in the way of a good story?

The IWT article can be seen in full at: <https://iwt.ie/mcconalogues-denial/>



Eilean Croine at Ardglass - Photo courtesy Christophe Feenan

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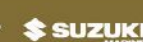


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news from Castletownbere

Helen Riddell



Jason O'Shea arrives at the pier to off load his catch at Castletownbere. Photo courtesy Anne Marie Cronin Photography

Castletownbere Coast Guard

Congratulations are extended to Castletownbere Coast Guard team member Kieran Lyons who was recently presented with his 10 year service medal from sector manager Damien Kelleher. Kieran has been a member of the Castletownbere Coast Guard for thirteen years. Separately other team members have recently been undertaking training in enhanced driver raining, boat navigation and power boat training.

Fish Filleting and Handling Course

A fish filleting and handling course with Hal Dawson will be held on Bere Island from Monday November 7th to Friday November 11th. The course will consist of fish filleting, fish smoking and BBQ techniques for fish and shellfish. The course is free to those receiving social welfare payments and also for eligible individuals who are not welfare payment recipients.

For further details contact Bere Island Projects Group at 027 75099 or email bipginfo@gmail.com

Funding for Renewable Energy Initiatives

A new funding scheme, the Brexit Blue Economy Development Scheme will provide up to €25 million of funding to businesses in Ireland's coastal communities to encourage them to use renewable energy. The scheme is an initiative of the Government of Ireland and the European Union, and is being administered by Bord Iascaigh Mhara (BIM) and delivered through Fisheries Local Action Groups (FLAGs). Under the scheme each business can apply for funding of up to €200,000.

The scheme is also aiming to stimulate growth in rural coastal communities post-Brexit. Brenda O'Riordan, BIM Regional Officer, said the scheme has already received some promising and innovative proposals across a range

of blue economy businesses from seafood, coastal tourism, boat building and repair, to marine leisure and sport. "Given spiralling energy costs we're seeing a lot of interest from a wide breadth of blue economy businesses across Ireland's coastal communities, particularly those, looking to go green," she said. "From fishmongers putting photovoltaic units on the roof of the business to supply power, and charter boat business upgrading their engines to hybrid/electric, to seafood companies looking at lighting, heating and refrigeration upgrades."

"With these grants, blue economy businesses can start to take greater control of their energy costs and become more sustainable by helping to reduce emissions and the impact on our environment."

The largest of its kind ever, the scheme is open to three streams of projects: Capital Investment, Business Mentoring and Capacity Development, and Upskilling and Training. For further information about the Brexit Blue Economy Enterprise Development Scheme contact blueeconomy@bim.ie or see www.bim.ie

Ollie Dillane RIP

Ollie Dillane of Knockaneroe, Castletownbere and formerly of Inishmore, Co Galway passed away peacefully on October 7th at Castletownbere, Community Hospital. Ollie is survived by his son Reece, siblings Máire, Barbara, Bernie, Ger and Dominic. The Marine Times offers sincere sympathy to his family and friends.

Caha Centre

The Adrigole Men's Group meet every Monday night at 8pm in the Caha Centre, Adrigole and the Ardgroam Men's Group meet every Thursday night at 8pm in Ardgroam House. All are welcome to attend.

Eyeries 5 Miles Road Race

The final race in Beara Athletic Club's 5 Mile Road Race

series will take place in Eyeries Village on Saturday November 12th at 2.30pm. The 5 mile race starts and finishes in the village and there will be over 100 prizes awarded for various categories. Entry is €20. For further details and to register see www.popuraces.ie The race is sponsored by Murphy's Supervalu, Castletownbere.

Beara Film Fest

Plans for next year's festival are well under way and a call out for submissions opened on October 28th and will close on Friday February 24th 2023 at 5pm. Local aspiring directors both established and student alike are encouraged to submit films.

For further details on submission, and the format to film in see www.bearafilmfest.ie or the Beara Film Fest Facebook page.

Allihies Men's Shed

The Allihies Men's Shed is open every Tuesday from 7.30pm and on Thursdays from 12.00pm, all are welcome to come along.

English Lesson

English lessons are running again at the Beara West Family Resource Centre, Castletownbere on Friday mornings. For more information, and to register contact 027 70998.

Beara GAA

As part of the fundraising effort by Beara GAA and the Beara Senior Football County Championship winning team of 1997, to support the future educational needs of the children of the team's goalkeeper Padraig Crowley, an online auction has been set up which includes items donated by golfer Padraig Harrington.

Bids are €5 and all bids will close on Saturday November 5th. All the bids will be placed online, further details can be found at www.bearagaa.ie

International Fishing and Maritime News

European Commissioner Criticised for Bottom Trawling Decision

The EU Commissioner for Equality Helena Dalli has been strongly criticised by MEPs in the European Parliament over her decision to establish deep-sea fishing areas. They accused her of forcing the European Union into a situation where it will be importing fish from countries which do not respect the regulations of the Common Fisheries Policy.

"The decision comes at the wrong time, when rising fuel prices, inflation and food insecurity raise concerns among fishers as well as among consumers. The Commission did not consult fisheries sector before putting the regulation into effect. Original data based on which 87 areas were closed to bottom-contact fishing are already obsolete," MEPs said, requesting the Commission to suspend its decision until new data is taken into account. They criticised the Commission for banning all bottom-contact fishing techniques, stating that there were considerable differences in their impact on the seabed.

Another group of MEPs said that bottom trawling caused underwater deforestation by damaging corals and vulnerable species. Protection of vulnerable marine ecosystems is crucial for biodiversity, they said.

