



# The Skipper

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## PAST SEAL BY DATE

Time to discuss the seal management problem? *See pages 2-5*



AIDE O'SULLIVAN FISHING LOBSTERS IN CASTLETOWNBERE. PHOTO JOHN ROBERTS

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Over the coming months, The Skipper will be carrying a series of articles discussing seal-fishery interactions and the long overdue case for a seal management plan in Ireland. This month, Dr Ciarán Crummey provides an overview of the research carried out in Ireland on seal depredation over the past two decades, alongside a discussion of the ongoing inaction on the matter by the State, which he contrasts with the route that has been followed elsewhere, before suggesting a way forward on the issue.



Dingle fishermen display extent of seal damage

## The Grey Seal Management Problem



By Dr Ciarán Crummey

Seal depredation is a conflict that involves weighing up the gaps that exist between experience-based knowledge and scientific knowledge. These gaps exist throughout the geographical range of the species and usually between species where other human-wildlife conflicts arise, e.g. Deer. Although the prevailing circumstances in each country are not the same, policymakers all have access to the same published scientific evidence. Generally reflecting weight being attached to experience-based knowledge, but also based on different interpretations of the science, it is a conflict that is today actively dealt with everywhere within the natural range of grey seals on both sides of the Atlantic, except in Ireland. In 1993 I described this at a conference as a man-

made problem. The decision to licence boats to fish and provide additional supports in the form of grants and training, are State decisions, as is the decision to protect seals. The State is therefore responsible for this conflict, however unforeseen it may have been. To begin with, the State needs to provide forms of redress that adequately compensate for losses, while pursuing ways of reducing them. It is a responsibility that the State cannot avoid dealing with forever.

### RECOMMENDATIONS HAVE BEEN IGNORED

In 1997 I resigned from BIM when I learned how the findings of my seal depredation research were going to be presented. A version, which omitted some of the key findings of that research, was subsequently published following my resignation. This, I believe, was politically motivated. In 2006 I completed a PhD based on the original research findings, with an updated literature review and some

additional analyses. The final chapter of my thesis showed how politically compromised Parliamentary Questions (PQ's), and other information sources about the conflict, were in the first half of the following decade. No further research was carried out until the end of that decade.

A 2010 policy briefing note to the EU's Directorate General for Internal Policies from Ireland recommended that a seal-fisheries management group be urgently established at national level. Five years later, a publication from Ireland in an international peer-reviewed journal concluded that a comprehensive management plan to deal with the issue was urgently required. Other publications pointed in the same direction. These recommendations have been ignored. This year the National Parks and Wildlife Service (NPWS) has confirmed that there is no management plan for grey seals.

Today we know that grey seals prey on common seals, whose numbers are



Grey seal

declining. They are also cannibalistic and prey on harbour porpoises. On the depredation side, a lot of taxpayers money has been spent on research since 2010. It showed that set net depredation losses had considerably worsened since the 1990s, while the grey seal population has grown steadily to record high levels. The human, economic, and wider conservation problems (especially in relation to depleted wild salmon and common seals) associated with grey seals continue to be ignored.

In relation to salmon, for example, two studies published in Ireland in 2014 showed that salmonids represented between 14% and 36% of the biomass consumed by grey seals. In Canada, the equivalent values for cod were lower than this, at between 1% and 24%. Even so, culling 60,000 grey seals from a population of half a million in Canada has been justified in order to conserve depleted cod stocks. In Norway, grey seals are also actively managed. Wild salmon stocks in Norway are in considerably better shape than they are in Ireland, even though salmon farm production there is many orders of magnitude greater than here. There is no justification for ignoring the contribution of record high numbers of grey seals to our declining stocks of wild salmon.

### S42 LICENCES

Since 1976, with the introduction of the Wildlife Act of that year, the only

policy instrument available to deal with problem seals has been an S42 licence. In 2000 it was widened to include Acoustic Deterrent Devices (ADDs) and the penalties for the unlicensed killing of seals were increased. ADDs don't work for set net fisheries and no other non-lethal mitigation methods have been found. This means that the only available form of redress is an S42 licence to shoot or harass culprit seals. Since 2014 the minister responsible for the NPWS has referred to fishermen being able to apply for S42 licences as a form of redress seven times in the Dáil in answers to PQ's. However, at least since 2012, the NPWS has rejected hunting applications from set net fishermen. Hardly any were issued to salmon fishery owners and even less to fish farms. By repeatedly saying that this form of redress was available to fishermen, the Minister's answers, therefore, were misleading.

During the late 1970s, approximately 20-30 of these licenses were issued annually. Between 1992 and 1999 this had been reduced to an average of less than 8.5 permits per year in total. Between 2010 and 2018 the average fell again to less than 3 permits (2.88) per year. In the last eight years, these licenses allowed only two seals to be legally killed annually. From almost half a century ago to today there has been nearly a tenfold decrease in the numbers of S42 licences issued. These numbers don't add

Continued on page 4



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up against a background of worsening losses over that time. In the country closest to us where this conflict also exists, Scotland, between 2011 and 2018 licences were issued to shoot a total of 6,745 seals—5,058 grey and the balance common, or harbour, seals. The equivalent number licensed in Ireland was 16 (15 grey and 1 common). Based on these figures, the management of seals by the NPWS in Ireland can at best be described as tokenistic.

On the 13th July 2016 the minister's reply to a PQ included the following:

"...I am aware that the inshore fisheries sector is also concerned about the interaction between seals and commercial inshore stocks. In January this year the NPWS accepted an invitation to discuss the seal population with the National Inshore Fisheries Forum (NIFF) and I understand that this discussion was viewed as constructive by both sides. At the most recent meeting of the NIFF on 22nd June, my first meeting with the Forum, the discussion was described as a necessary starting point of an issue that requires further engagement in the future...."

By many accounts, however, a process of disengagement, rather than engagement, has subsequently occurred,



Grey seals. Image sourced from Creative Commons

and it is not uncommon to hear representatives of the fishing industry complain publicly that the matter is excluded from the fisheries management agenda, on the grounds that seal management and policy is the responsibility of the NPWS.

This year, on the 10th February, the minister's reply to a PQ included the following:

"...affected persons can apply for such licences. My Department has no plans to undertake a general cull of seals..."

The minister omitted to say that disaffected fishermen 'need not apply', and that there is no plan. Later on in this answer Minister Josepha Madigan

said that: "...discussions covered... the management of seal-fishery interactions.... NPWS undertook to further investigate solutions ...and to continue their collaboration with the Marine Institute and the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine to investigate such problems and their solutions in partnership with the fishing industry..."

The only work that is currently on the cards is to try to reduce seal bycatch in set net fisheries, even though this is not a conservation issue. There is no inter-departmental/industry partnership collaboration or management of the conflict. The discussions she was referring to took place during a meeting with fishermen in

February. If they had been satisfied with that meeting the question to which she was replying would not have been put down.

The above illustrates a frightening degree of disconnection between the NPWS and the disaffected. This author may be uniquely positioned to know that there has been no management progress made since the 1990s in relation to this conflict. He tried to initiate it back then.

**TOWARDS A SOLUTION**

It is a generally accepted principle that the cost of nature conservation should be borne by society as a whole, and not only by individual sectors of the economy, in this case, set net fishermen, salmon

farmers and the owners of salmon river fisheries. The question of redress lies at the core of this conflict. On the one hand, the State seems to accept some form of responsibility for it by apparently offering a form of redress. However, there has been no redress whatsoever available to set net fishermen, and hardly anything available to river owners or fish farms compared to in Scotland, and elsewhere. This shows that the form of redress being offered has, and continues to be, of very limited value. The State is avoiding dealing with its responsibility, and the disaffected have been, and continue to be, denied fair procedure. The literature acknowledges that refusal to provide redress to the disaffected gives incentive for them to kill problem-causing animals. The State's avoidance approach is now in its third decade. It is also important that the legislature is not misled.

Records supplied from the NPWS refer to NGOs in 2012 encouraging the disaffected to apply for S42 licences rather than pursuing illegal culls. Interestingly, this indicated that these NGOs were not opposed to lethal methods of seal control. This encouragement resulted in applications from the fisheries sector which were rejected. It was the NPWS, not the NGOs, who were responsible for this. An opportunity to regularise illegal activity was lost.

Although the numbers of licences to shoot seals in Scotland has been reduced each year since 2011, the evidence points to a far greater level of mutual

understanding and respect for the regulations there compared to here. To an even greater extent, the same can also be said of Canada, Iceland, Norway, Sweden, Denmark, Finland and other Baltic countries where grey seals naturally occur, because in these countries hunting licenses have not decreased. As they have been denied fair procedure and natural justice now spanning three decades, the disaffected in Ireland have been increasingly incentivised towards taking the law into their own hands in order to protect their livelihoods.

These problems have not gone away. It would also be surprising if new methods of lethal control have not evolved. Fishermen, fish farmers, and river fisheries managers, indeed anyone in any business that is threatened by an overabundant predator that the State is responsible for and refuses to deal with, would eventually be driven to take matters into their own hands. This is a fundamental governance matter with important conservation, animal welfare, environmental and social justice implications. Clearly, there is a lot more than just scientific advice that needs to be considered by NPWS policymakers. More policy instruments are needed and the existing one needs to be revisited. Ireland has fallen behind international best practice in failing to address this conflict.

At EU level, the Habitats Directive allows for a derogation to permit hunting to prevent serious damage, in particular to crops, livestock, forests, fisheries and water



Seal damage to fish. Image Daragh Devane

and other types of property. Although this is not being done in Ireland with seals, neither the EU nor the Habitats Directive prevents it from being done.

There are many precedents in other countries for managing human-wildlife conflicts, both on and off the water. During the last decade, the EU funded FRAP programme examined case studies involving fisheries and fish-eating vertebrates. About 60 researchers from seven EU countries participated in this project. Although Ireland didn't, the lessons learned are applicable here.

My PhD thesis concluded back in 2006 that political decisions and administrative reforms were required if any progress was to be made. Between 2010 and 2016 it appeared that progress was finally being made. However, all of this research by the MI, BIM, IFI and UCC has amounted to nothing in terms of developing a plan. These recommendations have disappeared into a black hole somewhere within the NPWS. There is a widespread

belief that this inaction is politically motivated.

A precedent for action was established with the setting up of the Irish Deer Management Framework in 2015. A similar kind of formal partnership arrangement is overdue for seals, led, as in the deer forum, by those directly affected. The Minister is to be congratulated for how well she handled the recent deer culling controversy in the Phoenix Park. She did not shirk the issue. She dealt with it responsibly. I call on Minister Josepha Madigan to initiate a statutory consultation process with a view to informing the terms of reference of an Irish Seal Management Framework for Action. Justice delayed is justice denied. A formal transparent consultation process with all stakeholders is now the best way forward.

*At the time of going to print, the Skipper was awaiting comment from the Minister for Culture, Heritage and the Gaeltacht, Josepha Madigan, in connection with the issue.*

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# INTERNATIONAL BLUE WHITING SPAWNING STOCK SURVEY (IBWSS) 2019

**Ciaran O'Donnell,** Fisheries Ecosystems Advisory Services (FEAS), Marine Institute

In March the RV Celtic Explorer took part in the 2019 International Blue Whiting Acoustic Survey. This survey acoustically measures the size of the spawning stock of blue whiting (*Micromesistius poutassou*) in western waters and is conducted by vessels from Ireland, the Faroe Islands, the Netherlands, Norway and Spain. This year's survey is the sixteenth in a time series which is an important input to the stock assessment.

### Area coverage

The Celtic Explorer began the survey on the 28th March, along with vessels from the Netherlands (RV Tridens), Norway (FV Kings Bay), the Faroe Islands (RV Magnus Heinason) and Spain (RV Miguel Oliver). The combined effort ensured almost continuous synoptic coverage over 26 days from the Porcupine sea right northwards to the Faroe/Shetland Ridge including Rockall and offshore banks south of the Faroes (Figure 1). The combined survey effort covered over 7,610 nmi (nautical miles) of transects representing almost 121,397 nmi<sup>2</sup> of spatial coverage. Spatial coverage,

biological and acoustic sampling effort and timing were comparable to that achieved during the 2018 survey.

The survey was designed so that each vessel worked in a northerly direction interlacing transects with the other vessels and so providing high-resolution transect spacing. Survey scientist Ciaran O'Donnell said: "Spain joined the IBWSS survey in 2017 and will continue as part of the joint international effort during future surveys. Given that Russia has not participated since 2016 Spanish participation allows us to maintain the same coverage with equivalent effort".

### Stock distribution

The bulk of the blue whiting detected in 2019 was located along the shelf edge within three core strata; Porcupine Bank, North Porcupine and Rockall Trough. When combined, these 3 strata accounted for 95% of the total observed biomass (Figure 1). The Rockall Trough stratum contained 61% of this biomass, comparable to that recorded in previous years. The Porcupine and North Porcupine Bank accounted for 21% and 13% respectively, a substantial increase from the 2018 observations for the North Porcupine Bank. Some of the highest density aggregations of blue whiting were observed in the Porcupine strata during the survey. Ciaran O'Donnell added:

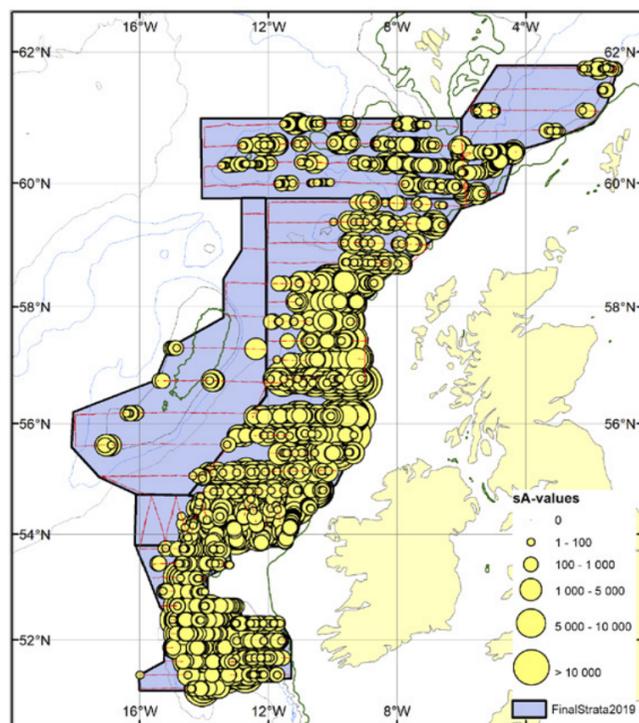


Figure 2. Mean weight of blue whiting (g) from 38 survey trawls.

"the centre of gravity of the stock this year was located around the Porcupine Bank which may indicate a slightly later post-spawning migration than in 2018.

As the survey is fixed in time each year, we can mark the northward progression of migration back to the summer feeding grounds in the Norwegian Sea"

The Rockall and Hatton Bank stratum, on the western periphery of the survey area, contained minimal amounts of blue whiting, accounting for 0.7% of the total observed biomass, down from 4% from 2018. However, survey effort in the western area remains an important component of the survey in order to determine the westerly limit of the stock distribution and also to monitor hydrographic conditions. Temperature and salinity have been shown to be important drivers in the spawning success of blue whiting. A decrease in temperature and salinity associated with the influence of the subpolar gyre was noted in 2017 and persists into 2019. The strength and influence of the gyre has been linked to the western extension of blue whiting during spawning. The two northernmost strata (South Faroes and Shetland Channel) accounted for the remaining 4.1% of biomass observed in 2019.

### Stock composition

To investigate the age composition of the stock 38 trawl samples were taken (figure 2). These yielded 1,938 individual blue whiting age measurements and over 6,228 length measurements. Individuals ranging from 1 to 13 years old were observed. As in recent years, the bulk of the stock comprises fish from the exceptionally strong 2014-year class (now 5 years old). The 2019 results indicated this year class accounted for some 47% of the total biomass observed. Four and six-year-old fish ranked second (24%) and third (11%) respectively and when combined with the five-year-old fish, these 3 cohorts account for 82% of total observed biomass.

### Stock size

The total stock biomass estimate of blue whiting for the 2019 survey is 4% higher than in 2018 and represents the largest in the current time series (2004-present). The strong 2014-year class dominates the current stock in terms of both biomass and numbers. The 2016 and 2017 year classes are now fully recruited and are estimated to be smaller than 2014 which may indicate a declining stock size in the short to medium term.

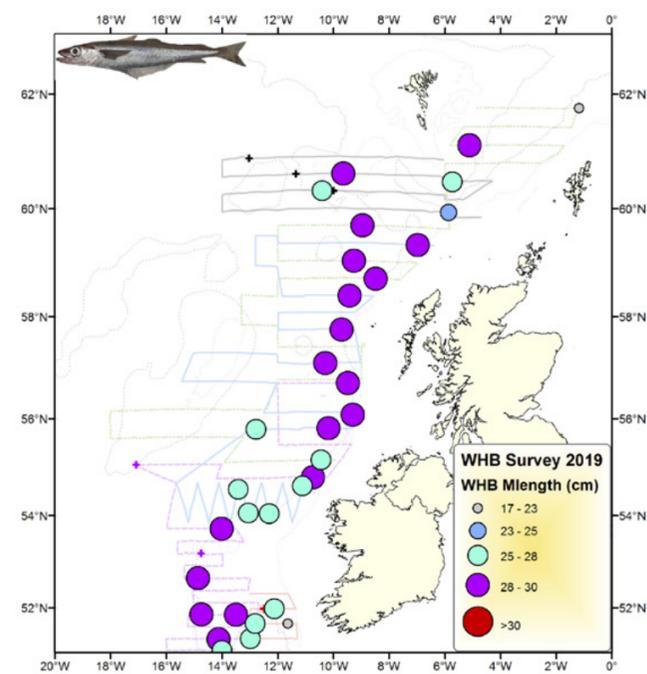


Figure 1. Blue whiting distribution (acoustic density) from combined survey effort.

# Spanish vessel fined after pleading guilty on shark finning offences

The Spanish registered Virxen da Blanca (3-LU-22-05) has been fined €2,500 in addition to forfeiture of €165,000 of catch and gear after pleading guilty on shark finning charges.

The vessel—which was part of a fleet of pelagic longline vessels operating in an area south of Mizen Head—had been charged after being boarded by the LÉ William Butler Yeats, off the West Cork coast last August, and escorted into Castletownbere, Co Cork before being handed over to the Garda Síochána who were assisted by the SFPA.

A special sitting of Clonakilty Court that followed heard the vessel had 164,250kg of blue shark, 98kg of mako shark and 1250kg of shark fins on board. Although whole sharks may be caught and landed legally, finning at sea has

been prohibited under EU regulations since 2013.

Commenting on the verdict, which was imposed on the 23rd of May by Judge Brian O'Callaghan, Dr Susan Steele Chair of Sea-Fisheries Protection Authority (SFPA) stated that the operation highlights the success of interagency co-operation between the Irish Naval Service, An Garda and the SFPA:

"The Irish Naval Service play a strategic role in the enforcement of at sea activities and work closely with the SFPA in undertaking risk based inspections at sea. Information compiled by officers of the SFPA and passed to the Navy resulted in the detention of this fishing vessel, which has now resulted in a prosecution following a guilty plea."

Dr Steele reiterated also



Spanish boat being detained in Castletownbere. Inset: Shark catch being landed

the SFPA's commitment to preventing illegal fishing and in particular illegal shark fishing: "We have zero tolerance for vessels removing fins from sharks in our waters.

Luckily this infringement was detected and we will continue to work with authorities across Europe to deter and detect any future illegal shark fishing violations."

