

MARINE TIMES



Photo taken from the Southern Sun alongside their partner boat Silver Bell outside Dunmore East while fishing for Herring with Hook Lighthouse in the background. Photo courtesy Seán O'Connor



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Mixed Bag Quota Increases and Cuts – Are they Reasonable or Confusing?

Another conclusion to the annual fishing quota negotiations has divided opinions across the board with regards to the gains and losses for the different sectors in the Irish fishing industry. Where we see gains in the pelagic industry it is negated by large cuts in the nephrop / demersal sectors.

This year's outcome to the amount of fish Irish fishermen can catch has issued reactions such as; Reasonable – Fearful – Disappointing – Expected – Consequential – Confusing

See inside this issue for full reaction and analysis

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Commencement of Two Important New Conservation Measures For Fishing From 1 January 2020

Banning Larger Trawlers from Fishing Inside Irelands 6 Mile Zone

Increasing Minimum Mesh Sizes of Fishing Nets by 25% for EU Trawler Fleets Fishing in the Celtic Sea

From 1st January all trawling by larger trawlers, over 18m in length, in coastal waters inside Ireland's 6 mile zone will cease other than for a sprat fishery which is being phased out during 2020 and 2021.

Minister Creed said "The inshore waters inside our 6 mile zone will be restricted for trawling to smaller fishing vessels, 18m in length or less, from 1 January which will both support our small scale and island fishermen and provide wider ecosystem benefits, including for nursery areas and juvenile fish stocks. This new policy will, I believe, support the development of small scale inshore and sea angling sectors which is a Government commitment."

The Minister's decision on this new policy was announced in December 2018. It was taken following an extensive public consultation and was greeted extremely positively by many in the fishing industry and the wider environmental conservation sector. The National Inshore Fishermen's Association (NIFA) hailed the decision as "undoubtedly the most significant policy decision made in the history of the state in terms of supporting Ireland's Inshore Fishing sector! From a Social, economic, environmental and moral perspective this was the right decision." It was similarly heralded by Padraig Fogarty of the Irish Wildlife Trust (IWT) as "the biggest step we have ever seen" towards marine conservation in Ireland."

The Minister acknowledges and accepts that the forthcoming restriction will particularly affect some vessel owners and taking account of this he introduced a phasing in of the policy for the sprat fishery so that vessels in the fishery have adequate time to

transition to other fishing activities.

Minister Creed stated that "I see this new policy as an important reflection of Ireland's commitment to the UN Sustainable Development Goals, namely SDG 8 decent work and economic growth, SDG 12 responsible consumption and production, and SDG 14 life below water. The catch of one large vessel will have the potential to be spread out over many small vessels and thereby help support families in coastal communities."

These measures come into effect as an increase in conservation measures for the Celtic Sea were agreed at the December Fisheries Council. The new EU rules which commence at the beginning of the year involve a 25% increase in the size of mesh in nets used to fish for mixed whitefish in the Celtic Sea. This increase is designed to make the fishing gear used by all EU vessels in the Celtic Sea more selective by avoiding or minimising catch of stocks in need of protection.

Minister Creed said "The new measures agreed for the Celtic Sea to help rebuild the depleted cod and whiting fish stocks will also provide substantial benefits for all our whitefish stocks including for our inshore waters. As this will involve a change in the fishing gear used by Irish fishermen I have asked BIM to provide grant aid support to them to reduce the costs of the required fishing gear change."



the fine Art of Marine Finance

by Art Kavanagh

Eaten Bread Etc???

I read in disbelief of the proposed write downs in some high profile debts and wonder how people are allowed to keep Houses that they have effectively not paid for.

When you borrow money and give security – you are warned that in the event of non payment you are likely to forfeit the Security. That was the deal you signed up to. The lenders responsibility was to allow you to draw the Loan once it is approved. Your responsibility or your part of the deal is to pay the loan off or forfeit the Security you gave for the Loan.

That was the deal!!!

There is a disregard for responsibility for unpaid Loans and other Debt creeping back into Society. The person owing the money is the one who should be embarrassed- not the person owed the money.

If you ask for a job to be done make sure you are in a position to pay for it. It is simply not fair to leave people unpaid for Work carried out in good faith.

Our Quotas for 2020 have been announced with the usual triumphant attitude of our Minister who as always will have claimed that he has saved us from worse cuts.

That may well be and the negotiations can't be easy but that the same time we see that the weighing of Mackerel on the pier is creeping back into the discussions.

I understand that we are the only country requiring this weighing regime and even with the various concessions offered since the announcements first made there is going to be total waste of fish and resulting income to the fleet. If the water is removed from a tanker to allow the fish to be weighed net of water the fish will be damaged beyond use and will be heading for the fishmeal plant.

A Tanker of Fish containing say 10 tonnes at current prices would be worth in excess of €10,000 and would be wiped out.

How can anyone justify that?

I know that our Government adopts a Cavalier Attitude to say the least to Financial Waste when we look at the Children's Hospital Debacle, "PrinterGate" which is like something from a Carry On Movie, Deputies claiming Expenses willy nilly and other things ... Does nobody check anything up there apart from trying to stop decent People doing their Work.

It is very easy to be dismissive of Effort when it is someone else's Effort Lads

SHAME on you all.

In recent months I have been dragged in to a number of situations where some negotiation might improve the prospects

for both Bank and Borrower where various wheels have come off.

I have to ask if they really want to clear their Books at all unless it involves selling the Loans to Vulture Funds?

I am a professional Banker and therefore believe that Loans granted in Good Faith must be cleared one way or another.

I absolutely believe in the Right of the Lender to exercise their security and have great difficulty with the absolute Rubbish from some of our Politicians. If Loans are written off where do they think the Shortfall will be found????

On the other hand if there is a realistic deal to be done where both Bank and Debtor can emerge with some dignity- **why not explore it.**

The Blood out of a Stone simile applies here.

I have a situation at the moment involving a substantial amount of money where the Bank is insisting on following Legal means despite the offer from the Debtor of sacrificing the Security. This is absolute waste with only the Legals making money from it at the eventual Cost to the Bank.

We all remember the "Jobsworth" Awards from the Esther Rantzen Show on BBC TV years ago.

The old concept of waking the Patient up to give him or her the Sleeping Tablet has crept in. You will take your Tablets even if they Kill you!!!!

Let's hope that as we enter a new Decade we can ALL OF US- that includes our Government and Regulator work together to maximise the value of our Seafood Sector and bear in mind that the foundation of the seafood sector is found in the Fleet.

Can we examine our national conscience to see if we can convince ourselves that the Financial and Personal Risks taken by the Catching Sector are matched by an atmosphere of support and understanding from Central Government. I know that we are on the thin end of the Agri Food Sector but we do abide by whatever Market Forces throw at us without heading for Kildare Street if the Price of our Produce drops.

Remember that everyone.

The sight and the arguments which have been promoted widely by our National Press in recent months make me absolutely sick.

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96% of the Large Trawler Fleet Sign Up to the 'Clean Oceans Initiative'

Irish Fishermen Removing Waste Plastic As They Trawl The Ocean

Minister for the Marine, Michael Creed, T.D., has welcomed the increase in trawlers and other fishing boats now signed up to Ireland's Clean Oceans Initiative.

The Minister launched the Clean Oceans Initiative in January last year at Union Hall to address the serious issue of marine plastic pollution. The Minister at that time called for the participation of the entire Irish trawl fishing fleet in the scheme by 31st December 2019. To date, 168 trawlers and 56 other fishing boats have signed up with 12 ports registered and involved in the Initiative.

By the end of Q3 2019 approximately 150 tonnes of marine plastic waste had been collected from 12 of Ireland's busiest fishing ports and 54 tonnes of used fishing nets have been collected for recycling by BIM's mobile shredder, the 'Green Machine'.

Minister Creed said, "Fishermen have risen to the challenge I set for them early this year and I am sincerely thrilled that 96% of our trawlers are now signed up and on board, but we need to get every single trawler on-board for this. I'm delighted that the Fisheries Producer Organisations endorsed this Initiative and are encouraging their members to sign up and get involved."

The Fisheries Producer Organisations represent the majority of Ireland's trawling fleet and receive funding under the European Maritime and Fisheries Fund for production and marketing activities.

Protecting our oceans is one of 17 Global Goals that make up the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. Ireland's commitment to Goal 14, Life below water is reflected in the enthusiasm shown towards the Clean Oceans Initiative.

Minister Creed identified the opportunity to get signed up to the Clean Oceans Initiative over the Christmas period "With the majority signed up by now, I hope that the remaining trawler owners will use some of the time while they are ashore over the Christmas period to get their paperwork into BIM so that they and their crew can avail of the facilities the Initiative offers."

Applicants are advised to sign up online at www.bim.ie/fishing-for-litter/ or by contacting BIM directly at (01)2144100.



Some of the litter recovered by the MFV Staronia off the West Cork coast; Celtic Quest and Castlemore picking up more discarded rubbish prior to Christmas week West of the Skelligs. Another load of litter brought ashore by the Arkh Angell from the Porcupine Bank into Ros A Mhíl. You can see by the type of gear being discarded by foreign fishing vessels that the majority of this rubbish is not coming from the 96% of Irish Trawlers supporting the Fishing for Litter scheme. Photos from the Fishing for Litter Facebook page.



National Fisheries College of Ireland

Schedule January 2020



Skipper Full

- 14 April-17 June, NFC Castletownbere
- 14 April-12 June, NFC Greencastle

Second Hand Full

- 06 January-24 April, NFC Castletownbere
- 06 January-28 April, NFC Greencastle

Second Hand Limited

- 06 January-24 April, NFC Castletownbere

Deckhand Foundation Programme

- 03 February-13 March, NFC Greencastle

Electronic Navigation Systems (Fishing)

- 06 January-24 January, NFC Castletownbere
- 06 January-24 January, NFC Greencastle

Navigation Control Courses (Fishing)

- 22 June-03 July, NFC Castletownbere
- 22 June-03 July, NFC Greencastle

Enhanced Safety Training (Under 15m)

- 07 January, NFC Greencastle
- 29 January, NFC Castletownbere
- 19 February, NFC Castletownbere

Basic Safety Training

- 13-15 January, NFC Greencastle
- 14-16 January, NFC Castletownbere
- 14-16 January, Clogherhead, contact 087 2334620

- 14-16 January, Lettermore, Co. Galway, contact 087 6837134
- 27-29 January, NFC Greencastle
- 29-31 January, Howth, contact 087 2334620
- 03-05 February, NFC Greencastle
- 04-06 February, Lettermore, Co. Galway, contact 087 6837134
- 11-13 February, NFC Castletownbere
- 25-27 February, Inis Mór, Co. Galway, contact 087 6837134

Elementary First Aid on Board Ship STCW-95

- 29 January, Lettermore, Co. Galway, contact 087 6837134

PHECC First Aid Responder

- 17-19 February, NFC Castletownbere

GMDSS General Operators Certificate

- 20-31 January, NFC Castletownbere

Fire Prevention and Fire Fighting (3-day)

- 24-26 February, NFC Greencastle
- 1-3 April, NFC Castletownbere

Advanced Fire Fighting (5-day)

- 03-07 February, NFC Castletownbere
- 18-22 May, NFC Castletownbere
- 06-10 July, NFC Greencastle

Medical First Aid Aboard Ship

- 01-03 April, NFC Greencastle
- 06-08 April, NFC Castletownbere

GMDSS Restricted Operator Certificate

- 14-28 April, NFC Castletownbere

GMDSS Short Range Radio Proficiency (Modules 1 & 2)

- 20-22 January, Lettermore, Co. Galway, contact 087 6837134
- 21-23 January, Glogherhead, contact 087 2334620
- 11-13 February, NFC Greencastle
- 19-21 February, Kílrush, Co. Clare, contact 087 6837134

QQI Level 6 Commercial Scuba Diver

- 24 February-20 March, (pre-week medical course 17-21 February), NFC Castletownbere

Surface Supplied Diver (3 weeks)

- 30 March-24 April, NFC Castletownbere

Passenger Boat Proficiency

- 24-28 February, NFC Castletownbere

NFC Greencastle +353 74 938 1068

NFC Castletownbere +353 27 71230

To confirm the mobile training schedule on the west coast please contact 087 6837134 and on the east coast call 087 2334620. Funding for the course fee and subsistence costs may be available through BIM's Seafood Training Scheme.



STOCK	AREA	2019 Quota	2020 Quota	Volume Change	Value 2019	Value 2020	Value Change
Cod	VIb	16	16	-3%	€0.05	€0.05	2%
Cod	VIa	385	284	-26%	€1.27	€0.95	-25%
Megrim	VI	749	764	2%	€2.78	€2.88	4%
Monkfish	VI	1,145	797	-30%	€5.56	€3.93	-29%
Haddock	VIb XII XIV	824	824	0%	€1.69	€1.71	1%
Haddock	VIa Vb	528	650	23%	€1.08	€1.35	25%
Whiting	VI	324	273	-16%	€0.47	€0.40	-14%
Norway lobster	VI	204	215	5%	€1.73	€1.85	7%
Plaice	VI	261	261	0%	€0.51	€0.52	1%
Pollack	VI	56	34	-39%	€0.14	€0.09	-38%
Saithe*	VI	455	402	-12%	€0.71	€0.64	-10%
Common sole	VI	46	46	0%	€0.42	€0.43	1%
Sub Total (Area VI)		4,992	4,566	-9%	€16.42	€14.80	-10%
Cod	VIIa	532	169	-68%	€1.75	€0.57	-68%
Cod	VII b-k	650	461	-29%	€2.14	€1.54	-28%
Megrim	VII	3,001	3,101	3%	€11.13	€11.67	5%
Monkfish	VII	2,501	2,675	7%	€12.14	€13.17	9%
Haddock	VII b-k	1,851	2,413	30%	€3.79	€5.01	32%
Haddock	VIIa	1,619	1,366	-16%	€3.31	€2.84	-14%
Whiting	VIIa	419	415	-1%	€0.61	€0.61	1%
Whiting	VIIb-k	5,334	4,073	-24%	€7.75	€6.01	-22%
Norway lobster	VII	7,296	6,201	-15%	€62.02	€53.50	-14%
Plaice	VIIa	1,499	1,442	-4%	€2.94	€2.88	-2%
Plaice	VII bc	63	67	6%	€0.12	€0.13	7%
Plaice	VII fg	240	253	5%	€0.47	€0.50	7%
Plaice	VII h-j	47	30	-36%	€0.09	€0.06	-35%
Pollack	VII	929	929	0%	€2.34	€2.38	2%
Saithe	VII	1,492	1,492	0%	€2.34	€2.38	1%
Common sole	VIIa	74	77	4%	€0.68	€0.72	6%
Common sole	VII bc	36	36	1%	€0.33	€0.33	1%
Common sole	VII fg	26	52	100%	€0.24	€0.49	103%
Common sole	VII h-j	171	148	-13%	€1.57	€1.38	-12%
Hake	VI, VII	4,400	3,493	-21%	€13.51	€10.88	-19%
Skates & Rays	VI, VIIa-c, & e-k	1,329	1,329	0%	€1.92	€1.95	2%
Sub Total (Area VII)		33,508	30,222	-10%	€131.20	€119.01	-9%
Tusk*	V, VI, VII	68	68	0%	€0.07	€0.07	1%
Blue Ling	Vb,VI,VII	33	31	-6%	€0.04	€0.04	-5%
Blue Ling	II, IV	4	2	-50%	€0.01	€0.00	-49%
Ling	VI - IX, X, XII, XIV	898	898	0%	€1.71	€1.73	1%
Greenland Halibut	IIa, IV, VI	14	14	0%	€0.16	€0.16	2%
Spurdog	I, V - VIII, XII, XIV	53	53	0%	€0.02	€0.02	1%
Cod	I,II	322	322	0%	€1.06	€1.08	1%
Sub Total (Other whitefish)		1,392	1,388	0%	€3.06	€3.10	1%
TOTAL DEMERSAL		39,893	36,176	-9%	€150.68	€136.91	-9%
Stock	AREA	2019 Quota	2020 Quota	Volume Change	Value 2019	Value 2020	Value Change
Greater silver smelt	III, IV	8	8	0%	€0.01	€0.01	1%
Greater silver smelt	V, VI, VII	329	263	-20%	€0.22	€0.18	-19%
Boarfish	VI, VII,VIII	15,086	13,235	-12%	€3.02	€2.68	-11%
Herring	VIaN	630	526	-17%	€0.27	€0.23	-15%
Herring	VIaS, VIIbc	1,482	1,236	-17%	€0.63	€0.53	-15%
Herring	VIIa	1,795	2,099	17%	€0.76	€0.91	19%
Herring	VII ghjk	4,097	750	-82%	€1.74	€0.32	-81%
Blue whiting	I - VIII a,b,d,e XII,XIV	37,800	38,599	2%	€6.43	€6.66	4%
Mackerel	VI, VII	55,313	78,052	41%	€71.91	€101.47	41%
Horse mackerel	IVb, IVc, and VIId	376	334	-11%	€0.32	€0.29	-10%
Horse mackerel	IIa,IVa,VI,VIIa-c,e-k,VIIIabe	30,306	17,726	-42%	€25.76	€15.29	-41%
Herring	I, II	3,399	3,035	-11%	€1.44	€1.31	-9%
Albacore	North Atlantic	2,854	2,891	1%	€8.73	€8.98	3%
TOTAL PELAGIC		153,475	158,754	3%	€121.23	€138.85	15%
TOTAL ALL STOCKS		193,368	194,930	1%	€271.92	€275.77	1%

Mixed Bag: Quota Increases and Cuts – Are they Reasonable or Confusing?

Report by Mark Mc Carthy, Editor, Marine Times Newspaper

Another conclusion to the annual fishing quota negotiations has divided opinions across the board with regards to the gains and losses for the different sectors in the Irish fishing industry. Where we see gains in the pelagic industry it is negated by large cuts in the nephrop / demersal sectors.

This year's outcome to the amount of fish Irish fishermen can catch has issued reactions such as; Reasonable – Fearful – Disappointing – Expected – Consequential – Confusing Not that anyone would know outside the coastal communities as this years negotiations got zero coverage in our national media other than a small side note in some publications.

We were forewarned prior to the negotiations of how severe cuts would be despite protestations by the industry. Sean O'Donoghue speaking before the negotiations stated that "The Commission's proposals contain some significant reductions in a number of key Irish stock such as the 15% reduction in nephrops, 30% reduction in monkfish and 40% reduction in pollack. I question the justification for these reductions both on a scientific basis particularly for monkfish and pollack and also most importantly that the Commission's proposals take no account of the socio-economic obligations enshrined in the CFP. The proposals only take account of the sustainability principles. If the socio-economic obligations had been taken into account, the proposed cuts in some of our key stocks would almost be eliminated or significantly reduced. I fully expect Minister Creed to take account of these missing factors from the Commission's proposals during the Council." Needless to say, as you read on you will see that the Commission paid no heed to the Irish fishing representatives concerns.