Commissioner Dalli defended her decision, saying it was based on data provided by Member States, analysed by the International Council for the Exploration of the Sea (ICES). The Commission had been required by a previous Parliament decision to establish the vulnerable marine ecosystem areas in 2018, but the final scientific advice was only obtained in February this year. The Commission, she said, is bound by the legislation to review the list of protected marine areas annually, so it is subject to regular change based on additional data provided by Member States. She acknowledged that there would be a socio-economic impact from the Commission's decision and suggested that Member States should use the European Maritime and Fisheries Fund (EMFF) to help the sector that will be affected.

'Seas At Risk' and 'Oceana' have published a document - 'Exploring alternatives to Europe's bottom trawl fishing gears'. It suggests that switching to readily available alternatives to bottom trawling offers multiple benefits, including improving fisheries resources, protecting the seabed and marine habitats and increasing resilience of the ocean to the climate breakdown.

The UK Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA) has published a policy paper setting out how Fisheries Management Plans which "aim to deliver the objectives of the Fisheries Act 2020" will be prepared and published for waters around England. Six main species are listed - Crab and Lobster; Whelk; King Scallop; Bass; Channel non-quota demersal stocks and Southern North Sea and Eastern Channel mixed flatfish.

439-Million-Year-Old Shark

Researchers in China have uncovered the remains of a 439 million-year-old shark-like fish with unusual features that "set it apart from any known vertebrate," or animal with a backbone.



The bizarre primeval creature, covered in spines and "bony armour," is the oldest jawed vertebrate ever discovered. Scientists discovered the remains at a renowned fossil site in Guizhou Province, Southern China. Their findings have been published online in the journal Nature.

Recording Melting Icebergs

Dublin artist Siobhán McDonald is part of an international expedition which has dropped hydrophones into the waters off Greenland to record the sounds of melting icebergs.



Over the next two years, the hydrophones will capture the sounds of melting Arctic sea ice and subaquatic audio every hour. The sounds will be used for scientific research and as part of a mixed-media installation and musical score to explore human impact on the world's oceans.

New Film Highlights the Issues Facing Inshore Fishing Communities

A new film produced by researchers at the University of East Anglia (UEA) highlights the "crisis" facing fishing communities in the UK.

The short film focuses on a fishing family in Cromer, Norfolk, and was launched during an event in Parliament, organised by the All Party Parliamentary Group (APPG) on Fisheries. Dr Carole White, who has been studying social resilience and recruitment into inshore fisheries since 2011, also talked about her research and the industry entry challenges for young people.

"Many fishing communities in the UK are facing a crisis in terms of their future," said Dr White, a Research Fellow in UEA's School of International Development. "The industry is failing to recruit young people to work on fishing boats. Despite recent investment, barriers to recruitment remain - particularly for those without family connections in the industry. Until these barriers are addressed, we risk losing small scale fisheries from UK coastal communities."

The film, titled *The Shauls*, was made with Postcode Films between 2018-2021 and funded by the Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC) as part of the FisherCoast project, a multi partner international research programme exploring the impact of environmental, economic and social change on the wellbeing of coastal communities. The *Shauls* follows skipper Keith Shaul and his grandsons Jimmy and Josh, who are Cromer crab and lobster fishermen working off the North Norfolk coast. Keith is determined to provide his grandsons with the skills to make a living independently as fishermen, while being acutely aware of the increasing challenges to small scale fishing families' survival.

The film sees them spending time at work and while they relax, discussing the issues they face, and why so few young people today are considering fishing as a profession. As Jimmy makes his start as an independent fisherman, it shows how essential the support from his grandfather is, highlighting the importance of family connections in fishing. Using the case study of the Cromer Crab fishery and talking about the challenges facing new entrants into fishing, Dr White and the film's direc-

tor Jaime Taylor call for external support for new entrants and young people starting their fishing careers, as well as a holistic approach to rural coastal development to build social resilience in fishing communities across the UK.

"New entrants outside the fishing community face even greater challenges in making a viable start as fishermen," said Dr White. "Without external support for new entrants, particularly young people, the sustainable future of inshore fishing communities hangs in the balance."

The film can be viewed on YouTube at: www.youtube.com/watch?v=nFl-RHeq6YkU

Lost Fishing Gear

More than 13 billion hooks and 16 million kilometres of fishing line are lost from vessels each year, according to a report issued by marine researchers at the University of Tasmania.

Analysing international fisheries data, they identified five major types of fishing gear involved, including bottom trawl nets and long lines composed of hooks. Seven countries around the world that fish intensely with these types of gear were identified as allegedly responsible - Iceland, USA, New Zealand, Peru, Morocco, Indonesia, Belize and 451 fishers from those countries interviewed about annual gear usage and losses. The report is available on the Science Advances webpage.

Local Icelanders Say They Know More About Fish Farming Than National Authorities

Iceland's largest salmon farming area is in the Westfjords where local authorities have told the national government in Reykjavik that a great deal of infrastructure work is needed in the region to facilitate the growth in aquaculture.

That needs to be carried out quickly they say and that they are best placed to know what is required and how to deal with the issues. They have told the government that any tax contributions from aquaculture should be given directly to them. This would be instead of their having to collect it from central government fisheries funding.

Salmon Disease Testing

In Scotland, research is being carried out in an attempt to develop non-lethal testing for four major salmon disease. The University of the West of Scotland (UWS), WellFish Diagnostics, Bakkafrost Scotland, Vertebrate Antibodies Limited (VAL), and the University of Aberdeen's Scottish Fish Immunology Research Centre are combining in the research.