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# Deal reached by Government and ITF on A-Typical Workers Scheme

Late last April reports emerged that, following mediation, a deal on changes to the A-typical Workers Scheme had been struck between the Government and the International Transport Workers' Federation (ITF). Following on from this, a joint statement on the agreement that had been reached on the scheme for the employment of non-EEA workers in the Irish fishing industry was issued by the Departments involved stating that:

"Following recent mediation between a number of Government Departments and the International Transport Workers' Federation on the scheme for employment of non-EEA fishers (outside the European Economic area) in parts of the Irish sea-fishing fleet, a settlement agreement has now been reached and signed by all parties.

"This mediation was in the context of proceedings taken by the International Transport Workers' Federation against the relevant Government Departments in relation to the Scheme and a recent High Court judgment on injunctive relief, dated 7th December 2018. The High Court today (30 April 2019) struck out the case."

Under the terms of the agreement which has been reached, crew employed under the scheme will now be entitled to receive their contract of employment in their native language, alongside an English contract, which specifies clearly their entitlements with respect to pay, working hours, and rest periods. Those employed under the scheme will also have the right to switch vessels without risking losing their visa. In other words, their visa will not be tied to a particular employer. That

said, no visa will be granted to any non-EEA nationals without a contract with a specific employer.

The terms also state that: "Where the Department of Justice & Equality becomes aware that a fisher has left their employment, for any reason, before the end of their twelve month contract, a letter will issue to the non-EEA fisher requesting that they provide details of their new contract of employment under the Scheme to the Department of Justice & Equality within 28 days."

It has also been agreed that, EU Directive 2017/159—The 2012 Agreement concerning the implementation of the Work in Fishing Convention, 2007 of the International Labour Organisation, which regulates maximum hours of work, minimum hours of rest, and manning requirements aboard commercial fishing vessels—will come into force from the 15th of November.

Under the terms, the Workplace Relations Commission (WRC), the Marine Survey Office (MSO), and the Department of Justice and Equality, will liaise with each other on the enforcement of regulations relating to hours or

work and rest. Further, for the first six months, an Oversight Committee, chaired by the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine, will meet on a two-monthly basis, starting in May. After that, there will be quarterly meetings "to monitor the Scheme and ensure that it is operating as intended."

The mediated agreement on the scheme—which was introduced by the Government in 2016 in response to allegations made against the fishing industry in relation to the working conditions of non-EEA crews—follows on from allegations made by the ITF that the Government introduced scheme has been used to exploit migrant fishermen. On the back of those allegations, the ITF had taken the Government to court over alleged failures in monitoring the scheme.

The Government departments involved in the mediation were the Department of Justice and Equality; Department of Transport, Tourism and Sport; Department of Business, Enterprise and Innovation; Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine; and the Workplace Relations Commission.

## Industry Response

**I**ndustry representatives—who have consistently voiced their concerns with the scheme as was originally devised by the Government and actively called for improvements of that scheme—though cautiously welcoming the revisions have pointed out that a number of problematic aspects with respect to the workability, or rather unworkability, of the Government devised scheme remain.

In a detailed submission to the Joint Oireachtas Committee on Business, Enterprise and Innovation on the matter, a range of outstanding issues relating to the scheme have been highlighted by Mr Francis

O'Donnell, CEO of the Irish Fish Producer's Organisation (IFPO). In the submission, Mr O'Donnell also highlights that as far back as January 2017 he had written to the Government requesting a review of the scheme. The issue of non-EEA workers being unable to transfer between vessels had been amongst the issues that he had raised at that time, alongside issues relating to the 'onerous' renewal process relating to work permits obtained under the scheme.

Mr O'Donnell states, however, that his request for a meeting on the matter had been ignored, and highlights, the even though boat owners (alongside non-EEA workers)

are one of the primary stakeholders within the scheme, they have hitherto had very little input into the design and implementation of that scheme, and this is something which remains to be addressed. To this end, Mr O'Donnell says that it is vital that the fishing industry is given a seat at the table of the scheme's Oversight Committee, which as part of the new terms, will meet for the following six months on a two-month basis. Had steps in this direction been taken earlier, Mr O'Donnell states that, in his opinion, the case taken by the ITF would have been avoided.

Though, in line with his earlier communications with the Government on the matter, Mr O'Donnell has welcomed the revisions that have been made to the scheme—in particular those relating to the provision of detailed contracts in the native language of the employee and the ability of non-EEA fishermen to now transfer employment in the scheme—he has cautioned that transfers should "only occur in the context of normal contractual arrangements in that it would be grossly unfair if an Atypical employee could simply walk away without giving the employer the required notice period."

In a written submission to the Oversight Committee of the scheme, which met on the 28th of May, issues relating to the proposal under the new terms of the scheme with respect to the payment for the visa application, guarantees with respect to the significant additional costs borne by boat owners in relation to flights, accommodation and agency fees that the employee will not leave the moment they arrive, and regarding who bears responsibility for repatriation of the employee once a contract ends have also been highlighted.

### Processing of Applications

Alongside this, the IFPO has stressed that a number of outstanding issues remain in relation to the scheme—many of which relate to issues surrounding the processing of applications under the



*"we were not the architects of the scheme and have not been in a position to have the scheme reviewed."*

FRANCIS O'DONNELL, CEO IFPO

scheme and many of which have been echoed by the other representative organisations of the industry.

In this respect, issues surrounding the 20 day processing rule, whereby applications must have been received by the INIS 20 days before the expiry of the Contract, which on account of an inefficient application process involving multiple different bodies and departments is causing huge problems for both boat owners and those processing the paperwork on their behalf, who are left trying to predict the length of time that it will take for the application to get to the Atypical Department have been highlighted. That these are issues that are especially problematic in relation to the realities of fishing, whereby fishermen and women may be out at sea for days which, consequently, means getting a contract signed within a rigid timeframe is exceptionally difficult has also been highlighted.

The IFPO has also highlighted that the requirement of original letters of authorisation, which are now being requested by the INIS, is also causing considerable headaches. That this rule for applications is being applied to applications that have been received before the Éle came in and that applications are being held back on this basis has also been underscored. The knock-on effect of this is that applicants are consequently Énning out of time to apply, which subsequently slows down the whole process as new applications have to have originals posted from the Philippines, Ghana etc. In this respect, the system is actually preventing what it is supposed to achieve, Mr O'Donnell states.

Issues which have arisen with the processing and review of applications, in terms of a failure to flag issues relating to the application (e.g. missing dates etc.), that may prevent

the application from being processed, in a timely manner and ultimately, resulting in applications being refused on the basis of omissions that should have been flagged immediately or were never flagged in the first place, and refusals that should never have occurred in the first place have also been detailed.

That the rules of the scheme are subject to frequent change has further been cited as a serious problem and one that is often only uncovered once an application has been made and returned with a note informing the applicant of those changes, with no allowance for a crossover period for the new rules to come in. In this respect, Mr O'Donnell has emphasised that it is imperative that actors are informed of changes to the scheme and when these changes will come into effect.

Mr O'Donnell explicitly states that the above outlined barriers make the scheme unworkable, time-consuming and without doubt elevates risks to the employer and employee, and mean that accessing the scheme for non-EEA workers is becoming nearly impossible.

### Further responses

Speaking to the Skipper, though detailing many of the issues that have been raised by the IFPO, Mr Patrick Murphy, CEO of the Irish South and West Producers Organisation (IS&WPO) said that the IS&WPO had chosen not made a submission, as they felt that further consultation was required on the issue than could be provided via a written submission. In this respect, and echoing the sentiments expressed by the IFPO's Mr O'Donnell, Mr Murphy stated that it was vital that the fishing industry had a seat at the table in relation to addressing this complex matter.

## NEWS in brief

### ICES MACKEREL ADVICE REVISED UPWARDS

Following on from the recent re-evaluation of the northeast Atlantic mackerel stock assessments, the International Council for the Exploration of the Sea (ICES) has revised its catch advice for the stock upwards by more than a factor of two.

The revision comes on the back of a review of the methods used to estimate the stock carried out earlier this year, which resulted in a large change in the perception of the stock based on a revision to those methods.

The increase in the estimates of the stock provided differed significantly from those which had been used as the basis of the advice provided by the scientific body last Autumn, which had indicated a continued reduction in the spawning stock biomass (SSB) of the stock.

Based on those estimates, a large cut in mackerel quotas for 2019 had been advised and, subsequently, a 20 per cent cut to the 2019 TAC agreed. Earlier this year the MSC certification for the fishery had been suspended.

In light of this reassessment—which, in comparison to the assessment used for the advice issued in 2018, estimates an upward revision of the stock size and a downward revision of fishing mortality—industry representatives and interested Coastal States had called on ICES to revise the 2019 catch advice, and expressed confidence that this would be forthcoming.

The new catch advice, which has now been issued and which replaces the advice given in October, at 770 358 metric tons up from 318 403 metric tons is significantly higher than had been previously issued—more than twice that which had been offered last Autumn. Calls to reinstate the fishery's MSC status are, however, ongoing.

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## Body of Wexford fisherman, Dominic Sinnott, lost off the Ellie Ádhamh recovered

The body of Dominic Sinnott (45), who was lost off the Ellie Ádhamh on Friday 24th May, was recovered about 40 miles from Rosslare on the evening of Tuesday the 28th of May. Dominic's body was discovered by the Audacious which was fishing in the area at the time.

The well-known and liked Co. Wexford fisherman had gone missing from the Ellie Ádhamh early on the morning of Friday the 24th of May, while near the Saltee Islands off Kilmore Quay, after having left Rosslare earlier that morning.

Coast Guard crew members, lifeboat personnel, local fishermen and boat-owners had been

searching for Dominic since then. A number of vessels were taking part in a search for him in the area at the time.

Dominic's body was subsequently transferred to a ship that was nearby before being retrieved by the Waterford based Coast Guard Search and Rescue 117 helicopter. Dominic was formally identified later that night in University Hospital Waterford, where a post-mortem was carried out.

*The Skipper team would like to express their deepest sympathies to the family, friends and colleagues of Dom on their untimely loss.*

*A full obituary will appear in a future issue of the Skipper*



The late Dominic Sinnott, Skipper of the Ellie Ádhamh

## New (discard ban friendly?) quota balancing arrangements for whitefish stocks announced

Following on from a recent public consultation and recently expressed diverging opinions relating to the scheme among some of the industry's representative organisations, the Minister for Agriculture, Food and the Marine, Michael Creed T.D., has announced the adoption of a pilot quota balancing policy for whitefish stocks.

The pilot scheme, which has been developed at the request of, and with the assistance of the Quota Management Advisory Committee, is intended to assist the whitefish fleet in navigating some of the challenges posed by the full implementation of the Landing Obligation.

### Balancing adjustment

Under the policy, quota balancing will apply where a vessel's landings exceed that vessel's catch limit for one or more demersal stocks for a fishery management period. Any fish landed in excess of a vessel's assigned limit must be paid back by means of a deduction from a future allocation. Where the excess is greater than 10%, a higher ratio of payback applies to the full excess.

The Department endeavours that this 'balancing adjustment' will be made in the next possible management period or as near as possible after that. Quota

### Pilot Phase – Demersal Stock \*

Species	Area	Area Code
Monkfish (Anglerfish)	6	ANF/56-14
Monkfish(Anglerfish)	7	ANF/07
Hake	6, 7	HKE/571214
Haddock	6a	HAD/5BC6A
Whiting	7b-k	WHG/(7X71)7X7A-C

\*further stocks to be added on a phased basis

balancing will only apply where the landings concerned are at least 50kg in excess of the catch limit made available for that demersal stock. Only vessels which have landed in excess of their catch limit for a fishery management period will be quota balanced.

### Phased implementation

As this is a pilot system applicable to whitefish stocks, quota balancing will apply to five main commercial stocks initially. Further stocks will be subject to quota balancing on a phased basis. It is intended that the pilot, which follows on from the introduction of a similar scheme for pelagic stocks last year, will apply from 1 July 2019. For demersal stocks, monthly/two month/three month/

quarterly fishery management periods may operate.

### One-for-one basis

The balancing adjustment is to be made against the same demersal stock, but in exceptional circumstances, where this is not possible, the adjustment will be made against a stock with the nearest equivalent economic value, on a one-for-one basis. Any proposed adjustment against a different stock will be brought before the Quota Management Advisory Committee, in anonymised form, for advice, which will be subject to Ministerial approval.

While welcoming the full implementation of the discards ban though acknowledging the

challenges faced by the fishing industry in terms of practical implementation, Minister Creed stated: "I fully appreciate that the discards ban has brought about a change of practice for many Irish fishers.

"I have worked with industry representatives to find a practical means to support the implementation of the discards ban. The pilot quota balancing policy promotes conservation of Irish fishing quotas and also supports coherence between the discards ban and the effective management of the quotas."

*A copy of the policy & information booklet is available on the Department's website at the following address: <https://www.agriculture.gov.ie/seafood/seafoodpolicy/forms/>*

## Marine Institute hosts largest international fisheries Working Group

The Marine Institute recently hosted a consortium of experts and scientists for the annual International Council for the Exploration of the Seas (ICES) Working Group on Fisheries Acoustic Science and Technology (WGFAST) meeting. With more than 107 participants from 25 countries attending the meeting, it was the largest meeting to date for the ICES Working Group.

For the first time, the meeting was attended by a scientific and industry delegation from Peru representing the South Pacific Fisheries Management Organisation. The delegation also had the opportunity to meet Her Excellency Ms Ana Maria Lilliana Sanchez Vargas de Rios, Ambassador of Peru, who visited the Marine Institute to meet the delegation.

The Working Group on Fisheries Acoustic Science and Technology focuses on the development and application of science and technology used to observe the marine environment. The group has been key in developing acoustic trawl surveys and reliable acoustic measurements, and more recently the focus has been on the use of acoustics to observe key biological parameters such as biomass indices, behavioural metrics and acoustic species classification.

Marine Institute's Fisheries and Ecosystem Services carry out acoustic surveys for herring, blue whiting, and boarfish, and some additional information is also collected for species such as sprat and horse mackerel. Acoustic surveys help determine the relative abundance of these species, information which is then used to determine catch rates and management advice for the following year.



Marine Institute hosts Peru Ambassador at ICES Fisheries Working Group

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**mara media Skipper**

# GREYSTONES FISHERMEN'S PROTEST – Development, but for whom?



Fishermen protesting in Greystones last month. Images by Frontlens Photography



Last month, fishermen of Greystones re-entered their home harbour and landed their catch in protest against the ongoing lack of provision for fishing boats in the harbour, as members of the community of Greystones turned out to support them.

The skippers of Golden Venture, the Orca and Centurion—who staged a previous demonstration in 2014—say they have been unable to use the harbour since 2007, when the development of the Greystones harbour commenced, on account of a lack of facilities to support their activities and restrictive harbour by-laws which effectively mean that commercial fishermen cannot carry out their activities from the harbour.

In relation to the ongoing issue, the fishermen have highlighted the long tradition of fishing that can be traced to the very roots of Greystones and stated that this is a heritage they do not want to see lost. Rather reasonably they wish to be able to fish from their home pier, however, in order to do so, they require basic facilities for their boats (e.g. moorings).

### “Exiled from their home harbour”

These, the fishermen have stated, have not been forthcoming as part of the extensive redevelopment of the harbour. Exacerbating this, by-laws drafted

by Wicklow County Council have effectively excluded fishing (and fish) from the harbour, and prevented fishermen from landing their catches on the pier. The fishermen must now transfer their catches onto punts, before landing to the pier, where no storage facilities are provided, no bait can be stored, and no fish can be sold.

Alongside the large personal and financial strains of being “exiled from their home harbour”, the environmental cost of daily commutes by land to Dún Laoghaire harbour and again by sea to local fishing grounds for what is otherwise a low impact fishery has also been highlighted by the fishermen.

### Statement from Wicklow County Council

In a statement issued on the matter, Wicklow County Council has said that the most recent discussions with the Greystones fishermen took place in 2017 and that a landing area within the marina was identified at that time.

The Council also states that “fishermen were to pursue the installation of a hoist to unload their catches at this location, but this does not appear to have happened.” It is also claimed that moorings were installed to the specifications of the fishermen, but that these were not used and were, therefore, removed.

The statement by the Council concludes by saying that the fishermen have not been in contact with the Council since 2017, despite being requested to submit details for their fishing operations.

### “A blot on the landscape”

Countering these comments, however, Tim Storey, one of the Greystones fishermen involved in the protest, has stated that all attempts by the fishermen to come to a solution on the matter have been met with obstacles and resistance.

Discussions with the Council and the private partners (Sisk) tasked with developing the pier broke down in 2017 as the Council would not permit vehicle access to the boats, or parking as had been previously available at the harbour. The fisherman states, however, that, up to that point, the Council were made fully aware of the facilities needed to ensure fishermen would be able to operate from the harbour.

Mr Storey reiterated the point that the Marina does not permit any landing of fish on their property, and stated, in relation to the installation of a hoist at the site, the local council refused to take advice on the matter from a local fisheries officer in relation to how best funding for that hoist might be secured.

Though Mr Storey

acknowledges that floating moorings were installed by the developer, he has highlighted that fishermen had requested that wall moorings be installed, and repeatedly voiced concerns, which were not addressed, in relation to the suitability of floating moorings for commercial fishing boats. He further states that the fishermen were never assigned a mooring. Those that had been installed, on inquiry, turned out to be uninsurable for commercial purposes.

For Mr Storey, questions relating to the tendering and planning of the project need to be asked, as do questions relating to why, as the fishermen feel it, there appears to be strong resistance from some quarters against the preservation of the rich fishing heritage of Greystones and an active effort to exclude them from what has traditionally been their working space?

In relation to questions with respect to funding, the fisherman strongly expressed a belief that—as seen with the impressive development of Greystones Harbour—the funding and ability to improve harbours in one direction or another appears to be there, it just does not appear that it is being directed towards the needs of fishermen, leaving the Greystones fishermen feeling like they and fishing communities are being treated as “a blot on the landscape.”

# Pushed to the margins

by the Editor

In his social and cultural history of Ireland’s sea fisheries, Jim Mac Loughlin highlights the centrality of the State in the propagation and enforcement of socially based hierarchies that provide the rules governing the operation of social and economic life, including economic decision-making. In Ireland’s case, this has allowed successive Irish governments prioritise other sectors at the expense of the fishing industry, without having to worry too much about the opposition this might provoke from fishing communities. Mac Loughlin finishes his book by stating that what this meant practically is that, within Ireland, “fishing communities were pushed to the political as well as the geographical margins” of the State.

Today, as many of these “geographical margins” become increasingly crowded out spaces, questions relating to the national and local level prioritisation of the economic, social and cultural usages of these spaces, and what these priorities might mean for fisheries, are becoming increasingly important. Questions also arise in relation to the funding of these spaces, and whether the funding—from the relevant Departments, or that which is being allocated at the local level—for the development of these spaces is adequate and reasonably meets the needs of the fishing communities that have traditionally inhabited and added vibrancy to these spaces?

Two cases in particular, over the past month, have arisen which throw light onto some of these questions. On the one hand, the case of the fishermen’s protest in Greystones provides insights into questions relating to development for whom? The case of the urgent need for dredging at Heilbhc pier that has been raised by fishermen and their families further down along the south-east coast, on the other, throws up questions relating to underdevelopment. Both of these cases together illuminate the manner in which priorities are directed in one way or another in relation to these spaces.

Whilst these questions are important with respect to all of the places where fish is landed around Ireland, including the five Fishery Harbour Centres (Killybegs, Castletownbere, Howth, Rossaveal, and Dunmore East), they are especially pertinent with respect to the further 40 secondary ports, and 80 piers and landing places dotted around the coast of Ireland. These sites, many of which are Local Authority owned, are central to the activities of inshore fishermen and women – activities, as is so often referenced by policymakers and noted in policy documents, which are embedded in the fabric of the communities within which they and these landing sites are embedded.