Concern is also raised when it seems the drastic cuts to nephrops could have been reduced if the Minister and his team worked with his UK counterparts on a proposal for this valuable industry. To reject it so outrightly at a time when we are seemingly on a precipice with regards to Brexit and shared stocks beggars belief when co-operation should be key for future relationships in the industry!

The Irish Fish Producers Organisation attended the Council of Fisheries Ministers in Brussels which ended in the early hours of December 18th. This will be the last Fisheries Council in this format as the UK will no longer be part EU in 2020. The new format will see bilateral negotiations taking place between the EU and UK over the 100 plus shared stocks and be in no doubt this this could have devastating results for the Irish Fishing Industry.

In a statement to the Marine Times, the IFPO states that; "The Brexit rollercoaster continues apace and there is still a strong possibility that we could see the UK leave without a deal with the EU and the consequences for that scenario in 2021 do not bear thinking about. We fish at least 50% of our most valuable species, Mackerel and Prawns in UK waters and we could be denied access.

"The final tables for stocks in 2020 is a disappointing result. There is no doubt there is a very strong green agenda within the Commission and the effects of these cuts on coastal communities is never taken into account. We are down over 400 MT of whitefish in area 6 and 3300 MT in area 7. The PR spin will point to the large increases in Mackerel but this and the other pelagic stocks was decided months ago and the increase is as a result of bad science by ICES in 2018 and has nothing to do with this week's meeting. This year was the deadline under the CFP to set TAC's in accordance with the scientific advice and in line with MSY principle.

"However, we have once again dubious advice resulting in cuts for Monk area 6 by 30%, Hake in 6 and 7 by 21% and Pollack in 6 by 39%. The 15% cut in Prawns will have a very serious effect in 2020 and we will be hard pressed to get swaps to keep this fishery open. However, we have some positives too with increases for Haddock in 6a and 7b-k, Monkfish in area 7 and Sole in f/g by 100% which may seem huge but is only an additional 26MT."

For Chief Executive of the South and West Fish Producers' Organisation, Patrick Murphy, three words sum-up the EU fishing quotas decided last month: Disap-



Lady Lu with arms open wide for the Hook Lighthouse - Photo by William Power

pointment, Confusion and Fear. Ireland, he says, with the majority of Europe's accessible fishing grounds still remains a small recipient in the European context when it comes to the share-out of this valuable resource. There are massive cuts to the earnings of whitefish boats that could not come at a worse time.

According to Patrick Murphy; The efforts by members of the Irish South & West Fish Producers' Organisation in the months and weeks leading up to the critical December Meeting of the EU Council of Fisheries Ministers dimmed like a candle slowly burning-out and all that was left was a wisp of smoke that disappeared in front of our eyes.

"As presented by Minister Michael Creed to our delegation, Ireland has received an overall gain of earnings for their fishing fleet from €271m in 2019 to €275m for 2020, an increase of €4m. However, the vast majority, approaching 99% of Ireland's fishing fleet, will not benefit by one Euro from this increase, but will in fact be down €14 million on last year's figures. This will undoubtedly have devastating effects on the majority of our fishermen, their crews, families and the coastal communities that so depend on them." (Read Patrick's full analysis on the quota negotiations and results on page 10)

The Killybegs Fishermen's Organisation (KFO) has said that the Council of Fisheries Ministers annual meeting in Brussels has delivered a reasonable overall result on certain key stocks but has upheld misguided proposals on others.

However, its CEO, Seán O'Donoghue, said at the end of Council that this is almost certain to be the last December Fisheries Council in this format with the looming withdrawal of the UK from the EU. This was the metaphorical calm before a potentially devastating storm with the long-term future of the industry very much in

the balance as the UK and EU negotiating teams assess and mould Britain's exit plan from the EU.

Commenting on the conclusion of talks which entered a third day, Mr O'Donoghue said that TACs and quotas had been set at sustainable levels.

"The Commission's unworkable proposals for cod and whiting in the Celtic Sea were changed to setting appropriate by catch and catch levels for these species and a range of workable technical conservation measures to avoid a vast array of sustainable fisheries being closed. There were significant sustainable increases in a number of species such as 41% increase in mackerel, 23% and 30% increases respectively in haddock in areas 6a and 7b-k, a 7% increase in monkfish area 7 and a doubling of small sole quota area 7gf. The reduction in nephrops our second most important economic stock was not unexpected but none the less it will have an affect on the demersal fleet. The 30% reduction in monkfish in area 6a and the 40% reduction in pollack areas 6 are disappointing as they are based on dubious science. In the overall context of all stocks of Irish interest there has a small increase of 1%. I wish to thank Minister Creed and his team of officials for achieving a reasonable sustainable outcome in difficult circumstances."

"A no-deal Brexit really cannot be what people want but it still is a possibility on 1st January 2021. The situation would be uncontrollable with almost 3,000 kilometers of a 'water border' to be policed and the potentially devastating consequences for fleets which would have to be tied up.

"Ultimately, it would be the death knell for many coastal fishing communities, with the demise of the Irish seafood sector to the tune of between 30% and 50% and projected job losses of between 30% and 40% in the fishing industry here. The reliance we have on UK waters for species such



TENDER ANNOUNCEMENT

The Marine Institute is inviting personnel to submit an application for the following tender

Enhanced Catch Sampling Services

To sample and record catch data on board commercial fishing vessels

If you would like details of this tender specification and conditions for the above tender please contact:

<http://www.etenders.gov.ie>
Tenders will be launched early January

Please see tender notice for closing date

as mackerel (60%) and nephrops (40%) is staggering, these are two main money “spenders” for the industry. It’s very hard to get one’s head around the fact that waters, to which we have enjoyed access, could be out of bounds on 1st January 2021 with no physical wall nor barrier in place.

“It is imperative that no stone is left unturned to protect the Irish seafood sector in the future trade negotiations which, last year alone, was valued at €1.25 billion, employing more than 14,300 people predominantly in rural, coastal locations. Michel Barnier and Trade Commissioner Phil Hogan will play key roles, along with our Government, to negotiate the retention of the close linkage between fisheries and the wider trade relationship in order to maintain existing access to fishing waters and existing resource allocations. This linkage is absolutely critical.

“Whereas fish are mobile and know no borders nor bear any nationality, our trawlers don’t have this luxury and must obey boundaries and exclusion zones. We must do absolutely everything in our power to deliver a reasonable solution in terms of access to waters and resources thereby avoiding a ‘no-deal’ Brexit and the ramifications which this would have for our sector,” concluded Mr O’Donoghue.

Hugo Boyle, Chief Executive of the Irish South & East Fish Producers Organisation, commented to the Marine Times that; “The ISEFPO welcomes the positive news, where the quota has been increased for a number of stocks, namely mackerel, haddock in areas 6 and 7, with a slight increase in monk and megs in area 7 along with sole and herring in 7a.

“We also welcome the fact that the Minister and his negotiating team were able to have the original Commission proposal for a 27 ton cod quota in the Celtic Sea increased to a figure of 461 tons, which, rather than being in a ‘choke’ situation with the Celtic Sea closed, allows for a by-catch in this area.

“Unfortunately, stocks where there has been a reduction in quota far outnumber those in which there were gains. The reductions in quota for these species will have serious consequences for demersal/whitefish vessels in particular in 2020.

“The 15% reduction in the prawn quota will affect the greatest number of fishers. This is Ireland’s second most valuable fishery which is targeted by more vessels in the demersal fleet than any other and as a result, the reduction here will have a negative impact on all our Coastal Communities.

“At the Minister’s pre Council meeting in Brussels with the Industry, the ISEFPO highlighted and emphasised the serious consequences of any reduction in the Prawn quota and that other side effects of this would be the displacement of vessels, with their reduced monthly prawn quota, into other fisheries.

“This, in turn will place undue pressure on these stocks where we do not have enough quota to cater for the vessels which regularly fish them. These quotas have to be topped up by swaps every year which are becoming more difficult to get.

“The seriousness of the prawn cuts is most disappointing for the demersal

vessels and on that note, we will be looking for clarification from the Minister on claims by our Northern Ireland counterparts that he would not support the UK position for a lesser reduction in the Prawn TAC for 2020.

“The above cuts along with reductions in other species does not auger well for the whitefish sector and while political spin can point to a potential overall increase in value of landings of 1% for 2020, this includes a €30,000,000 increase in the value of the mackerel quota.

“This, in simple terms, leaves a shortfall of that same €30,000,000 in landings of other species, which will, in the main be borne by the demersal/whitefish vessels.

“To say that the outcome on quota was anything other than disappointing for these vessels would be a misrepresentation of the facts.”

Minister for Agriculture, Food and the Marine, Michael Creed T.D. announced that EU Agreement has been reached on setting sustainable quotas for fish stocks following two days of intensive negotiations and that the total package of fish quotas agreed is 195,000 tonnes worth €275 million for the Irish fishing industry in 2020.

In response to the result that our second most important fishery, Prawns, has been reduced by 15%, the Minister stated that this was in accordance with the scientific advice due to the decline in stock density in some important prawn beds.

Also in regards to some stocks such as cod and whiting in the Celtic Sea, the Minister stated that they remain in very poor shape and at this Council agreement was reached on the introduction of significant additional safeguards designed to rebuild these stocks.

The Minister said, “Securing agreement on rebuilding measures in the Celtic Sea was one of the most difficult aspects of these negotiations. Council agreed measures that will deliver the necessary protections for cod and whiting while still allowing vessels to continue fishing in a sustainable way. These measures were trialled by our experts in BIM and the Marine Institute, working closely with our fishing fleet. By taking these necessary steps now, we can rebuild the stocks in our Celtic Sea fisheries and avoid the need for closures.”

Minister Creed said that “I am satisfied that I have achieved my twin aims coming into this Fisheries Council which were to continue the progress we have made on improving sustainability and to protect key fisheries on which our coastal communities depend.”

This year marked the deadline set under the Common Fisheries Policy (CFP) to end overfishing by setting total allowable catches (TAC) in accordance with the scientific advice. This means that for most stocks, where sufficient advice is available, quotas have been set at levels that ensure long-term sustainability, in line with the maximum sustainable yield (MSY) principle.

This December Council agreed quotas for 47 stocks of particular interest to Ireland. For 32 target stocks, the quotas for 2020 were set at or below the scientific advice where available, meeting MSY criteria.

For four vulnerable stocks of interest to Ireland, where the advice was for no fishing, restrictive quotas were set. This allows for unavoidable by-catches of these stocks, in circumstances where they are part of mixed fisheries.

The Council also agreed to very small quotas to allow for the collection of scientific data for 3 depleted herring stocks.

For the eight remaining stocks, it was agreed to set precautionary quotas considering the scientific advice available, and the status of many of these as minor by-catches.

Minister Creed said, “Since the reform of the Common Fisheries Policy, we have been working steadily towards the objective of setting quotas in line with Maximum Sustainable Yield (MSY) by 2020. However, this is not the end of this journey. We must continue to build on the progress we have made to secure a sustainable future for our fishing industry and the coastal communities which depend upon it.”

Thomas Pringle, TD commented to the Marine Times that: “The fisheries negotiations represent a mixed bag for fishermen, pelagic fishermen will be reasonably happy and demersal fishermen will be disappointed with the outcome that sees a significant reduction in the value of catch available to them.

“The increase in Mackerel quota will provide a boost for pelagic crews and hopefully that will be sustained into the future as well. The demersal crews see a significant reduction and it will continue to make things difficult for them to survive. It is unclear whether the changes that are being made to move to sustainable fisheries are working but we can only hope that they will in the long run.

“As usual our demersal fishermen are hampered by not having a fair share of the TAC and that will always make life difficult for them.”

Fianna Fáil Spokesperson on Fisheries, Pat The Cope Gallagher, has cautiously welcomed fishing quotas for 2020.

He commented, “There is a cautious welcome to the fishing quotas agreed for 2020 from our Party and those Irish fishermen who watch so closely these yearly deliberations.

“I do welcome the increases in quotas for mackerel and haddock given their importance to fishing vessels from the North West, in the case of the mackerel increase it is correcting the flawed advice provided by ICES last year.

“The reduction in nephrops, and its importance to Irish fishermen, is very disappointing but not unexpected. What is more concerning is the situation post Brexit. 40% of our nephrops are caught in UK waters. This area could be removed entirely by January 1st 2021 which will severely limit Irish fishing vessels.

“This is why the future relationship between the European Union and the UK is so important. Trade negotiations between the EU and UK will have the biggest outcome for our fishing fleet next year. There could be potentially devastating outcomes for fleets which would have to remain in Port as almost 3000km of a water border would need to be policed.

“We depend so much on access to UK waters it is imperative fish and trade talks are to the fore of future negotiations. Minister Creed, Commissioner Hogan and others have a responsibility in these negotiations to advocate on behalf of the Irish commercial fishing industry,” concluded Deputy Gallagher.

Fianna Fáil MEP for Ireland South, Billy Kelleher has said the announcement of revised fishing quotas are a mixed bag for Irish fishermen.

Speaking following the agreement at the EU Fisheries Council this week in Brussels, Kelleher said, “Of course, increases in the quotas for mackerel, haddock, monkfish and megrims are to be welcomed, but further controls on cod fishing in the Celtic Sea and big cuts in the Irish and North seas will put many fishermen under further pressure.

“The EU must accept that it has twin obligations when it comes to fishing quotas. On the one hand, we need to protect our fish stocks for future generations, but equally, on the other, we need to ensure fishing communities, and the families reliant on the fish industry, remain profitable and viable.

“Additionally, we need an acceptance that the climate emergency will, unless

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addressed and arrested, will make it worse for fishermen. We are already aware of how climate change is affecting fish stocks, and their ability to restore themselves naturally.

“That means that fishing and ocean management needs to be part of, and take a leading role within the European Green Deal - something my European group, Renew Europe, has been quite forceful on in recent debates. The only way fishing can remain a viable industry is by preserving fish stocks. If there is no fish, there are no fishing communities,” concluded Kelleher.

Following the conclusion of the quota negotiations the National Inshore Fishermen's Association (NIFA) and National Inshore Fishermen's Organisation (NIFO) issued a joint statement to the Marine Times: “Profiling our members suggests the majority have a greater economic dependency on non-quota shellfish stocks, however some are reliant on a number of quota stocks to a fair extent. As such we had a number of concerns regarding the commission's proposal going into the December Council meeting.

“While seal depredation in White Pollack Fisheries continues to impact our members more than a shortage of quota, the proposed 40% cut in White Pollack was of major concern. This is especially as it's considered a “data poor” stock something which raises questions about the scientific advice behind the proposal. Thankfully it didn't materialise in Area 7, something that is unfortunately of no consolation to our Donegal members who now face a 39% cut in Area 6. If anything, it demonstrates the need for scientific advice to be based on robust data and sound methodology. If data and the science it informs are accurate, then it should concur with what fishermen experience at sea. The situation of where we have continued zero TAC for Spur Dog is a prime example of where something certainly isn't right in this regard.

“Even though unsurprising, the fact that we now have a zero commercial TAC for both Celtic Sea and NW Herring Fisheries is also of concern. NW Herring have been zero TAC for a number of years now. Some of our members have been involved in the scientific fishery to gather data, which will hopefully someday demonstrate a stock recovery which will allow a return to a commercial fishery. Members in Donegal Bay have reported sizeable marks of Herring in

recent weeks. While we acknowledge these marks are spawning or pre spawning aggregations, the fact they exist can only be seen as a positive in terms of the stock recovering. Re Celtic Sea Herring the indications have been for a number of years that the stock was in trouble, so a Zero TAC is of no real surprise. Hopefully the small scientific quota can be used to keep the vital sentinel Fishery in the Dunmore Box open. The Sentinel Fishery played an important part in the rebuilding plan the last time this stock collapsed. Inshore Herring fisheries have the potential to provide some badly needed Winter diversification opportunities to Inshore operators many of whom are now solely depended on shellfish for various and complex reasons. With traditional spawning grounds inside the 6 mile limit now protected from industrial fishing by trawlers over 18 meters, we feel there is a real chance of recovery stock now.

“The requirement to bring all stocks within MSY by 2020 added a different dynamic to this year's council meeting and undoubtedly made achieving a satisfactory outcome more difficult. We need healthy fish stocks to support our fishing communities but we also need sufficient fishing opportunities available to those communities in the interim to allow them survive until we get to a situation where all stocks are at MSY. In General we feel the broader outcome was balanced and we would like to take this opportunity to commend Minister Creed and his department on their efforts to bring that about.”

In a statement to the Marine Times, Alan McCulla OBE, CEO ANIFPO/Sea Source, says: “Having attended every EU December Fisheries Council for the past 27 years it might be easy to conclude we have seen it all before. Nevertheless, one lesson learned is that no two years are the same, a bit like fishing. Twelve months ago it was assumed in some quarters that the December 2018 Fisheries Council would be the last one the UK attended as full members of the EU. We knew we would be back, but we thought only as observers. We got it wrong. After the recent General Election this should be the last Council the UK attends as full members of the EU. Let's end 2019 on that optimistic note...”

Read Alan's full statement on page 27

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Government with A Strong Marine Focus Needed

There will be a General Election this year. That is a certainty. It is also certain that the marine sector, of which the fishing industry is a major part, will not be a major priority for any of the parties or politicians contesting this election.

That lack of priority is an indication of failure by successive governments to give equality of attention to the resources which the seas around this island nation at the same level as they have to foreign investment.

Had they done so, this nation could now be thriving from its maritime resources.

Government concentration has been ashore, where in recent years it has focused on urban centres, without equal attention being given to rural and coastal areas. Yet, from the time people first set foot on this island, they settled in coastal areas where 70 per cent of Ireland's population are still resident.

There has been some gradual dawning of realisation that this is an island nation, particularly with the UK's withdrawal from the EU emphasising the importance of our ports and harbours. The eventual terms of the Brexit withdrawal will impact on the fishing industry, where other changes this year include access restrictions to inshore waters dependent on Irish fishing vessel size.

A new Marine Planning system is being developed, the Marine Institute is to get a new research vessel, the importance of energy from the sea, wind and wave, is being realised. There is some indication of the realisation that Ireland is the most western island of Europe and the implications of that physical situation. These are welcome developments, but overall, government still does not prioritise the marine sector sufficiently.

Maritime responsibilities are divided amongst different government departments. Fishing is within the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine. Note that 'Marine' is mentioned lastly, for which alphabetical justification is not sufficient, disregard for the importance of the marine at State level is more likely. Harbours, the Coast Guard and other marine aspects, such as leisure and marine tourism, are within the Department of Transport, Tourism and Sport.

Why not a dedicated, single Marine Department, as there was in previous years? That appears to reflect lack of appreciation of the marine sphere, amongst both politicians and administration officials.

Ports and harbour authorities did campaign against a single Department of the Marine in previous years, wanting to be positioned within Transport. Internal Civil Service wrangling at the highest level also forced the diminution and eventual disbanding of the Department of the Marine.

