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SALES NOTES DEBACLE

State failure on sales notes sees fishermen deemed ineligible for tie-up scheme. See pages 2-3



ANTARCTIC, WESTERN VIKING AND FELUCCA TIED ALONGSIDE IN KILLYBEGS. (CREDIT: MARK A. NEESON)

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INSIDE THE JULY ISSUE

P 4-5
Greater support needed for fishing communities

P 10-11
Aquaculture

P 24-27
Boats, Gear and Products

P 28-29
Crew Shots

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State failure on sales notes sees fishermen deemed ineligible for tie-up scheme



Union Hall. (Credit: Andy Gibson)

By Lorna Siggins

A failure by the State to ensure sales note return by fish buyers resulted in a number of inshore boats being turned down for the COVID-19 temporary fleet tie-up scheme.

Just over three per cent of the entire whitefish fleet was approved for the temporary tie-up scheme for the month of June, according to figures released by Bord Iascaigh Mhara (BIM).

BIM says that of 104 applications received for June, nine did not fully complete their applications, five missed the closing date but were offered an alternative tie-up month, and 25 were "closed", as in turned down.

It confirmed that 12 inshore applications were turned down due to lack of sales notes.

It says that although 67 applicants were approved, two of these did not hand in their sea fishing license as required under the conditions of the scheme.

As a result, a total of 65 applicants were issued with the compensation – representing just over three per cent of the entire fleet.

Of that 65, some 19 vessels between eight and less than ten metres were approved, while two vessels over 24 metres were approved. (See table on page 3 for full breakdown).

The sales note requirement was one of the conditions of the scheme which stated that applicants had to "have made total

"It is yet further proof that this tie up scheme was designed to fail"

to a minimum value of €5,000 in the calendar year 2019, by reference to the Irish sales note system administered by the Sea Fisheries Protection Authority. (SFPA)".

"Sales recorded outside of this system will not be taken into consideration in meeting this criterion," the scheme stated.

However, vessel owners are not responsible for the return of sales notes, and were effectively being asked to produce a guarantee which is within the SFPA's remit.

Repeated attempts by *The Skipper* to receive a response from the SFPA on the issue were unsuccessful at the time of going to press.

It is understood that warnings had been issued at official level and by industry representatives when the scheme was rolled out. Also, shellfish vessels rely on gatherers records or shellfish registration documents, rather than sales notes.

"It is yet further proof that this tie up scheme was designed to fail," Irish South and West Fish Producers' chief executive Patrick Murphy said.

There is considerable anger over the scheme, particularly among vessel owners who took the difficult decision to tie up on March when the COVID-19

pandemic hit.

"I don't begrudge the beef farmers the 50 million euro which the outgoing government has given them, but it beggars belief that an industry like fishing where people risk their lives to produce food should be treated in this way," Mr Murphy said.

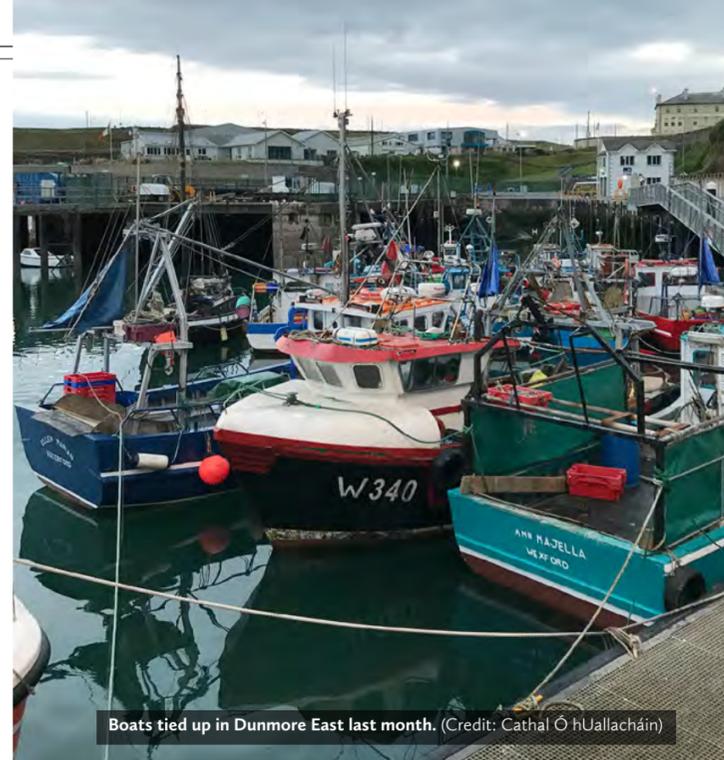
The scheme is operational from June 1st to August only, and offers support to "eligible" vessels which can tie up for one or two of the three months from that date.