Carrying out these activities, however, necessitates adequate infrastructure. This is explicitly recognised in the Inshore Strategy 2019-2023, which was published earlier this year. One of the key themes identified in that Strategy is Infrastructure and Resources, under which improving the facilities available at inshore piers and harbours is specified as a core objective. If the aims set out in this Strategy are to be met, shortcomings in this area, be they at the local or Departmental level, urgently need to be addressed.

# Cé Heilbhc – a case of perpetual underdevelopment?



Slua ar an gCé i Heilbhc chun achainí a shíniú ar lorg dreidireacht laithreach

Further down along the coast fishermen have also been voicing their concerns in relation to the state of their local pier at Heilbhc Head, Co. Waterford. Of particular concern to the fishermen of the area is the urgent need for dredging—an unresolved issue, whereby boats are prevented from entering or leaving the harbour at times due to the build-up of sand in the harbour.

In light of this concern and the ongoing lack of adequate action in relation to the matter—which has been an ongoing issue in the area for decades—following a public meeting which was held at the pier, whereby fishermen and their families voiced their concerns and called for action, last month a petition was submitted to the Waterford Council calling on the CEO to take immediate action with respect to the ongoing situation at Heilbhc pier.

The petition, which was signed by 111 people, was submitted to Waterford Council by the recently elected Sinn Féin Councillor, Conor McGuinness, alongside Aisling de Grás and Neasa de Paor, the two daughters of local fisherman Liam Kelly, who is oftentimes left outside of the pier, waiting to land when he comes in from sea, on account of the issue.

The petition states that: “There is a dire need for dredging at Cé Heilbhc. Fishermen have experienced great difficulty in entering or leaving the harbour for some time, due to the build-up of silt and sand.

This situation is affecting the ability of local fishermen to effectively and safely carry out their work. Heilbhc is strategically important as the lifeboat base covering Dungarvan Bay and adjacent waters. At this stage, the ongoing situation presents a health and safety crisis, and it is long past time to address it.”

### “Significant statutory requirements”

In a response to the Skipper with respect to the issue and the petition that had been submitted to the Council on the matter, Michael Walsh, CEO, Waterford City and County Council acknowledged the need for dredging at Heilbhc, so as to maintain water depths for boats and the RNLI.

With respect to the lack of action on the matter, Mr Walsh cited high costs with respect to the initial “significant statutory requirements” (surveys, sampling, assessments etc.) needed prior to any works taking place. In relation to obtaining funding for these processes, he stated that an application had been submitted to the Department of Agriculture, Food and Marine under the 2019 Harbour and Coastal Infrastructural Programme for funding to undertake statutory processes, which was

unsuccessful. Mr Walsh further stated that when and if funding was secured once the “statutory consents” which are needed were in place, further funding would be required to carry out the initial works and maintain those works, and concluded by saying Waterford Council does not have the budget to undertake this work.

Previously this work would have been done on a “low-cost basis”, which is no longer an option on account that such alternatives are no longer compliant with environmental legislation. Consequently, Mr Walsh stated, “the costs have moved beyond the remit and capacity of this Council and accordingly we are dependent on National funding which we have been unable to access to date.”

### Ongoing with decades

Fishermen, however, have stressed that this is a matter that has been ongoing with decades and has never been adequately addressed. They and their families have also questioned the need for repetitive (and exorbitantly priced) surveys relating to the matter, indicating that the lack of adequate action, to date, has led to the issue becoming worse than it has ever been before.

Incredulity has also been expressed that there has been no action on the matter, even though currently a dredging vessel, tasked elsewhere in the area, sits in Heilbhc pier. Sinn Féin’s McGuinness stated: “At the moment there is a dredging vessel in Heilbhc. It is here to undertake survey work in Dungarvan Bay on behalf of Irish Water, and is equipped and available to carry out dredging work.”

Queried in relation to the sheer length of time that this had been an ongoing issue in the area, in following correspondence Mr Walsh stated that, “There was then and remains only very limited funding for maintenance of piers and harbours which would only suffice for the basic upkeep of the harbour structures.”

Mr McGuinness, however, has further highlighted that “no one is under any illusions as to the coast and scale of the works required, but if Heilbhc Pier is to remain a working fishing port the build-up in the harbour needs to be addressed.”

That the issue of dredging is but one of the challenges facing those who fish from Heilbhc has also been highlighted by the Sinn Féin representative. These challenges, Mr McGuinness has said, are reflective of a more general underinvestment in the pier and years of neglect. This, he says, has not only hampered the development of the fishing industry locally, but has also added more risk and hardship to what is already a dangerous occupation.

## 2 years on and still waiting on a workable Aquaculture Licencing System

By Alec Reid,  
Oyster Farmer,  
Donegal

2 years have passed since the publication of the Independent Review on the Aquaculture Licensing Process in May 2017, and still Minister Creed has no implementation plan in place for achieving any of the review's recommendations.

### 30 RECOMMENDATIONS

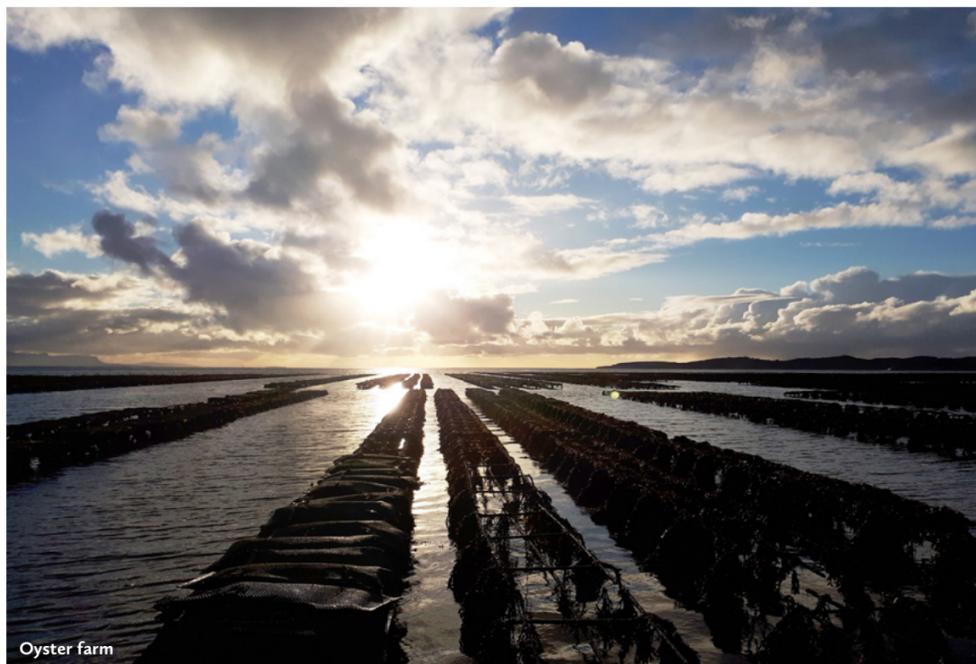
May 2017 saw the publication of the long-anticipated Independent Review on the Aquaculture Licensing Process, and with it came the review's widely supported 30 recommendations for improving the totally unworkable aquaculture licensing system.

A sigh of relief was felt by all aquaculture producers who believed that finally the antiquated and inadequate aquaculture licensing process, the single greatest obstruction to developing Irish aquaculture, would finally receive the practical improvement it seriously required.

However, relief has turned to frustration as May 2019 marked the 2 year anniversary of the Independent Review, and to date not one of the recommendations of the Licensing Review Group have been implemented, and even more disheartening; the Minister is yet to finalise any implementation plan outlining when the industry can expect any of the recommendations to be implemented.

### 2020 DEADLINE

In the *Mid-Term Assessment of the National Strategic Plan for Sustainable Aquaculture Development* at page 11 the Department of Agriculture, Food and Marine outlined that the timescale for the implementation of the recommendations of the Licensing Review Group is



Oyster farm

'over the period up to 2020 approximately'. However, it is becoming increasingly unlikely that the Minister will deliver on this commitment given that, to date, there is no implementation plan for the achievement of the 30 recommendations. Perhaps a 'not so gentle' reminder should be sent to the Minister, telling him that time is running out!

The Aquaculture and Foreshore Management Division of DAFM in their 2018 Mid-Term Assessment of the *National Strategic Plan for Sustainable Aquaculture Development* claimed to be at 'almost complete' stage on developing an implementation strategy; however, given that the Licensing Review Group published the recommendations in May 2017, and that the Minister did not confirm any implementation plan was complete a year later during the Joint Committee Debate on Aquaculture Licensing held October 2018, and most alarmingly, that to date no implementation plan has yet been finalised by the Department, is it not fair to assume that DAFM is, in fact, not legitimately finalising

such an implementation plan, and more pressingly, that the Minister is not going to achieve the implementation of any of the Licensing Review Group's recommendations by the proposed deadline of 2020?

### BACKLOG ISSUE

A particularly irritating attitude conveyed by the Department is that the Minister continues to use the now worn-out excuse of dealing with the 'backlog issue' as a defence for the lack of implementation of the other recommendations of the Licensing Review Group. Although there is an immediate need to address the backlog issue in the licensing process, there is an underlying problem in this approach, where the priority given to eliminating the backlog is actively working against the implementation of the other recommendations of the Licensing Review Group.

The Minister outlined during the Joint Committee Debate on Aquaculture Licensing held October 2018 that he 'prioritises the clearing of the licensing backlog to the cost of every

other recommendation if necessary' – see page 16 of the *October 2018 Joint Committee Debate*. This position is utterly unacceptable and poorly calculated by the Minister when considering that the goal of the Independent Review on the Licensing Process was to achieve an acceptable and workable licensing system, not to delay its development until the backlog was erased. Eliminating the backlog without implementing the necessary recommendations for reforming the licensing system only delays the achievement of an acceptable licensing system.

This is especially true when the implementation of the other recommendations is what offers the actual reform and improvement of the licensing system; a consideration which is painfully obvious to the industry, yet one the Minister continues to be blind or perhaps deliberately ignorant to.

### DIFFERENT PRIORITIES

In the *Aquaculture and Seafood Ireland Directory (2018)*, the late Richie Flynn

of IFA Aquaculture noted on behalf of the industry that 'our priority is to have a working licence system that is fit for purpose, delivers an efficient decision-making process, is clearly timelined and cost-effective, and is acceptable to all stakeholders'. The Minister quoted during the Joint Committee Debate on Aquaculture Licensing held in October 2018 that he never refused to listen to the industry, however if the Minister's priority is to delay the implementation of any actions to improve the unworkable licensing system until the backlog issue is dealt with, then it is questionable whether the Minister has genuinely listened to the industry's concerns, given that what the Minister considers a

priority differs so greatly from what the industry considers a priority.

Perhaps it is useful to remind the Minister that his Department has set the ambitious goal of 'increasing turnover from the ocean economy to more than €6.4bn by 2020, and doubling its contribution to GDP by 2030' – see *DAFM Harnessing Our Ocean Wealth (2012)*. In relation to this goal, Irish aquaculture is mandated to double its annual production, from approximately 44,000 tonnes to 80,000 tonnes. This goal simply cannot be achieved without a workable licensing system. The industry stakeholder is actively working towards achieving the sustainable and environmental production goals set out by

the Minister's Department in the *Harnessing Our Ocean Wealth (2012)* strategy. However, if the aquaculture industry is to fulfil these production requirements set by the Minister's Department, the Minister will have to start actively working towards fulfilling his own Department's requirements as set out by the Licensing Review Group in the Independent Review of the Aquaculture Licensing Process. It is suggested that a useful starting point for the Minister would be to finalise and publish the now gravely overdue implementation plan for the 30 recommendations of the Licensing Review Group, and furthermore, to mobilise his Department on accomplishing the



Alec Reid

recommendations so that we can see the reform of the aquaculture licensing system in practice, as opposed to just on paper.

## Further perspectives on the licensing issue

### IFA AQUACULTURE

Commenting to the Skipper, with respect to the article by Mr Reid, IFA Aquaculture said the issues raised in the article were an accurate reflection of the ongoing frustration with the licensing review and lack of implementation of the review's recommendations – a frustration that is very much shared by the body representing the interests of those engaged in aquaculture around the country.

Echoing the sentiments expressed by Mr Reid, IFA Aquaculture stated: "An implementation plan that addresses the feasibility of all recommendations, along with how and when the Department proposes to implement these recommendations is long overdue.

"The Irish aquaculture industry demands a clear commitment with regard to drafting an implementation plan in order to prioritise, with clear timelines, each of the recommendations identified by the aquaculture licensing review.

"Further engagement between the Department and industry stakeholders is absolutely necessary if we are all to work towards ensuring the economic potential and sustainable future of the Irish aquaculture industry is realised, to this end, IFA Aquaculture looks forward to playing a pivotal role in driving this engagement."

### RESPONSE FROM THE DEPARTMENT

In a response on the matter and the points raised by Mr Reid issued to the Skipper by the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine (DAFM), the following points were made:

"In 2016 the Minister commissioned the Independent Review of Aquaculture Licensing and the Report of the Group was submitted to the Minister in May

2017. The Review Group carried out a detailed examination of the existing aquaculture licensing process, undertook comprehensive stakeholder consultation and looked at comparative national and international consent systems to determine best practice for managing a complex licensing process in a transparent, environmentally appropriate and legally robust manner. The Group's Report is published and available to view on the Department's website. A total of 30 separate recommendations are contained in the Report.

"Since receiving the Report of the Review Group the Department has engaged in detailed consideration of the recommendations set out in the Report with a view to their implementation, having regard to the legislative, environmental, technical and public interest issues that arise. The Department has also engaged closely with industry representatives and relevant State Agencies.

"In the meantime, and reflecting the key priority attached to the elimination of the licensing backlog by Industry Representatives, the Department immediately put in place a two-year programme to eliminate the backlog of Shellfish Licence Applications. This two-year programme involves the achievement of 300 licence determinations in 2018 and again in 2019. A total of 305 licence determinations were achieved in 2018 and the Department is on target to achieve the required further 300 licence determinations for 2019.

"The elimination of the shellfish licensing backlog will be a game changer for the industry and will provide the solid footing for the industry long demanded by industry representatives.

"As all industry stakeholders and EU Commission have identified the elimination of the licensing backlog as the overriding priority in the reform of the licensing

system, the Department's response has focused on this issue while continuing to have regard to the other recommendations in the Report. It should also be noted that the elimination of the licensing backlog will have an immediate beneficial effect on every individual aquaculture operator.

"The Minister met with the Joint Oireachtas Committee on Agriculture, Food and the Marine on 23rd October 2018. In the course of the meeting, the Minister explained the rationale for prioritising the backlog and stated, inter alia, "There are 30 recommendations but I make no apology for prioritising, in absolute terms, dealing with the backlog of licences."

"The Department has moved swiftly and effectively to respond to the Report of the Aquaculture Licensing Review Group. In prioritising the elimination of the licensing backlog the Department is not only addressing the key issue affecting the industry from a strategic perspective but it is also responding positively to the specific demands of industry, including IFA Aquaculture.

"The Department is on target to eliminate the shellfish licensing backlog this year and has also taken concrete steps to address the finfish licence application backlog. In this regard, it should be noted that the Department has formally requested finfish operators to submit Environmental Impact Statements in respect of their licence renewal applications. This request issued to all operators in December 2018 and it specified the timeline for submission of the necessary documentation (30th September 2019)."

**Further details on the 30 recommendations made by the Independent Aquaculture Licensing Review Group and submitted to the Minister in 2017 can be found at, <http://www.fishingnet.ie/media/fishingnet/content/>**



## SCOTLAND NEWS

### SFF leader to step down after 14 years service to the Scottish fishing industry

Scottish Fishermen's Federation chief executive Bertie Armstrong will be standing down from the post later this year, it was announced last month.

Elsbeth Macdonald, who is currently the deputy chief executive of Food Standards Scotland, will be his replacement. She will start at the SFF's headquarters in Aberdeen in August, after handing over her current responsibilities. Mr Armstrong will remain until a smooth handover is completed.

Speaking in relation to the decision to step down Mr Armstrong said: "This has been a planned succession process. I have lived and breathed this industry for 14 years and it's been an exciting period of change.

"There was never going to be

an absolutely ideal time to hand over, but with phase one of Brexit – making the case for the fishing industry – almost complete, it makes sense to do it later this year.

"The next phase, which will involve the UK holding the line and moving to full, sovereign, coastal state status, will realistically take some time.

"We are making careful preparations for the handover and I will remain here to help Elspeth transition into what is a hugely challenging but immensely enjoyable job."

Elsbeth Macdonald joined the Food Standards Agency in Scotland (FSAS) in April 2001, having previously worked in the Scottish Government's Marine Laboratory in Aberdeen. She is a science graduate of the universities of Stirling and Aberdeen.



Bertie Armstrong

### 2018 Sea fisheries stats for the Scottish Fleet

Last month, the Scottish Government published 2018's provisional sea fisheries statistics for the Scottish fishing fleet. According to these latest figures, Scottish-registered vessels landed 445 thousand tonnes of fish and shellfish in 2018, with a value of £572 million. Though this represents a decrease, in tonnes, of 4% on last year, it represents an increase of £12 million in value. In other words, no significant change in real terms.

#### Pelagics

As with other fleets in the region, despite decreased landings (down 15% to 153 000 tonnes) on account of quota cuts, good prices both at home and abroad meant that mackerel remained the most valuable stock for the fleet, and accounted for 29% (down 1% to £163 million) of the total value of Scottish landings. Conversely, though the weight of herrings landed by Scottish boats increased by 15%, on account of falling prices for herring, the value of that catch increased only marginally (1% to £24 million) on the previous year.

#### Demersals

The most valuable demersal

species for the fleet were cod, haddock and monkfish. With the value and tonnage of cod landed last year rising by 25% on 2017 to reach 19 000 tonnes worth £44 million, the value of cod just about exceeded the value of haddock landings (down 1% to £43 million), to become the most valuable demersal species for the fleet. The value of monkfish landings increased 5% to £39 million, despite a 2% decrease in the tonnage landed (13 000 tonnes).

#### Shellfish

Driven by lower landings of Nephrops (Norway lobster or langoustine), scallops and velvet crab, the shellfish sector, as a whole, saw decreases in both tonnage and value. Nephrops—the most valuable shellfish species and the second most valuable species overall to the Scottish fleet—accounted for 11% of landings by value. Landings of Nephrops for the year fell by 16% to 18 000 tonnes, and the total value for that species fell by 18 per cent on 2017, to £63 million.

#### The fleet

In terms of the fleet, the number of active Scottish registered fishing vessels in

2018 was 2,087—an increase of 19 vessels (1%) from 2017. This change was largely due to 20 additional under 10m creelers. At the end of 2018, the number of vessels in the under 10m fleet was up 32 to 1538 vessels, while the 10m and over fleet was down 13 to 549 vessels. At 184 vessels the demersal fleet remained the same, while the shellfish fleet was down 12 to 346 vessels and the pelagic fleet was down 1 to 19 vessels.

#### Employment

Last year saw 4,857 people employed across the fleet, up 1% on 2017. Continuing the shift from irregular to more regular employment seen in 2017, the number of regularly employed fishers increased by 100 (3%) employed across the fleet, while those irregularly employed decreased by 41 (5%). The number of crofters decreased from 6 to 5.

#### UK Fish Quota Uptake

Uptake of quota was high overall for the major pelagic fish stocks, with uptake of West of Scotland mackerel just going over quota at 101%, West of Scotland herring uptake at 92%, and uptake of North Sea mackerel and herring over 98%.

In terms of demersal, uptake

was more mixed. For example, West of Scotland haddock quota uptake for area VIb was 82% and for areas VIa and Vb was 85%, with monkfish at 92%, and cod (area VIb) at 98%. For other West of Scotland demersal stocks quota uptake was varied, ranging from 49% (megrim) to 115% (whiting).