Aquaculture, a vital future food source, has been badly treated, its development frustrated by attitudes within the Department of the Marine and consequent regulations. The same Department has spent millions of Euros in legal action against fishermen, who have sought without adequate response, negotiation and discussion. This, focused on developing the industry, would assist it in the challenges faced.

The maritime sector is largely ignored by national media. Anti-fishing industry lobbying groups accuse fishermen of over-fishing and level environmental allegations, but ignore that the major fishing effort in Irish waters is by foreign vessels which have the biggest fish catching quotas, forcing the Irish fleet to the lowest level of catches. Irish fishermen have led conservation measures. Healthy stocks are in their best interest. They are also the biggest environmental cleaners of debris waste found in Irish waters, most of it issuing from land-based human activities.

The fishing industry, however, has not helped itself by lack of unity and a single outspoken voice.

Generally, the maritime sector is not as strong, powerful and outspoken as other area of Irish life. It is an aspect of modern life that government does not respond without pressure being exerted upon it to do so.

The upcoming General Election will be an opportunity for the maritime sector to emphasise that an island nation needs government which has a strong marine focus.

The MARINE TIMES will be a voice for the maritime sector in the widest sense and the fishing industry in particular.

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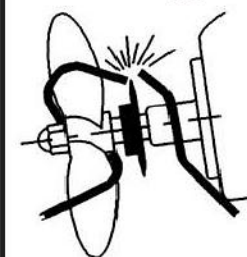


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Sole Survivors

50% survival obtained in Irish otter trawl fishery

Dr Ronán Cosgrove, Fisheries Conservation Manager, BIM

Black, common, or plain old 'sole' is prized by seafood consumers for its firm flesh and sweet taste. In terms of landings, sole is one of the most valuable species in Europe with most catches occurring in the North Sea and eastern Celtic Sea.

In Ireland, aside from some small scale directed fisheries, the species is mainly taken as bycatch in mixed demersal trawl fisheries. According to the Marine Institute stock book, around 185 tonnes of sole are caught annually by Irish vessels, mainly in coastal shallow sandy areas where they typically constitute less than 2% of total landings of all species. Around half of Irish sole catches are made off the southwest coast in ICES division 7j. Discarding is considered negligible and landings have been well below the Irish quota in 7j in recent years. Quota is much more restrictive in other areas: Further to the east in ICES divisions 7f and 7g, a 1% bycatch quota applies for most months of the year. In the Irish Sea, no directed fisheries were permitted in 2019, with Irish vessels allocated a bycatch quota of 74 tonnes.

Under the EU landing obligation, low quotas combined with difficulties in reducing unwanted catches can lead to early cessation or choking of fishing effort. Demonstration of relatively high post-capture survival can be used to apply for an exemption under the landing obligation. Sole has potential in this regard with a survivability exemption currently in place in an inshore trawl fishery in the English Channel. Bord Iascaigh Mhara (BIM), conducted a sole survivability study in September, 2019 in collaboration with Padraic and Gerard McDonagh, owners of the *MFV Karen Mary*, and with Galway Mayo Institute of Technology (GMIT). The trial was led by members of the BIM fisheries conservation team, Martin Oliver and Matthew McHugh.

The vessel fished a single-rig otter trawl with 80 mm codend and 120mm square-mesh panel. Hauls averaging around 3 hours duration and 47 m depth were mainly

conducted in outer Galway bay and the Aran Grounds. Approximately 160 sole were stored onboard in fish bins with a continual flow-through of seawater before transport to a recirculated seawater fish

holding system at GMIT. Relatively large holding tanks were used with sand on the bottom to facilitate sole's natural burying behaviour and reduce stress associated with captive holding.

Mortalities were observed to stabilise after 5 days' observations with just one fish mortality on day 5 and no mortalities on days 6 and 7 of the experiment. At the end of day 7, 50% of fish remained alive. A survival extension model was used to predict mortalities beyond day 7. This also resulted in a survival estimate of 50%. Water temperatures are known to be

highly correlated with mortality of flatfish species. Relatively high water temperatures during the Galway trial suggest survival is likely to be greater at other times of year and in other areas around the Irish coast such as the Celtic and Irish Seas.

There are no guarantees regarding the outcome of applications for survival exemptions with the EC placing increasing emphasis on stock status and bycatch reduction plans for the relevant species. Nevertheless, an application will be made and hopefully this work will assist the Irish Industry in dealing with low sole quotas and key challenges under the landing obligation. BIM would like to thank the vessel owners, Ian O'Connor and staff at GMIT for their assistance with this study.

A full report is available at www.bim.ie/our-publications/fisheries

Inset photos: Tanks aboard the 'Karen Mary' and at GMIT



Dr. Matthew McHugh and Martin Oliver, BIM with Skipper Gerard McDonagh on-board the MFV Karen Mary and below unloading the catch. Photos by Alan Place



MFV Karen Mary (Photo by Derek Hosie)

The South - West View



For Chief Executive of the South and West Fish Producers' Organisation, Patrick Murphy, three words sum-up the EU fishing quotas decided last month. Ireland, he says, with the majority of Europe's accessible fishing grounds still remains a small recipient in the European context when it comes to the share-out of this valuable resource. There are massive cuts to the earnings of whitefish boats that could not come at a worse time.

Disappointment, Confusion And Fear

The efforts by members of the Irish South & West Fish Producers' Organisation in the months and weeks leading up to the critical December Meeting of the EU Council of Fisheries Ministers dimmed like a candle slowly burning-out and all that was left was a wisp of smoke that disappeared in front of our eyes.

DISAPPOINTMENT

Fishing trials carried out, witnessed and recorded by on-board BIM gear technologists, using newly-designed fishing nets, in Irish South and West boats proved that massive improvements in reducing the numbers of Cod and Whiting in the catches is not just possible, but guaranteed.

There was initial jubilation - seeing the industry's joint submissions and consultations with the Minister's negotiating team resulting in these measures being included in the dying moments of the negotiations, but our mood quickly turned, like milk left out in the sun, to a sour taste in our mouths as the potential increase of 300% in recovered and healthy Haddock stocks never materialised.

We were granted a miserable spirit-crushing 30%, a kick-in-the-teeth made worse because our scientists had advised seeking a 100% increase. If this was not enough, Hake stocks where there was only a -5% reduction in size since 2019 was slashed by -21%, once again contrary to the advice to use the upper level of the

scientific advice which would have resulted in no cuts.

Whiting, a traditional strong fishery for Irish vessels, has seen cuts of various sizes in all areas and a total cut combined would need a 34% increase next year to return our catches to 2019 levels.

Nephrops, commonly known as Dublin Bay prawns, Ireland's second most important fishery, saw an overall slashing for the second year in a row of 15%.

There is a slight increase in Monk in Area 7, but this was not only cancelled out by the massive cut of 30% in Area 6 but overall, we are down 187 tonnes which is a loss of 5.4%.

Cod, the perennial problem child, sees an overall cut of 42.2% on 2019's quota.

The only Stock that has seen an increase for the demersal sector is Haddock, up 11.7% in all areas combined, despite the announced 30% increase in Celtic Sea with Megrims receiving a slight increase of 3.5%

Ireland, with the majority of Europe's accessible fishing grounds due to the geo-

logical position of our Island nation on the Continental Shelf still remain a small recipient in the European context when it comes to the share out of this valuable renewable resource.

CONFUSION

This year's Council meeting has completely upended the percentage increases Irish demersal fishermen gained last year by stripping them away this year, quoting mixed stock advice focus as the reason.

With the unknown consequences from the fall-out from Brexit these massive cuts to the earnings of Irish White-Fish fishermen could not come at a worse time.

The massive decreases in our most important fishery of Nephrops (Dublin Bay Prawns) for the second consecutive year will force freezer vessels to diversify into other fisheries, but as all demersal stocks we catch have been cut, the ones in which we could have been granted an increase, had we followed scientific advice to reduce the size of the cuts to key stocks in 2020 or been given adequate (and scientifically available) increases to improved stocks, spell disaster for many Irish fishermen, their crews and the coastal communities that desperately depend on them.

We have consistently proposed other measures that would improve the sustainability for this fishery, but this has fallen on deaf ears.

Albacore Tuna a very important fishery for many Southern-based vessels who travel hundreds of miles for this valuable fish. They are also confused at the 1% increase rather than the recommended 20% increase advocated by The International Commission for the Conservation of Atlantic Tuna, ICAT

Pelagic fisheries, for the RSW segment, see increases this year in Mackerel up +41%, but also see devastation through the loss of Ireland's Celtic Sea Herring, reduced to just a scientific quota of only a few hundred tonnes. This will have disastrous effects on Polyvalent Pelagic Vessels. Scad (Horse Mackerel) was also slashed by 41%, despite previously suggested alternative measures to help the sustainability of the fishery that sadly, were not introduced.

FEAR

The Industry accepts that reductions in quotas are required to protect sustainable stocks, but we fear we often times do so while not taking into account the socio-economic importance of getting it right. We fear those shouting for cuts do not properly understand that fish of various size fluctuate from year-to-year and this will influence necessary changes that should happen, also year-to-year so to properly manage the entire stock.

Fishermen are the first to acknowledge that cuts as harsh as they are, are, unfortunately, necessary but we feel the cuts made to TAC's and Quotas for different stocks must be done in a properly evaluated manner over a period of time by taking into account our decision-making process. Fishermen risk their lives at sea every day and should be entitled to catch enough fish

to pay their bills and also survive in the Industry.

In recent times our demersal fleet has been decimated by our Government's introduction of Decommissioning Scheme after Scheme. This seems to be disproportionately directed at white fish vessels.

With Brexit and the potential loss of access to UK fishing grounds, we in the South West are already gravely concerned with the ever-increasing number of our fellow EU Members' Vessels fishing efforts off our shores. There is also the requested but as yet unknown effect this increased effort is having on our Biologically Sensitive Area that wraps around our coastline all the way through the Celtic Sea to west of Galway.

The fear is that now, we will have no choice but to revisit this brutal and final resolution of decommissioning to again make way for others with greater quotas in Ireland's EEZ.

DOWN IN EARNINGS - NOT UP - FOR THE VAST MAJORITY OF FISHERMEN

As presented by Minister Michael Creed to our delegation, Ireland has received an overall gain of earnings for their fishing fleet from €271m. in 2019 to €275m. for 2020, an increase of €4m.

However, the vast majority, approaching 99% of Ireland's fishing fleet, will not benefit by one Euro from this increase, but will in fact be down €14 million on last year's figures. This will undoubtedly have devastating effects on the majority of our fishermen, their crews, families and the coastal communities that so depend on them.

The Irish South and West fish Producers Organisation acknowledge the work carried out by Minister Michael Creed and his officials at this year's meeting: we know it never is an easy task.

Our membership are fully aware of the hard work we will have to undertake and the individual responsibility on all of us in protecting the sustainability of fish stocks in our waters. By taking hard decisions in introducing new technical measures, following best scientific advice and reducing the unwanted catches of undersized fish, fishermen have an enormous task to balance their catches ensuring the species they are allowed to catch are also retained in these new larger meshed fishing nets so they can earn a viable living that supports the families of coastal communities that are so dependent on them.

With this said, the increases Minister Michael Creed announced are welcome and the Chairman, Damien Turner and myself will continue to work with our staff, industry colleagues and the Minister's Department officials, on behalf of our membership and our Industry to help secure a viable future for our vessels.

We wish to you all a safe and prosperous New Year.



Sun sets on another year for the Irish fishing industry - Photo John Power

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Spider Crab Nets: 0.95 monofilament x 13" and 14" Mesh x 5.5md x 1000ml – two shades of Green available ... NOW IN STOCK!

We carry a full range PP Ropes for net rigging in sizes 4mm, 5mm, 6mm, 8mm, 10mm, 12mm, 14mm and 16mm.

We stock PP Ropes in **right and left hand lay** for rigging 3 strand x 220 Metres.

We have a full range of mounting twines for net rigging in Nylon: 210/36, 210/45, 210/54, 210/60, 210/66 Anzalón (2kg) and heavier if required in colours green and white.

Braided Nylon rigging twines on 1 kilo spools in sizes 0.75mm, 1mm, 1.3mm, 1.5mm and 1.8mm.

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We can supply any of the above type of nets fully mounted for surface or bottom fishing – with all new materials to agreed spec.

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Kilmore Quay Fishing Community are the Winners of the Clean Coast Fishing Community of the Year (supported by BIM)

The County Wexford fishing village of Kilmore Quay came on-board Fishing For Litter in May 2018 and have retrieved over 31 tonnes of marine litter to date. They have also responsibly retired about 16 tonnes of end of life gear. There are 19 vessels registered for FFL in Kilmore Quay, which represents 71 crew actively supporting BIM's Clean Oceans Initiative. Kilmore Quay is a great example of how a number of stakeholders' work in partnership to achieve results.



A key stakeholder is the O'Flaherty's, a family run fishing business that signed up all its trawlers to Fishing For Litter and work closely with the harbour master in improving waste management in the port by separating the end of life gear and hazardous items such as oil, filters and other key streams as space allows and are working to further improvements.

The fishing community of Kilmore Quay embraced the ask to show case the work supporting and combating marine litter in the marine environment as part of Wexford Co Co's schedule for national science week.

Volunteers from the Sub Aqua Club, Coast guard and the RNLI as well as the Wexford Co Co harbour staff and the trawler vessels and crew of the O' Flaherty run vessels. Representatives from the inshore sector also discussed their role in marine litter retrieval and sustainability programmes such as Lobster V notching. They all discussed their love for Kilmore Quay and the marine environment and gave behind

the scene tours of their operations backed by a science for the 45 children of Kilmore National School.

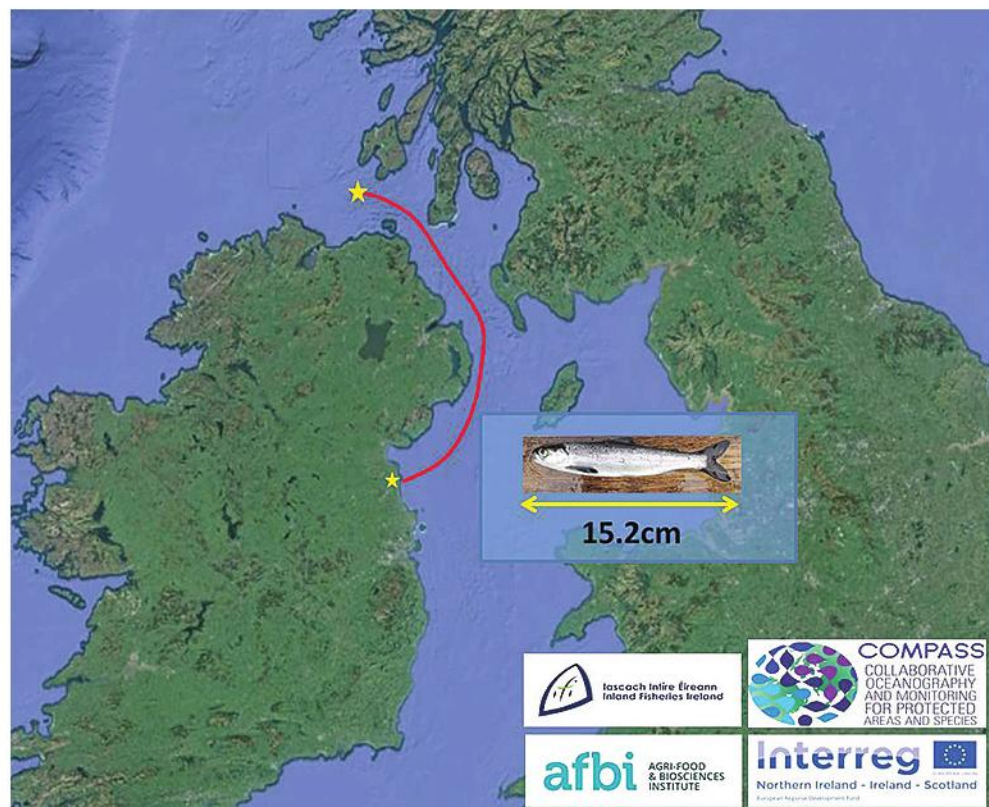
The hub of the community of Kilmore Quay is the Stella Maris Community Centre run by the Kilmore Quay Development Association. The Stella Maris hosted the children, fishermen, the Coast Guard, the RNLI and scientists from BIM and Infomar and provided a great springboard for the fishing community to come together to our common goals for a health ocean. Participation by Sofimar by supplying scallop shells for arts and crafts and Keohoe marine for a tour of the equipment used by vessels to maintain their nets and vessels also added to the day. The event was a great success and the variety of demonstrations across the village showcased the breath of Ocean literacy among its passionate practitioners.

Kilmore Quay launched their co-commitment to BIM Clean Ocean's Initiative 2019/2020 as part of science week.

Go North, and Swim Fast - New Evidence of Migration of Young Salmon Leaving Ireland

Migration Route Discovered and Longest Tracked Distances of Individual Salmon at Sea

The route taken by young salmon (smolts) leaving the east coast of Ireland has been discovered for the first time. Inland Fisheries Ireland and Northern Ireland's Agri-Food and Biosciences Institute have revealed findings which show young salmon leaving rivers on the eastern coast travelling northwards to leave the Irish Sea, rather than south and west to join salmon on the western coast. The research was carried out as part of the COMPASS project and funded by the EU European Regional Development Fund's Interreg VA programme.



The new evidence was established after researchers tagged salmon smolts with coded transmitting acoustic tags in the Castletown and Boyne rivers in County Louth during the spring of this year. Three of these tagged salmon were picked up on listening devices in the coastal seas as they travelled northwards out of the Irish Sea towards the Atlantic Ocean.

One of the smolts was recorded in Scottish waters, some 80 kilometres north of the Inishowen Peninsula. This smolt had travelled an estimated 250 kilometres in just over a month, one of the longest distances recorded for a salmon tracked at sea en route to its feeding grounds in the North Atlantic. Two more salmon smolts were tracked as far as receivers located off the Northern Ireland coast, further confirming the northward migration of the fish through the Irish Sea.

Until now, it was unknown if juvenile salmon leaving Ireland's east coast rivers headed around the North or South coasts to get to their oceanic feeding grounds. These first three tracked fish took a northward route from rivers on the east coast to exit the Irish Sea. These salmon also moved offshore quickly, behaving very differently from sea trout, which remained closer to their spawning rivers and swam closer to the coast and river mouths.

The tagging work was carried out by

scientists from Inland Fisheries Ireland (Dr James Barry) and AFBI (Dr Richard Kennedy) who tagged and analysed the movements of 130 salmon smolts as they left their rivers of birth in the spring of 2019. This work was supported by a local angling clubs, including The Dundalk and District Brown trout and Salmon Anglers, who helped to install fish traps which enabled the tagging and release of fish. A network of acoustic receivers were moored to the seabed along the coast from Drogheda to the north east coast by researchers from IFI and AFBI, to track the tiny acoustic transmitters in the salmon as they migrated from the rivers to the open ocean.