The aim is to develop antibodies to probe key markers in fish blood that indicate an immune system response to four of the most common health challenges. Funding for the project is being provided by the UK Seafood Innovation Fund (SIF) and the Sustainable Aquaculture Innovation Centre (SAIC).



The Shauls - Cromer crab and lobster fishermen working off the North Norfolk coast

On The West Coast



Niamh Stephenson, Media Manager reflects on a week visiting and working at RNLI stations on the West Coast



I took a week and worked out on the West Coast, visiting and working from four RNLI lifeboat stations and meeting many different people. The name Nigel Millard might not ring a bell, but chances are, if you've looked twice at an RNLI image or seen a lifeboat or RNLI crew member or lifeguard photographed in a really striking manner, it's one of Nigel's photographs you are looking at.

A lifeboat crew member from Torbay, Nigel took the shots of the incredible Rambler rescue involving Baltimore RNLI, which took place during the famous Fastnet race in 2011. I regularly use a photograph of Kilmore Quay's Tamar lifeboat at sea when I send out a release for water safety advice. It's an incredible shot.

Nigel loves shooting pictures in Ireland, so when he called and said he wanted to do a full week on the West Coast, it was the perfect opportunity to work away from home. We visited Clifden, Aran Islands, Achill Island and Ballyglass RNLI. He took thousands of images and most of them were not at sea.

The focus was on people, the lifeboat crew, the shore crew, the station managers, the fundraisers, the water safety volunteers, the lifeboat press officers, the education and visits officers, the shop volunteers,

every single role was photographed and the results are stunning. I learned the value of a good wall. Nigel looks for a good backdrop and then lets the subject lean against. They relax, they smile and there is your record of a volunteer, smiling and proud.

In Clifden we visit the station mechanic Joe in his home and photographed him with his Dad, himself former crew, with his family all around him. There is no shortage of children in Clifden and I couldn't help think, that's the future crew sorted. Again, they are all leaning against a wall, with their parents' lifeboat kit on them, thinking one day, they will wear it for real.

In Ballyglass he captured an image of 'Beans' a chef in the local hotel, who himself was out on the 'shout' to the person trapped in the cave for the day and then a few days later, on another long call-out to the South end of Donegal. Cooking us dinner one night, staying awake onboard the lifeboat to keep an eye on a trapped casualty the next. Amazing.

The Aran Islands visit was planned to coincide with the opening of the shop and visitor centre. This is where you see the incredible volunteers who support the lifeboat crews, who raise the funds. Margaret Gill is the station treasurer and has been volunteering for the RNLI for forty years. She does incredible work and I'm biased as her daughter is lifeboat press officer for the station. Seeing mother and daughter together and officially opening the new ventures was fantastic. On Inis Mór the crew in full kit walked to the wormhole or Poll na



Aran Islands crew posing for their photo shoot and the photographer being pictured as he is preparing the Achill RNLI crew for their photo shoot.



bPéist for some stunning shots. These will be used in campaigns, on social media posts or featured in the media.

On to Achill Island and we hit the weather, but we found a spot to do a similar scenery photograph on the wild Atlantic way. In calling for the fundraising volunteers to come down to the station and get a photograph, we were inundated with people. For a lifeboat station a little out of the way, (the road to it had so many sheep blocking our way that we felt outnumbered) there is an incredible community behind it. The station were involved in the rescue of a lone sailor back in May in a fourteen hour callout and it's easy to see why the rescued man was full of praise for the people he met there. Standing everyone in front of the blue door where the boarding boat comes out, we met so many people who were great craic and each had a story. Again with the leaning.

We ended the week in Ballyglass, with the inshore lifeboat in the town of Belmullet and the All-Weather a good drive out to Ballyglass, windswept and beautiful. Again, the weather was not kind, but these tend to be the best shots. I waited in the station with the Lifeboat Operations Manager and Launching Authority, while the crew went

on exercise, having run up the road for rolls and crisps for the when they returned (it's not all glamour in PR). We sat around a small table upstairs in the station and the craic was mighty. The Coxswain James and the Mechanic Allen are always on hand and are rightly enormously proud of their fundraisers and the station's Waves 2 Wheels cycle which has raised thousands of euro for the RNLI.

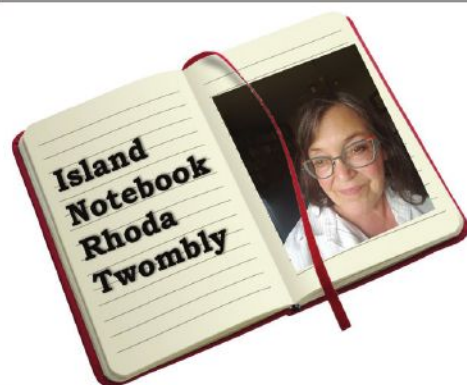
Finally, we went down to visit the Belmullet Tidal Pool where all day, every day, people come down to take a dip, whatever the weather. It was great to see the swimmers with coloured swim hats, whistles, toe floats and comfy dry robes for after. Living where they do, they know all about water safety and the power of the sea. The tidal pool sits flush against the ocean, maintained by the local community, the brainchild of a couple who saw something similar when they were abroad. You could swim for miles in it, safe in the walled off square but looking out to the Atlantic. Every photo taken that week showed a smiling face and we had time to sit and talk.

To the 42 other stations, Nigel's coming back, he chases the weather, and we get the kind he likes over here.