Supports range from €6,000 per month for a maximum of two months for the very largest vessels over 24 metres, to €500 per month for the very smallest vessels under six metres in length.

A spokesperson for the National Inshore Fishermen's Association (NIFA) said that a number of its members had still decided to apply, and it appeared that at least half of those applications had been rejected due to the sales notes issue.

"Legislation has been in place since 2007 in relation to this, but we have long had suspicions that it was not being monitored," they said.

Under the Sea Fisheries (First Marketing of Fish) Regulations 2007, buyers' sales notes should include date and location of the



Boats tied up in Dunmore East last month. (Credit: Cathal Ó hUallacháin)

"Legislation has been in place since 2007 in relation to this, but we have long had suspicions that it was not being monitored"

sale; quantities of each species sold; price paid for each species sold; name and registration number of the vessel which landed the fish; name, address and, where available, registration number of the buyer; and reference number of the contract of sale or invoice.

The notes have to be submitted to the "competent authority"—as in the SFPA—on demand but "no later than 48 hours after the completion of weighing". This extends to 28 days if the buyer is not established in Ireland.

The NIFA spokesperson said that the issue was not just a short-term glitch, but one which had long term implications as it showed that accurate information was not being collated in relation to the inshore fleet.

"So the State is not accurately recording the full economic value of the inshore sector," the spokesperson pointed out.

The tie-up scheme was introduced by Minister for Marine Michael Creed in spite of criticism across the industry.

The four fish producer organisations condemned it as inadequate. Mr Creed did not respond last month to requests for a further meeting on the issue.

"The temporary tie up scheme, as a safety net scheme, is not designed to attract all fishermen and to bring all fishing activity to a halt. That is not the primary

Government objective for the fishing industry," Mr Creed said in a press statement.

"The scheme is not intended as an income replacement scheme for fishing vessel owners. The scheme is intended to contribute towards the fixed costs, associated with fishing vessels of various sizes, that voluntarily choose to tie-up," he said, adding that "fishermen have been and will continue to be able to avail of the horizontal Government Covid supports, such as the Pandemic Unemployment Benefit, the Wage Subsidy Scheme and the delayed banking arrangements".

Size of vessel	June Awarded
<6m	11
6 < 8m	10
8 < 10m	19
10 < 12m	10
12 < 15m	7
15 < 18m	0
18 < 24m	6
> 24m	2

Scheme Breakdown by vessel category awarded in June 2020

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Killybegs. (Credit: Mark A. Neeson)

Pelagic sector to take case against SFPA *'Water is being weighed as fish'*

A number of pelagic processing companies and organisations are to take a High Court case against the Sea Fisheries Protection Authority (SFPA). The case, to be taken by the Killybegs Fishermen's Organisation (KFO), the Irish Fish Processors and Exporters Association, and companies Atlantic Dawn, Arctic Fish, Norfish and Gallagher Brothers, comes following a dispute arising from a decision by the

SFPA to weigh fish at the point of landing rather than at the factory. Last December, the SFPA confirmed a percentage of all catches of pelagic species landed in the State would be weighed upon landing from the start of the 2020 spring pelagic fisheries. The measure arises from the recommendations of a 2018 audit conducted by the European Commission concerning compliance with

pelagic fisheries regulations. Unhappy from the out with the new procedure, according to the pelagic sector the weighing system would see huge losses for the sector, resulting as it does in the weighing of refrigerated water – for which someone has to pay one way or another, either with fish or money! The issue of weighing landings was raised by Pim Visser, president of the European Association of

Fish Producers Organisations (EAPO), of which the KFO is a member, in a letter to DG Mare at the beginning of June. In the letter Mr Visser highlights that while under Control Regulation requirements weighing of fish has to take place at the place of landing before transport, it is possible to weigh landings after transport if this is provided for in the control plan of the Member State, with it being common practice to use the latter provision. Detailing some of the specific issues that currently exist where fishermen face challenges using this provision, with respect Ireland specifically, Mr Visser said that in Ireland "the pelagic fishing industry endures the continuation of domestic problems."