This research is just one element of the COMPASS (Collaborative Oceanography and Monitoring for Protected Areas and Species) project, a transnational initiative which focuses on the coastal seas between Ireland and western Scotland. The project aims to deliver improved cross border environmental monitoring programmes, including research to support highly mobile protected species such as marine mammals, salmon and sea trout. This particular research package is investigating the success of wild salmon and sea trout as they migrate from river to sea, and examining where they travel to and how many of them survive before returning to Ireland to reproduce.

Commenting on the findings, Dr William Roche, Senior Research Officer at Inland Fisheries Ireland said: "As salmon populations are in decline across the northern hemisphere, we urgently need to establish their migration journey and identify any issues which may be negatively impacting survival along that route. This research marks an exciting milestone and it will play a critical role in supporting marine conservation efforts."

Dr Cathal Gallagher, Head of Research and Development at Inland Fisheries Ireland said: "Salmon hatch in their native river, spend their juvenile life feeding in freshwater and prepare for their long sea migration before returning as adults, usually one year later to mate in their native river. Genetic analysis has shown this loyalty to their native river which can be traced back to the Ice Age.

The COMPASS project has for the first time identified the northward migration route of young salmon from some of Ireland's east coast rivers, as they start their epic and dangerous journey to their feeding grounds in the North Atlantic Sea. Research results like these offer insights which will enable policy makers and

managers to focus actions aimed at the protection and conservation of Ireland's iconic salmon stocks, which have suffered considerable decline over the past decades. Inland Fisheries Ireland will continue in its research efforts, nationally and internationally, to support the conservation of our salmon stocks which are threatened by current and increasing threats posed by a changing environment."

Dr Robert Rosell, Principal Scientific Officer for freshwater fish at AFBI said: "These observations are an exciting first for long distance tracking of individual young salmon at sea. We are now in a position to carry out follow up studies to find out much more. These results will optimise the placement of further detection equipment and add information, for instance on survival rates, for further releases of tagged fish. Now that we know where to look, advancing technology and longer battery life tags may soon give us not just the outward journey, but also detail of the routes taken by adult fish coming back to spawn."

To find out more about this research and the COMPASS project, visit www.compass-oceanscience.eu/salmonid-fish

Fish Kills Will Continue to Increase Says Inland Fisheries CEO

Water Quality Report Shows Decline and Pressure from Human Activities

The Chief Executive of Inland Fisheries Ireland has said that the "decline in water quality and in particular in river quality since 2015 shows an increase in pressures coming from human activities."

Dr. Ciaran Byrne was commenting on the Water Quality in Ireland Report for the period 2013-2018, published by the Environmental Protection Authority which showed a decline in river quality and a further loss of pristine river water bodies. It also highlighted that the number of fish kills had increased to 40 in 2018 after a historic low of 14 in 2017.

"Activities such as agriculture, wastewater issues, forestry and hydromorphology (man-made changes to the physical form of the river) are all putting pressure on the aquatic environment, which in turn can have long term impacts on our fisheries resource," said Dr. Byrne. "It is extremely disappointing that the percentage of high-quality biological river sites with undisturbed natural conditions has decreased from 31.6% in 1987-1990 to 17.2% of sites in 2016-2018. These high-quality sites are important for supporting sensitive fish species such as juvenile salmon and trout so any decline in this regard is worrying. Fortunately, the picture for lakes is more stable with a small number showing improvement since the last assessment."

The EPA report gave details of fish kills which occurred during 2018, as supplied by Inland Fisheries Ireland. While there was a significant increase in fish mortalities last year, stating that it is likely that the hot weather and low flow conditions experienced in the summer of 2018 may have caused fish to be more vulnerable to pollution events. Of the 40 fish kills in 2018, 15 were caused by disease or natural causes, seven by agricultural practice, eight by municipal works, two by industrial operations and a further eight fish kills had unknown causes.

Dr Byrne said that, in the context of climate change, it is anticipated that the number of fish kills "will continue to increase."

"This issue is even more critical when we consider that rivers with poor water quality do not have the resilience to deal with pollution events during periods of stress. Radical change is needed if we are to ensure the sustainability of our valuable fisheries resource into the future."

Satisfied Customer Orders Alternative Oil Filter Solutions for New Builds

This alternative oil filter ensures both optimal reliability and lifetimes for marine engines while also saving on fuel and time and money on maintenance. The environmental benefits of saving many litres of waste oil on an annual basis is just one of the advantages of C.C.JENSEN's new oil filter, the CJC® Lube Oil Filter.

This is what shipping company Royal Greenland discovered after testing several different types of oil filter on its existing ships. During the period, C.C.JENSEN closely monitored the choice of the different types of oil filter and, as part of a collaboration between MAN, Royal Greenland and C.C.JENSEN, the new oil filter was developed in order to ensure continually clean and dry lubricating oil in the ship's diesel engine.

At Royal Greenland, the CJC® Lube Oil Filter 427/108 with Flow Drive became the most natural choice for one of the shipping company's new builds, the trawler 'Sisimiut', which is the third of the shipping company's trawlers to go by this name and, with a volume of 5,000 gross tonnes, is twice as big as its predecessor.

'Sisimiut' was launched in August 2019. Not only is the trawler bigger, it has also been improved in several significant areas, including in relation to fuel consumption,

which has not increased even though the new 'Sisimiut' trawler has the capacity for both longer and faster voyages than its predecessor.

Cleaner, better and more sustainable. The ship's main engine, a MAN 9L32/44Common Rail 5400 kW, is fitted with the new CJC® Lube Oil Filter, which also ensures a continually clean and dry oil, increasing uptime and extending the lifetimes of components and oil.

"Overall, the improvements mean an increase in efficiency and quality while improving sustainability. And efficiency, energy optimisation and sustainability are certainly important parameters for today's shipping companies," emphasises Jan Foged, C.C.JENSEN Ireland Ltd

While the typical oil filter solution is a centrifuge, requiring more maintenance and regular repairs, C.C.JENSEN's alternative solution has been developed and designed



Royal Greenland trawler, 'Sisimiut' with CJC® Lube Oil Filter installed to maintain its engine lubricating oil.

Engine reliability



Avoid dirty diesel tanks



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CONTACT
Jan Foged



to make life easier on board.

"It's an easier way of keeping the oil and engine clean. We also hear from the crew that they enjoy just being able to wash their hands with water and ordinary soap after making repairs, quite simply because the oil is nowhere near as dirty as with traditional filtering," says Jan Foged.

A filter for yet another new build: Royal Greenland's positive experiences with C.C.JENSEN's oil filter have meant the shipping company is now ordering the same solution for yet another future new build.

"Research shows that 80% of oil related failures and breakdowns are caused by contaminated oil. That's why preventive oil maintenance is so important for ensuring optimum reliability and avoiding system breakdown. On this basis, we are very happy that Royal Greenland has had such positive experiences with our oil filter and has chosen the solution again," says Jan Foged, Technical Advisor.

Ground-breaking filter technology: C.C.

JENSEN A/S is a globally oriented family-owned business, which has specialised in the production of lubricant oil filters for marine engines since its establishment in 1953. The company has its head office in Svendborg and its own production plant in Hesselager, where all filter inserts are produced from 100 percent natural cellulose fibres from sustainable resources – entirely without chemicals.

After many years of research and practical testing, C.C.JENSEN has, in collaboration with shipping companies and leading engine producers, been at the forefront in the development of a new and

ground-breaking technology for maintaining lubricating oil in 2 and 4 stroke engines running on diesel, medium fuel oils, heavy residual fuel oil, heavy fuel and other fuel types.

A typical argument for choosing a CJC® Oil Filter are the considerable savings to be made, with up to 60 percent lower oil consumption, 97 percent energy savings and a full 99 percent lower slam content from the lubricating oil.

news from Castletownbere

Helen Riddell

IS&WFPO - "Disappointment, Confusion and Fear"

Commenting on the recent December council of minister's meetings, Patrick Murphy, CEO of the Irish South and West Fish Producers Organisation said that three words come to mind, "disappointment, confusion and fear." He went on to say, "the efforts by members of the IS&WFPO in the months and weeks leading up to this very important and critical December meeting of the EU Council of Fisheries Ministers seemed to dim like a candle slowly burning out and all that was left hanging in the air was a wisp of smoke that disappeared right in front of our eyes."

Fishing trials carried out, witnessed and recorded by on-board BIM gear technologists, using newly designed fishing nets, in Irish South and West boats, proved that massive improvements in reducing the numbers of cod and whiting in the catches is not just possible but is guaranteed.

After our initial jubilation in seeing Industry's joint submissions and consultations with the Minister's negotiating team resulting in these measures being included in the dying moments of the negotiations our mood quickly turned, like milk left out in the sun, to a sour taste in our mouths as the potential increase of 300% in recovered and healthy Haddock stocks never materialised while we were granted a miserable spirit crushing 30%.

This kick in the teeth was made worse by the fact that our scientists advised seeking a 100% increase.

If this was not enough to take, Hake stocks where there was only a -5% reduction in size since 2019 was slashed by -21% once again contrary to the advice to use the upper level of the Scientific Advice which would have resulted in no cuts.

Whiting, a traditional strong fishery for Irish vessels has seen cuts of various sizes in all areas, and a total cut combined would

need a 34% increase next year to return our catches to 2019 levels.

Nephrops, commonly known as Dublin Bay prawns, and representing Ireland's second most important Fishery saw an overall slashing for the second year in a row of 15%.

Although there's a slight increase in Monk in Area 7, this was not only cancelled out by the massive cut of 30% in Area 6 but overall, we are down 187 tonnes which is a loss of 5.4%.

Cod, the perennial problem child, sees an overall cut of 42.2% on 2019's quota.

He said the only stock that had seen an increase for the demersal sector was haddock, up 11.7% in all areas combined despite the announced 30% increase in Celtic Sea with Megrims receiving a slight increase of 3.5%.

Mr Murphy went on to say, this year's council has completely upended the percentage increases Irish demersal fishermen gained last year by stripping them away this year quoting a mixed stock advice focus as the reason.

With the unknown consequences from the fallout from Brexit these massive cuts to the earnings of Irish White-Fish fishermen could not come at a worse time.

See pages 5-7 & 10 for further comment on this years Quota

Fundraising Coffee Morning

A fundraising coffee morning held in aid of Castletownbere Community Hospital and Castletownbere Day Care Centre has raised €3450. Organiser Sandra Regan O'Shea thanked all those who helped out, "the people of Beara never disappoint and they pulled out all the stops to support two very worthwhile facilities in Castletownbere." She extended thanks to all those who dropped in spot prizes and to Betty, Christina O'Shea and Kieran for their help and for providing their bar as a venue. Anyone who still wishes to donate can do so by giving donations to Sandra or dropping them into O'Shea's Bar, Castletownbere.

Beara Camera Club

Beara Camera Club will hold their first meeting of 2020 on Monday January 13th at 8pm in Twomey's Bar in Castletownbere. New members are welcome, the first meeting is free, thereafter the subscription is €5 a month.

Castletownbere Development Association

A key project the Castletownbere Development Association is currently involved in is the restoration of the former St Peter's Church in the town. The wider community was invited to offer suggestions as to the practical use of the space. In all 27 submissions were received from individuals and organisations and these were all discussed at an open meeting held in the Beara Coast Hotel on November 15th. The consensus of the meeting was that St. Peter's would be renovated in order to make it suitable for the arts, drama, exhibitions and workshops. It would also be available for the use of organisations such as Beara Community School and the Family Resource Centre.

The renovation project will be the key focus for the CDA in 2020 and plans are at an advanced stage in what will make St. Peter's a gem in the local community.

Dingle Call for Seal Cull

A number of inshore fishermen held a meeting in Dingle, County Kerry, at the end of December and made a call for a cull of the seal population.



They claimed that an unsustainable level of damage was being caused to fish stocks and fishing nets by an increase in the numbers of grey and common seals in the area.

Both species are protected under the EU Habitats Directive, and the Blaskets are a Special Area of Conservation for seals.

Twenty-one licences were granted by the National Parks and Wildlife Service (NPWS) for the killing of seals during the period 2010 to the end of 2018. These were issued under section 42 of the Wildlife Act, 1976, according to figures release by the Minister for Culture, Heritage, and the Gaeltacht, Josepha Madigan.

The number of seals around the coastline near Dingle and the Blasket Islands was the particular focus of the fishermen's complaints.

Government Approves Marine Development Bill

The Government is reported to have approved the Marine Development Bill, but it is unclear whether the Department of the Marine's objections are still unresolved.

Taoiseach Leo Varadkar and Minister for Climate Action Richard Bruton have focussed on what they see as changes in the application system for offshore renewable energy, particularly wind farms in the context of the Bill, to increase wind farms offshore.

Following its reported approval at the last Cabinet meeting before the end of the year the Taoiseach said the Bill would provide for a "radically different single consent principle" to remove issues in the current planning process which had delayed projects.

There would be more investment in renewable energy, he predicted.

"It's a new planning system, like that for land, working with Bord Pleanála, that will allow us to have a revolution in offshore wind energy and we need that," Mr. Varadkar said.

Public and stakeholder consultation meetings are due to continue around the year.

For more information – December edition of the Marine Times interview with Minister Damien English about the Marine Development Bill.



Union Hall RNLI would like to thank the local fishermen for donating proceeds from scrap metal collected on pier to the RNLI and Lost At Sea Tragedies LAST. They would like to express their sincere thanks to Cork County Council and harbour master Garrett for facilitating this collection on the pier and to Cork Metal Company Ltd for buying and collecting. The collection of scrap metal continues so if you have any waste scrap and would like to support these two charities, you can drop to the designated bin on the pier.



Matthew McHugh, BIM Fisheries Conservation Technologist, was in Union Hall with the crew of Ocean Pioneer preparing for a selective gear sea trial. The dual codend was being tested in this final sea trial of 2019. The principal function of this type of gear is to separate prawns from fish. The aim of this work being carried out by BIM with members of the Irish fishing Industry is to reduce unwanted catches as part of the wider landing obligation requirements in the Nephrops fishery.

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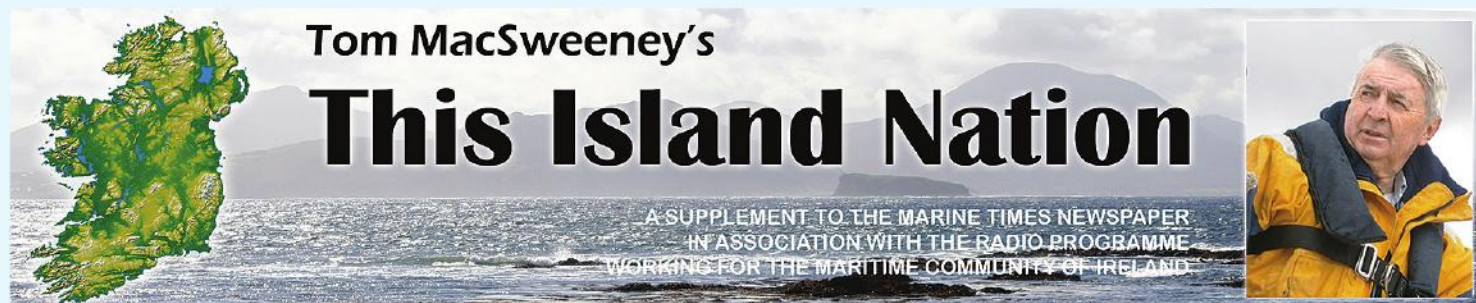
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You can also hear the Podcast of the current programme and archived past editions on the Marine Times website www.marinetimes.ie

I'm always interested to hear your stories, comments.

Email: thisislandnation@gmail.com



Tom MacSweeney's

This Island Nation

A SUPPLEMENT TO THE MARINE TIMES NEWSPAPER
IN ASSOCIATION WITH THE RADIO PROGRAMME
WORKING FOR THE MARITIME COMMUNITY OF IRELAND

A Marine Scribe's Diary

About the culture, history, tradition and developments in MARITIME IRELAND

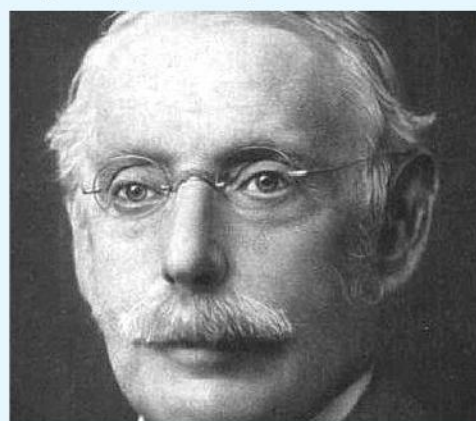
On the last Saturday of this month I plan to be in Ballinacurra village in East Cork for the unveiling of the memorial to Edward Bransfield, the Irish mariner who first set eyes on Antarctica and whose contribution to maritime history has been ignored for far too long.

While researching this month's INTERVIEW feature which you can read on page 16 about Bransfield, I came across the story of another Irishman whose contribution to maritime history, like Bransfield including the British Royal Navy, as well as seafaring in general, deserves more public recognition.

This is the Offaly man who revolutionised naval warfare and marine transport, Charles Parsons, who was born 1854, son of the third Earl of Rosse. His father was a famous astronomer and builder of the "Leviathan of Parsonstown" then the largest telescope in the world and still in the grounds of Birr Castle. He grew up, therefore, in a stimulating environment and often spent hours in his father's workshop designing and making his own machines.

After studying mathematics at Trinity College Dublin and Cambridge University, he became an apprentice at Armstrong Whitworth & Co., in Newcastle Upon Tyne, which was one of the world's leading engineering and manufacturing firms. Later, while working for Clarke, Chapman and Co., in 1884 as Head of Electrical Equipment Development he pioneered the

steam-powered turbine engine which was adapted by power companies across the UK.



He founded his own company - CA Parsons - to produce his patented turbine, which he wanted to supply to the Royal Navy. However, its bosses dismissed the notion that his turbines could propel large naval vessels. So he designed and tested his

own steam-powered sloop, the *Turbinia*, which was capable of speeds of up to 35 knots. Rejected by the Navy he decided to put on a public display of its abilities at the Naval Review of 1897, held in honour of Queen Victoria's Diamond Jubilee celebrations.

Much to the anger and annoyance of the organisers he sailed his, by comparison with the big Naval vessels taking part, small craft through the centre of the Review. Fast Naval vessels were sent to see him off, but their speed could not catch up with the *Turbinia* which thereby proved that the merits of his invention were undeniable.

He got his Naval contract. He was also knighted for his developments.

Parsons turbines also powered the engines of merchant and passenger vessels as well as Naval. The ill-fated RMS Lusitania, the RMS Mauretania and the big American battleship USS Arizona amongst them. She had four direct-drive Parsons steam turbine sets and was a particular target of the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbour where she was sunk.