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

How Big Is the Housing Crisis on Offshore Islands?

The Irish Islands Federation, Comhdháil Oileán na hÉireann, is carrying out an online survey in conjunction with a research team from UCC and Comhar na Oileán CTR to determine the level of housing needs of the offshore islands. The purpose of the study is to ascertain the inventory of offshore island housing in addition to housing needs of islands among current island residents and those presently lacking suitable housing options.

The need for the survey was identified as part of Comhdháil's strategy work.

Housing arose as one of the main challenges islands are facing in the community consultation that was carried out to inform the new national Islands Policy as well as in forums held to discuss the future of Irish and European islands. Acting Chair of Comhdháil Oileán na hÉireann, Máirtín Ó Méalóid, sees the lack of suitable, affordable housing on offshore islands as the major block to the ultimate sustainability of Ireland's islands.

"We selected housing as one of the main themes in our strategy as it's crucial to the sustainability of island communities," states Comhdháil board member John Walsh. "All offshore islands have their own characteristics and challenges, but housing is something that we all struggle with one way or another."

The challenges presented by the lack of island housing was highlighted by the "Visioning the Islands" workshop held by ESIN/European Small Islands Federation in January 2021 that asked, "How will the islands look in twenty years?" While it was agreed that there are differing circumstances for Europe's islands, there are many similar challenges to survival: ... there was a wide consent that the most important themes are the threat of population decrease that is directly linked to housing shortage and poor-quality broadband: these are the two main challenges that the small islands of Europe have in common.

Turning attention to the Irish offshore islands, a housing seminar held by Comhdháil Oileán na hÉireann in April of 2021 that heard from residents of 13 islands resulted in a comprehensive report with forward-looking conclusions. The suggested actions arising from the seminar are:

- Input to all relevant county development plans (County Councils) with regards population targets
- Work towards the establishment of an island-specific planning procedure which includes the planners being trained correctly having visited the islands.
- Housing survey to be carried out on each island and collated into one full report
- Ensure input to the island policy development via the interdepartmental committee on island development
- Government lending scheme/Rural and Islands Fund (Scotland)
- Community Land Trusts
- Discussion around the compulsory purchase of houses in long-term dereliction
- Concentrate efforts on greater diversification to facilitate a move from high tourism dependency

- Establishment of an island housing association
- Tax incentives for landlords (longer term/year-round lease)/VAT parity with mainland to have cost equality
- Innovative/experimental government housing schemes to be piloted on islands
- Non-profit/community owned and island-controlled housing scheme.

The seminar concluded that a study of housing on the islands needed to be designed and implemented across the islands with a view to gathering quantitative data that could be used in communicating needs to the government and housing agencies. Comhdháil has enlisted a research team from UCC who very successfully carried out a survey of the West Cork Islands to work on the survey creation and distribution along with the staff of Comhar na Oileán CTR.

Comhdháil Oileán na hÉireann will use the results to identify challenges and possible solutions, and use them in communication with different local, regional, and national stakeholders. The survey, which went live at the Comhdháil AGM, is for everyone currently living on an island, owning a property on an offshore island, or thinking about moving to an island.

"Even though we have an idea what the needs are, it's important for us to have quantitative, representative data so that we can work towards solutions and communicate more effectively," says Comhdháil secretary Rhoda Twombly. "We also want to capture views of people who would like to move to an island: we know anecdotally that there's latent demand but it's always better to have numbers to back up solutions."

The housing crisis in Ireland and the increase in remote working opportunities creates both opportunities and challenges for rural communities. Islands are also popular tourist destinations which tends to heat up the holiday home markets and increase the property prices. But how big is the housing crisis on offshore islands? That's what the study intends to find out.

The survey is open until 13th of November on: bit.ly/3gBCKcC. The link can also be found on Comhdháil Oileán na hÉireann's Facebook page.



Aran Islands RNLI officially opens new Visitor Experience and lifeboat shop on Inis Mór. Pictured (l-r) Caelán Cullen-Quinn, Tommy Dirrane, Padraig Éinne Dillane, Daniel O'Connell, Coxswain John O'Donnell, Treasurer Margaret Gill, RNLI Head of Region Anna Classon, Station Mechanic Mairtin Coyne, Lena O'Connell, Alan O'Flynn, Ronan MacGiolla-phadraig and Máirtín Ó Flaithearta. Seated is Aran Islands Lifeboat Operations Manager Michael T. Hernon.

Shop volunteers: Jack O'Connell and Siobhan McGuinness were on hand to welcome customers to the new Aran Islands RNLI shop. (Photos courtesy RNLI/Nigel Millard)



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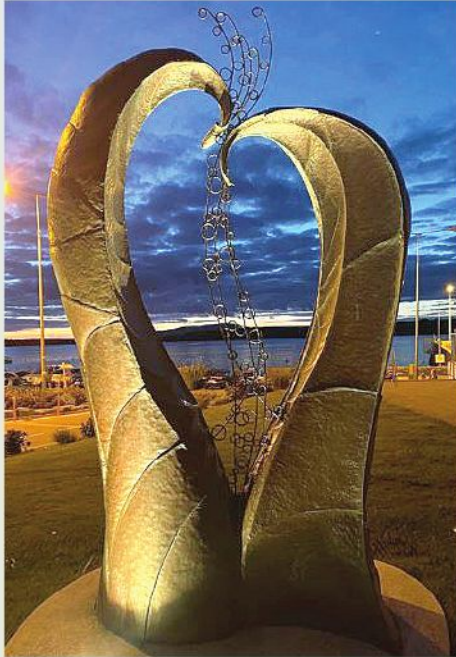
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Croí Na Mara in Baltimore

The Croí na Mara sculpture is a maritime memorial presented to the community of Baltimore by the Baltimore Rath and the Islands Community Council. The 'Heart of the Sea' memorial features two waves coming together in a heart shape to capture the power and energy of the sea.