North Sea monkfish quota uptake was at 74%, haddock at 84% and cod at 90%, while other North Sea demersal stocks ranged from 35% (plaice) to 92% (saithe). Reflecting low uptake of Nephrops in recent years, uptake for West of Scotland Nephrops was 65%, while uptake for North Sea Nephrops was only 50%.

#### Ten Year Trends

In terms of an overview of the last ten years, the tonnage of fish landed in 2018 was up 18% on 2009 and in real terms value was up 11%. With respect the fleet, in line with the pattern across other European fleets, the Scottish fishing fleet has been decreasing in number (down 89 vessels or 4% on 2009) over the past decade. The composition of the fleet has also changed, with 144 fewer 10m and over vessels and an increase of 55 under-10m vessels (mainly creelers).

### Peterhead leads the way and becomes the first port to receive new seafood certification

Following the successful completion of an independent audit by certification body Acoura, Seafish has announced that Peterhead has become the first port to receive certification under the Responsible Fishing Port Scheme (RFPS).

The voluntary certified programme, which was developed in consultation with the UK seafood industry to raise standards across the fishing ports sector and launched in July 2018, has been designed to demonstrate responsible food safety and good operational practices within UK fishing ports and harbours. It provides assurance to buyers and sellers of seafood that certified fishing ports are acting in a responsible manner with the seafood landed or sold through the market.

John Forman, Harbour Master at Peterhead Port, who was presented with the certificate by Jimmy Buchan, chair of the Scottish Seafood Association and Seafish board member, said:

"We have worked extremely hard in recent years at Peterhead to improve our infrastructure and operations in order to add value to the seafood supply chain, so we are delighted to have become the first port in the UK to gain RFPS certification. The award is further proof that Peterhead is synonymous with delivering on the highest quality in seafood."

Marcus Jacklin, RFPS Project Manager, said: "It's absolutely fantastic to see Peterhead receive its Responsible Fishing Ports Scheme certification. We know that this award represents the culmination of a huge amount of work by the port and demonstrates their commitment to good operational practices."

"The RFPS was designed to complement other standards recognising best practice within the industry, with the rationale behind the scheme coming from an increasing need for assurances and transparency across the seafood supply chain and fishing ports. The certification of Peterhead



RFPS Peterhead, Jimmy Buchan and John Forman.

port is an excellent first step in the rollout of the scheme and we would welcome any other ports now interested in applying for accreditation to get in touch."

RFPS is currently open for applications from large fishing ports with an auction or direct sale function. Development of another version of the scheme targeted at small

ports is also underway.

Further information about the RFPS is available on the Seafish website: <https://www.seafish.org/article/responsible-fishing-ports-scheme>.

To find out more about RFPS large port certification contact Marcus Jacklin on [marcus.jacklin@seafish.co.uk](mailto:marcus.jacklin@seafish.co.uk) or 01472 252 340.

### A group effort: SWFPA lands first Group Certification under the Responsible Fishing Scheme

The first Group Certification under the Responsible Fishing Scheme (RFS)—a world-leading certification programme for commercial fishing vessels which recognises best practice in fishing operations and crew welfare—has been awarded to a group of vessels from the Scottish White Fish Producers Association (SWFPA).

This represents a significant milestone for the RFS—which is increasingly being incorporated by leading UK seafood processors, retailers and service providers into their sourcing policies—as it marks the first time a group of vessels has been collectively assessed against the Scheme's robust standards.

Prior to the launch of the Group Certification Model, vessels had to seek RFS certification on an individual basis. While still delivering

the same assurance levels, a key benefit of the Group Certification Model is that it provides a more efficient process of certifying new vessels by reducing the amount of external audits required for individual vessels.

Vessels may be considered for group application under the Scheme if they share a central management system and in-house auditor. These rigorous internal systems replace the need for an external audit of every vessel in the group, thereby improving certification efficiency.

The RFS Group Certification covers 62 of the SWFPA vessels, which range in length from 6m to 34m, and brings the total number of RFS vessels certified in the UK to 121.

Speaking in relation to the SWFPA's certification, James Buchan from SWFPA said: "We

are absolutely delighted that SWFPA vessels have become the first group to become certified under the Responsible Fishing Scheme. We aim to facilitate a sustainable fishing sector which works for the environment, for consumers and for the fishermen, and we are always working to improve the way the seas are managed. With RFS helping to lead the way in responsible sourcing, it's fantastic that a group of our vessels are the first to gain Group Certification under the RFS."

Helen Duggan, Head of RFS Transition at Seafish, said: "We're thrilled to mark a significant new milestone for the RFS with the first Group Certification awarded to Scottish White Fish Producers Association vessels. The demand for fishing vessels to be able to demonstrate best practice through independent third-party certification is becoming

increasingly prevalent, and being certified under the RFS enables them to do this.

"The Group Certification Model offers an alternative route for vessels to achieve this, thereby increasing the scalability of the RFS. We look forward to continuing our work with SWFPA to maximise the opportunity this group presents to demonstrate the group model is credible, robust and practical."

Seafish is also currently seeking other groups of UK commercial fishing vessels to participate in additional Group Certification pilots. For further information about this or the Scheme in general contact Mick Bacon, RFS Fleet Manager at Seafish, on [Michael.Bacon@seafish.co.uk](mailto:Michael.Bacon@seafish.co.uk) or 01736 732759.

More information about the RFS can also be found on the Seafish website at <https://www.seafish.org/responsible-fishing-scheme>.



## SHETLAND NEWS *By Peter Johnson and Hans J Marter / Shetland News*

### Fish companies to move out to new Mair's Pier market

**L**ERWICK waterfront institution LHD is among the organisations preparing to move to the town's new fish market, which is in line to be completed early next year. The fish selling agency that boasts over 100 years of involvement with the Shetland fishing fleet will re-locate from its Alexandra Buildings base to the £7.6 million Lerwick Port Authority (LPA) development adjacent to the new Mair's Pier. Shetland Fish Producer's Organisation (SFPO), based at the Stewart Building some 50m from the LHD, will also be relocating to the new market by the end of the first quarter of 2020. The companies are paying for and will own the first-floor offices within the on-schedule building.

The state-of-the-art fish market will double landing capacity and complete a phased development which has included Mair's Pier and Mair's Quay, the location for the replacement building. It will also incorporate an upgraded electronic fish selling auction.

LPA chief executive Captain Calum Grains said: "The market's capacity to include these organisations contributes to our strategy to create a modern hub for the fishing industry at Holmsgarth, increasing coordination and co-operation within the sector." The development will bring a range of benefits, including in landings and dispatch, enhancing the quality of fish delivered. "Shetland is a main player in the UK's fishing industry with more fish being landed in the isles than in England, Wales and Northern Ireland combined. LHD managing director Richie Simpson said that given the huge improvements in the white fish industry in recent years, he was delighted to see the new market taking shape.



Lerwick's new fish market, Mair's Pier

He added: "Mair's Quay and market area will give an ideal location not just for landing fish into a sheltered, modern chilled fish market, but also all the other services needed to keep the whole operation running efficiently." Our LHD offices will be relocated above the new market, bringing us much closer and accessible to our fishermen clients."

SFPO chief executive Brian Isbister added: "We're delighted to be moving to offices within the new Lerwick fish market, a facility which will both enhance the quality of our members' produce and provide us with much greater scope to build on the service we provide the local industry." In the market, four temperature-controlled bays will extend to 1,600 square metres and there will be more space for palletising fish in a chilled dispatch area. The chilling system will be more environmentally-friendly and energy-efficient. Plans are in place to upgrade

the electronic auction system to provide a more versatile online platform for buyers, alongside a new 'live view' auction hall built into the design. Shetland Seafood Auctions manager Martin Leyland said: "The modern equipment and facilities in the new market mean we can ensure high product standards for our buyers and that we can achieve new objectives in quality management." In a busy first quarter generally for the port, there were 60,011 boxes of white fish landed, a 1.24 per cent increase on the same period last year, at an average price of £1,830 per tonne.

LPA, meanwhile, is again exhibiting at the Skipper Expo International in Aberdeen on 17 and 18 May. The show is taking place against a background of strong white fish and pelagic landings, with ongoing investment by the Shetland industry, albeit amidst Brexit uncertainties. More new

pelagic vessels - Adenia, Zephyr and Charisma - are due this summer as part of a £150 million replacement programme over several years. The port authority recently installed an additional new shore power point at Mair's Pier to increase availability for the pelagic fleet. Meanwhile, a replacement whitefish trawler, Valhalla (LK687), recently joined the local fleet.

The 18m long steel trawler was bought by skipper Ivan Garriock as a replacement for his old vessel that has been sold to new owners in Broadford on the Isle of Skye. The replacement vessel is a beamy 2003 build Macduff Shipyards design that can either single or twin rig trawl. She had been fishing in the English Channel the past few years. Valhalla is powered by a Caterpillar 3412 engine rated at 447kW, is 7m in the beam and has a registered length of 16.4m.

### Councillors back Toft Pier redevelopment

**S**HETLAND Islands Council is to press ahead with rebuilding and extending the Toft Pier at a cost of nearly £3 million after councillors gave the proposal their backing in April. Around one third of the cost—£1 million—will be covered by grant money from the European Maritime and Fisheries Fund. This means the council will have to stump up £1.9 million in capital costs, although discussions are ongoing as to whether further funding—possibly £500,000—can be secured from the Scottish Government. Work on the new Toft Pier, which is

extensively used by part of the local shellfish fleet, could start this summer ahead of completion in late 2020, with planning permission granted also in April.

The business case stated that a planned net service station adjacent to the pier, which is opposed by local residents due to its location, is dependent on the redevelopment. Discussions on what to do with the Toft Pier have taken place in the council chambers for years, with the project managing to navigate through the various hurdles to become a full business case. Vehicle access to the pier was closed off in 2014 before it was fully



shut in 2016 as a result of its deteriorating condition, with a pontoon installed alongside the pier instead to allow berthing. Usage of the pier by other sectors, such as salmon and mussel farming, largely stopped after it was closed

off in 2014. The pier was built in the 1950s for the Yell ferry service and then rebuilt 20 years later. When a new ferry terminal at Toft was built in 2000, the ferry service stopped using the old pier.

### KIMO board meeting held in the isles



Fishing for Litter: Back (from left): Malcolm Bell (SIC Convener), Jan Joris Midavaine, Ryan Metcalfe (both KIMO), Kevin Sutherland, Ross Sutherland, Robert Sandison, Gary Sandison (all ArctuEs crew members), Calum Grains, Lerwick Port Authority, Rick Nickerson (KIMO). Front (from left): Faron McLellan, Robert te Beest and Grioghair McCord (all KIMO).

**T**HE BOARD OF KIMO, the international organisation dedicated to protect, preserve and enhance the marine environment, met in Lerwick town hall earlier in May with the intention of developing a marine strategy for coming years. President Robert de Beest said that Shetland, one of the founding members of the organisation which spans the northeast Atlantic, was something of a nexus for maritime matters and bang in the middle of KIMO's operational area.

Shetland is also home to the KIMO secretariat - the only international secretariat to be based in the isles. The board were shown around Lerwick and Scalloway

harbours as examples of "best practice" including the supply of a backpack vacuum cleaner and brushes that can clean up net refuse from mending areas before it ends up in the sea. De Beest had particular praise for the ongoing Fishing for Litter initiative, one of KIMO's "golden eggs", which saw the addition of new dedicated skips for marine waste installed in Lerwick and Scalloway during the visit of delegates from six European coastal states. To raise awareness of the voluntary Fishing for Litter scheme, which removes around 120 tonnes of marine litter, mainly plastics, from Scottish waters every year, new-look Fishing for Litter

flags for participating vessels have also been unveiled.

Shetland Fishermen's Association and the isles fishing community have been strong supporters of the project since its inception 15 years ago. SFA policy officer Sheila Keith said: "Public awareness of the need to remove plastics from our seas is currently very high. "Our fishermen embraced the Fishing for Litter scheme when it was established in 2004 and we expect that future generations of fishermen will be as keen to participate. "Fishing boats are given large bags to collect the plastics, ghost gear and other debris that gathers in their nets during normal fishing activities.

When the fishing boats come into port, they can unload the bags of litter. These bags are collected regularly and the rubbish is recycled or disposed of on land." Grioghair McCord of KIMO said: "All the fishermen who participate in the project are volunteers.

On a daily basis, they are out at sea removing rubbish from the ocean. Result? Cleaner seas, cleaner beaches and a healthier marine environment. But McCord

conceded that there was still a lot to do and progress could be at times very slow. The loss of over 300 containers from MSC Zoe, one of the world's largest container ships, in a marine reserve off the coast of The Netherlands in January, had sent the Dutch Fishing for Litter scheme into overdrive. Garbage from the spill sometimes outweighed the fish catch.

Nineteen of the containers were also washed ashore on Dutch islands. This had spurred the need for clean up costs to be paid by shipping companies which spill general cargoes and not just oil and toxic chemicals. "It's an ever-changing field .... so our work is never done, but we have small victories along the way," said McCord.



## ORKNEY NEWS *By Craig Taylor*

### RNLI lifesaving director visits Orkney



Pictured in Longhope are Alex Sinclair, mechanic, John Payne the new RNLI community lifesaving director, Kevin Kirkpatrick, coxswain and Dupre StÉtt, RNLI area lifesaving manager Shetland and Orkney. (Longhope RNLI)

**J**OHN PAYNE, the new RNLI community lifesaving director, paid a visit to Orkney and Shetland recently when he visited all lifeboat stations in the islands.

He called in at Lerwick and Aith in Shetland, and all three lifeboat stations here in Orkney — Stromness, Kirkwall and Longhope — meeting with those involved in the RNLI including crew, management and guild members.

While in Longhope Mr Payne also took the opportunity to visit the Longhope Lifeboat Museum, where the 50th anniversary of the Longhope Lifeboat Disaster was recently commemorated.

During his time in Orkney, Mr Payne told of his experience and vision for the development of his role. As a mariner, and before coming ashore in 1998, Mr Payne held a number of operational commands involved in the installation and maintenance of international subsea telecoms systems.

Since coming ashore, he has held some key senior management roles, including successfully leading both

operations and service delivery teams. He most recently held the role of managing director for Nautilus Marine Services Plc and he has lived and worked in the USA and Asia.

He was chief operating officer and interim chief executive at Hallin Marine Subsea, and is also a Fellow of the Institute of Directors. Mr Payne joined the Rotary Club as a volunteer in 2015 and supports various charities and charitable work.

He says he is excited about joining the RNLI and bringing all of these skills together into his new role there, which was an appointment announced back in November.

After his visit, he said “I am truly humbled by the dedication of all the volunteers, supporters and fundraisers that I met in the islands and their commitment to saving lives at sea, through either rescue or education.

“The RNLI is a volunteer-led charity and it is only with the very special volunteer support that we are able to take the lifeboats to sea to save lives.”

### Orkney company tow Danish trawler



The Karbak arriving alongside in Lerwick, Shetland. (Green Marine)

■ ORKNEY company Green Marine towed a Danish fishing vessel to safety at the end of April after it had broken down off Shetland.

The company explained that just two hours after being contacted Green Marine was departing Stromness to aid the Danish fishing vessel Karbak, a 35m trawler which had lost all means of propulsion.

Approximately 18 hours from the call, the Green Isle, Green Marine's multicat, had transited 152 nautical miles to reach the Karbak, located 60 nautical miles off Shetland,

where a towline was safely connected between the vessels.

In the following seven hours, the Karbak was safely towed and brought alongside the quay in Lerwick, and the Green Isle returned to Orkney.

The master of the fishing vessel was grateful for the rapid response time, saying: “We were impressed with how quickly Green Marine organised a team and vessel to come and assist us in our time of need. They were constantly professional from start to finish and resolved a bad situation.”

### Charity cheques to Fishermen's Mission, RNLI, and heart screening in Orkney



Pictured, back row, from the KDDL Orkney darts committee are Brian Moar, David Henderson, Richard Polson, Ian Linklater, Robbie Norquoy and Craig Taylor. Front row, David and Ingrid Dalrymple of the Freya Rose Dalrymple Memorial Fund, David Sinclair of the Fishermen's Mission, and Kirkwall RNLI representatives Paul Miller, Scott Bain and Sinclair Pirie.

■ THE KDDL Orkney darts committee held its annual charity cheque presentation recently, making the end of the season.

The Fishermen's Mission and Kirkwall RNLI each received £500 for their annual donation from money raised at the Davie Cooper Memorial Darts. Meanwhile, the Freya Rose Dalrymple Memorial Fund set up to provide heart screening for the young here in Orkney through charity CRY

(Cardiac Risk In the Young) received £820.

Money was raised at the Steven Flett Memorial darts and at the darts trophy presentation night when the ‘Tattie Bogle’ Shield was also held.

Charlie Tulloch at the Kirkwall Masonic Club also contributed money by organising a raffle and other fundraisers at the club prior to the darts. Thanks to all who contributed so generously.



## ISLE OF MAN NEWS *By Michael Craine*

### SCALLOPERS

■ A month of easterly winds meant that most of the king scallop fleet fished off the south-west and west coast of the island with boats landing into Peel and Port St Mary. The fair weather at the end of the month allowed the scallopers to have a good spell on the grounds which made up for the lack of shells.

There have been a couple of incidents where local scallopers have got their props caught up in poorly marked pot ropes resulting in a tow back to port. Thankfully there was no serious damage and boats were back at sea the following day. Some skippers are having problems getting crew resulting in a number of scallopers being undermanned—not ideal.

The 11.3 metre Douglas scalloper Serpico, PL156, has been sold to Kilkeel by Juan Canipa who now skippers and owns Sapphire, DO 7. Serpico, previously registered as L 37, joined the Peel fleet in 2010 and was owned by Laurie Henley. She mainly potted for crabs before moving to Douglas in 2013 where Juan converted her for trawling and took part in the seasonal king and queen scallop fishery.

### BEAM TRAWLERS

■ At the beginning of the month the Brixham beam-trawler Robin of Ladram, BM110 worked grounds in Liverpool Bay before steaming back to Brixham. Also this month Belgian beam-trawlers from Zeebrugge trawled outside the Manx 12-mile limit between the island and Anglesey. These boats included Vaya Con Dios, Z526 and Flamingo, Z548.

### PRAWN FISHERY

■ The Port St Mary prawn trawler Antares, CT185, which is now based in Portavogie, moved to the St Bees grounds at the beginning of the month, joining a couple of Maryport prawn trawlers. These boats were soon joined by trawlers from Portavogie, Ardglass and Kilkeel plus Ocean Maid, BA 55 and Freedom III, BA280 from the Clyde.

The Northern Ireland trawlers were mainly landing at home with a few landing into Whitehaven. Returning from the grounds on the 15th April, were Sparkling Sea, N183, which sheltered off Peel and the Ardglass trawler David Liam, B109



Scallopers berthed in Peel

which came in and berthed alongside. There was also a fleet of trawlers, mainly from Kilkeel, working southwest of the Chickens.

### POTTERS

■ Crews on the multi-hulled potters were glad of their stable platforms earlier this month, which allowed

them to work the weather. The Manx potter fleet, which works all year, is made up of ten multi-hulled potters and a few single hulled potters. Most of these boats work out of Peel. Some of the whelk potters, working off the east coast of the island, have caught some excellent sized whelks—twice the normal size.

## A BIG THANK YOU

**T**he Fishermen's Mission Isle of Man would like to say THANK-YOU to everyone who donated to the collection organised by the Manx Fish Producers Organisation. They raised £1,960 which was divided between the Fishermen's Mission Isle of Man and the Peel RNLI Swim-Safe Team.