Worst Fright for Baltimore Cox

The "worst fright" for Baltimore Lifeboat Mechanic Cathal Cottrell occurred when the boat was "lifted by a monster wave which heaved it far to port so that it struck 'The Loo' - an 'infamous rock' near the outer edge of Baltimore Harbour."

The West Cork lifeboat had been called out in January of 1990 when "the weather was atrocious". A Spanish fishing vessel with sixteen crew aboard had gone aground on rocks in Bantry Bay and was sinking. "Shaking herself, she was off again to spend the next half a day at sea on standby near the trawler," says the lifeboat mechanic. "We were strapped in our seats pounding through the seas, thirty and forty foot waves. When the boat goes airborne you hold onto your seat and wait for her to land. We couldn't imagine anyone out in such storms. When we got home we found ourselves full of aches and pains throughout our bodies from the pounding."

That experience aboard the lifeboat Hilda Jarrett is described in the 'Baltimore Lifeboat History' a newly-published book recording a century of rescue work from 1919 to 2019 written by historian Dr. Éamon Lankford. I was delighted to be asked by

Eamon to advise on the compilation of the book, published in conjunction with the centenary celebrations of the station. He describes the people of the coastal village as having "a strong backbone built over generations of grappling with the challenge

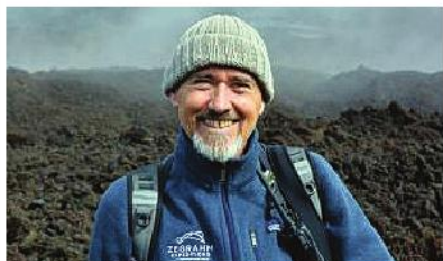
es of maritime life."

Baltimore has two lifeboats, one all-weather offshore, the other inshore.

"The station has great community support, equipment and crew members. The lifeboat operation is in robust good health and looks set fair to continue delivering the high standard of service for which the station has always been admired. Together they comprise a formidable team, bound together by a fierce community pride," says Eamon Lankford.



Crew members from RNLI Baltimore Lifeboat, Kieran Cotter (Coxswain), Ronnie Carthy, Marty O'Driscoll and Amy Kearney, with author Éamon Lankford; Phil Coulter, a staunch RNLI supporter; Joan Lucey, Vibes & Scribes Bookshop, Cork. Photo: Brian Loughheed/RNLI.



"It's taken a long time, but we've succeeded, this will be the first and only monument commemorating a man whose achievement should be remembered but has been ignored up to now."

Jim Wilson and Eugene Furlong are sitting in a pub in the small village of Ballinacurra in East Cork on the edge of Cork Harbour when they explain to me what motivated their determination to have a fisherman's son from the village recognised for his achievement – discovering Antarctica.

Working with an equally, utterly determined village committee, Edward Bransfield will be remembered for posterity on Saturday, January 25, at 2 p.m., the completion of the long campaign.

Greenan's pub in Ballina-

curra, less than a mile from the town of Middleton, itself has an honoured place in Irish maritime history. It was from this family base that the legendary schooner, the Brooklands, was operated when Ballinacurra was an active port for coastal shipping.

Jim Wilson, an Antarctic tour guide, tells me how Bransfield came to his attention there and describes the Bransfield Strait there as "an O'Connell Street for cruise ships". The area is mentioned in Ernest Shackleton's account of the famous Elephant Island rescue, in which the legendary Tom Crean was also involved, when Shackleton explored Antarctica.

"There is also Bransfield Island, Bransfield Trough, Bransfield Rocks, Mount Bransfield, all named for Edward Bransfield. These aren't obscure locations, they are well-known."

Getting to know these areas in his tour guiding led Jim Wilson to trace the story of Bransfield raced through historic documentation findings in Australia and with the support of Eugene Furlong, the man whose interest in Polar exploration

THE MARINE TIMES INTERVIEW

On Saturday, January 25, the son of a Cork fisherman will be honoured in the small village of Ballinacurra in East Cork. The reason – he discovered Antarctica. His achievement has gone unrecognised until now, in contrast to the attention given to other Irish Antarctic explorers in recent years. A voluntary committee of Cork people has been working determinedly for many years to have Edward Bransfield's place in history recognised. Marine Times Deputy Editor, Tom MacSweeney, talks to two of its members, Jim Wilson and Eugene Furlong.

Honouring the Fisherman's Son Who Discovered Antarctica

tion led to him being in a bar on the Norwegian Lofoten Islands in 2008 chatting about adventurers such as Nansen, Scott, Shackleton, Tom Crean and the Irish connections. Through that came the return of Shackleton's cabin from Norway to the Shackleton Museum in Athy in County Kildare.

"I first became aware of Bransfield's story about fifteen years ago," Furlong recalled, "finding out that, at the age of 18, he was 'press ganged' into the Royal Navy from his father's fishing boat out in Cork Harbour when the British needed men for the Napoleonic wars. A fisherman's son, born in 1785, he rose through the ranks, although not formally educated and by 1819 was a Ship's Master."

I have been at meetings of the Bransfield Commemoration Committee where they pieced together his story and struggled to gain attention for him and to raise funds for the memorial. As well as Wilson and Furlong, the Committee members include Minister of State David Stanton from Middleton; Liam O'Riordan; the Polar writer Michael Smith; historian Ursula O'Mahony; Tegwyn Stephenson and John Ahern.

Their meeting base has been Nena Greenan's famous pub.

After wartime Bransfield was appointed to the Royal Navy's Pacific Squadron in Valparaiso, Chile. There, in 1819, a British merchant ship named the Williams sailed into port report-

ing the sighting of previously uncharted lands south of Cape Horn. The Navy ordered Bransfield to investigate. He took command of the Williams and, with a crew of 30 men, sailed 3,200kms south from Valparaiso in December 1819.

On January 20, 1820, Bransfield sighted "two high mountains, covered in snow". He had discovered what is now called the Trinity Peninsula, the northernmost point of the Antarctic continent. A Russian Naval Captain Thaddeus von Bellingshausen claimed to have sighted "ice mountains" near Maud Land in Antarctica, just three days earlier. While Bellingshausen was never certain that what he had seen that day was land or just another iceberg, Bransfield meticulously charted and recorded the mountains and ridges he observed. On that basis, Bransfield is credited as the person who discovered Antarctica.

"Ballinacurra versus Putin," the commit-

tee told me at one meeting, "and in this case Ballinacurra wins!"

Bransfield sent his charts and journals back to the Admiralty in London wanting to lead a voyage back to verify his findings. But the Admiralty wasn't interested. Embittered, he quit the Navy and spent the rest of his life working on merchant ships. He was married and died in Brighton in October 1852.



In 2000, Bransfield's historic achievement was recognised in Britain when the Royal Mail issued a stamp in his honour. Since no likeness of the man survives, the stamp depicted an image of the RRS Bransfield, a British Antarctic surveying vessel, named after Bransfield.

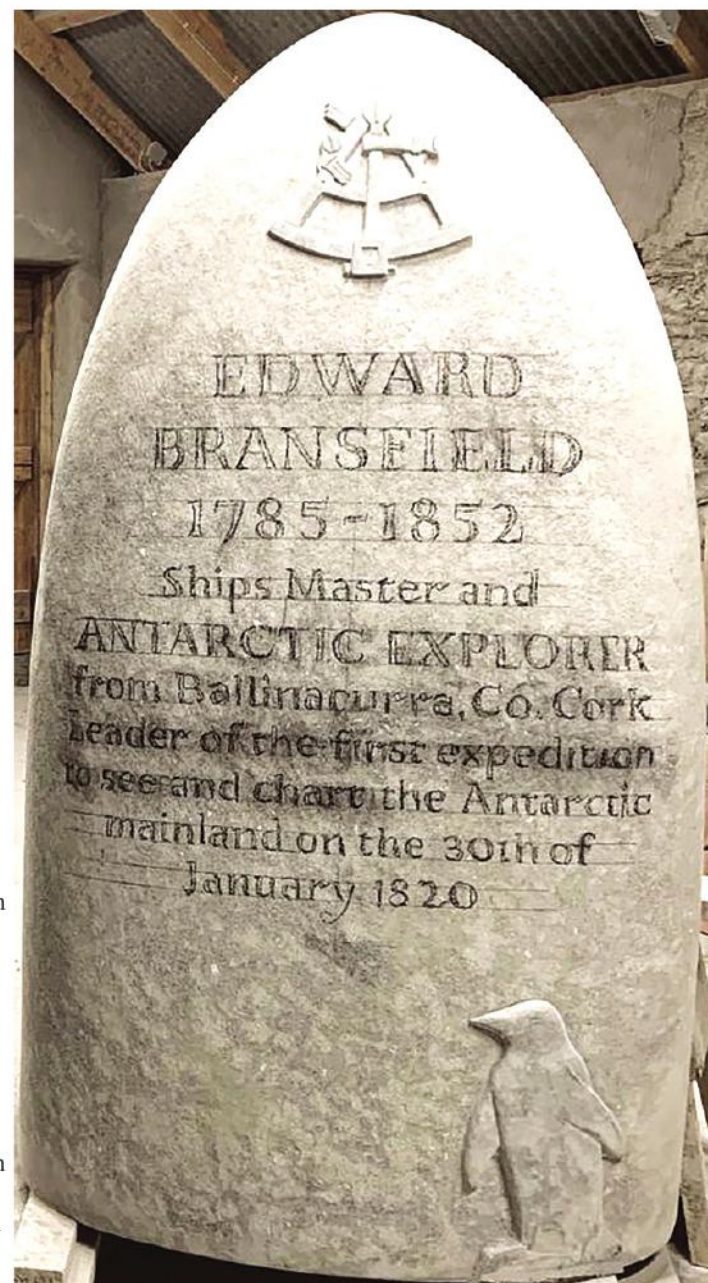
However, until the unveiling of the monument this month, there has been no such recognition of the Irishman in his native land.

There is no recorded photograph of Bransfield known to be in existence, even though the Commemoration Committee has searched for one. Because of this the well-known beacon at the entrance to Baltimore Harbour in West Cork has provided the idea for the monument to him. It was challenging for Sculptor Matt Thompson to decide on the type of memorial because of the lack of a photograph.

Though he had sailed himself sailed in the harbour waters up to Ballinacurra, the sculptor had not known a lot about Bransfield – much like the general public lack of knowledge of the mariner.

"As Bransfield was commander of a ship, responsible for safe navigation and its working, it's appropriate to have a marker, a beacon for him, so I based it on the beacon in Baltimore – on that kind of shape. The stone was actually a rock boulder, from Ballinacurra, which is quite difficult to get a shape into and also meant that you could not do anything too complicated. So the design is of a beacon, lettering on it and of course, a sextant and a Penguin is appropriate from those Antarctic waters and a carving of a ship on the back."

Local authority and public voluntary subscriptions have funded the memorial, the first anywhere in the world to commemorate the Irishman who discovered Antarctica. The unveiling on January 25 will mark the 200th anniversary of Bransfield's pioneering expedition which made the first sighting and maps of the Antarctic mainland.



Bransfield Memorial. Photo Tony Whelan Canola Pictures

Irishman set to lead Voyage of Discovery towards the South Pole!

19th December 1819 - Edward Bransfield, from the small fishing village of Ballinacurra in Cork Harbour, Ireland, in command of the brig Williams will weigh anchor at 5.00pm local time. Earlier this morning Master and Commander Edward Bransfield, together with the master's mate, Midshipman Poynter and Midshipmen Bone and Blake, from HMS Andromache, and the assistant surgeon, Dr Young of HMS Slaney boarded the brig 'Williams' for what we hear is a 'voyage of discovery towards the South Pole'.

NEWSMAKERS of the Month

Naval Vessel Sold by State for €110,000 is Re-Sold to Warlord in Libya for €1.3m

The former Irish Naval vessel, LÉ Aisling, which was decommissioned and sold by the Government to a Dutch shipping broker for €110,000 has been sold onto a Libyan warlord for €1.3m in breach of a UN arms embargo, according to a report an 'Expert Panel on Libya' to the UN Security Council.



Irish Times Facebook photo of re-gunned Aisling now owned by Libyan Warlord

The Dutch company which bought it had sold it onto a company in the United Arab Emirates for €473,000 – making a big profit on its purchase from the Irish State. The UAE company sold it on to Libya where it is now called the Al Karama and has been refitted with guns. Gunnery was removed from it before the sale from Ireland.

The Department of Defence said it had "no obligations" in relation to the vessel and that the resale of the ship was a matter for its purchaser.

Foynes Port Says Re-Opening Rail Line Would Cost Much Less Than Road

Shannon Foynes Port Company has called for the re-opening of the rail link from Foynes Port. It has been unused for many years, though the company arranged for vegetation to be cleared in 2015 to enable structural surveys to be carried out on the link to the deepwater port which handles 10 million tonnes of cargo annually.



The Port company said that re-opening the link would cost much less than the spending of €450m on upgrading the N69 road between Limerick and Foynes which Transport Minister Shane Ross has announced should go ahead.

More Development of Bantry Bay

More development of Bantry Bay is planned by the harbour company there, run by the Port of Cork and which last year completed an €8.5m investment in dredging the inner harbour, widening the town pier and building a new marina.



A survey by the Royal Institute of Architects of Ireland has been completed of the potential of the inner harbour. Cork Port company says proposals have been put forward which will be discussed with local groups about further development of the marine potential of the town.



Kilkeel Has First Woman Harbour Master: A Northern Ireland Coastguard officer and footballer is the first woman to become Harbour Master at Kilkeel in County Down. 28-year-old Danielle Rooney, a mother of two, has described it as her "dream job" and says she has "a very supportive team and the fishermen are great. I grew up around the harbour, so it's great to be working here." She is a scuba diver, Station Officer for Kilkeel Coastguard and a senior footballer with Ballymartin GAC. She succeeds Michael Young, who moved to Carlingford Harbour.



Ilen Is Best Restoration: The restoration of Ireland's last trading schooner, the ILEN, has been given the Industrial Heritage Association of Ireland's Award for "Best Restoration of 2019" for its "visionary management of the rebuilt sailing vessel" and the associated community education boat building school in Limerick. The Association's President Paul McMahon presented the trophy at the IHA Awards 2019 in the ESB Archive Building in Finglas. ESB sponsored the event, and Michael English (IHA Board Member) read the citation. Photo shows: (L to R) Industrial Heritage Association of Ireland President Paul McMahon, Gary MacMahon of the Ilen Project, ESB Director Nicholas Tarrant, Father Anthony Keane (Ilen Project), and Michael English (IHA Board Member) at the presentation of the IHA's Best Restoration of 2019.

Coast Guard Boats Returning to Service After Lifejackets Problem

The Irish Coast Guard had returned almost half of its fleet of boats to full operation by the end of December after the problem which occurred with lifejackets and for which their usage was suspended after concerns about malfunctioning of equipment.

Twenty-three rigid inflatable boats at Coast Guard stations had been taken out of service.

The Coast Guard said that its entire fleet of inshore rescue boat units would be fully operational this month.

It is understood that discussions and investigations into the problem, between the manufacturer and supplier of the lifejackets and the Coast Guard to identify the cause are continuing.

An investigation into the malfunctioning lifejackets involving the IRCG, the supplier and the manufacturer is underway to identify the cause and provide for "a speedy, effective and safe solution".



Creating a buzz around the country is Inis Cléire's new Gin released just prior to Christmas - 3 Sq. Miles

Public Consultation on Seafood Development Programme 2021-27 Launched

The Minister for Agriculture Food and the Marine, Michael Creed TD has announced the opening of an initial public consultation to inform the development of a new operational programme for the sustainable development of the seafood sector for the 2021-27 period.

The Programme will be developed in the context of the proposed EU Regulation on a European Maritime, Fisheries and Aquaculture Fund, which is presently being negotiated by the EU co-legislators with a view to enactment in the Autumn of 2020. The new operational programme will be co-funded by the Government of Ireland and the European Union.

Speaking at the launch of the public consultation, Minister Creed said: "My Department's present EMFF Operational Programme for the seafood sector is nearing its end and will be wound up in 2021. It has been a success in channeling €240 million into vital investments to promote the sustainable growth of our seafood sector and will leave a lasting legacy of enhanced sustainability, profitability, competitiveness and enhanced value.

"We are now facing into a new Programme period starting in 2021 and while many of the challenges and opportunities facing our seafood sector will continue to be relevant for the future programme, there will also undoubtedly be some new and changed investment priorities. Adapting our seafood sector to the changed landscape that Brexit will bring will be a vital consideration. Climate change is a top priority for Government and we must consider what the new Programme will contribute to

Ireland's response. Preservation of marine biodiversity and Clean Oceans and ensuring the sustainability of our fish stocks will continue to be top priorities. And we must continue to enhance the competitiveness, value and productivity of our sector through innovation, training, and targeted capital investment.

"In this initial public consultation, I am asking our stakeholders to share their views on how we should address these and other relevant issues in our new programme, in what ways we should intervene, and how should we prioritise and get the right balance in distributing the available funds".

The open call for submissions will run until 5pm on Friday 7 February 2020.

A Public Consultation document and Questionnaire are available at <https://www.agriculture.gov.ie/emff/SDP2021-27programme/development/>. Interested parties and stakeholders can respond to the Open Call for submissions in a number of ways:- Online at <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/3SQ6YQN>

by email to EMFF@agriculture.gov.ie

by post to - SDP 2021-27 Consultation, Marine Programmes Division, Department of Agriculture Food and the Marine, National Seafood Centre, Clonakilty, Co Cork.

Ros a Mhíl Building Approved

A new building described as for "welfare facilities and a canteen on ground floor, with administrative offices on the first floor," have been approved by Bord Pleanála for Ros a Mhíl fishery harbour in Connemara.

Nine conditions, including a contribution of €2,000 to Galway County Council and the imposition of time limits during which construction work can be carried out are included in the planning conditions. Work

on site will be restricted to 7 a.m. to 6 p.m. on weekdays and 8 a.m. to 2 p.m. on Saturdays. The Department of the Marine had made the planning application.



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

Development Office Funding

The Department of Culture, Heritage and the Gaeltacht recently announced €510,000 funding to support the development offices on the non-Gaeltacht Islands. This includes €22,000 to Comhar na Oileáin for administration of the funds. It goes without saying that this funding is vital to the Island offices which organise and run all manner of projects and services for Islanders.

Fishing Importance

Fishing has always been central to Island life and IIMRO (Irish Islands Marine Resources Org) is still working to have the Heritage Fishing Licences (Islands) passed by the Dáil. Held up by a supposed "money message," the Bill still has not progressed.

The European Parliament's Committee on Fisheries (PECH) added 'fair treatment of small-scale and artisanal fishers' to their last meeting. It was generally agreed that small-scale fishers are not being treated equitably by European governments.

Hopefully this will help to open more discussion and changes in legislation for Ireland's Island fishers.