Copper rings of varying sizes, drawn up towards the sky through heartstrings in the centre of the waves, represent those who lost their lives at sea. Created by local artists Helen Walsh and Paddy McCormack, it is made from bronze, copper and stainless steel.

There is societal importance for coastal communities in having memorials to those lost at sea, some of whose bodies may never have been recovered.

"A memorial where people can come to reflect, contemplate and remember those lost at sea," as the Community Council describes the new memorial.

BIM Takes Top Place at the 2022 National Transparency Index

This independent NGO Transparency International Ireland (TII) published its National Integrity Index ranking and Bord Iascaigh Mhara (BIM), Ireland's seafood development agency, scored highest among 40 public bodies.

The national index is measured against the existence and ready availability of policies and disclosures of a given public body that specifically address anti-corruption risks.

BIM is pleased to have received this ranking and will continue its efforts to ensure a culture of integrity and honesty across the organisation and with the Irish seafood industry and other stakeholders it serves.

Non-EEA Fishermen in Irish Fleet to Become Eligible for Employment Permits

Government has approved the publication of the Review of the Atypical Scheme for non-EEA Crew in the Irish Fishing Fleet. This report and its recommendations follow an extensive consultation process with stakeholders involved in the scheme.

Minister for Justice Helen McEntee, Minister of State at the Department of Enterprise, Trade and Employment Damien English and Minister for Agriculture, Food and the Marine Charlie McConalogue jointly welcome government support for the recommended changes to the employment of non-EEA fishers in the Irish fishing fleet.

The Atypical Working Scheme (AWS) for non-EEA Crew in the Irish fishing fleet was established in 2015 as a cross departmental response to address claims of exploitation and trafficking of undocumented non-EEA workers on certain categories of vessels in the Irish fishing fleet.

Currently, non-EEA fishers can apply through the Department of Justice for a permission under the Atypical Working Scheme to work on a specific Irish vessel for a period of up to 12 months, but they are not eligible for consideration for the granting of an employment permit by the Minister for Enterprise, Trade and Employment.

The key recommendation of the Review Group is that the employment of non-EEA crew in the Irish fishing fleet should be provided for under the Employment Permit system (administered by the Department of Enterprise, Trade and Employment), instead of the Atypical Working Scheme (administered by the Department of Justice). The sector will be required to submit a comprehensive business case to the Minister for Enterprise, Trade and Employment to support their inclusion in the Employment Permits System and a process of engagement has already begun in this regard.

The transition to the employment-permit based system would entitle employment permit holding Seafishers to transition to a Stamp 4 immigration permission and the wider entitlements offered by that permission.

A cross-departmental group of senior officials in relevant departments and agencies will be established to oversee implementation of the transition from the current scheme to the Employment Permits Scheme. This group will be co-chaired by the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine and the Department of Enterprise, Trade and Employment. The overall time frame for implementation of the report's recommendations is expected to be approximately 12 months.

Publishing the report, Minister McEntee said: "The publication of this report and its recommendations is the first step in putting non-EEA Seafishers on a similar path to other Non-EEA nationals employed in the State in terms of entitlements and protections.

"Non-EEA fishers and their employers will now be entitled to apply for an employment permit through the Department of

Enterprise, Trade and Employment.

"These recommendations will also benefit Seafishers employers, by streamlining the permission process and making it easier to recruit non-EEA Seafishers."

Minister for Agriculture, Food and the Marine Charlie McConalogue said: "I have asked my department to examine the Review Report and to work closely with the Department of Enterprise, Trade and Employment with a view to ensuring the full implementation of the recommendations. I have also tasked an Bord Iascaigh Mhara with providing the fishing sector with any practical assistance necessary to support of the sectors access to the Employment Permit Scheme."

Welcoming the publication of the report, Minister of State Damien English said: "The recommendations in this Report will go a long way to addressing the concerns raised by stakeholders in the sector. Of course, the Employment Permits system works very differently from the Atypical Working Scheme so it is proper that there will be a phased implementation in order to identify and address any challenges which arise and deal with these in the most effective way possible."

The Review Group consisted of officials from the Department of Justice, the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine, and the Department of Enterprise, Trade and Employment. The key recommendation of the group is that the employment of non-EEA crew in the Irish Fishing Fleet be provided for under the Employment Permit system (administered by the Department of Enterprise, Trade and Employment), instead of the Atypical Working Scheme (administered by the Department of Justice).

The recommendations proposed will also

give individuals employed in this sector of the fishing industry access to a stamp 4 immigration permission in due course, which has been sought by this cohort for some time.

It is proposed that a cross-departmental group of senior officials in relevant departments and agencies be established to oversee implementation of the transition from the current scheme to the Employment Permits Scheme, to be co-chaired by DAFM and DETE.

Currently a number of departments are involved in the operation of the scheme and it is monitored by an Oversight Committee, chaired by the Department of Agriculture, Food and Marine with members from relevant departments and State agencies, including the Department of Justice.

There is a cap of 500 permissions available to the sector under the scheme. This cap has not been reached since the inception of the Scheme.