*The cheques were presented by Dr David Beard, Chief Executive of the PO to Mike Craine—Hon Agent Fishermen's Mission Isle of Man, Dawn Marshall—Swim Safe Co-ordinator Isle of Man and Frankie Horne—RNLI Fishing Safety Manager UK & Ireland.*



### MANX LIFEBOAT LAUNCHES

■ In 2018, the islands'

lifeboats were launched 71 times and rescued 90 people. Douglas was the busiest with

25 launches followed by Peel with 15, Port St Mary 13, Ramsey 12 and Port Erin 6.

## NORTHERN IRELAND NEWS *By Dick James*

### BROWN CRAB MANAGEMENT CONSULTATION



The Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs Issued under covering letter on the 2nd of May, a consultation on management proposals for the Brown Crab fishery in Northern Ireland. The closing date for responses is 27th June. The cover letter says that there has been industry concern over the health of the stock with increased effort in recent years culminating in landings worth £1.239 million in 2017.

The document notes that the Northern Ireland Fish Producers Organisation sought EFF grant aid funding in 2011 to commission a report on the management options for the Northern Ireland Brown Crab fishery. The report was undertaken by Poseidon Aquatic Resource Management Limited and concluded that there was a need for improved management of the Brown Crab and other inshore fisheries. Options given were:

- Increase minimum landing size to 140mm
- Limit type of vessels permitted inshore
- Limit on hobby fishermen
- Ban on the landing of soft-shell crab
- Ban on de-clawing at sea
- Ban on landing berried crab
- Gear restriction
- Escapement measures.

Whereas the issue of hobby fishermen has been addressed and other measures have been introduced locally (Strangford Lough), generally the picture in 2019 remains as it was in 2011.

The favoured measure is for an increase in minimum landing size from 130mm to 140mm which could bring Northern Ireland in line with Wales and the Republic of Ireland but out of sync with the rest of the UK. In England, however, the inshore waters are adjudicated by regional conservation authorities and management measures are set by them.

A ban on the landing of berried crab is seen as a boost to the reproductive cycle and it is noted that in other parts of the

UK such a ban applies to the landing of all cēstaceans.

In an effort control mode, the shellfish entitlement applicable nationally could be enhanced by a specific Northern Ireland permit based on track record with the suggested cut-off date being the 1st January 2019.

It is also suggested that pot limits may be applied on a per boat basis but whether it should be based on size or some other criteria is part of the question. A ban on declawing at sea is seen in the consultation as a wasteful process in terms of the overall value of the fishery and would be needed if the minimum size issue was to be enforced.

What is more interesting is the omission of measures proposed in the Poseidon report but not covered in the consultation document. Gear restriction and escape panels are omitted, as is the ban on the landing of soft-shell crab, which many involved in the fishery see as a favoured option.

The paper can be found at <https://www.daera-ni.gov.uk/consultations>.

#### ■ VOISINAGE

We have Voisinage (after a fashion). Following a dramatic and rapid series of political moves, the new deal was agreed and signed off despite protest. However, the new Voisinage is not the same as the old one and must raise questions on the implications for now and the future.

Firstly, the baselines have changed. Whereas previously the agreement was to start from the beach now it is decreed that it will be from the baselines used to determine the cover of territorial waters and the 200-mile EEZ from Malin Head to Carnsore Point, plus in the Irish Sea, new baselines have been drawn across Wexford Bay and the Bay of Dundalk.

This may well affect the prime cause of the initial dispute, which was the harvesting of seed mussel, but in the Bay of Dundalk, it is also going to impact on the Kilkeel based potters who traditionally fished there, particularly for lobster.

Next, the area has changed. Whereas previously it was beach to 12 miles it is now baseline to 6 miles. This makes little difference in the Irish Sea as long as the London Convention remains in force and access to the 6 to 12-mile zone is covered but on the west coast grounds which had in the past been fished will now be closed. This was subject to a legal interpretation in the Galway court previously in a case involving the Kilkeel based Arcane.

This could also affect the Brexit issue where it could transpire in the Irish Sea that access will be open from baseline to 6 miles but closed out with 6 miles.

Given that the agreement is supposed to be the same to both the North and South of Ireland it remains to be seen now how the northern Administration will react in response to the new Voisinage.

#### ■ THE FISHERY

Well, it had to come to an end and within a week

the nature of the Irish Sea prawn fishery changed from a booming fishery of good size langoustines to a scratching of predominately tails only prawns. The bottom had got soft as the plankton bloom died off and the scum settled on the bottom making it harder to spread the gear and resulting in the prawns staying put in their burrows. Time to look elsewhere or take time off for a bit of maintenance and a paint up.

Looking for other options some of the fleet tried the west coast of Scotland grounds joining the boats from the North Sea who had decamped there. There was no sign of the Smalls ground coming good though some Scots boats made for Jones Bank but not in the same numbers as in previous years. The Whitehaven pitches were not showing up although it is still early enough and there is time yet for them to show.

What did show promise was the Clyde where at the time of the Irish sea demise a fishery showed up there after it being barren for some considerable time. Generally, something turns up and the Clyde fishery

could be good to tide over the change over to the Irish Sea summer fishery once the grounds have cleared.

The first of May heralded the reopening of the Irish Sea White fish Fishery after the CRP closure and the usual suspects made for the Haddock grounds off the Co. Louth coast. Some of the Whitefish fleet tried again the West of Scotland grounds for a mixture of fish. Reports of success are not yet to hand.

The Scallop fishery is pretty much moribund with the Isle of Man grounds being particularly disappointing this winter and it being too early for the Queen Scallop season with whatever quota the Manx authorities choose to dish out this summer.

On the inshore front things are starting to look up with continuing interest in gearing up for the Brown Crab and new boats appearing within the fleet. The weather seems to have settled and activity is increasing as the summer only fleet joins the full-timers. Lobster was the target for the smaller potters in the winter months but the increase in effort is now on the crab.



## UK NEWS

### Sharing under ILO 188

In late April, a new briefing note on the topic of UK Share Fishermen in relation to ILO 188 Work in Fishing convention 2007 was published by Human Rights at Sea, alongside the National Federation of Fishermen's Organisations (NFFO) and The Fishermen's Mission.

The briefing note, *UK Share Fishermen: A Practical Guide & Review of Status*, aims to provide clarity and a new baseline reference publication in support of new UK legislation reflecting the application of ILO 188 – the international minimum standard regulating living and working conditions on board fishing vessels, which came into force internationally on 16 November 2017 and was formally ratified by the UK in January 2019.

The overarching objective of the briefing note is to provide “a plain-English explanation of the status of share fishermen” and assist those in the UK fisheries supply chain understand the basis upon which share fishermen are engaged, the activities they undertake, and the rights and responsibilities they have.

In terms of its effect on those working aboard vessels, ILO 188 “brings parity to all fishermen in respect of the provision of minimum welfare standards and human rights protections

on board UK flagged vessels and vessels operating inside UK waters.” That said, the briefing document explicitly indicates that the rights and obligations laid out by ILO 188 do not erode the status of share fishermen working in the UK.

In this regard, the briefing note highlights that, in light of ILO 188 coming into force, the parity now enjoyed by share and employed fishermen in respect of basic minimum welfare standards and human rights protections has generally been a welcome development.

It also notes, however, that the move has caused some “consternation” within the industry, in particular amongst boat owners and share fishermen who view this development as a move closed to the erosion of the status of share fishermen. Thus, the report stresses that in order to “allay these fears and cement the status of share fishermen” in the UK, more work and clarification is needed.

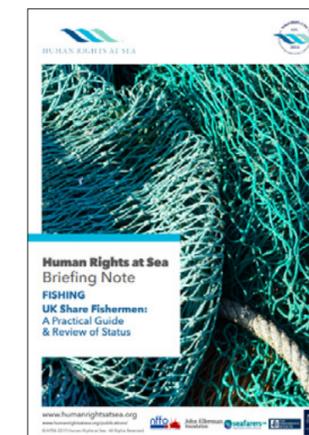
In this regard, it is recommended that ILO 188 work agreements take account of the particulars of share fishing arrangements whilst maintaining certain minimum protections, and that emphasis is placed on the rights of fishermen to choose the basis upon which they are engaged. The note also highlights

that, given that some fishermen are paid on a day rate basis, which falls outside of the strict definition of share fishing, the question is raised as to the status of such fishermen and whether their rights under ILO 188 and the WIFC Regs 2018 are in any way prejudiced?

Commenting on the publication, Robert Greenwood, Safety and Training Officer, NFFO, commented that: “The right to be a share fisherman is an important part of the UK Fishing industry and is a historic privilege enjoyed by both fisherman and vessel owners equally. The introduction of ILO 188 Work in Fishing Convention and its implementation into UK law, includes both employed and share fishermen, and this independent briefing note by Human Rights at Sea clarifies that the rights of a share fisherman should be unaffected by the Work in Fishing Convention changes.”

Commodore David Dickens RN CBE, Chief Executive of The Fishermen's Mission said: “This timely briefing brings much needed clarity to assessments of the rights of share catch fisherman in light of the Work in Fishing Convention legislation. It also allows individual fishermen and the industry to see clearly the overall welfare balance of choosing to work as a share catch fisherman.”

Founder and Trustee, David Hammond reflected: “We are



pleased to deliver this publication which has been produced with support from the industry, The Fishermen's Mission and the NFFO to provide a useful reference tool and explanatory document in order to assist with understanding UK fisheries working conditions under ILO 188.”

The full briefing document may be accessed at, <https://www.humanrightsatsea.org/2019/04/30/new-uk-share-fishermen-briefing-note-published/>

Further details with respect to ILO 188 and UK fisheries can be found at, <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/ilo-work-in-fishing-convention>

### Quotas top of the agenda for industry representatives at House of Lords Landing Obligation enquiry

Well into the first year in terms of the full implementation of the Landing Obligation, the ongoing House of Lords enquiry into the policy's implementation has recently been reconvened.

Amongst the array of questions currently being investigated by the enquiry, as it probes the impact of the Landing Obligation, are whether the industry's concerns that the new rules would result in fishermen quickly running out of quota (and, consequently, having to stop fishing) have been realised?

In early May, the EU Energy and Environment Sub-Committee heard evidence from fishing industry representatives on the

matter. Among those who gave evidence were Mr Bertie Armstrong (SFF), Mr Barrie Deas (NFFO), Mr Jeremy Percy (NUFTA) and Mr Jim Pettipher (Coastal Producer Organisation).

During the session fishing representatives indicated that the issue had, hitherto, not led to widespread tie-ups, highlighting the range of measures that had been adopted by fishermen in terms of improving selectivity and changing their fishing patterns—measures which had been especially successful in relation to undersized fish.

Quota-driven discarding, however, remains high on the list of challenges. In this regard, concerns were raised that as the year went on and quota inevitably became scarcer, this

could have implications in terms of, for example, limiting the effectiveness of quota swaps. The crucial role that various mitigation factors had played, to date, in ensuring chokes had been avoided was highlighted by Barrie Deas.

The serious challenges posed by Relative Stability, in relation to dealing with chokes and avoiding them, was emphasised by the SFF's Bertie Armstrong, who stressed that this was something swaps would not fix, highlighting that the issue of discarding in European waters was 'systemic' and would only be addressed by the adoption of a 'more sensible' distribution of quota once the UK leaves the CFP.

Allocations at the national level were highlighted by representatives of the inshore

sector, with NUFTA's Jerry Percy stressing that even though the under-10m fleet is relatively selective, the discard issue still posed a challenge for that segment of the fleet on account of a lack of quota and difficulties in accessing quota. This was echoed by Jim Pettipher who highlighted also that ineffective quota management was an issue that exacerbated this.

Further points raised by inshore representatives included the difficulties in terms of moving to different areas so as to avoid unwanted catches that smaller vessel faced, the lack of information provided to the inshore fleet, and the lack of scholarly attention received by the small scale fleet in relation to discarding.

# Aberdeen Show Review

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SCOTTISH FISHERMEN'S FEDERATION



## Skipper Expo Int. Aberdeen draws the crowds

**S**kipper Expo Int. Aberdeen 2019 has been hailed as a great success by exhibitors and visitors alike, with this year's show being the biggest ever in the series and with excellent visitor numbers.

"It seemed that people were turning up earlier and staying for longer – which is testament to the large number of stands, and of course, their sheer quality," says Sharon Boyle of show organiser **MARA MEDIA**.

Sponsored by the **SCOTTISH FISHERMEN'S FEDERATION**, the expo was officially opened by Scottish Cabinet Secretary for Fisheries, Fergus Ewing.

The minister said: "The show organiser, Mara Media, have done a terrific job in organising the event and it is fantastic that there are more companies exhibiting

here than ever before," he said.

With over 230 exhibitors covering virtually every equipment and support services for the fishing industry, the expo proved a great place to do business.

Among the successful companies was **MMG WELDING**, who enjoyed a flying start to the show through the successful first sale of their new patent product, the Vessel to Vessel Gangway, which was purchased by Donal and Alan O'Neill of the **MFV SPARKLING STAR** based in Castletownbere.

"We have had huge interest in our new product and the show has been a great way to promote our compact gangway systems," said Eibhlin McGuinness of MMG Welding.

Show highlights included the extremely popular seafood tasting bar hosted by **BOX POOL**



The Organising team, Hugh, Sharon, Lia, Brid and Declan

**SOLUTIONS** and safety demos from the **RNLI**. The seafood buffet and dance at the Douglas Hotel on the Friday evening also proved a great success.

Sharon Boyle of Mara Media said: "We are thrilled at the success of the expo and this is an event that has really captured the imagination of the fishing industry."



Over 230 companies exhibited this year



MMG Welding, Killybegs

## Ewing announces new Scottish Safety Group at show

**SCOTTISH FISHERIES SECRETARY FERGUS EWING** announced at Skipper Expo Int. Aberdeen 2019 the creation of a group to advise on health and safety on Scottish commercial fishing vessels.

Mr Ewing said: "It's no exaggeration to say that commercial sea fishing is one of the world's most dangerous jobs.

"Over the years, there have been too many serious accidents and sadly too many lives lost at sea. Injuries and fatalities take a terrible toll, most obviously on families but also on our coastal communities. I want to try and change that. "We need to do all we can to make fishing as safe as possible. I am therefore establishing an expert group to be made up of people who are active fishers in different sectors and seas. It will advise on how we can improve health, safety and wellbeing on Scottish vessels.

"I also hope that the work of the group will encourage more people to see fishing as a desirable career, which will help to ensure the sustainability of the industry in the long term."



Cabinet Secretary Fergus Ewing, SFF chief executive, Bertie Armstrong with Mark Jackson, Jackson Trawls

## VESSEL SIGNINGS GALORE AT THE SHOW



Eamonn and Teresa McHugh celebrate with Bert Leslie, Seaquest Systems, Kent Dangaard and Knud Karstensen from Karstensen's Shipyard

With over 27 shipyards present at Skipper Expo Int. Aberdeen 2019, the show was a great showcase for skippers looking for new build options.

Vessels were also signed for at the show, most notably by Eamon McHugh of the **ANTARCTIC FISHING COMPANY**, who placed an order for a 62.60 m pelagic trawler new build with **KARSTENSEN SHIPYARD**. The vessel will be named Antarctic and

will be based at Killybegs.

The McHugh family currently operates the 51m Antarctic, which will be sold upon arrival of the new vessel. The new vessel will operate along the same pattern as the existing vessel, with a traditional pelagic trawl fishery, where target species are mackerel and herring.

The vessel will be outfitted with all the newest machinery and equipment, and suppliers have



The Harcus family and Ove from Vesvaerftet Shipyard signing with BOPP for the deck machinery package

been chosen carefully to match specification and requirements. In particular it is noteworthy, that Aberdeen exhibitor **SEA QUEST** will supply the full deck machinery / winch / crane package.

Another Aberdeen exhibitor, **KER GROUP** will supply the full RSW-machinery and vacuum unloading packages. Both these Killybegs based companies have long standing business relationships with Eamon McHugh.

**BARRY ELECTRONICS**, also of Killybegs, will supply the complete array of electronics for the new vessel. Antarctic is scheduled for delivery in July 2021.

Meanwhile, also signed for at the Aberdeen expo was a hydraulic deck machinery package from **BOPP** for the new vessel RussaTaign that will shortly be getting built at the **VESTVAERFTET SHIPYARD** for Thomas, Peter and Paul Harcus.



Whitby based **PARKOL MARINE ENGINEERING** had a very successful Skipper Expo Int. Aberdeen with two new boat building contracts signed at the show. They were also awarded the 'Best New Build Shellfish Boat 2018' for **STAR FISHING COMPANY'S** 20m scallop

vessel, **SUMMER ROSE**. At the expo, John and David Clark of **RELIANCE FISHING COMPANY LTD** (above left) signed for a 20m LOA, 16.49 registered length, 190 tonne twin-rig trawler, complete with Mitsubishi S6R2 main engine and Reintjes gearbox. She will



be built and fitted out in Whitby with fabrication starting in August. Meanwhile, **LCL SHIPPING LTD** of Whalsay represented by Leonard Anderson (above right) completed the signing for a 27m x 9.7m, 350 tonne Salmon Feed Carrier. The vessel will be twin

screw powered by **CUMMINS** KTA-19 engines. This will be the second feed carrier built by Parkol for LCL (first - Havilah completed 2015) and is to be built at the company's Middlesbrough yard with the first steel being due for delivery at the end of the month.

## VCU takes Catch Management system order for Norway

Aberdeen exhibitor **VCU** was delighted to take an order at the show for the new-build Norwegian fishing vessel VA-19-S 'Tenor', which was signed by the owner Frode Jensen.

The Dutch company produce The VCU CatchManagement System - a carefully designed weighing system, developed in collaboration with fishermen.

The order taken at Aberdeen consists of:

- 1 VCU CatchManagement system with label option combined with 4 scales and scale selector for use at the automatic grader
- 1 VCU CatchManagement system with label option combined with a single scale for use at the fish bins in the fish room

- 1 VCU CatchManagement system with label option combined with a single scale for packing prawns at the shelter deck
- 1 sample scale for use on the sorting belt at the shelter deck
- 2 spare label printers
- Administration and report software for use in the bridge

Earlier in 2014, Frode Jensen commissioned VCU to deliver and install a VCU CatchManagement system for the vessel, VA-18-S 'Tempo'.

More information on the VCU CatchManagement system at:

<https://www.vcu.nl/en/vcu-catchmanagement>



VCU received strong interest in their products



Kieran Ward from DRAWM busy taking orders



Arthur MacDonald, Commercial Oils with Edward Anderson, Anteras, Shetland



Colin Anderson, Crab company Scotland busy with enquiries



Duo Tool's Kevin Willox, meeting with his customers



First time exhibitors Tyson's Ship Riggers with a great variety of gear on display



Skipper Seamus McNeil who uses Solent Pot hauling equipment catching up with Dave Middleton



Peter Stevenson, Aderco and Andrew Deacy, Engine Solutions first time exhibitors at Aberdeen



French Fishermen from La Turballe Harbour, Brittany make a visit to the show



Fish Pump on display from MacGregor (GBR) Ltd

## Box Pool Solutions' stand hands out over 8,500 seafood tasters at expo!



Gayle Graham of Box Pool Solutions serving up fantastic Scottish Seafood

Box Pool Solutions always look forward to Skipper Expo Aberdeen Int., and the seafood taster stand they host is, without doubt, one of the most popular elements of the show.

Managing director Gayle Graham says: "It's our chance to say 'thank you' to all our customers and promote the finest Scottish Seafood. "I have never known the stand to be so busy with queues stretching far back for most of the day or until the samples ran out - it was proving impossible to cook the fish quick enough to satisfy the demand. Our special thanks as always to the teams from Buchan Braes and the Palace Hotel, Peterhead for preparing such a fantastic spread - there were over 8,500 tasters given out over the two days. Thanks also to **Jim McConville (E2 Partnership),**

and **Chris and Colin Anderson (Anderson Marine)** for the supply and build of the stand.