Job Creation

Exploring ideas for job creation on Oileáin Chléire, the members of the community through Comharchumann Chléire Teo developed a plan to build a gin distillery. Receiving full planning permission in 2016, Cape Clear Island Distillery Ltd. was created. They have not only started production of a unique gin but also opened a display cottage. The company plans to create a trademarked whiskey as well but for now is delighted to have shipped the first batches of Cape Clear Gin.

Out on Inish Mór, the Comharchumann has launched a range of organic seaweed-based skin products. Beautifully made with gorgeous packaging, the products promise to improve anyone's skin health. They are also creating flavourings and healthy salt which are not only unique and delicious but healthier than regular salt. So far two jobs have been created with hopefully more to come.

Inish Mór should also be proud of what

their recycling system has achieved. Aran Islands Co-op Recycling Project (Athchursail Árann) was overall winner of the 5th annual Pakman Awards, for its work in hugely improving the waste management and recycling systems across Aran. The Co-op has been working on this project for years, creating jobs across the 3 Aran Islands and helping to not only improve their environment but increase sustainability.

Public Consultation Begins

The Interdepartmental Committee on Islands has had its first meeting, beginning the process of developing an action plan and policies for the Islands. While Islanders and their representatives are disappointed that they will not have a seat on the Committee, the Department has announced the beginning of the public consultation process. The Islands Policy Consultation document, which can be found on the Department website (<https://www.chg.gov.ie/app/uploads/2019/12/2019-islands-policy-consultation-paper.pdf>) includes an invitation to Islanders to make submissions to the policy document, adding their observations, ideas and comments.

Public meetings will be held on all of the off-shore Islands to give communities the opportunity to contribute to this important piece of work. It is hoped that due notice will be given to the time and dates for these meetings to allow as many Islanders as possible to attend and contribute their opinions and ideas.

HAPPY NEW YEAR

On behalf of the Board of Comhdháil Oileáin na hÉireann, I'd like to wish you all a very happy and healthy New Year.

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Marine Notice Issued to Implement ILO188

The Department of Transport, Tourism and Sport (DTTAS) has issued Marine Notice No. 42 of 2019 for all fishing vessel owners, agents, fishing vessel masters and fishers.

The notice has implemented ILO (International Labour Organization) 188 as of the 15th of November 2019.

In a statement sent to Marine Times, Dermot Conway of Conway Solicitors who specialises in Maritime law, outlines what the agreement means for both the owner and crew of any Irish vessel.

ILO 188 entitles all fishermen to written terms and conditions of employment (a fisherman's work agreement), decent accommodation and food, medical care, regulated working time, repatriation, social protection and health and safety on board. It also provides minimum standards relating to recruitment and placement and includes a mandatory requirement to have a certificate of medical fitness to work onboard a fishing vessel.

The Application provides compliance benefits for both the owner of the fishing vessel but also the crew members.

Work Time records and Rest Hours

The ILO 188 convention uses the same formula to calculate adequate rest hours as is contained in S.I. No. 709/2003 -

European Communities (Workers on Board Sea-Going Fishing Vessels) (Organisation of Working Time) Regulations 2003. It is going to be necessary for owners and skippers to ensure they can prove compliance.

What is clear is that the current rest hour logs are not sufficient.

Crew Agreement

A Crew agreement is required for each fisher and they are to be afforded the opportunity to get advice on this.

Minimum Age

While there is a derogation as to the minimum age in certain circumstances, ILO 188 envisages the minimum age to be 18. The age can, in circumstances be as low as 14 or 16 but there is not explicit provision contained in the Marine Notice as to how this would work.

Medical Certificate for Crewmembers

A new requirement will be a Medical certificate of 1 year's duration for each and every crewmember. The medical certificate will specify that the fishers hearing

and sight are acceptable and there is no underlying condition which would render the fisher unfit.

Provision of a qualified First Aid Provider

Fishing vessels have at least one fisher on board who is qualified or trained in first aid and other forms of medical care. Again, the system will be able to identify that person and attached to their file will be the qualification or certificate demonstrating compliance with this requirement.

Recording of Provision of Training

Another new requirement, training and equipment for all crew members specific to the vessel. Further training based on the type of fishing gear etc being used, will also have to be logged and recorded.

Compulsory insurance

Insurance will become compulsory to cover injury or death of a fisher. The Irish fishing industry for commercial and historic reasons (such as finance from Banks) already has compliance under this heading.

Dispute resolution

Owners will have to have such a mechanism in place for both share fishermen and employees. This should be in the form of a formal policy handed to each person on board no matter how long they were on board.

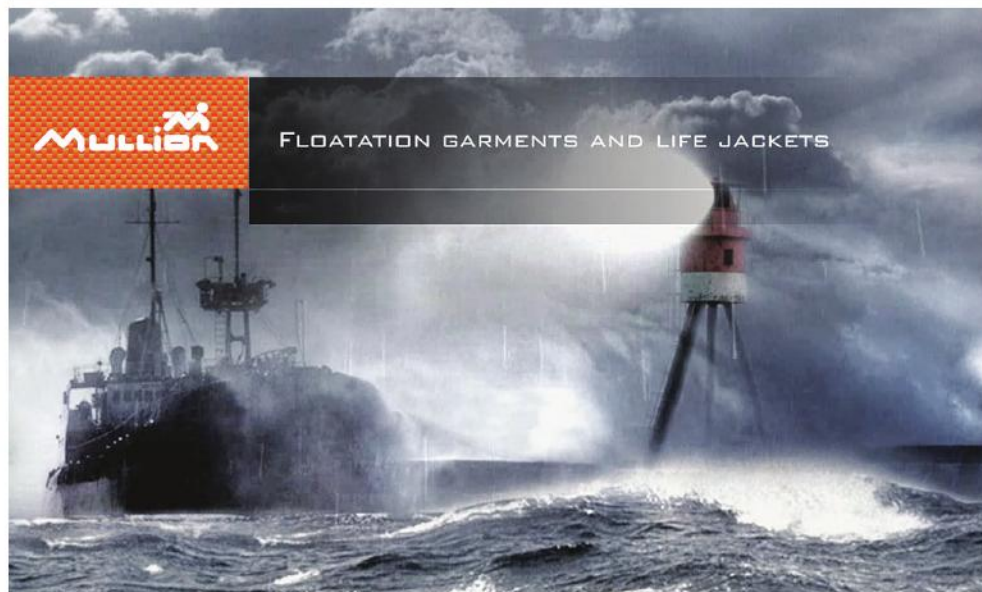
Share-fishermen

All the Provisions apply to share fishermen.

Kilmore Quay RNLI Station Mechanic Retires After 50 Years Service



Station mechanic at Kilmore Quay RNLI, Brian Kehoe, has retired from his position as full time station Mechanic/Coxswain after serving over 50 years with the RNLI both as a volunteer for 25 years and as RNLI employee for over 25 years. Brian Kehoe (Snr) went afloat for his last exercise on Tuesday 31st December 2019 as station mechanic. Brian was joined by crew from the flanking lifeboats stations of Rosslare Harbour, Fethard-on-Sea and Dunmore East. Kilmore Quay Coast Guard was also on hand while Coast Guard helicopter Rescue 117 joined the exercise and Brian was winched from the lifeboat onboard the search and rescue helicopter. Best wishes in your retirement Brian. Photos courtesy Rescue 117 Waterford.



Designed for and by fishermen

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Spanish Shipyard to Build Ireland's New Marine Research Vessel

The Marine Institute is pleased to announce that a contract was signed between the Marine Institute and Spanish shipyard Astilleros Armon Vigo S.A. for the construction of Ireland's new state-of-the-art marine research vessel, following the completion of the design of the vessel by Skipsteknisk AS of Norway. This is a significant milestone with the build process contracted to complete in 2022.

Supporting the Government's national integrated marine plan, Harnessing Our Ocean Wealth, as well as the national Marine Research and Innovation Strategy, the new 52 metre research vessel will form a critical part of the State's maritime infrastructure. It will replace the RV Celtic Voyager and will be a sister ship to Ireland's larger research vessel, the 65 metre RV Celtic Explorer.

The new vessel will support Ireland in addressing some of the research challenges of Brexit and the Common Fisheries Policy, as well as climate-induced impacts on our oceans. It will facilitate service demands under the European Maritime Fisheries Fund (EMFF) including the conservation, management and rebuilding of fish stocks and the long-term sustainable harvesting of marine biological resources. It will greatly enhance the Institute's many research and data gathering activities in areas like marine biodiversity, marine spatial planning and ocean observation and monitoring. The vessel will also support a diverse range of marine operations, such as maintaining and deploying



Celtic Voyager on the syncrolift at Killybegs being prepared for works by the team at Mooney Boats

Ireland's Marine Data Buoy Network which supports Met Éireann's daily weather forecasts.

The new research vessel will be a modern, multipurpose, silent vessel, capable of operating in the rough seas of the Irish Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ). It will be designed to incorporate the latest proven technologies to ensure that it operates as efficiently as possible, ensuring minimal fuel consumption and minimising the vessels environmental impact and carbon footprint.

Welcoming the signature of the contract to construct the new research vessel, Minister for Agriculture Food and Marine, Michael Creed TD said: "This project, when completed, will ensure that the important work of the Marine Institute, including vitally important fisheries and oceanic research initiatives, which are also important in the context of Climate Action, will be significantly enhanced through the commissioning of a state-of-the-art new fuel efficient research vessel. I am delighted that my Department has been able to provide the necessary capital funding to the

Marine Institute to enable the new vessel to be delivered within the anticipated three year timeframe."

Dr Paul Connolly, CEO of the Marine Institute welcomed the signing of the research vessel build contract stating: "This is an incredibly exciting moment in our ocean science history. The new national research vessel will allow Ireland to make a major leap forward in our understanding of the Atlantic. As we enter the UN Decade of the Ocean (2021 to 2030) it will ensure that Ireland continues to build our ocean knowledge and enhance our scientific understanding."

"The significantly enhanced capabilities of the new research vessel will support a broad range of ocean stakeholders including policy makers, managers, industry,

researchers, educators, students, coastal communities and the public. This knowledge is essential if we are to sustainably manage our oceans and empower Ireland and its people to safeguard and harness our ocean wealth."

Based in Galway, the vessel will be used by the Marine Institute,

other State agencies and Third Level Institutes to undertake fisheries, plankton, oceanographic and environmental research and surveys, as well as student training. It will enable Ireland to continue building on our achievements as leaders in seabed mapping. It will also allow for continued transatlantic surveys with international partners through AORA (Atlantic Ocean Research Alliance) and other collaborations, as well as research survey programmes funded through EU Horizon2020.

The new research vessel will be built at Armon's shipyard facility in Vigo, Spain. The Spanish ship building company Armon, have a reputation as a builder of highly advanced vessels, with more than 900 ships built and in service throughout the world's oceans. The yard recently built the RV Svea, a 70 metre research vessel delivered to the Swedish University of Agricultural Sciences.

Mick Gillooly, Director of Ocean Science and Information services, Marine Institute highlighted that the nature of marine equipment has changed significantly since the launch of Ireland's first research



Pictured at the contract signing were Dr. Paul Connolly CEO Marine Institute, Minister Michael Creed TD, Department of Agriculture Food and the Marine and Laudelino Alperi Baragaño, Executive Shareholder, Astilleros Armon Vigo S.A.

vessel, the RV Celtic Voyager back in 1997.

"This new research vessel will be one of the most advanced marine research vessels in the world. It will provide scientists with state-of-the-art facilities and technologies to undertake crucial research that will deepen our understanding of the oceans."

The new research vessel which will cost €25m will be 52 metres long and will be engineered to endure harsh conditions

and the punishing weather encountered in the North-East Atlantic and will be able to spend 21 days at sea. In addition, this new vessel will be a silent research vessel, and will be designed to meet the stringent criteria of the ICES 209 noise standard for fisheries research. It will also support the remotely operated vehicle (ROV) and autonomous underwater vehicle operations, which enable the exploration of our deep ocean down to 3,000 metres."

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New Research Project Commences in Kerry to Investigate the Decline of Sea Trout in World Famous Lough Currane Catchment

Funding Announced for Two Fisheries Conservation Projects in Kerry

Inland Fisheries Ireland has recently commenced a comprehensive sea trout assessment and monitoring programme in the Lough Currane catchment in Kerry. The project, called 'Currane STAMP', aims to identify potential factors contributing to the apparent decline of sea trout populations in the area in recent years. The programme follows reports from anglers of reduced catches and is funded by Inland Fisheries Ireland through its Salmon and Sea Trout Rehabilitation, Conservation and Protection Fund.

Sean Canney TD, Minister with responsibility for Inland Fisheries, said "the Currane system is an internationally renowned angling hotspot for salmon and sea trout and hosts some of the longest lived and largest sea trout found in Ireland. However, recent indications from angler rod catch reports suggest declines in sea trout populations in the system and I support Inland Fisheries Ireland's attempts to get to the bottom of these developments".

The Currane project is one of 25 projects in 16 counties which have been awarded funding by Inland Fisheries Ireland through its National Strategy for Angling Development. The organisation today announced funding of €1 million for fisheries conservation, protection and education initiatives and for projects which will give the public greater access to fishing sites around the country. In total, €242,900 has been awarded to the research project on the Currane - €55,800 in 2018 and a further €187,000 in this latest funding call. A separate initiative at Scartleigh Weir near Listowel will also receive €6,000 to support the provision of CCTV equipment to monitor illegal poaching activity in the area.

As part of the programme on the Currane, researchers will use a combination of traditional and novel research techniques to examine important aspects of sea trout ecology throughout their life stages. Habitat surveys will map important spawning and nursery areas while electrofishing (a benign technique used to catch fish by stunning them for a short period of time) will be conducted to assess juvenile fish population trends against previous studies in the area.

Inland Fisheries Ireland researchers have already begun tracking the movement of juvenile sea trout tagged with tiny acoustic tags. Acoustic receivers, which record the movement of any tagged sea trout passing within range, have been strategically placed in freshwater in the Currane system and in the sea in Ballinskelligs Bay with a view to uncovering the freshwater movement and inshore migratory routes of sea trout and determining their survival in the marine

environment.

The research will be coordinated and conducted from Met Éireann's Valentia Observatory in Cahersiveen where Research Officer, Ryan Murray from Inland Fisheries Ireland will be based and will be supported by experienced local fisheries staff. In addition to the sea trout assessment, the team will also work on a salmon monitoring programme which

will aim to determine if population trends between the two species are related or independent.

Dr Cathal Gallagher, Head of Research and Development at Inland Fisheries Ireland said: "This research will collect vital information on sea trout which will ultimately inform management strategies which may be required to combat the possible deterioration of sea trout in the Currane

system. I would like to acknowledge the support of Met Éireann for this project and we look forward to working with local anglers on the ground to help establish the status of sea trout populations."

As part of a citizen science initiative within the programme, Inland Fisheries Ireland will be enlisting the invaluable knowledge and assistance of local anglers to establish current and historical rod catch trends. Neil O'Shea, a fourth generation Currane ghillie, who is supporting the programme said: "I am looking forward to contributing to the sea trout citizen science component developed by Inland Fisheries Ireland. This project will be important for the sea trout fishery in Currane and will help to answer key questions related to the apparent decline of trout in the area."

The projects in Kerry see an investment by Inland Fisheries Ireland in the area. The funding has been made available through the Salmon and Sea Trout Rehabilitation, Conservation and Protection fund under the National Strategy for Angling Development. The Strategy aims to ensure that Ireland's fish stocks and angling infrastructure are protected and enhanced with a view to ensuring a sustainable habitat and delivering the economic, health and recreational benefits they offer to communities across Ireland.



Lough Currane & Currane outflow to sea



BirdWatchIreland
protecting birds and biodiversity

Swans are a graceful and attractive part of Ireland's maritime scene. According to history, the Normans brought them to Ireland. The travelling patterns of swans will be recorded this month in the International Swan Census which is undertaken only once every five years. Brian Burke Project Officer at BirdWatch Ireland outlines the details and how readers can help.

Swans Come from Russia to Spend the Winter in Ireland

BirdWatch Ireland will be co-ordinating the Census to count every single Whooper and Bewick's Swan in Ireland in just one weekend! The 'International Swan Census' happens every 5 years, where surveyors in countries across northern Europe go out on the same weekend to count all of their migratory swans. The two swan species in question are winter visitors to Ireland, in contrast to the more familiar Mute Swan, which is the only swan species that remains in Ireland throughout the whole year.

Every winter, hundreds of volunteer birdwatchers and staff from BirdWatch Ireland and the National Parks and Wildlife Service count waterbirds at wetland sites

as part of the Irish Wetland Bird Survey (known as I-WeBS). I-WeBS is coordinated by BirdWatch Ireland and funded by the National Parks and Wildlife Service. The survey does a very good job of monitoring birds at wetlands, but the swans and geese that migrate to Ireland for the winter often spend the day feeding away from wetlands – usually on wet grassland pastures in the wider countryside. Because of this, we need a more targeted approach to monitor their numbers. Birdwatchers taking part in the census will not only be checking their local wetlands for swans, but also other grassland sites known to have been used by Whooper and Bewick's Swans in previous years. These birds are very site-faithful, so they tend to return to the same sites every winter.

The last International Swan Census took place in January 2015. The fact that the swan census is carried out in multiple countries across the species' range over the same few days, minimises the risk of swans being counted twice if they move between countries over the winter and allows us to identify key differences between countries that may inform their conservation. The results of the 2015 census revealed that Whooper Swan numbers had increased throughout their wintering range. Whooper Swans breed in Iceland during the summer and spend the winter in Ireland, Britain and the Isle of Man, as well as in Iceland itself. In total there were 34,004 Icelandic Whooper Swans recorded across their wintering range in 2015. Nearly 12,000 of these were in the Republic of Ireland, with a further 3,500 in Northern Ireland.

Interestingly, it was found that numbers had increased the most in the south-west of England, despite Ireland formerly being the most important wintering location for this species and the number of juvenile birds in Irish flocks being consistently high.

This suggests that birds are increasingly choosing to spend the winter in England rather than Ireland or Scotland. There were interesting differences in habitat usage

between countries too: around 70% of Whooper Swans in the Republic of Ireland were recorded on pasture, but only 12% of those in Britain, where arable crops were the favoured feeding sites.

Bewick's Swans are also monitored as

part of the census.

Our Bewick's Swans come from Russia, and until the middle of the last century they outnumbered Whoopers in Ireland each winter. Their numbers have rapidly decreased since, from a couple of thousand in the 1980's to only 21 birds during the 2015 census. This was initially because of what is known as 'short-stopping', where the birds no longer needed to travel as far as Ireland to find suitable wintering habitat as a result of increasing temperatures elsewhere. In more recent years though, the Bewick's Swan population has been declining globally, not just in Ireland. It will be interesting to see if any Bewick's Swans are recorded in Ireland this January or if we have lost them as a regular Irish wintering species.

The 8th International Swan Census will take place on the weekend of Saturday and Sunday, January 11 and 12, all across Ireland.