As of 30 September 2022, a total of 520 individuals, employed by approximately 100 vessel owners, have been granted permission under the Scheme since its introduction and there were 277 individuals, employed by approximately 60 vessel owners, holding a letter of approval under the scheme granted between 1 July 2021 and 29 September 2022.

The report and its recommendations refer to the Atypical Scheme for non-EEA Crew in the Irish Fishing Fleet only and not other Atypical schemes administered by the Immigration Services of the Department of Justice.

Atypical Working Scheme Fishers Review Group Report can be downloaded at www.gov.ie (<https://assets.gov.ie/236843/a4cc55f6-c889-40b7-b2f9-37166ab456bc.pdf>)



Caolan Og joins the hunt out of Kilkeel for the 'hern' - Photo courtesy Leslie Campbell

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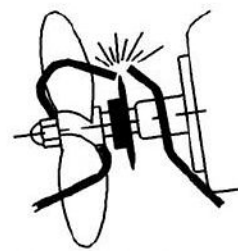
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Irish Fish Processors and Exporters Express Concerns at Rate and Scale of Proposed Offshore Energy Projects

At the Annual General Meeting of the Irish Fish Processors and Exporters Association (IFPEA) held in Dublin on the 12th October, members expressed concern at the rate of new projects for off shore energy being proposed and the massive scale of some of these projects. While at the same time there is absolutely no statutory process to insure adequate public consultation or to afford the rights to the fishing industry that no displacement takes place and jeopardise their livelihoods.

The fishing industry are keenly aware of the need to secure additional energy supplies and increase our renewable capacity as a country, but we must not do this at the cost to the Irish fishing industry or our coastal communities. In fact, the fishing industry themselves are extremely high energy users, that being said we need to be mindful the seas around Ireland are the working place for many, and from these seas over 16,000 fishing industry jobs depend on it.

The recently published Government benchmarks for off shore energy, are placing massive pressure on fishing grounds. The following is an indication of the scale being looked at or the real targets being set.

- The Irish government has increased the 2030 offshore wind target from 5GW to 7GW.
- Existing Capacity Arklow Offshore Irish Sea Wind-farm / Turbine Array: 25 MW, using this as an example the following two points sets the context of where we are heading.
- Target Offshore Wind Capacity 2030: 7 Gigawatts equal to 280 Times Arklow Windfarm Capacity
- Target 2050 ORE = 30 Gigawatts equal to 1200 Times Arklow Wind Farm Capacity

The IFPEA are extremely concerned that with the massive focus initially on the Irish Sea and southeast, that wholesale displacement of fishing grounds could well take place, and with the absence of a regularised structure for proper planning and consultation that valuable fishing

grounds could be impacted and worse lost for all time.

Renewable energy is the future this is not disputed, but we must be mindful of what we experienced first-hand on land with multiple wind farm sites across Ireland; unless you have robust procedures and processes in place the environmental impacts of these renewable projects can be worse than the energy they end up ultimately providing.

The current regime regarding these off-shore energy projects is haphazard and bordering on the absurd, whereby vast areas of sea bed are earmarked and little to no real or comprehensive consultation is undertaken, withstanding that the fact that no proper planning procedures exist at present.

That is respective of those that wish to invest in these projects, those that are currently earning an income from the sea, our coastal communities or the general public at large. With the continued absence of a structured and transparent planning process for all of these off-shore energy projects, the immediate outcome is going to lead to growing tension.

All of this can be avoided if a framework or process is put in place; like any other project within the state that is subject to planning, there are defined procedures which must be followed.

All of this needs to be part of a statutory process that affords the same rights to all parties and is completely impartial in its final determination. At present this is totally lacking concluded the IFPEA.



Hunting the 'hern' off the north coast at Kilkeel - Photo courtesy Leslie Campbell

Letters to the Editor

Right of Ownership

A Chara,

Why does everyone involved in Irish Politics and in Irish Fishing believe that we gave away all our Fish to the EU when we joined the EEC in 1973?

We NEVER gave away the Right of Ownership over our Fish to the EEC-EU; not in 1973, not under the Treaty of Maastricht, not under the Treaty of Nice and not under the Treaty of Lisbon.

What we, the people of Ireland agreed to and what we gave to the EU was the Right to the Rational Conservation of our Fish - in other words, the Right to regulate the conservation of Stocks in Irish Waters and how much Fish should be caught in Irish-EU-EEC Waters.

We, the People of Ireland NEVER gave away ownership of our Fish to the EEC-EU.

Successive Irish Governments & successive generations of Irish Politicians and Civil Servants have gone to Brussels and have allowed other EEC-EU Countries to decide how much of our Fish should be caught by them - by the French Spanish Dutch German Danish Belgian Polish Lithuanian Portuguese and British Boats in our Waters through the mechanisms of the Common Fisheries Policy particularly the hated Relative Stability that was first introduced in the 1983 CFP, where the % amounts of the total catch of various Fish Stocks in Irish Waters was fixed - yes "fixed" so that France Netherlands Spain Britain were allowed grab what they could from Irish Waters leaving Irish Fishermen with whatever miserable % was left over.

It's as if successive generations of Irish Civil Servants and Politicians have been hypnotized by our EU 'col-leagues' when it comes to the issue of WHO OWNS THE FISH IN IRISH WATERS so that they completely forget that it is Ireland and the Irish People who own these Fish and NOT either the EU Commission or the EU Council, whose ONLY role under the EU Treaties is to decide HOW MUCH FISH should be allowed to be caught in any one year with the Coastal Member State that owns the Fish and the Waters - Ireland - deciding which countries should be allowed to catch those fish during the following year!