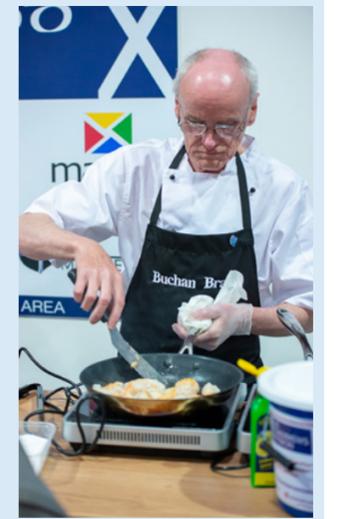
"All the fish is donated from Scottish vessels and prepared by local fish merchants. It's a real team effort that has proved to be a huge success - our thanks to everyone."

**Special thanks to the following for processing the fish donated by fishermen:** McConnell Seafoods, JH Milne, GT Seafoods, Sustainable Seafoods, J Smith Sandend, G & J Jack (FR), Enterfoods, Jack Fish Co (PD), French Fish Export, Seafood Ecosse, Laeso, McConnell Seafoods.

Special thanks to Seafood Ecosse, Macduff Shellfish and Frozen @ Sea for providing Prawns and Scallops and to J Smith & Son, Sandend for the Smoked Salmon and Smoked Haddock.

To the **Harvester PD98 & Ocean Harvest PD198** for Haddock prepared by Mc Connell Seafoods, **Boy John INS110 & Rosebloom INS353** for Haddock prepared by Sustainable Seafoods, **Harvest HopePD120** for Cod prepared by GT Seafoods, **Sunrise FR359** for Cod, Ling and Catfish prepared by G & J Jack (FR), **Reliance BF800** for Monkfish, Megrin and Prawns prepared by Jack Fish Co (PD) & Seafood Ecosse, **Russa Tagin K193** for Haddock prepared by JH Milne, **Endurance FR111** for Cod prepared by Mc Connell Seafoods, **Caledonia BCK35** for Megrin, Monk, Plaice and Sole prepared by Jack Fish Co (PD), **Tranquility PD35** for Cod prepared by JH Milne, **Budding Rose PD418** for Haddock prepared by Sustainable Seafoods, **Opportunus IVPD96** for Cod prepared by JH Milne, **Lapwing PD972** for Haddock prepared by Sustainable Seafoods, **Aalskere K373** for Haddock (Smoked) prepared by J Smith, Sandend, **Boy Andrew WK170** for Hake prepared by JH Milne, **Apollo INS179** for Prawns prepared by Frozen@Sea, **Evening Star PD1022** for Scallops prepared by Laeso, **Faithlie FR220** for Hake prepared by GT Seafoods, **Venture BF326** for Blue Ling, Black Scabbard prepared by French Fish Export, **Avrella LK174**

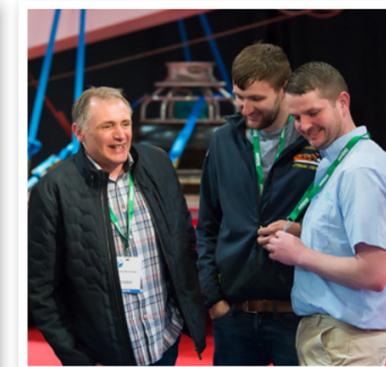
for Monkfish prepared by Jack Fishing Co, **Olivia Jean TN45** for Scallops prepared by Laeso, **Lynden FR151** for Lemon Sole, Monkfish prepared by Enterfoods, **Heather Sprig FR151** for Prawns prepared by Enterfoods, Aquarius FR95 for Haddock prepared by Enterfoods, **Atlantic Challenge PD197** for a very generous donation for Fishermen's Mission and RNLI.



The ever popular seafood tasters hosted by Box Pool Solutions



Strong supporter of our show, Chris Anderson, Anderson Marine



Neil Leslie from Seaquest Systems enjoying catching up with customers



Crown Marine Seats kept busy throughout the two days



Sam Pearson from Barrus dealing with the many enquiries during the show



George and Stuart Anderson admiring the model of the new Adenia due shortly from Zamakona Yards

**VISITOR  
TESTIMONIALS**

**Eleanor McGillivray, Shetland Bigger & better than last year - this show improves all the time.**

**Chris Ryan, Fife**  
If you're involved in the fishing industry in any way whatsoever then visiting the show is essential to meet suppliers and customers.

**Tim Cook, Essex**  
Excellent industry show. Covering all commercial fishing needs.

**Magnus Polson, Shetland**  
Excellent range of stalls and business ideal for members of the fishing industry and great promotion of the Scottish industry as well. Would highly recommend and congratulate The Skipper team for their hard work.

**Robert Buchan, Aberdeenshire**  
The show was perfect in all ways plenty of foreign companies displaying all their gear and lots of different yards for any lads thinking of a new vessel. Only shortage this year was the smaller Potting Vessels only one on display, it's great to have a look onboard them.

**Gordon Macnab, Caithness**  
Great exhibition, found all stands I was looking for. Layout was good and easy to find. Food tasting stand was excellent, was good to taste different types of fish.

**Steven Clarke, Invernesshire**  
This was the best show I have been to in Aberdeen. Very well laid out and there was a fantastic amount of varied exhibitors there. The show was superbly organised and I will definitely return next year.

**Alan Thomson, Aberdeenshire**  
Great show as always with fantastic exhibits from all the company's, also would like to thank all the team who organised the show for their exceptional professionalism and hard work to make the show a success as always.

**Barry Brunton, Berwickshire**  
As always the show was FANTASTIC. The wife and I have been going for years, and we Feel, 2019 was the best yet! We are so looking forward to next year's show.

**Craig Beckett, Angus**  
Fantastic array of equipment getting promoted.

**Aurea Campo, Pontevedra, Spain**  
It was easy to get to the Skipper show from the city centre. I found very welcoming people, eager to trade and the local seafood taster stand was an extra surprise difficult to surpass.

**Sustainable Scottish fish celebrated**



■ Celebrating the successful re-certification of the **SCOTTISH SEAFOOD ASSOCIATION'S (SSA)** Group Chain of Custody, visitors to the Aberdeen Expo were treated to delicious MSC certified tasters.

Canapés, designed and served by award-winning chefs from the Buchan Braes Hotel, Peterhead, included a range of certified Scottish species such as cod, saithe, haddock and hake caught by members of the Scottish Fisheries Sustainable Accreditation Group (SFSAG) and supplied by SSA Group members.

SSA CEO Jimmy Buchan said: "We are thrilled to have been in the MSC programme for three years, having been successfully re-certified in May this year. We now have twenty-one members in our group certification. This is rising year on year. Our customers always want sustainable seafood, and our group certification allows

smaller businesses to meet this demand for sustainable MSC certified supplies."

The first in the world for Group Certification of processors, the SSA has led the way in increasing the supply of MSC certified Scottish seafood into the UK supply chain to help meet the growing demand.

Claire Pescod, UK & Ireland Senior Fisheries Outreach Manager, added: "It's great to see the successful SSA Group scheme's membership increasing and the SSA continuing to help their members meet the growing demand for sustainable seafood. MSC developed the Group scheme to provide a more cost-effective way for organisations to join forces and benefit from economies of scale. The SSA Group means that UK fish and chip shops and restaurants have improved access to the large range of delicious certified species that Scotland has to offer."

**"Fantastic" Skipper Expo for Caithness Creels**



■ **CAITHNESS CREELS** reported a fantastic Skipper Expo Int. Aberdeen with the "biggest sales to date from an exhibition".

Managing director John Sinclair said: "The show is improving every year, not just the number of stands but more importantly the quality of stands. Fishermen come to the event to look at fishing gear and there was plenty of it on display this year."

**FISA NETS LARGE CATCH**

■ **FIBRAS INDUSTRIALES S.A.**, commercially known as FISA, reported much better than expected results from Skipper Expo Int. Aberdeen.

Over the past few years the company has gradually introduced its products, spearheaded by its SUPRA Advanced Fibers line of third generation HDPE, mostly in the South West of England, Iceland and The Netherlands.

As a result of the great feedback the company received from its pioneer European customers in the fishing industry, this year that FISA decide to showcase its products at Aberdeen and offer them to the mass market.

The reaction during the exhibition was much better than anticipated and firm requests for products have come in at incredible speed.

"As I landed back In Peru, I turned my phone on and could already see mails requesting rigged nets and also loose bales, I have never seen such a fast reaction from an exhibition," said Yoni Radzinski, Commercial Director of FISA.

The companies interested in FISA products were very impressed by its existing range of customers which include Skinney-Thinganes of Iceland, Ocean Fish and Interfish of the UK and the Ekofish Group of the Netherlands.

Current quotes Yoni said he is attending include the Scottish fishing fleet, English fishing fleet and sports and security net market.



**Busy show for Thistle Marine**

■ **THISTLE MARINE** enjoyed an especially busy first day to Skipper Expo Int. Aberdeen with four cranes being sold. Two were for Ireland, one for Fraserburgh and the other for a new build at **MACDUFF SHIPYARDS**. They also received many queries for new vessel crane packages. Karen Anderson of Thistle Marine commented, "It was an excellent run show with lots of visitors."

**ECHOMASTER MARINE WINS ORDERS**

■ Continuing the 'hands on' theme of previous Skipper Expos, **ECHOMASTER MARINE** displayed a range of working equipment from leading manufacturers to appeal to all sectors of the fishing industry.

One of the highlights for under 10m vessel owners, was the new Hondex HE-773II-Di Small Boat Searchlight Sonar. The sonar has been sold and deployed on several inshore vessels since the beginning of 2019 with excellent feedback from owners. On both days, the sonar drew many enquiries, with several orders being placed on the day. Continuing with the Hondex Product family, the new HDX-121 Chartplotter/Echo-Sounder in either it's 12" standalone or black-box versions generated interest because of its ability to map, view and store seabed contour and ground discrimination.

The latest 2019 SIMRAD A2004 Autopilot package offer continued our position as one of the largest



**Arlene from Echomaster dealing with enquiries**

providers of small vessel Autopilots in the UK.

For larger vessels, several enquiries were received for a range of equipment and new-building projects, with interest in SIMRAD Norway's PX Trawl monitoring system and ES80 Echo Sounder. Also, at the show, Echomaster Marine exhibited video tiling and single trackball Processor control solutions, which seems to be increasing in popularity for new-

build projects wishing to utilise large displays.

Echomaster's association with OLEX Norway continues, with the new GRIB Weather Forecast module for the OLEX 3D mapping software realising orders and follow-up enquiries on both days.

A spokesperson said: "Once again, Skipper Expo Int. Aberdeen did not disappoint, and we now look forward to the 2020 shows with the prospect of new venues."

orders, over 400 sacrificial anodes were sold, some taken away and the balance delivered on the Monday after the show. SeaCoat Anti Fouling Paint received much interest and Marine Supplies (International) will actively follow up all

enquiries made at the Expo. "This year was by far the busiest Skipper Expo and we look forward to the next one, not only here, but in other venues," said Gavin R Fisher, Managing Director, Marine Supplies (International).

**Excellent expo for Marine Supplies (International)**

■ **MARINE SUPPLIES (INTERNATIONAL) LTD** had an excellent two days at Skippers Expo Int. Aberdeen 2019 with many orders for Sonihull Anti Fouling Systems taken at the exhibition. In addition to Sonihull Anti Fouling Systems

**ANNUAL FREE SEAFOOD BUFFET**  
SPECIAL THANKS TO ALL OUR SPONSORS ON THE NIGHT



**EXHIBITOR  
TESTIMONIALS**

**Julian Ramsey, MACGREGOR (GBR) LTD**  
Great show! You know it's been a good day when it is 4pm the first time you look at your watch!

**Jane Goodwin, MULLION SURVIVAL TECHNOLOGY LTD.**  
Excellent show, well organised and professional as always. Good attendance. Friday was probably the busiest day I have ever known. All the right audience there.

**David Ash, MANTSBRITE LTD**  
The best Aberdeen Show we have exhibited at for many years, busy from the start on Friday with orders taken and good quality enquiries to follow up on. Well worth attending for exhibitors and visitors!

**Ken Smith, HOOK MARINE LTD**  
Our first show for a few years, and how it has grown! A great opportunity to see customers face to face, and to present safety improvements for their boat.

**John Sinclair, CAITHNESS CREELS**  
Best show to date, most orders I've taken at a show, Very good quality of visitors.

**Chris Martin, MEDLEY POTS**  
Another great show by the skipper team, busy on both days with some good confirmed orders from both existing and new customers.

**Lynne Forman, MACDUFF SHELLFISH**  
This was our 1st time exhibiting and was definitely worth doing so. The team made it an easy event to attend and everything went smoothly.

**Ross MacLennan, SHETLAND ISLANDS COUNCIL**  
Another brilliantly organised show my Maramedia, as always they have been a pleasure to work with and we look forward to seeing them all again next year. The show is going from strength to strength, long may it continue!

**John Grant, WARTSILA MARINE**  
The 2019 event was busy, especially on the Friday, and the large number of yards present confirms the level of new build activity ongoing.

For more show reviews visit [www.maramedia.ie](http://www.maramedia.ie)



**NEW BOAT**

## Arklow Marine built Amberlisa steams for Downings

The 19m crabber, Amberlisa - built for Jason Coyle and Seamus Rogers, in partnership with Macmar Fishing Ltd and destined for Scotland - is Arklow Marine's first for Scotland and biggest delivered into the UK.

Following a successful launch at the yard last March and subsequent sea trials, the Amberlisa left Arklow Marine Services last month to make her way to Downings in Donegal, before finally embarking on her journey across to Scotland.

The 19m crabber, which was built by Arklow Marine Services for Jason Coyle and Seamus Rogers of CR Fishing Ltd, in partnership with

Macmar Fishing Ltd, is Arklow Marine's first for Scotland and biggest delivered by the yard into the UK.

Speaking to the Skipper in relation to their decision to work with Arklow Marine Services on this prestigious new build, co-owner and skipper Jason Coyle said they had heard a lot of good things about the Wicklow based yard, and indicated that on this front they have not been disappointed and were very

### FACT FILE

**AMBERLISA SKIPPER(S)**  
Jason Coyle & Seamus Rogers  
**REGISTRATION** UL30  
**HOMEPORT** Ullapool  
**FISHING FOR** Crab & lobster  
**CREW** 6/7  
**OWNERS** Macmar Ltd, in partnership with CR Fishing Ltd.  
**DESIGNER** SC McAllister & Co Ltd  
**BOATYARD** Arklow Marine Services

**MAIN BUILD CHARACTERISTICS**  
**LENGTH OVERALL** 19.00m  
**LENGTH REGISTERED** 16.49m  
**BREADTH MOULDED** 7.00m  
**DEPTH MOULDED** 4.20m  
**DRAUGHT AFT.** approx. 3.50m  
**FUEL CAPACITY** 10,000L  
**FRESH WATER CAPACITY** 4,000L  
**VIVIER GROSS VOLUME** 42,000L  
**MAIN ENGINE** Scania D1 071M, 450 bhp @ 1800 rpm  
**GEARBOX** Reintjes WAF274 with a 7.044:1 reduction ratio  
**AUXILIARIES** Twin Cummins 6CT8.3M rated 122 Kw @ 1500 rpm



Jason Coyle and Seamus Rodgers with Pat Doherty, Gortnabrad. Image supplied by Tirconnell Tribune

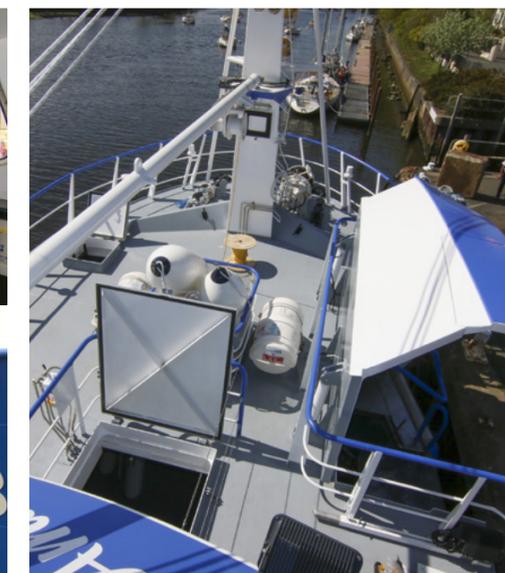


Image supplied by Tirconnell Tribune

pleased with the build.

Though the Ullapool registered vessel is the first for the CR Fishing duo, together they are bringing almost three decades combined fishing experience to the joint venture - Jason having fished with 16 years and Seamus with 10.

### BUILD DETAILS

The impressive vivier-crabber, which was designed by SC McAllister & Co Ltd, has an overall length of 19m, a registered length of 16.49m, a beam of 7m and a draught of 3.50m.

The main propulsion for the vessel is provided by a Scania D1 071M developing 450 bhp @ 1800 rpm, coupled to a Reintjes WAF 274 gearbox with a 7.044:1 reduction, and a 1800mm-diameter four-blade Teignbridge propeller. The vessel's electric and hydraulic systems are powered by twin Cummins auxiliary engines, supplied by Beta Marine. The electrics onboard the vessel were installed by local electrician, Tommy Carroll.



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Amberlisa. Photo Derek Hosie

Fishing a total of 4,000 pots, the vessel features a 42m<sup>3</sup> vivier-hold, with two refrigerated bait stores on either side of the central vivier tĒnking, and an EK Marine supplied 3t pot hauler. She also features an anchorless windlass, a bow thĒster, a hydraulic pot transporter and a hydraulically operated forward hatch.

The extensive array of electronics kitting out the wheelhouse were supplied by Barry Electronics Ltd, and includes FuĒno radars, satellite Compass, Navtex Receiver, GPS Navigator and DSC Radio, a

Hondex Echosounder, Sodena plotters and an Olex 3D Chart Mapping System with Bottom Hardness, alongside a range of other electronics (see below for full details).

Accommodation is provided aft for 12 crew. Mess room, galley, toilet and shower room are provided forward of the aft accommodation. With the deckhouse offset to port a large working deck area is created, while a spacious and well laid out wheelhouse affords excellent all-round visibility, and is comfortably kitted out with a NorSap seat which was supplied by Mooney Boats.

Birkenhead based vessel interiors specialist, MPE Interiors fitted out the accommodation, galley and wheelhouse interiors. The safety equipment aboard the Amberlisa was supplied by Swan Net and Medley Creels.

#### FROM ARKLOW VIA DOWNINGS TO WEST OF SCOTLAND

After leaving the yard in Arklow, the Amberlisa steamed for Downings where she was blessed by the Parish Priest, Fr.

#### ELECTRONICS PACKAGE SUPPLIED BY BARRY ELECTRONICS LTD

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- Furuno M1835 Radar
- Hondex HE7300i Echosounder
- Sodena Easy Win Chart Plotting System with AIS and ARPA
- Olex 3D Chart Mapping System with Bottom Hardness
- Simrad AP70 Autopilot and Follow Up Lever for steering
- Furuno SC70 Satellite Compass
- Furuno GP39 GPS Navigator
- Icom M423G Class D VHF Radio
- Furuno FS1575 MF/HF DSC Radio for Area A2 operation
- Furuno NX300 Navtex Receiver
- Victron GMDSS Battery Charger with Victron Alarm Panel
- 2 x Sailor 6210 VHF for Short range communications
- 1 x Icom M73 Professional Handheld
- Phonetech 3101 with Stations for Cabin's, Galley, Shelter Deck area and Engine Room
- Intellian i4P Satellite TV connected to internal TV's
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#### PACKAGE SUPPLIED BY EK MARINE LTD

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- 1 x EKM Double Roller Net/Rope Transporter
- 2 x EKM Hatch Cylinders
- 1 x EKM Landing Winch
- 1 x EKM Anchor Winch

Charlie Byrne, and 'christened' with a bottle of champagne by Carol Anne Coyle at Downings Pier.