I will be co-ordinating surveyors in the Republic of Ireland for the I-WeBS team at BirdWatch Ireland and Graham McElwaine of the Irish Whooper Swan Study Group will co-ordinate counters in Northern Ireland. If you see any Whooper or Bewick's Swans around the second weekend in January, please get in touch with BirdWatch Ireland either by calling 01-2819878 or emailing bburke@birdwatchireland.ie, giving details of the location and the number of swans seen.

Inset photo: The winter visitor Whooper Swan on left and the permanent resident Mute Swan on right of photo from BirdWatch Ireland by Paddy Swan



news from the North West

editor@marinetimes.ie

Lough Swilly, Portrush and Arranmore RNLI Rescue Five Fishermen in Storm Force Conditions

Lough Swilly, Portrush and Arranmore RNLI volunteers spent almost 15 hours at sea in storm force conditions on the weekend of 14th December to rescue five fishermen who got into difficulty off Fanad Head.

Lough Swilly and Portrush RNLI were requested to launch their all-weather lifeboats by Belfast Coastguard at 2.15pm following a Mayday alert from a 45ft fishing boat.

The five men who had been fishing for crab got into difficulty 20 miles north of Fanad Head. The boat lost power and encountered steering difficulties while violent waves smashed the wheelhouse windows in.

Lough Swilly RNLI volunteers launched their all-weather lifeboat and started their 90-minute journey to the scene some 34 nautical miles from their station. Portrush RNLI meanwhile, had 50 nautical miles to travel. Weather conditions at the time were extremely challenging with the volunteers facing Force 9-10 gales and sea swells of 50ft. Arranmore RNLI was requested to launch shortly after at 4pm.

Once on scene, Lough Swilly RNLI's lifeboat crew assessed the situation and checked that the five crew were safe and well. The fishermen were cold, tired and shaken from the severity of the weather conditions but were otherwise in good health. Due to the challenging conditions, the decision was made to leave the crew on-board their boat rather than transfer them to the lifeboat. The lifeboat crew worked with the fishermen to establish a tow but despite attempts, the tow parted on three occasions in the storm. On arrival Arranmore RNLI's lifeboat took over the tow and brought the vessel back into the mouth of Lough Swilly where the tow was transferred to Lough Swilly's lifeboat to allow Arranmore's RNLI's crew make the three and half hour return trip back to their station in heavy seas.

Speaking following the call out, Joe Joyce, Lough Swilly RNLI Lifeboat Press Officer said: "This was an extremely challenging call out for all the RNLI volunteers involved and we are delighted that the five fishermen were brought safely back to shore.

"Our lifeboats launched in dangerous weather conditions on Saturday afternoon and our volunteers, 20 in all, spent almost 15 hours at sea, most of it in the hours of darkness. They faced gale force conditions and 50ft swells but with great courage, selflessness and teamwork they successfully met and overcame those challenges to bring the fishermen to safety.

"While challenging for our crews, this call out was a huge testament to the level of training RNLI volunteers undergo. Lifeboat crew members are highly trained and

skilled to carry out such challenging work and thanks to the generosity of the public, we are provided with the best of equipment and technology to save lives at sea."

Lough Foyle Herring Fishery

Thomas Pringle TD has asked the Minister in what way the north west scientific quota for herring impacts on the Lough Foyle herring fishery. Also asking what view has the Minister on if it should be managed separately, if vessels and skippers have to show track record specifically on that fishery in order to have received a quota allocation and if he will make a statement on the matter.

Replying to Deputy Pringle's question the Minister stated; "The boundary line between the herring stock in 5b,6b and 6aN (6aN) and the herring stock in 6aSouth, 7b and 7c (6aS 7bc) is along the 7degree west line which cuts through the Foyle. Although they are considered to be separate stocks, herring in the southern part of 6a and 7bc is combined with that from the northern part of 6a by ICES for the purposes of assessment. This is because the survey and catch data that informs the assessment includes mixed aggregations of herring. Currently, work is underway to determine markers (genetic and physical) which may be used to separate the stocks in the survey and in any potential mixed catches.

"As herring in both stock areas are in a depleted state, ICES has advised zero catches since 2016 for each. However, ICES also advises that a low level of catch could be taken to facilitate sampling of the stock in support of the stock assessment and the ongoing genetic work on stock identity.

"The EU set a TAC of 5,800 t each year from 2016-2019 with 4,170 t allocated to 6aN and 1,630 t allocated to 6aS 7bc. The proposal for 2020 is 17% decrease for both areas to bring the TACs into line with ICES advice. The herring caught in the Foyle cannot be considered a separate herring stock and there is no case that it should be subject to a separate TAC and quota regime. The 7W meridian which divides the two stock areas cuts through the Foyle, much of Lough Foyle is west of 7W and thus can be considered as part of the 6aS 7bc TAC area.

"The 2012 herring management policy has been set aside because this is a scientific data collection fishery which is being made available to support sampling to provide a more accurate picture of the state of the stock. The arrangements in place for 2019 have been discussed and proposed by industry following a meeting of industry stakeholders held on 26 July 2019. The arrangements provide opportunities for 19 under 12m vessels which did not have a track record under the 2012 herring policy. Other category of vessels in the fishery were required to have the track record as set down in the 2012 policy. Vessels were invited to book into the fishery and were selected by lottery. The fishery opened on 28 October."



Achieve passing Rotten Island on her way into Killybegs.
Photo by Alan Hennigan, courtesy Mooney Boats.

Bringing Ireland's Deep Atlantic Into the Classroom

The Marine Institute welcomes the addition of new online classroom resources for Junior Cycle students, which will feature the documentary series, *Ireland's Deep Atlantic*.

Junior Cycle for Teachers (JCT), Raidió Teilifís Éireann (RTÉ) and the Broadcasting Authority of Ireland (BAI) launched a new selection of online classroom resources for the Junior Cycle classroom on Monday 25 November 2019. *Ireland's Deep Atlantic* is one of three Irish-produced and publicly-funded television programmes used to create the online resources.

Ireland's Deep Atlantic, produced by Sea Fever Productions, sees filmmaker Ken O'Sullivan embark on a series of voyages in the North Atlantic in search of blue whales, sharks and deep-water coral reefs. Ken O'Sullivan filmed part of the series on board the Marine Institute's marine research vessel the RV *Celtic Explorer* and documented coral reefs at a depth of 3,000 metres using the Marine Institute's ROV *Holland 1*.

The new online classroom resources for Business Studies students will utilise the series, including video clips of the RV *Celtic Explorer* and scientists, to learn about consumer behaviour and sustainable development, and the impact of economic growth on society and the environment.

Geography students will learn about the 'Real Map of Ireland' and the importance of Ireland's ocean territory. The students will also learn about the exploitation of water, fish stocks, forestry, and soil and the relationships between the physical world, tourism and transport.

Ken O'Sullivan of Sea Fever Productions said, "This project took five years to realise with huge co-operative work from

a number of organisations and groups, but it's just wonderful now to realise that every teenager in Ireland will see our beautiful, fertile oceans and learn not just about the rich life within them, but the impact of human behaviour on our oceans with things like consumer spending habits, marine plastics and also the value of eco-tourism to coastal communities. *Ireland's Deep Atlantic* is the first documentary to be used in this way and the platform has now been built for RTÉ to host many more publicly funded documentaries in this way for the secondary school education curriculum."

Patricia Orme, Director of Corporate Services at the Marine Institute said, "These online resources enable *Ireland's Deep Atlantic* to be utilised as a learning tool in Junior Cycle classrooms across the country. Students will learn from engaging video content that showcases marine life in Irish waters and the work of Irish scientists. Bringing *Ireland's Deep Atlantic* into the classroom increases awareness about Ireland's valuable marine resource, encouraging students to become ocean leaders and marine champions."

The production of *Ireland's Deep Atlantic* was supported by the Marine Institute, BAI and the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA).

Teachers and students can access the educational material and the programme clips referenced from the RTÉ Learn website at <https://www.rte.ie/learn/junior-cycle/>



IRISH WHALE AND DOLPHIN GROUP IWDG NEWS

A new study has shown high levels of consistent pollution in Killer Whales which were stranded on the Irish coastline. Dr. Simon Berrow, Chief Executive of the Irish Whale and Dolphin Group and the Galway-May Institute of Technology which carried out the study, analyses what its findings mean.

Persistent Pollution is an Insidious Threat to Ocean Health

The study, published in the Marine Pollution Bulletin, has shown levels of persistent pollutants in four stranded killer whales are very high and may exceed the toxicity threshold which can lead to significant health effects.



Two killer whales photographed by Nick Massett for IWDG. IWDG photo from Ian O'Connor showing the collection of a blubber sample from a dead killer whale for examination of contamination.



Killer whales are an iconic species in the world's oceans.

They are also at the top of the food chain and able to concentrate persistent pollutants to very high levels, which the study, carried out by GMIT and the Marine Institute, has shown.

The role that high concentrations of persistent pollutants may have played in their possible cause of death is not known.

The GMIT and Marine Institute teams analysed blubber samples from three

killer whales stranded in Galway, Mayo and Waterford between 2010 and 2017, one of which was pregnant with a near term foetus, which was also sampled.

Marine debris, over-fishing, ocean noise and the effect of climate change have all been raised as critical effects on the world's oceans but by far the build-up of persistent pollution in top predators is probably the most challenging and insidious issue.

Killer whales, though frequently sighted in Irish waters, rarely strand and these samples provide a great opportunity to screen

these top predators for a range of pollutants. The study has shown bio-accumulation of 16 polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs), 7 brominated flame retardants and 19 organo-chlorine pesticides.

Concentrations of PCBs in one killer whale, stranded at Doohoma, Co Mayo, exceeded the suggested toxicity threshold of 17mg/kg.

Senior author Moira Schlingermann, a PhD student at GMIT said "that although these concentrations are high, the results are relatively low from a global perspective, particularly in comparison to the highly contaminated transient killer whales from coasts along the north-east Pacific Ocean".

"These contaminants are known as legacy pollutants as they were produced decades ago but still persist in our marine waters. We are also interested in "emerging" pollutants, new chemicals that have only recently been designed and released into our environment and for which we do not know their effects".

Moira will be exploring concentrations of these emergent pollutants in a range of whale and dolphin species as part of her PhD.

The cocktail of legacy and emerging pollutants, together with other pressures these marine mammals face, from noise pollution to the availability of prey, can provide multiple stressors on these top predators. She concluded "persistent pollutants continue to be of major concern for marine apex predators such as killer whales and it is vital that they are continually monitored and reported in order to add to the knowledge of pollutants across the entire range of this species."

Dr Philip White of GMIT, who in conjunction with Dr Brendan McHugh from the Marine Institute supervised much of this work which was carried out in the Marine

Institute laboratories in Oranmore, Co Galway said that "while the levels of persistent organic pollutants in these samples are high it must be noted that whatever toll it takes on the animal's health must be further studied in order to properly quantify the effect on reproduction, immunosuppression and the overall health of the animals. To this end, GMIT will continue to provide analytical support to the project in the hopes of gaining a greater knowledge of the effects of persistent, as well as new and emerging compounds of concern, on this renowned and much loved whale species."

Irish Whale and Dolphin Group are part-funding this PhD which suggests that "the build-up of persistent pollutants and their effects on these animals reproduction are undoubtedly the biggest long-term threat they and other species of dolphin and porpoise face in our oceans. We have to do everything we can to prevent these substances entering the marine environment and the food chain, because once in it, they will be almost impossible to remove."

This research work has been carried out under a GMIT RISE studentship part-funded by the IWDG.

- Access the detailed study in the Marine Pollution Bulletin at: <https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/abs/pii/S0025326X19308550>

Galway-Mayo IT, IT Sligo and Letterkenny IT are working towards becoming a Technological University for the West and North West of Ireland.

Irish Whale and Dolphin Group

IWDG website: www.iwdg.ie

Maritime Museum Had 14,000 Visitors

The Maritime Institute of Ireland will hold its annual general meeting on Saturday, January 18, reviewing a year in which it says it has had 14,000 visitors to its historic museum building in Dun Laoghaire.

"Significant resources have to be allocated to the maintenance of the 182-year-old historic Mariner's Church heritage building" which houses the Institute and which is a protected structure, the Institute says.

The annual report of the Institute's Trustees says that uncertainty relating to long-term income, the availability of future resource to maintain the building and the impact of Brexit on tourism are "risks to which the Institute is exposed" and which are being closely monitored.

The Museum's collection of heritage items referring to maritime affairs in Ireland has been assembled since 1941.

The Trustees record appreciation of the Marine Times for support of the Institute and maritime heritage in general with Richard McCormick's series of articles in the paper.

National Maritime Museum of Ireland

The AGM is scheduled for 11.30 a.m. on January 18 in the National Maritime Museum at Haigh Terrace, Dun Laoghaire. The Institute welcomes new members. Information on: www.mariner.ie

AGM for New Dún Laoghaire Harbour Group

All organisations interested in developing Dún Laoghaire Harbour as a "peoples harbour" are invited to send representatives to the AGM of the Dún Laoghaire Harbour Representative Group which will take place on Thursday 16th January.

Organisation can register on the night at the venue - The Eblana Lodge, Dún Laoghaire - or in advance by completing forms from the venue.

Raise the Alarm, Stay in Touch and Stay Afloat – Use Suitable and Recommended Equipment

Irish Coast Guard Emphasise Key Safety Message in their End of Year Statement

The Coast Guard in an end of year statement is repeating a key message with regard to Safety at Sea or on Inland Waters.

The capacity to **Raise the Alarm and Stay Afloat**, are central to the prevention of drownings at sea or on inland waterways. The Coast Guard's core safety message **Stay Afloat – Stay in Touch**; highlights the importance of never engaging in any commercial or recreational boating activity without wearing a fully serviced Life Jacket or Personal Flotation Device (PFD), coupled with a capacity to raise the alarm via means such as a VHF radio, Personal Locator Beacon, EPIRB or mobile phone. This should be supported by informing shore-based colleagues of your intended activity and anticipated return time.

The Coast Guard cautions that mobile phones should not be considered as a suitable substitute or be relied upon as the only means of emergency communication at sea. Phone coverage at sea is limited and unreliable. Mobile phones are also highly susceptible to failure due to water ingress.

The publication of a new National Search and Rescue (SAR) Plan and a National Oil Spill Contingency Plan were two key achievements in 2019. The SAR plan replaces the pre-existing SAR Framework and the new plan affords equal recognition to the three components of Search and Rescue i.e. maritime, land and aviation, with an added emphasis on oversight arrangements. The SAR Plan is overseen

by an independently chaired National SAR Committee.

Into 2020, the Coast Guard will continue to focus on the importance of Prevention as a core safety theme and will continue to work with colleagues in Water Safety Ireland, RNLI, BIM and the Irish Sailing Association in promoting water safety and identifying key risk areas. In early 2020, it is intended to re-launch the Safety on the Water website.

The Coast Guard's three Rescue Coordination Centres at Malin Head, Valentia Island, and Dublin operate on a 24/7 basis. In the past year the three centres managed a total of 2487 incidents compared with 2647 for 2018 and 2503 incidents in 2017.

MRCC Dublin also serves as the national single point of contact for processing of COSPAS-SARSAT 406 MHz Satellite Beacon Alerts generated by Irish registered beacons worldwide EPIRBs (Emergency Position Indicating Radio Beacon; PLBs (Personal Locator Beacons) and ELTs (Emergency Locator Transmitters), including any beacon alerts from foreign flagged vessels or aircraft operating within the Irish SRR (Search & Rescue Region).

In 2019 a total of 195 satellite beacon alerts were received by MRCC Dublin, with the majority proving to be false alerts due to accidental activation or expired equip-

ment. The COSPAS-SARSAT satellite beacon alerting system has a huge role to play in alerting SAR authorities of persons in distress. The Coast Guard emphasises the importance of correct beacon handling, regular use of inbuilt test mechanisms and proper disposal of expired beacons.

Coast Guard helicopter services are provided under contract by CHCI operating a fleet of Sikorsky S92 helicopters out of bases in Dublin, Shannon, Waterford and Sligo. Helicopter services are on 15 minutes notice by day and 45 minutes by night. By year end, Coast Guard helicopters will have flown in excess of 770 missions. These missions also include inland searches for missing persons in support of An Garda Síochána and Mountain Rescue Teams.

The Coast Guard attaches particular attention to what it categorises as Lives Saved i.e. assistance provided that, prevented, loss of life, severe risk to life, or protracted hospitalisation. In 2019, the Coast Guard recorded that 378 individuals were categorised as Lives Saved.

In addition to their primary role of provision of maritime search and rescue services, the Coast Guard provides a day and night support services to the offshore islands. In 2019, the Coast Guard flew a total of 123 emergency missions from the offshore islands to the mainland. Coast Guard helicopters also provide HEMS (Helicopter Emergency Medical Service) to the National Ambulance Service including inter-hospital

transfers. The busiest inter-hospital transfer route is from Letterkenny to University Hospital Galway.

The RNLI is categorised as a declared resource to the Coast Guard, which means that each individual station can be directly requested to respond to individual incidents. In 2019, RNLI were requested to launch on over 815 occasions.

The nationwide network of Volunteer Coast Guard units is an integral part of the national search and rescue framework. With a membership of 940 volunteers, these units deliver rescue boat, cliff rescue and shore-line search services coupled with a capacity to support their communities during local emergencies, including inclement weather. Overall, Coast Guard units were tasked on a total of 1075 occasions throughout the year.

Coast Guard Director, Eugene Clonan said "The publication of the two key plans, the National SAR and Oil Spill Contingency plans were two significant achievements in the past year and I want to acknowledge the very constructive engagement that we had with a multiplicity of stakeholders". He added, "I want to also acknowledge the commitment and professionalism of our Volunteer members. In addition to the three core services that they provide, they are an integral part of community resilience and continually act as the Eyes and Ears of our RCCs in responding to any coastal emergency"

New Limits on the Area of Wexford Harbour from January 1st

According to a Marine Notice from the Department of Transport, Tourism and Sport, Transport Minister Shane Ross has signed into law the Harbours Act 1996 (Limits of Wexford Harbour) Order 2019 - SI No 625 of 2019.

The SI (Statutory instrument) defines the new seaward limit of Wexford town's harbour as an imaginary line drawn from Raven Point to Rosslare Point, and the inward limit at the southern side of the Old Bridge on the River Slaney in Enniscorthy.

This change has been made following consultations with Wexford County Council; the Marine Survey Office; Marine Planning-Foreshore Section of the Department of Housing, Planning, and Local Government; Waterways Ireland; and Inland Waterways Association of Ireland.

Further information on this can be obtained by contacting the Ballast Office in Wexford Harbour Tel: 053 9122300 or by email: harbourmaster@wexfordcoco.ie

Lily Tom II Catches Another Crawfish off Lambay Island

Catches of Crawfish are not that unusual from the South to North West coasts of Ireland but recorded catches of this species are extremely rare for the rest of the Irish coast.