Unfortunately, we've been governed by people who either refuse to accept the constitutional position under Bunreacht na hEireann throughout the past 40 years or they are entirely ignorant of that position while their advising Public Servants hide behind their political lackeys.

The original "fix" on how the Fish in our Waters should be caught and by which States was achieved with the CFP of January 1983. This CFP was supposed to last for only for ten years at which time the % share-out was supposed to be looked at again and then shared out taking account of the needs of Coastal Communities closest to the waters where the Fish is and on the basis of historic catch records. This never happened when the CFP was reformed in 1992.

This never happened again when the CFP was reformed again in 2002.

This never happened again when the CFP was reformed again in 2013.

Are we going to allow this to happen again at the end of 2022 when the 2013 model of the CFP runs out and is our Government going to allow our European "partners" to sim-

ply roll over the Share-outs that have been fixed since end 1982, leaving Irish Fishing to continue to die on its feet?

OR, are we going to force our Government and Civil Servants to go to Brussels and insist that the %'s allocated to France Belgium Netherlands UK and others in 1983 and to Spain from 1986 and "fixed" in place ever since are changed so that the Coastal State, Ireland, is granted the greatest Share-out of the Fish Stocks in our Waters in accordance with UNCLOS, the UN Convention on the Law of the Sea negotiated at Montego Bay in November 1982 with an Agreement on Straddling and Migratory Stocks agreed at New York in December 1995.

Are our Ministers and Public Servants going to inform, persuade and/or force our fellow EU Member State and the EU Commission to acknowledge and accept that ALL FISH in Irish Waters is the property of the People of Ireland and that Irish Waters are Irish Waters - NOT EU Waters?

After all, the Treaties of the European Union confirm that the Fish that swim in Irish Waters are the property of Ireland - and NOT of the EU.

There is nothing whatsoever that is rational about either the Conservation or Exploitation of Fish Stocks in Irish Waters!

We Irish are permitted to catch approx 15 - 16% of the Fish in our own Waters by the collective Ruling Class in Brussels.

Meanwhile, for example, France is permitted to catch approx 59% of the Hake in Irish Waters while we are permitted to catch a mere 4 - 5%.

Moreover, Belgian boats are permitted to catch 56% of Sole in Irish Waters while Irish boats are permitted a miserable 3%!

Why are Irish Fishers permitted to catch only approx 3.5% of the Blue whiting that spawn and breed in our waters and remain here for their entire life while a NON-EU State - Norway is allowed by our Government and their fellow Eurocrats in Brussels to catch 26.245% of that same Stock of Blue Whiting in our waters?

In other words, we Irish are permitted to catch approx 36,000 Tonnes while Norway is gifted 200,230 Tonnes - almost 6 times as much as we Irish are allowed to catch of this Native Irish Fish Stock!

When will Ireland Inc finally stand up for the Rights of the people of Ireland against the creeping colonization of our Natural Resources by Europe? Or, following 50 years of actual independence between 1922 and 1972 are we happy to return to the status of Serfdom with only the identity of our Masters being changed.

I, for one am not. I sincerely hope that there are many thousands more who share my view.

**Is mise
Greagoir O'Cathasaigh
IS&WFPO
Bearra, Contae Corcaigh**

Have you News, Views, Letters to the Editor and Photos that we may be interested in publishing? Please do send them on for consideration

Pringle Questions Lack of EU Response to Breaches of International Mackerel Agreements

Independent TD for Donegal, Thomas Pringle, has highlighted the European Union's failure to impose consequences on countries that set unilateral quotas for mackerel, despite several years of breaching agreements.

At a recent meeting of the Committee on Agriculture, Food and the Marine, Deputy Pringle questioned Minister Charlie McConalogue on the issue of unilateral quotas set by Norway, the Faroes and Iceland.

The deputy noted a document the minister brought to committee, which stated that if "unacceptably high, unilateral quotas of mackerel" is continued into 2023, "the EU must work together and use all available tools so that there are real and effective consequences for such behaviour."

Deputy Pringle asked: "What are the 'all available tools' and the 'real and effective consequences'?" He also asked what effective consequences were imposed by the EU in relation to non-compliance with the 2014 agreement on mackerel.

The deputy said: "I think if we're an equal part of a European Union that is negotiating in relation to this and we're not getting anywhere, surely the strength of the European Union is in terms of trade. It can be used as leverage to ensure that they actually comply in relation to the agreements, but it's clear that's not happening and it's probably not going to happen."

The deputy said: "I would contend that it's probably because we're the only country that's really affected by it that they don't do that, and I would wonder just how effectively we get a hearing in relation to fishing issues at the European level as to raise the importance of that. Because it's a very important situation for us and it's very important for the whole mackerel stock."

He said: "So in terms of environmental issues, in terms of economic issues for the west coast of Ireland, this has huge implications, but in the overall scheme of things it doesn't have very big implications as far as Europe is concerned, really."

During a lengthy exchange, the deputy pressed Minister McConalogue on what consequences the EU had imposed on countries for breaches of mackerel agreements. The minister emphasised the challenges that are involved when sovereign states are required to come together in agreement, and said it speaks to the challenges of fisheries management.

Minister McConalogue called mackerel a very significant stock and said, "It's something we take very seriously and it's something the commission takes very seriously, too."

Deputy Pringle said: "We'll have to agree to disagree on that."

The minister said what was needed is an outcome which respects the historic fishing patterns of the various participants in the fishery, and Deputy Pringle agreed.