Seamus and Jason are currently busy making the final preparations at Downings and the Amberlisa will soon embark on her journey across to the West of Scotland, where she will be fishing for crab and lobster, skippered by Jason and Seamus, and fished by a crew of 6/7.

Speaking to the Skipper about the Amberlisa build, Billy Tyrell from Arklow Marine Services

said: "Arklow Marine Services are delighted to have won this prestigious new build order which will be their 1st Fishing Vessel delivered to Scotland and also the biggest delivered into the UK. We wish Jason, Seamus and Macmar Limited every success with their new vessel & safe passage and good fishing to all the crew."

The Skipper would also like to wish both Jason and Seamus, their families, crews and partners, fair seas and safe fishing as they embark their exciting new venture.



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*“Whether it is progress or not I’m not sure”*  
(John Kelly, retired merchant seaman and fisherman)



Trawler tied up in Greencastle (All images by Harry Kerr)

# Croí na Farraigne

By Lia ní Aodha

In his book, *Soul and Soil*, the Scottish writer Alister McIntosh highlights:

*“I do not argue for going back to the past, but I will be suggesting that the past should be carried forward to inform the future. In this way, fresh light can be shed on the story of modern times and wisdom harnessed to knowledge.”*

Without understanding the past and where we came from, as versions of the saying go, it is very difficult to understand the present or work to shape the future in ways that we might like to live or might do justice to that past. Once this understanding becomes lost, it is something that becomes very difficult to restore.

## Living on the edge of Europe

As islanders, living on edge of Europe, our relationship with the sea is an integral part of our culture and is something that is intimately woven into the fabric of our identity. Fishing has been part of that identity, and part of the “lifefood” of coastal communities for millennia, even if it is something we are not always fully aware of. Though

fishing has changed over these millennia, the changes that have occurred over the past number of decades has been especially pronounced, and, for some, the fishing industry is at a pivotal point of its existence.

But what does it mean to live from the sea? And how can we capture our rich fishing heritage, so as to preserve it for future generations?

These are the questions that Croí na Farraigne, a community based digital media project, has set about answering with respect to the rich maritime heritage of the Inishowen peninsula in north Donegal. In an area

whereby, as with the rest of the coastal and island communities dotted around the shores of Ireland, the sea has shaped the lives of generations, the project represents an effort to record some of this rich social history and being, which might otherwise be lost.

Researched and produced by the Inishowen Community Media Network (ICMN) and funded through the Fisheries Local Action Group, FLAG North, the project, which was launched last month, is ongoing and captures the stories of people who have lived and worked in the area and the

surrounding seas. Presented as a series of films, it chronicles the shifting fortunes of the once-thriving fishing industry and way of life on the peninsula, and examines how the sea has shaped and continues to shape the community.

Told through the voices and experiences of those who lived them, among the rich and diverse stories that have been edited and are now available to view online are: retired fishermen Gerry Gill, John Kelly, and Jim Cavanagh, Foyle Fishermen’s Co-op, Andrew Ward of the IDP, Owen Doyle of BIM, the Kearney family of Kearney’s Oysters,

and Greencastle fishermen Cara Rawden, Gerard Kelly, and Cyril Harkin.

Providing a cross-generational perspective of a changing industry, they capture the everyday realities of people who fish and have fished and the shifting socio-environmental contexts within which these realities unfold.

Emerging from these stories are cross-cutting themes that touch on the challenges and opportunities thrown up by the sea, and the politics surrounding the resources provided by the sea.

From lives lived and shaped around the seasonality of salmon, to turning points relating to increasing investments, shifting ecological conditions, increasing regulations, and an increasingly globalised market for fish, the complex manner in which people who live from the sea adapt, persevere and survive these changes is illuminated.

Punctuated by tragedy, with the memory of the Carrikatine—a tragedy whereby 6 local men were lost in 1995—looming large in a number of stories, the stories also convey a sense of the physicality of a life at sea, and the movement associated with the life on the peninsula—movement from place shaped around the salmon season, following economic opportunity, or, today, increasingly quota and the ever-evolving and complex regulations governing this space.

## Changing fortunes of Greencastle

As part of these stories, alongside the lives that were and continue to be lived from the sea, the shifting fortunes of Greencastle are also detailed. Gerard Kelly, recalls a childhood whereby everyone migrated down to the pier, and one spent waiting to get out of school so as to join them or get out to sea at salmon. Peter Kearney details, for instance, the boost that the opening of a particular fishery could give to an area (for example, crab in the early 1970s). On the other hand, the problems that arise then when you take a fishery away from a community are also highlighted, and the ongoing issue with respect to the unfinished development of the harbour in Greencastle and the looming threat of Brexit is also highlighted.

## Looking forward

Though a multitude of



Greencastle fisherman Gerry Kelly



Greencastle Harbour

challenges arising from the shifting nature of fishing comes through in the interviews, positives also come through, as does the resilient nature of those who live from the sea and continue to attempt to make a living from the sea. For instance, the story of Kearney’s Oysters, though punctuated with stories of changing ecological and regulatory conditions and ongoing challenges, suggests continuing intergenerational interest in earning a living from the sea.

The resilience and capacity for continuation, but also diversification that exists within the industry also emerges, for instance, from the stories told by Greencastle fisherman Gerard Kelly, who has been “earning, hoping, working and trying to earn a living from the sea and what is happening with the sea since 1975” and is currently engaged in a struggle to protect the fledgling mussel industry in the area that he worked to help build as part of a community response to the shifting

economic fortunes of the area.

## A lot bigger than they anticipated

Speaking in relation to the project, ICMN spokesperson, Martha McCulloch, said they were delighted with the response from the local community, many of whom came forward to tell their stories.

“Some of those who feature in the series spent a lifetime at sea and some of the younger contributors are trying to make a living from it. The idea behind the project is to document materials for future generations that would otherwise be lost. All the recorded material is being archived and will be free to the public or schools and libraries to use for research or promotional purposes, e.g. Greencastle Maritime and Dunree Museum.”

Speaking with the Skipper, Jim Doherty, who recorded and interviewed the fishermen highlighted that his interest in the project had been driven by gaps in his own knowledge in

relation to fishing as a way of life, and stated that the stories to be told were a lot bigger than they anticipated, underscoring also that already they had gathered a huge collection of materials, and that which has been uploaded is just the tip of the iceberg. In terms of replicating such a project in other coastal communities, Mr Doherty emphasised also that doing so would be relatively straightforward.

## Further details

The project is ongoing and still looking for material and people with a story to tell.

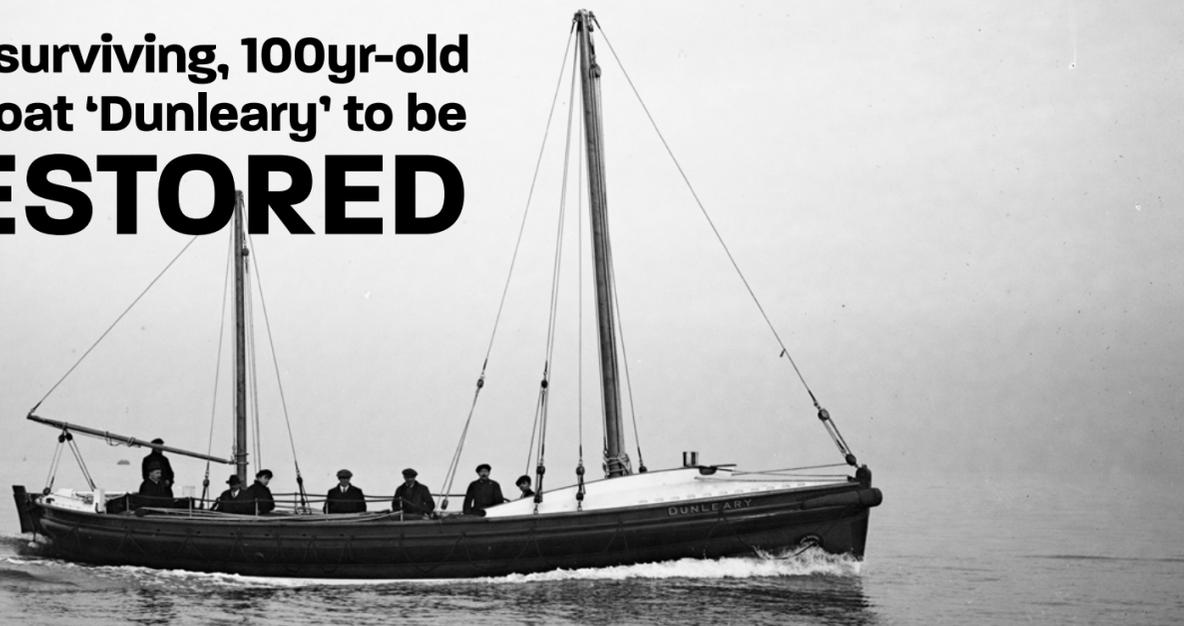
The materials that have been collected as part of the project will be archived and free for the public or schools and libraries to use for research and educational purposes.

*The online video archive, which was launched at the local maritime heritage museum late last April, can be found at <https://www.youtube.com/channel/>*



Greencastle fisherman Cara Rawden

# Sole surviving, 100yr-old Lifeboat 'Dunleary' to be RESTORED



Dunleary circa 1920's. Image from RNLI HQ archives, in Poole, Dorset.

**A**n important piece of Ireland's maritime history, the 100-year-old "Dunleary" lifeboat was recently brought back from the UK, where she was destined to be scrapped.

A group of local enthusiasts recognised the important historical significance of the vessel and formed a community association: The Dunleary Lifeboat Project. This group garnered enough support to safely transport the boat back to The Coal Pier in Dún Laoghaire, where she is currently stored. Their goal is to restore her to full sea-going condition so that she can be used as a heritage asset in the harbour, taking groups of visitors on short historical trips.

The ex RNLB "Dunleary" is a 45ft Watson Class lifeboat originally built in 1919 by S.E. Saunders of Cowes and is a non self-righting displacement hull motorised lifeboat. She was stationed in Dún Laoghaire Harbour from 1919 until 1937 and in that time she saved 55 lives. This boat is unique, as she is the sole survivor of the first eleven production boats dating to this time, which were open decked and retained full sail plans and a drop keel.

From 1937 to 1951 she was stationed in Lytham St Annes in Lancashire where she saved a further 30 lives, until her retirement from the RNLI. "Dunleary" then underwent numerous conversions to be useful as a private pleasure vessel. Her last owner passed away a few years ago and she was in layup in a boatyard in Amble, Northumberland, where the newly formed Dunleary Lifeboat Project found her and recovered her for restoration.

Since arriving back home to Dun Laoghaire, a team of volunteers have removed all the non-original parts and fittings to preserve the wood and prevent further damage. A temporary boat cover has now been fitted to protect "Dunleary" from the elements and to allow her to begin drying out in order for the restoration work to commence.

Fundraising for the restoration is underway and following a tender process, it is expected that the "Dunleary" will be moved to a boatyard for the specialist work to be completed.

For further information see [www.dunlearylifboatproject.com](http://www.dunlearylifboatproject.com).



Restoration of the Dunleary is underway



Minister Creed TD inspecting harbour works at the official opening of the harbour administration building in Castletownbere with harbourmaster Cormac McGinley, Tony O'Sullivan, Engineer and Kelly Guiney, Engineer. Picture: Maxwells

## Minister Creed opens new Harbour Administration Building and inspects €23.5m development project, doubling the quay space in Castletownbere

Last month, The Skipper's south-west correspondent, Mr Niall Duffy, attended the official opening of the new Harbour Administration Building in Castletownbere, by the Minister for Agriculture, Food and the Marine, Michael Creed T.D.

On opening the building, which will be shared with the Sea Fisheries Protection Authority, Minister Creed said: "This building provides fit for purpose offices whereby harbour users can carry out their business in a professional and modern space. The building will be shared with the Sea Fisheries Protection Authority facilitating a more efficient and effective delivery of services making it a one stop shop for harbour users."

The Minister went on to say: "The Harbour Administration Building provides a new focal point in the town and forms part of a wider and ongoing integrated Harbour Development programme. It demonstrates a commitment to rural development by this Government and spearheads

further improvements in the town proposed by Cork County Council."

Whilst in Castletownbere, which boasts one of the largest natural harbours in the world and is Ireland's largest whitefish port, Minister Creed took the opportunity to inspect progress on the €23.5m, 216-metre long quay extension project and associated works on Dinish Island (which hosts most of the fisheries infrastructure and processing activity), as part of Project Ireland 2040.

The quay extension project in conjunction with the new Harbour Administration building forms part of a wider Harbour Development Programme.

In respect of the European Maritime & Fisheries Fund co-funded extension the Minister said: "I took this opportunity to inspect progress on this large investment in the seafood industry in Castletownbere, and I am delighted to say that it is coming in within budget and ahead of schedule."

Proximity to rich fishing grounds makes

*"The value of landings into Castletownbere increased by 275% between 2010 and 2017."*

Castletownbere—which is the primary urban, economic and social centre on the Beara Peninsula in South West Ireland—an attractive fish landing location for both Irish and foreign vessels. Between 2010 and 2017 the value of fish landings into Castletownbere increased by 275%, from €29.9m to €112.3m, with volumes increasing by 91% over the same period from 19,030 tonnes to 36,446 tonnes.

The new extended quay will almost double the landing space available to fishermen, alleviate current congestion issues and provide for the possibility of increased fish landings and opportunities for further economic diversification compatible with the fishing industry.

In this regard, the Minister stated that "when completed the new quay will future proof the seafood sector

in Castletownbere, will significantly drive forward the fishing industry and local economy on the Beara Peninsula and allow for a major expansion of the seafood support sector and other marine related industries in the South West."

He concluded by saying: "Taken together, these two projects are testament not only to this Government's support for the Castletownbere fishing industry and the ongoing development of the wider seafood sector, but also to our commitment to the social and economic development of rural coastal communities. When fully completed, Castletownbere will have facilities on a par with the best in Europe, and will be open for further economic expansion providing the environment for the creation of much needed local jobs."

## VOICES OF WOMEN IN FISHERIES

The Skipper is interested in providing more coverage to the voices of women in fisheries. In order to do so, we'd like to hear from women from a range of backgrounds from across the fishing community about their experiences in their varied roles in fisheries – whether that is as a fisherwomen working at sea, a partner on land engaged in the day to day operations of fishing, a wife, sister, mother, daughter, or someone engaged in any other activities related to fishing (e.g., downstream activities such as processing, business, administration, management, science etc.). These stories could be historical or contemporary, big or small – either way, we would love to hear from anyone willing to share their story with us. To do so, contact the Editor at, [editorial@maramedia.ie](mailto:editorial@maramedia.ie) or 00353868239608.

This month, we are sharing Eimear O'Neill's story of her experiences pair-trawling with her father, Donal O'Neill, on the MFV Sparkling Star and the MFV Eternal Dawn.

## Sea-ing it from my point of view

by Eimear O'Neill,  
Castletownbere



Fishing has been an integral aspect of my life from a very young age. Having grown up in the seaside town of Castletownbere, in the beautiful setting of West Cork—from hearing seagulls from my primary school playground to having fresh fish for dinner—this way of life has always been my norm.

### There are no handouts in fishing

My Dad, Donal, started his fishing career in 1975 and together with my Mom, Peggy, they've built their business from the ground up. There are no handouts in fishing, if you want it, you've to work for it. Due to the lifestyle, each fisherman understands the next, in ways other professions do not. Although it can have a competitive nature, the respect is there. It is humbling to be a part of a community like that. I've always had an interest in the boat, and felt a duty



to know how it all works, onshore and offshore. I came to realise there really is only so much you can understand from just standing on the pier. So in the Autumn of 2016, I decided to go out on a herring trip and along with a more recent blue whiting trip in April 2019, I've experienced it all with my own two eyes.

### Unpredictable sleeping patterns and endless cups of tea

From the minute you leave the pier to the minute you arrive back in, it's work. The rolling is constant and when I say constant it's like being on a trampoline for four days straight. The noise from the various engines is overpowering

and the smell, well it's just fishy. You become blissfully unaware of these nuances as time rolls on. It's days of unpredictable sleeping patterns and endless cups of tea. On that note, carrying tea from the galley to the wheelhouse without spilling any should be considered an Olympic sport! The crew work systematically, whether they are shooting, taking ends, hauling or landing, it's all a practised process. It's second nature to them and each task that needs attention is completed with confidence. At sea, you lose all track of time. When we were out, I couldn't have said at any particular moment what day of the week it was, as when you're awake day and night

it all becomes the one.

### Partnership and coherence

There is a fierce strength of partnership and coherence between the two vessels when pair trawling, to achieve the job at hand. It is inspiring and fulfilling to witness. From the crew efficiently passing the lines to the detailed communication between the two wheelhouses while towing, it is a constant juggle and amendment of details. It really is a tight-knit operation. Having said that, it's also draining, incredibly draining. You need resilience as the whole set up is like a complex jigsaw, each piece needs to fit or else it will not be successful. For me, I love being out

at sea. There's a sense of freedom and freshness to it and the view of the open ocean never gets old. Not only is each meal a treat, but it's wholesome and tasty too.

From homemade chowder to fried hake for breakfast, it was all a novelty. Being at sea embraces the notion of appreciating the little things, whether the WIFI connection is good or treating yourself to an extra biscuit while on watch, these moments can be a huge comfort aboard. I was an ultimate tourist on each trip as I wanted to capture several moments in time. From taking sunset photos at golden hour to videoing the fish being pumped into the tanks (whilst salt water splashed

up onto my face!) I was snap happy. And before I knew it, the show was over. The tanks were full, the fish was logged and our route back to shore was mapped out.

The knots were high and so were the spirits aboard. I had mixed emotions as I knew my temporary home at sea was coming to an end, but as we were headed for land I learnt it's always nice to be going in no matter how good or bad the trip has been. After all, home is home.

### Perceiving a lifestyle is one thing but experiencing it...is another

From the moment we arrived in, it was like facing a brand new day's work. People on

*"Fishing has been an integral aspect of my life from a very young age."*

EIMEAR O'NEILL, CASTLETOWNBERE

the pier were fresh-faced and on a mission. Each of them busy with their own task. From forklifts moving swiftly along the pier to huge lorries swerving in every direction, it's all systems go. Once I stepped back onto the pier it was like I had never left. I didn't need my sea legs anymore. There was no need to focus on a sonar, and there were no waves gushing against the wheelhouse windows. Arriving back into shore reminded me of how similar it is to touching down on a

runway. You're back on dry land and life as you know it. I guess perceiving a lifestyle is one thing but experiencing it first hand is another. Not that I used to think fishing was all pictures of pretty boats and shiny new nets, but I think I was unaware of the endurance it takes. I admire the resilience and bravery of each and every fisherman, and after being to sea myself I not only have an appreciation for their job but also have an understanding now too. I'm looking forward to my next trip!



## Europeans love fish

SeaHealth - UCD : Issue 30

The Eurobarometer survey on EU consumer choices regarding fishery and aquaculture products is clear: Europeans love fish and other seafood. The survey was published in December 2018 and involved 27,734 face-to-face interviews with 1,011 of these with Irish consumers. More than four out of ten Europeans eat seafood at least once a week at home. Price and availability are the main barriers to increased consumption. Regional, national and EU products enjoy a very strong consumer preference. The study also explains how EU policy helps build trust with consumers, mainly by reliable and useful consumer information.