Alan Fanning, skipper of the Lily Tom II (D6) caught another Crawfish in his lobster gear off Lambay Island in the Irish Sea, this is his second in recent years.

On the 2nd of October 2018, a specimen measuring 100 mm carapace length was captured and released. This recent Crawfish had a carapace length of 80mm, it was also released as the minimum legal landing size is currently 110 mm.

Declan Quigley, who is a recognised authority on rare and unusual fish and shellfish in Irish waters told Marine Times, "Although Crawfish are regarded as relatively common off the south, southwest, west and northwest coasts, they have rarely been recorded off the north, northeast and east coasts of Ireland.

"Indeed before Lily Tom II's two Crawfish, there are only four previous records from Co Dublin, one of which dates from the 19th century: in 1880 from Dalkey Sound, the second in 1903 with a carapace length of 130 mm from Lambay Island, the third in 1963 with a carapace length of 72 mm from Dalkey Island, and the fourth in

1964 with a carapace length of 207 mm also from Lambay Island."

He added, "It is possible that the species apparent rarity off Co Dublin may be

related to the local practice of using only lobster gear which is generally unsuitable for capturing Crawfish, or a lack of suitable habitats and/or recording effort."

Declan would be very interested to hear of any further captures from the east coast of Ireland. Contact Declan on Mob: 087-6458485; Email: declanquigley@eircom.net



Alan released his rare east coast Crawfish after this photo was taken

RNLI REPORT

30 Year Service Recognition for Youghal RNLI Member

The volunteers of Youghal RNLI marked the retirement of long-serving volunteer, John Innes, who first became involved with the lifeboat service in 1987 and was fully enrolled as a crew member a year later.



Youghal Deputy Launching Authority Brendan O'Driscoll (left) presenting John Innes with Certificate of Long Service Photo: RNLI / Elizabeth Stepney-Power.

He went on to become a helm on three Atlantic class lifeboats, the Atlantic 21 Marjory Turner, Atlantic 75 Patricia Jennings and the current Atlantic 85 Gordon and Phil. He also served as lifeboat training coordinator between 2001-2009 and again between 2016-2017.

"Since I started with the RNLI 30 years ago, I've seen many changes and big improvements, the standard of training is so high these days," he said at the celebration of his service.

There have been many memorable rescues for John over the years, one he remembers from his early days happened one summer evening, when a man from Cork city traveled to Youghal to try out his new surfboard that he had received as a birthday gift.

John recalled: "The man had booked a surfing lesson, but the teacher was late so he decided to go out on his own. Shortly

after he entered the water, he began to be swept out to sea with the offshore breeze. When we arrived the man was in the water and being carried further out to sea, he was freezing cold. Had we not arrived when we did, the outcome could have been very different'

During his 30 years with Youghal RNLI John was instrumental in saving 34 lives at sea.

In an interview on the local radio station, CRY104FM, maritime programme, THIS ISLAND NATION, John told the story of going out on an evening with a friend who had bought a new boat and they came across two men in a speedboat who had run out of fuel near the entrance to Youghal Harbour, opposite Youghal Lighthouse. The men were consulting an AA road atlas and one was telling the other that what they were looking at was Roche's Point Lighthouse at the entrance to Cork Harbour and

thought they could row their speedboat the rest of the way.

"There is a lot of water between Youghal and round Ballycotton before you get to Cork," John said, "and they were lucky we came on them and got them to safety in Youghal. If they had tried to carry on, their situation could have led to a night search with a lot of people involved. Care is needed on the water, that is a message people need to understand!"

Brendan O'Driscoll, Youghal RNLI Deputy Launching Authority said: "The time, effort and commitment John has shown to Youghal RNLI over the last 30 years has been outstanding. On behalf of everybody at the lifeboat station, I would like to thank him for the immense contribution he has made over the years and we all wish him well in his future endeavours."

Baltimore RNLI Provides Assistance to a Fishing Vessel in Difficulty Just Before Christmas

As most office workers and factories were closing up in eager anticipation of the Christmas holidays, Baltimore RNLI was called out on the afternoon of Friday 20th December to assist a fishing vessel in difficulty off the coast of Baltimore, Co Cork.

The all-weather lifeboat was launched at 1.16pm at the request of the Irish Coast Guard to assist an 18m fishing vessel, with two people onboard, that was in difficulty

due to engine problems approximately two nautical miles south of Baltimore Harbour off the coast of west Cork.

The lifeboat with six volunteer crew onboard, coxswain Aidan Bushe, mechanic Jerry Smith and crew members Eoin Ryan, Ronnie Carthy, Don O'Donovan and Brendan Cottrell reached the casualty vessel at 1.38pm. Once the crew had assessed the situation they established a tow and brought the vessel back to Baltimore.

Baltimore's inshore lifeboat with four crew members on board, helm Kieran Collins and crew members Ryan O'Mahony, Pat O'Driscoll and Eoin O'Driscoll was launched at 3pm to assist the ALB with berthing the vessel at the north pier once they had entered Baltimore harbour. Once the casualty vessel was secured to the pier and the skipper was happy, both lifeboats returned to Baltimore lifeboat station, arriving at 3.38pm. Assisting at the lifeboat station was Rianne Smith.

Conditions at the time were moderate with a south south westerly force 3-4 wind, 2m sea swell and good visibility.

Speaking following the call out, Kate Callanan, Baltimore RNLI Volunteer Lifeboat Press Officer said: "Whilst there was no immediate danger to the crew on board, the skipper of the fishing vessel did the right thing in calling for assistance from the Irish Coast Guard. Due to the conditions in the harbour at the time, the ILB was subsequently launched to assist in berthing the casualty vessel. If you get into difficulty at sea or on the coast, call 999 or 112 and ask for the Coast Guard."

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Baltimore volunteer Coxswain Aidan Bushe and crew member Don O'Donovan assisting fishing vessel which was in difficulty. Photo RNLI/Brendan Cottrell

news from Northern Ireland

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Irish Sea 2020 TACs & Quotas

In a statement to the Marine Times, Alan McCulla OBE, CEO ANIFPO/Sea Source, says: "Having attended every EU December Fisheries Council for the past 27 years it might be easy to conclude we have seen it all before. Nevertheless, one lesson learned is that no two years are the same, a bit like fishing.

"Twelve months ago it was assumed in some quarters that the December 2018 Fisheries Council would be the last one the UK attended as full members of the EU. We knew we would be back, but we thought only as observers. We got it wrong. After the recent General Election this should be the last Council the UK attends as full members of the EU. Let's end 2019 on that optimistic note...

"Twelve months ago we saw important TAC increases for Irish Sea cod, haddock, whiting, plaice and sole, largely driven by the full introduction of the EU's Landing Obligation. For 2019 the Irish Sea herring quota was cut, as was Area 7 nephrops. What goes up, does come down. This week we have seen significant cuts for Irish Sea

cod, haddock and whiting, a smaller cut for plaice, and increases for sole and herring. The numbers for these stocks were known before we got to Brussels. It should be noted that with the exception of whiting, all Irish Sea quota stocks are managed according to the MSY principle.

"However, fisheries scientists have themselves described the scientific advice for Irish Sea cod as "not fit for purpose", reflecting as it does recent catches, which in turn mirror the priority given to avoiding cod - like any computer model, rubbish in = rubbish out.

"Given the importance of prawns, the situation with the Area 7 nephrop TAC was the priority. The proposal for a 15% cut in this TAC, driven by negative science for those components of the stock in the Celtic Sea had to be resisted. Nevertheless, the 15% cut was confirmed, contributing to a 42% cut in the TAC over the past two years.

"In respect of our issues DAERA officials advised that UK Fisheries Minister George Eustice MP took his responsibility for the Irish Sea and Northern Ireland seriously and made a good pitch on the Area

7 prawn quota. Against serious resistance from the European Commission, Minister Eustice was very specific that e.g. France continues not to use their share of the TAC in area 7. Given the cards he had been dealt with (science & Irish support for 15% cut in the TAC) we believe Mr. Eustice, together with officials from DAERA and DEFRA did all they could for UK commercial fisheries in the Irish Sea and Northern Ireland.

"Even before the Council concluded the minds of many in the Northern Ireland industry were past this week and into 2020. Yes, the sun will rise on 1 January and subject to wind fishermen will go to sea to harvest the seas, but questions around Brexit loom large, including of course rules that maybe put in place on Northern Ireland registered fishing vessels landing their catches into Northern Ireland.

"We will leave the CFP with the rest of the UK fishing fleet, but we must not be treated like a third country. The work goes on..."

New Funding Scheme Supports Purchase of Life-Saving Safety Equipment for Fishermen

Vessel owners in Northern Ireland can claim back £200 per item towards the cost of buying PFDs/PLBs for their crew.

Seafish, the public body that supports the £10bn UK seafood industry, is pleased to announce the launch of a new funding scheme which aims to improve safety in the fishing industry. This new scheme will support owners of UK-registered commercial fishing vessels with the cost of purchasing Personal Flotation Devices (PFDs) fitted with integrated Personal Locator Beacons (PLBs) for their crew.

PFDs are an essential piece of safety equipment for skippers and crew working on fishing vessels and PLBs have been shown to significantly improve the chances of fishermen being found if an accident results in them going overboard.

Having and wearing PFDs on board fishing vessels is now a requirement in the UK following the implementation the Work in Fishing Convention (ILO C188) and the

publication of Marine Guidance Notice 588 last year. The new regulations establish that owners of UK-registered commercial fishing vessels are responsible for the health and safety of everyone working onboard. Failure to ensure the provision and wearing of PFDs by fishermen working where there is a risk of falling overboard is considered a breach of health and safety legislation by the Maritime and Coastguard Agency.

The new funding scheme, which is being delivered by Seafish in co-operation with the MCA and Trinity House, is open to owners who have not previously received support to purchase PLBs (they can also apply for the cost of adding a PLB if they previously received funding to purchase PFDs). It allows them to claim £200 for each PFD/PLB purchased – potentially covering up to 50% of the cost of this life-saving equipment.

The financial backing for the scheme is being provided from the UK government's new £1m fund to improve safety in the fishing industry, which was announced by Maritime Minister Nusrat Ghani at the Department for Transport in July 2019.

Simon Potten, Head of Safety and Training at Seafish, said: "Fishing remains the most dangerous peace time occupation in the UK, so initiatives which improve safety on board vessels are very welcome. Previously support has only been available locally/regionally, so it's fantastic that this funding is available to fishermen all across the UK and we're delighted to be administering it.

"The provision and wearing of PFDs is now a requirement, but the addition of an integrated locator beacon significantly increases the chances of recovery. This equipment is expensive so I am sure this scheme will be welcomed by vessel owners. I'd encourage anyone interested to get in touch now so they can take advantage of this support while it's available."

The scheme is open for applications now. The final deadline for applications is 31 March 2020, however funding is limited and will be awarded on a first-come, first-served basis.



Kilkeel harbour - Photo by Stephen Jones (i-fish.ie)

MAN OVERBOARD COLD WATER SHOCK EVENT

**Funded places available for commercial fishermen in Poole's RNLI Training Centre
Tuesday 28th January 2020**

£400 training bursary available for commercial fishermen to attend. Travel, subsistence and accommodation costs will also be funded.

**Please register your interest by contacting SFITA NI LTD
Juanita/Susanne on
02842 771556/07484 019496**

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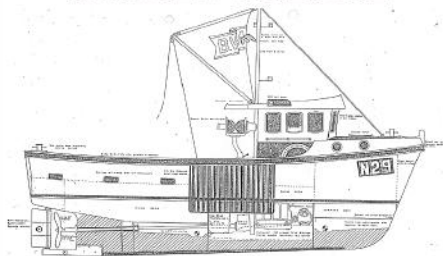
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Norwegian Government Commits To Significant Farming Expansion

After some controversy about fish farming development the Norwegian Government has given clear indication that it is committed to a significant expansion of offshore fish farming over the coming decade.

The Directorate of Fisheries has mapped and identified 11 extensive new zones on its 1,650-mile long coastline that could be suitable for the future development of sea based offshore aquaculture. The Directorate, which carried out the work in co-operation with the Institute of Marine Research, said the areas will have to go through further impact assessment before final approval. The mapping has been limited to parts of the coast one nautical mile outside the baseline, but within Norway's exclusive economic zone.

“The overall assessment includes physical environmental conditions set against limit values for good fish welfare. It is not known which technology will possibly be used at sea,” according to the Directorate. “The proposals have been sent to the Ministry of Trade and Industry for further consideration. This is not a survey of all possible marine development areas, others may be proposed in the future.”

The Institute of Marine Research said it was able to provide knowledge on physical environmental conditions, ecosystem impact and salmon's environmental requirements, which also ensure good fish welfare and preventing the spread of infection.

Some of the site suggestions were made by the fish farming industry.

Norwegian Seafood Minister Harald Tom Nesvik has announced a new “traffic light system for salmon and trout farming of all types” which will be brought into effect from this month in the New Year. The system “pinpoints areas of the coast where

aquaculture can and cannot be carried out.”

Also in Norway, the country's Food Safety Authority, regulating health issues on fish farms, is facing major changes following a critical report. The global services and accounting organisation, KPMG, reported that the organisation's systems, planning and monitoring supervision practices were “not fit for purpose; that the use of resources and some aspects of security were “not good enough” and “significant improvements were urgently needed.” Seafood Norway, which represents fishing and aquaculture companies, welcomed the report.

SCOTLAND Tackling Fraud

Scottish salmon producer Loch Duart is trying to combat illegal fish fraud bearing the independent company's name. The Sutherland-based company, which describes itself as farming in an “ethical and sustainable way,” is adapting technology to launch its efforts against suspected operators. Food fraud has become a major problem for producers in many countries, particularly those at the quality end, such as Loch Duart.

Sandy Bing, who co-founded Loch Duart 20 years ago, told BBC's Good Morning Scotland programme: “It is illegal, but people are very rarely caught. We want to change that. It normally happens in big cities where you get less scrupulous fish wholesalers, who will go to a high-end restaurant, say they've got Loch Duart salmon, but they're selling something from a cheaper provenance and invoicing it as



Naomhhóg 'Rí na Laoi' about to depart Kinsale to join other currachs of Naomhoga Chorcaí for a rowing trip along the Cork coastline. Naomhoga Chorcaí has over 150 club members, a complete collection of traditional Irish currachs and naomhógs and offers rowing, events, craic and beagáinín Gaeilge! Photo courtesy Carroll O'Donoghue (Skipper HARPY) www.kinsaleangling.com

Loch Duart salmon.' Loch Duart has been working with the New Zealand-based traceability firm, Oritain, which uses modern technology methods to detect fraudsters.

DENMARK Expanding Fish Quality

The Danish Fish quality mark has been expanded from wild-caught fish to the aquaculture sector, with one of the purposes being to get more Danes to eat farmed fish. Danish Aquaculture Director Brian Thomsen said this had been done because “Like Danish fishermen, we take pride in providing the highest quality fish. We are therefore very happy to be part of the fish family and for our fish to carry the brand label so that we can reach even more Danish consumers. More than 90% of Danish catches are exported. The rest of the world already has a taste for the Danish fish, and now it is time for Danes to follow suit. With this we hope to be able to spread awareness of the Danish Fish brand and boost sales of Danish seafood. We want to increase consumer awareness of our quality products. Fish protein is the greenest form of animal protein production – and the healthiest. Aquaculture produced fish traceability is very high, so consumers always know where the origin of their fish.”

PHILIPPINES Halting Decline of Prize Species

A new aquaculture technique has been developed in the Philippines to halt the de-

cline of one of the country's most prized native fish species. Dr Frolan A Aya, from the Southeast Asian Fisheries Development Center (SEAFDEC), has devised and patented a new means to produce silver therapon, locally known as ayungin and regarded as one of the most valuable edible native freshwater species because of its tasty flesh. Despite the declining trend in wild stocks of silver therapon, demand for the species remains high. The catch has declined from 4,765 tonnes in 2002 to only 1,408 tonnes in 2018. The Philippines is highly dependent on aquaculture, due to overfished wild stocks.

NORWAY Whale Raids Fish Farm

A 30-foot long minke whale broke into a salmon cage at Lerøy Aurora farm in Åpenvik in the Varangerfjord region of Northern Norway, “breaking a large hole in the net, through which a small number of salmon escaped,” according to farm management. Minke whales are common in the seas around the north of Norway, weighing around ten tonnes, “a formidable opponent for any salmon cage,” the company's manager, Kurt-Einar Karlsen, said. “We have not heard of anything like this before. It was discovered fairly soon after the whale got into the cage and dealt with by staff who sealed up the hole quickly.” The whale consumed some salmon and some escaped. “Not a large number,” the company said. “A number were quickly recovered.”

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Rooskie Beag - Photo by John Power

New Weighing Controls for Pelagic Fisheries

The SFPA has confirmed a percentage of all catches of pelagic species landed in the State will be weighed upon landing from the start of the 2020 Spring pelagic fisheries. The measure arises from the recommendations of an audit conducted by the European Commission in relation to compliance with pelagic fisheries regulations.

EU regulations require the weighing of catches prior to transport from the place of landing and compliance with this requirement involves the weighing of catches as may be directed by SFPA Sea Fisheries Protection Officers in the course of a landing inspection. Under a derogation previously approved by the European Commission, the landing and transport of catches for weighing in permitted establishments is permissible and this will continue in tandem with the additional procedures. Controls in these establishments will continue to ensure compliance with legislation and weigh permit conditions.

An inspecting Sea Fisheries Protection Officer will notify masters of vessels when weighing of their catches prior to transport from the place of landing will be required.

There will be an allowance of 2% made for water during these weighing operations. This will be deducted from the weights obtained to determine the Official Weigh Record that will be entered in all official documentation and systems used for recording of weighed catches.

Susan Steele, Chair of the SFPA stated that SFPA staff will ensure that the weighing operations at landing are completed in an efficient manner. "This requirement will be applied to a small portion of landings and co-operation with our officers will ensure that weighing operations are completed efficiently. In most cases, inspections and associated controls will continue as before. We would also encourage anyone who has any queries to contact the Senior Port Officer in their local SFPA Port office."

Tragedy off Hook Head: As we go to press with this issue of the Marine Times we were informed of a vessel sinking off the South East coast. Emergency services were alerted at 12.15am on Sunday 5th January when the EPIRB from the Duncannon fishing vessel, Alize was activated. The Alize, which is a family owned vessel from South Wexford, had been out fishing for scallops and was due to return at 11pm on Saturday night but failed to do so. Rescue 117, was tasked to assist while RNLI Lifeboats from Kilmore Quay and Dunmore East were also launched along with the majority of the South East fishing fleet. As we go to press it has been confirmed that one male in his 60s was recovered from the water and taken to University Hospital Waterford where he has since passed away. Searches continue for the second man. **Our thoughts and prayers go out to the families, friends, colleagues and the extended coastal community of the South East coast.**



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