Deputy Pringle said: "What I'm trying to get at is what is the EU going to do or willing to do to ensure that happens?" He said: "You say 'real and effective consequences', but they haven't been willing to use any."

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Sparkling Star at Ardglasss - Photo by Christopher Feenan



the fine Art of Marine Finance

by Art Kavanagh

Am I a Customer or Just a Nuisance???

A friend of mine observed recently that in Ireland we have NO SERVICES. I am not directing this observation at the Civil Service in particular – although I suggest that there are many in that sector who could benefit from an examination of conscience.

There are also those who are battling on to deliver a service in the “Old Ways” but which is rarely seen now. WHY must almost everything that we need in life comes to us in the guise of a CONCESSION.

If we are paying for services lads WHY should we have to feel unduly thankful. You have often heard me quote the advice given to me in 1966 on my entry into the Banking sector by the local Bank Manager who told me “Always remember that the man or woman outside that counter is your bread and butter - TREAT THEM AS

SUCH” That theory is gone down the tubes Lads!!!! Why should things that previously took 2/3 days to accomplish now take 2/3 WEEKS???

I believe for two reasons:

1. The dreaded Covid created a separation of personal contact and relationship between Customer and Provider.
2. Those in the business of providing Service are so understaffed they simply can't do it.

And we have the Compassion Fatigue of

which I wrote a couple of months ago

The danger in the staffing situation is that we assume we are too busy whether we are or not.

Many years ago I was involved in a local Tourism Group as a result of which I had regular contact with a fairly Senior Staff Member in the local Office of Bord Failte. His normal reaction when I rang him was to tell me that he was too busy to talk to me. One day however his secretary put a call through to me which prompted him to issue his normal “Too busy to talk to you” line until I reminded him that **HE WAS RINGING ME!!!**

We might be “up the creek” a lot of the time Lads - but if we are in business we must give the impression that we are actually interested and follow that up by making an effort to satisfy the need of our Customer while at the same time explaining that delivery will be a bit slower for whatever reason that they might previously have expected.

In trying to deliver my own services I spend more time waiting for others Being a customer is not a good experience Lads!!!!

I have encountered situations where it can be more difficult to get assistances for “Ordinary” things.

Some years ago on arrival at Dublin Airport with some goods which need to be declared and Duty Paid we entered the Red Chanel much to the annoyance of the young official who was deeply engaged in conversation with his colleague in the green zone.

We were really disturbing him and disturbed him even more when he had to refer to his manuals to establish what duty was payable on Mrs K's leather coat.

We eventually settled on a price but I had to ask him if we had been wrong in declaring the goods or if it only counted if they “Caught” us

Let's remember that while the Customer may not always be right – despite the old cliché- he or she is ALWAYS THE CUSTOMER!!!!

Many of you will be aware that in recent months I have been struggling with pure pressure of work caused mainly by having to wait for other people (Banks and Departments) to do their parts in what previously had been straightforward operations. My instinct now is to severely cut back and while I will finalize those deals which I have already started I will be limited in my ability to take on new projects.

Someone needs to learn and be prepared to put the same time and effort into things as I do.

The system is strangling all kinds of Industry lads and is going to force many of us who are trying to support and assist Fisherman with projects to throw in the towel.

Just listening to a radio discussion on the Child Minding Sector who are encountering the very same level of difficulty mainly created by people who have absolutely no practical experience.

It all too easy to create a new Rule if you don't understand how it may effect Real People.

The oldest trick in the books is to ask some frequently silly question which can justify a delay while we try to force (mainly accountants) to give certification of things which cannot be truthfully certified.

Kicking the Can is the current catchphrase- but I prefer Covering your Arse.....

If something proves to be successful -make sure you can add your name to it

But ... If there is the remotest possibility of something going wrong MAKE SURE YOU CAN'T BE BLAMED!!!!

Let's see how the coming weeks pan out.

Stay safe lads.

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The new 'Veronica' built for the Atlantic Dawn group arriving into Killybegs on its maiden voyage home, skippered by Peter Mogan. Photo courtesy Alan Hennigan - Mooneys Boats Ltd.

“The Fishing Sector Threw Its Net Into The Finance Bill, And It Came Up Empty.”

The unwillingness of Government to address and rectify the many missed opportunities of the September Budget has been highlighted by Cork-South-West TD, Michael Collins.

Deputy Collins was speaking during a Dáil debate on the Finance Bill 2022, which provides a legal basis to the measures announced on Budget Day.

While the Independent TD also raised issues relating to the Carers means test, the proposed VAT rate increase for hospitality and family-run hotels as well as the ongoing crisis in fuels and agri-fuel costs; he concentrated his remarks on the absence of supports for the fisheries sector:

“Budget 2023 could have been a potential lifeline to our under-siege fisheries sector. But no; Government chose instead to continue down the path of economically harpooning the sector and offering token, minimal supports in direct opposition to the kind of approach that several EU countries are offering their own fisher men and women,” said Deputy Collins.

“Why is it that the likes of France and Spain can offer proper fuel subsidies and rebates to their own fishing people while all ours get is shoved to the ground when they try to maintain a living?”

“There is a level of outright hostility toward the sector and now that hostility has been further embedded into the Finance Bill. Even the supports that are there in terms of energy costs won’t go on beyond December and are highly conditional on both the whim of the Minister and approval by the European Commission which is by no means guaranteed. The Minister for Agriculture must take this issue in hand and significantly amend the Finance Bill to reflect the kind of wide-ranging supports that the fisheries sector needs. It cannot survive on the kind of monetary minnows that it has been thrown to date,” Deputy Collins concluded.



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