### EU Commissioner

European Commissioner for the Environment, Maritime Affairs and Fisheries, Karmenu Vella reacts to the study: "European consumers tell us they want to have fish on their menu. It is our responsibility, as policy makers, to secure that our citizens can enjoy these tasty products in the long term. This means ensuring the sustainability of our fisheries, and we have progressed a lot on that over the last years. But also aquaculture plays an important role: farmed fish from the EU is a sustainable source of protein and other nutrients. In a low-carbon society, its role will only increase."

### EU fish market

The EU is the world's largest market for fishery and aquaculture products. We spend twice the amount of money on fish per capita as US consumers. What are the most important reasons: - consumers think it is healthy (74%) and tasty (59%). The supermarket or grocery store is where most



consumers get their seafood, although many (40%) also prefer the local fishmonger. The products consumers buy are fresh or frozen; nearly 60% of shoppers avoid breaded fish products or ready-meals. That said, consumers do need some help in the kitchen: only 27% are brave enough to buy the whole fish, not cleaned or filleted.

Everywhere in the EU, consumers show a strong preference for regional, national or EU products. Preference for products from the European Union has increased in almost every country compared to the previous study in 2016 with the greatest increases in Hungary and Slovakia.

### Aquaculture

The study also explored, whether consumers make a distinction between wild and farmed fish i.e. those caught at sea or in rivers versus those produced by aquaculture. While more than a third of European fish consumers prefer wild products (35%), nearly one-third (32%) makes no distinction. Only 9% indicated a strong preference for aquaculture products.

Most consumers (61%) like to try new products

and species. However, the limited offer/availability (53%) and, especially, too high prices (70%) remain as barriers for consumers who would like to eat more seafood. This shows the importance of helping consumers discover less well-known species, which can be much cheaper than the most common ones. This in turn can help to reduce pressure on the most exploited stocks, as it creates an outlet for 'less traditional' fish brought ashore because of fish landing obligations.

The study confirms the high level of trust (83%) that consumers have in the information they receive as result of EU regulations. Over 75% of consumers find the product information clear and easy to understand. Use-by-date was considered very important by 94% of the consumers interviewed as it puts a safety time limit on fish product consumption. However, tests in Ireland

suggest that some use-by-dates are too long and should be shortened by 1-2 days for certain fish species (SeaHealth-ucd Issue 21). Outcomes of the full survey are given at: Eurobarometer special survey 475: EU consumer habits regarding fishery and aquaculture products.

### Irish seafood survey 2013

A study on consumer knowledge of the health properties of fish conducted in Ireland in 2013 showed many similar outcomes to the European study. Nineteen percent of the 371 consumers interviewed did not purchase or eat fish while 74% of the 300 consumers who did buy fish did so at least once per week. Fish from the ice counter was by far the most popular form purchased and cod and salmon were by far the most popular species. Overall, fish was considered expensive (SeaHealth-ucd Issue 8, 2013).

Compiled by Professor Ronan Gormley, UCD Institute of Food and Health, Belfield, Dublin 4. More information from [ronan.gormley@ucd.ie](mailto:ronan.gormley@ucd.ie). **DISCLAIMER: While every care has been taken in ensuring the accuracy of the material presented, no liability as to its use or interpretation is accepted by the author or by UCD.**



## Creed announces €4m in EMFF grants to 274 coastal community projects

Last month, the Minister for Agriculture, Food and the Marine, Michael Creed, T.D., announced details of EMFF grants of €4 million, awarded by Ireland's 7 Fisheries Local Action Groups (FLAGs) to 274 coastal based projects, supporting a total investment of €6.4 million.

The grants are co-funded by the Government of Ireland and the European Union under Ireland's European Maritime & Fisheries Fund Operational Programme for the seafood sector (fisheries, aquaculture and processing), which was launched in 2016 and provides for €240 million funding for the sector over the period 2014 to 2020.

Of that, €12 million has been earmarked for coastal community development

under the 7 designated FLAGs—South FLAG (Cork), Southwest (Kerry, Limerick), South East (Waterford, Wexford, Wicklow) West, (Galway, Clare), Northwest (Mayo, Sligo, Leitrim), North (Donegal), and North East (Dublin, Louth, Meath).

Announcing the grants, Minister Creed said: "Ireland's 7 FLAGs are providing a wonderful source of investment for local seafood and marine projects in our coastal communities. Over 800 projects in seven coastal regions have benefitted from EMFF funding since the present FLAG scheme was launched in 2017.

"The Scheme continues to positively impact on coastal communities in Ireland. The high number of successful

projects funded this year reflects both the quality of the projects and the hard work of the local communities through the seven FLAG Boards."

Almost 400 applications were made to the 7 FLAGs this year. All applications were reviewed by individual FLAG Boards—which are comprised of volunteers from the local communities—in each of the seven FLAG regions throughout Ireland. Projects must be able to demonstrate a clear link to coastal community rejuvenation, enterprise, innovation, job creation and skills enhancement across the fishing, aquaculture and maritime industries.

**Details of the FLAG scheme and how to apply can be found at [www.bim.ie/schemes/](http://www.bim.ie/schemes/)**

FLAG	NUMBER OF PROJECTS	TOTAL INVESTMENTS	GRANT AWARDED
Northeast	36	€1,652,695	€973,221
Northwest	42	€589,471	€336,024
South	29	€551,236	€337,270
Southeast	41	€1,178,540	€757,817
Southwest	17	€238,597	€183,216
West	62	€1,306,294	€808,764
North	47	€852,891	€581,412
TOTAL	274	€6,369,723	€3,977,723

The latest round of grant awards announced

## Irish Lights seek feedback on marine Aids to Navigation service



Marine users of Aids to Navigation (AtoN) are invited to contribute to a General Lighthouse Authority (GLA) AtoN requirement review by providing their valued feedback.

Irish Lights is undertaking a full review of Aids to Navigation provision around the coasts of Ireland and require feedback from all users of marine Aids to Navigation. Every five years, the General Lighthouse Authorities (GLA), comprising Irish Lights, Northern Lighthouse Board and Trinity House in the UK, conduct this review to assess AtoN requirements. Over time changes can occur which affect Aids to Navigation requirements

and their development such as trade patterns, vessel types and volume, the seabed, development of offshore projects or changes in technology. The review will include individual AtoN and systems of AtoN to ensure international standards are met.

All users of marine Aids to Navigation are invited to contribute to the review by commenting on the usefulness and usability of existing AtoN provided by the GLA. Input is particularly welcome on any proposed requirement for the provision of additional AtoN; improvements to the current mix of AtoN; technological developments or additional services. Feedback is also welcomed on Irish Lights data service which provides near real time meteorological information.

Emphasising the critical importance of user input Captain

Robert McCabe, Director of Operations and Navigation Services, Irish Lights said, "International standards require average availability ranging from 97 percent to 99.8 percent and Marine Aids to Navigation must serve all users of the sea, from small leisure and fishing craft to large liners and cargo vessels. Input from experienced users is essential to the process of defining the correct mix of Aids to Navigation. Local knowledge and experience built through time at sea cannot be replaced by desktop analysis no matter how modern and sophisticated the tools may be."

Responses should be submitted before 30th July 2019 by emailing [navigation@irishlights.ie](mailto:navigation@irishlights.ie) or write to Navigation Services, Commissioners of Irish Lights, Harbour Road, Dun Laoghaire, Co. Dublin.

## NEWS in brief

SEARCH FOR NEW MARINE INSTITUTE CEO

In late April, the Marine Institute announced the commencement of the process to find a successor to Dr Peter Heffernan when he retires, in October this year.

Dr Heffernan has served as the inaugural CEO since the establishment of the Marine Institute in the early 1990s and has held a highly successful role in building and leading the organisation.

A tender has been issued for Executive Search specialists to conduct a campaign for a new CEO in line with the Marine Institute Succession Plan.

CREED ANNOUNCES €6.5M INVESTMENT IN AQUACULTURE AND PROCESSING COMPANIES

Last month, Minister for Agriculture Food and the Marine, Michael Creed T.D. announced €2,369,801 in grants to 17 seafood enterprises in 9 different counties under the Department's European Maritime and Fisheries Fund Operational Programme for the seafood sector. The grants will support total investment in these companies of €6,472,909 in the aquaculture and seafood processing sectors.

Speaking in relation to the investment, Minister Creed said the investment was evidence of strong confidence in the sector and its future growth prospects, despite ongoing Brexit uncertainties. He further stated: "My Department is assisting ambitious seafood enterprises with many exciting growth projects through generous EMFF financial supports, available through BIM for seafood enterprises to grow their output, add value to their products and develop and diversify their markets worldwide."

A full list of the grants awarded can be found at <https://www.agriculture.gov.ie/press/pressreleases/2019/may/title,127184,en.html>

END OF AN ERA AS WICKLOW RNLI BIDS FAREWELL TO TYNE CLASS LIFEBOAT

Late last April, Wicklow RNLI bid farewell to their beloved lifeboat Annie Blaker, the last operational Tyne Class lifeboat in the RNLI's fleet.

After being officially retired earlier in the month, on the 28th of April the historic vessel—which during her thirty years of service there was launched on callouts over 348 times and rescued 408 people—was launched for the last time at Wicklow lifeboat station. She was joined for her departure by a flotilla of vessels including lifeboats from Dún Laoghaire and Arklow.

The Tyne, which was introduced into the RNLI fleet in 1982 with the final one built in 1990, has been retired by the RNLI as it has been replaced by faster classes of lifeboats. The relief Shannon class lifeboat Jock and Annie Slater has replaced the Annie Blaker.

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**PHOTO OF THE MONTH** IN ASSOCIATION WITH **GUY COTTEN** **SNG SWAN NET GUNDRY**

**COMPETITION**

Send in your best fishing related photo and you could win a Neptune 50 N Bouyancy Aid by Guy Cotten plus the chance to win overnight accommodation at one of the Skipper Expos.

The subject of the picture must be related to the Fishing Industry (your vessel, your catch, a stormy day at sea...etc). Each month, the best photo will be published in The Skipper and the winner will receive a prize, courtesy of Swan Net Gundry Ltd and Guy Cotten. Images sent in may also be used in other areas of the magazine if suitable.

cameras out, and send us your hi-res photos by email to [editorial@maramedia.ie](mailto:editorial@maramedia.ie) and don't forget to mention your name and details, as well as a brief description of the scene depicted. The photos must be taken by the person sending it to us, and it is understood that they are free of copyrights.

**PHOTO THE MONTH WINNER:**  
**EANNA MURPHY**  
**STELISSA**  
**TAKEN FROM THE KALICOBA**

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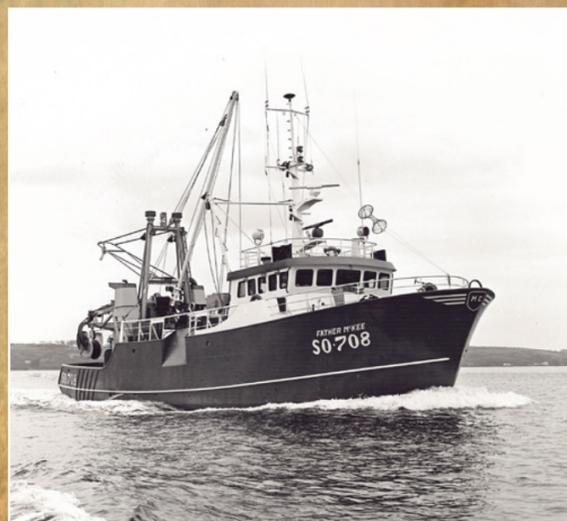
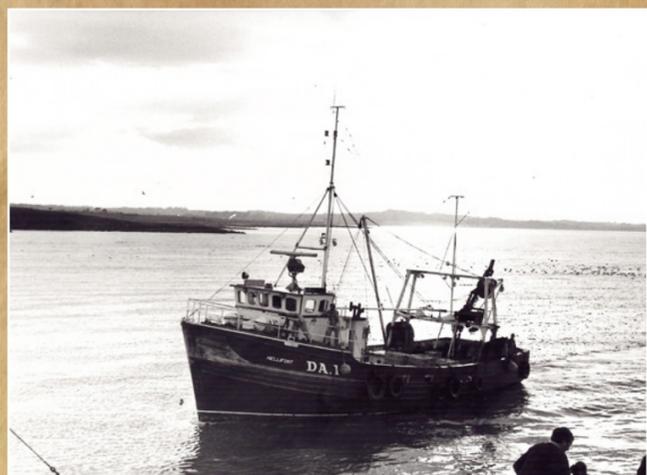
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# The Archives - June 1964

## £700 CHEQUE FOR VALENTIA SKIPPER Pier Extension is needed

By a Special Correspondent great help.

SKIPPER CHRISTY O'SHEA, of Valentia island, was presented with a cheque for £700 by Mr. Brendan O'Kelly, Chairman of B.I.M., at a ceremony in the Royal Hotel, Valentia, last month. The cheque was an incentive bonus for clearing his boat hire-purchase inside ten years.

Skipper O'Shea, who owns the 50-foot seiner, Ros Airgead (95 h.p. Gardner), fishes Boris nets in the grounds near Dingle Bay, Kenmare and Bantry. He attributes his success to careful attention to gear and to hard work. Localised marketing has also been a

**SOUND FUTURE**  
At the reception, which was attended also by fishermen from other ports, Skipper O'Shea told me that he considered there was a sound future for the modern fisherman using the right equipment. He is a great believer in the advantages of larger boats.

"When we get an extension to the pier at Renard (on the mainland opposite the island) things will be better," he said. "Then our fish will be landed right at the cold storage plant."

**KEEN TOPIC**  
The question of the pier

extension is a major topic among fishermen for a large part of this coastline.

Rainbow Ltd, the Danish firm which operates a 50-pond trout farm near Waterville, has built a well-equipped cold store with several chambers at Renard for handling its trout exports and for holding fish to feed the trout.

At the moment, 12 tons of fish a day has to be taken by road to the plant from other ports because there is not enough water in the pier to tie up a trawler there.

The Government has offered a grant towards the cost, but Kerry County Council wants the sum increased.

## U.S. ACTS TO KEEP OUT FOREIGN VESSELS

The U.S. House of Representatives last month passed legislation designed to keep foreign fishing vessels from working within 3 miles of its coast. The Senate has already approved the terms of the Bill.

The penalties proposed in the Bill include a 10,000-dollar fine or imprisonment for up to a year, or both. The seizure of any vessel and its catch could also be ordered.

The only exceptions to the new restrictions would be foreign fishing vessels operating under international agreement or by special authorisation.

The legislation was proposed because U.S. fishing grounds are increasingly receiving the attention of foreign vessels, especially off the north-east and Alaskan coasts. Cuban fishing vessels are also fishing the grounds off Florida, and Russian factory ships are occasionally sighted off the east coast.

## THREE NEW BOATS JOIN FLEET

THREE new trawlers joined Dingle's expanding fleet last month. Two of the boats are 56-foot long and the other is a 50-footer.

The two-larger craft were built at Killybegs and Dingle and are fitted with Gardiner 150 b.h.p engines, while the smaller craft was launched at Dingle and has an Ajax 120 b.h.p diesel. This boat also has a Simrad "Skipper" sounder.

Skipper Joseph Walsh, who formerly fished the Madonna took over the 56-foot Morning Star, and Skipper Patrick J. Flannery, son of the owner of the Ros Arcain and brother of the owner of the Ard Fionnbar, is fishing her sister vessel, the Guiding Star.

Patrick J. Brosnan will skipper the Ros Beithe on behalf of B.I.M., which will operate this vessel.

## QUESTION IN DAIL ABOUT PIER

Mrs. Brigid Hogan-O'Higgins, T.D., asked the Minister for Lands in the Dail if he would take immediate steps to have Carramore pier at Ballinacourty, Orranmore, Co. Galway, repaired. The Minister replied that it was a matter for the country council to arrange for the necessary repairs.





# Go Atlantic Blue to celebrate our connection with the Atlantic Ocean on World Oceans Day (8 June)

As part of World Oceans Day—the global day (Saturday 8 June) which connects people around the world in celebrating the ocean, its importance in our lives and how we can protect it—famous buildings and landmarks across Ireland will ‘Go Atlantic Blue’ over the weekend (7-10 June) to celebrate our connection to the Atlantic Ocean.

As part of the celebration, more than 20 different landmarks are expected to participate in the day by lighting up their buildings. Businesses, shops, schools and homes across the country will also ‘Go Atlantic Blue’ on the day. Everyone’s participation will highlight the strong connection that people in Ireland have with the Atlantic Ocean and the multiple ways that it affects and enriches our daily lives.

‘Go Atlantic Blue’ is being spearheaded in Ireland by the Marine Institute-led AORA-CSA (Atlantic Ocean Research Alliance Co-ordination & Support Action) against the backdrop of SeaFest 2019 (7-9 June) and Our Ocean Wealth Summit (9-10 June), which



Photo by Tom Szumski

are both taking part in Cork this year. It is the first year of the initiative, which aims to raise awareness of the vital role that the Atlantic Ocean plays in the lives of Irish people, no matter how near or far they live from the Atlantic coastline.

Dr Peter Heffernan, CEO of the Marine Institute, said: “Our ocean is our greatest natural resource and we see that most directly in

Ireland with the vital importance that the Atlantic Ocean plays in our daily lives – from influencing the weather to facilitating our trade industry and from seafood to surfing off the coast. The Marine Institute is proud to support the ‘Go Atlantic Blue’ initiative from 7-10 June, particularly at SeaFest and Our Ocean Wealth Summit, and we encourage & welcome everyone to come onboard.”

Director of Atlantic Ocean Research Alliance Co-ordination & Support Action, Dr Margaret Rae, said that the initiative gives people all around the country a chance to show their appreciation for the Atlantic Ocean.

“In Ireland, the Atlantic Ocean means so much to us. It’s our largest natural resource and we draw so much from it – our livelihoods, food, bounty, beauty, imagination, inspiration, song, poetry, health and wellbeing and much much more,” she said. “Going Atlantic Blue is a way to draw attention to how each and every one of us experiences the Atlantic, what we love about our Ocean and how we can be that generation that makes a difference.”

#### Some of the Landmarks around Ireland Going Atlantic Blue:

- Dublin Airport
- Shannon Airport
- Cork Airport
- Dublin City University
- King John’s Castle in Limerick
- St. Colman’s Cathedral, Cobh
- National University of Ireland Galway
- University College Cork
- University College Dublin
- Galway Bay Boat Tours
- Dunguaire Castle in Kinvara, Galway
- Galway Atlantaquaria, National Aquarium of Ireland
- Port of Galway
- Cork City Hall
- Berwick fountain (Grand Parade), Cork
- Bishop Lucey Park, Cork
- St Peter’s, Main Street, Cork

- St. Luke’s, Cork
- Roche’s Point Lighthouse, Cork
- Baily Lighthouse, Dublin
- Port of Cork
- National Maritime College of Ireland (NCMI)
- Marine and Renewable Energy Ireland (MaREI) Centre, Cork
- One Albert Quay Cork
- The Capitol, Cork

#### How you can ‘Go Atlantic Blue’

- Decorate your business/home/school with an Atlantic blue colour – add dark blue filters, fairy lights or blue light bulbs in outdoor lights
- Dress in Atlantic blue clothing e.g. T-shirts, wear a blue wig or paint your face dark blue
- Organise your own ‘Atlantic Blue’ themed event

#### Share how you ‘Go Atlantic Blue’

- Take a photo or video of how you’ve gone Atlantic Blue and share it on social media platforms. Feel free to share what makes the Atlantic Ocean special to you.
- Tag your social media posts with #WorldOceansDay and #GoAtlanticBlue to link with a community of fellow ocean appreciators!
- Tag AORA in your tweets (@AtlanticAll) and also tag @Seafest\_ie and @OurOceanWealth if you’ve room!

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