"It faces difficulties where the control authority, the Sea Fisheries Protection Authority (SFPA), refuses to use the exemption allowing for weighing pelagic species in the processing plant over the fully calibrated flow scale with cameras. "Instead, the SFPA insists on weighing the specialised transport tankers over a weigh bridge as part of the 5% and 7.5% full monitoring requirements. This is a totally inaccurate way of working as water is being weighed as fish. This is not in accordance with the requirement in the control regulation to accurately weigh the landings."

Greater support needed for fishing communities

By Lia ní Aodha

The acting government came under fire last month from both Sinn Féin and the Social Democrats, not only for their current handling of the issue of supports for the fishing industry in the face of the coronavirus pandemic but for ongoing issues including those relating to a lack of quota and basic infrastructure for those fishing from piers dotted around the coast.

On June 3rd, Sinn Féin's Pearse Doherty questioned the Tánaiste and Minister for Foreign Affairs and Trade, Simon Coveney on the plight of Ireland's inshore fishermen, highlighting that while the current coronavirus crisis has been tough on sectors right across the country, inshore fishermen were struggling long before this crisis came to pass.

Speaking in the Dáil, the Donegal TD said: "With herring quotas and scientific quotas reduced and boats tied up, our small fishermen are on their knees. Speaking to those working in inshore fisheries in Donegal, they are crying out for help. It is not an exaggeration to say that many of them just won't be fishing this time next year if the proper supports and protections are not forthcoming."

"I have been corresponding with Minister Creed on this subject to let him know that the tie-up aid announced, the funding for which is European Union backed, will not cover the monthly cost of insurance for many fishermen with smaller vessels, let alone cover loans or other commitments that they have. What I am asking, Tánaiste, is what further supports

are expected from the EU in terms of funding for inshore fisheries should the current crisis continue?"

Referencing the ongoing Brexit uncertainties also facing Irish fishermen and women, the Donegal TD went on to say: "This continues at a time when supertrawlers from other member states are continuing to fish in Irish waters and when there are rumblings of disagreement on fishing rights in Brexit negotiations."

"Uncertainty surrounds the position of the EU Task Force on fisheries; whether it plans to use fisheries as a bargaining chip in negotiations and if it is prepared to accept Britain's quota grab in order to secure better terms in other sectors," he said, before asking:

"What progress has been made in Brexit negotiations to ensure that the livelihoods of small fishermen in Ireland are protected? What guarantees can you give to those fishermen? And separately, is there any leeway being considered on the easing of the quotas for small fishermen to help sustain them through the crisis?"

On June 10th, Holly Cairns, Social Democrat spokesperson on Agriculture, Food, and the Marine, similarly raised the issue of supporting fishing communities in the Dáil. Speaking on the government's Annual Statement on Climate Action and Low Carbon Development two days after World Oceans Day, she highlighted the importance of small piers and marine infrastructure to sustainable fishing.

In a statement, the Cork South-West TD said: "We need to support sustainable, small scale fishing. To do that we need to immediately address the lack

of basic infrastructure for them. Too many small piers dotted around our coastline and islands are falling into disrepair and lack basic amenities like slipways.

"They urgently need investment to preserve the livelihoods of local families and the practice of truly sustainable fishing. The kind of fishing that has existed in rural and coastal Ireland for generations; that is more environmentally friendly; and that will keep families living on islands and other coastal areas."

"I have called for small piers to be made a priority and receive needed funding streams for marine infrastructure to support sustainable fishing and coastal and island communities," she said.

Encompassing objectives relating to improving pier and harbour facilities, one of the key themes laid out in Ireland's Inshore Strategy, launched last year, was Infrastructure and Resources. The Strategy lists auditing inshore piers and harbours in terms of functionality and facilities, and providing support for their improvement as actions required to meet objectives in this area.

In the Dáil, the recently elected TD also reiterated earlier comments regarding the inadequacies of the government's COVID-19 tie-up scheme – an issue which she said highlights the need for participatory decision making between fishing communities, their representatives and Government.

"The Covid-19 tie-up scheme demonstrates the urgent need for greater engagement. Once it was announced, fishermen and their organisations contacted me expressing dismay. Not

only was it insufficient to cover standing costs, it was ill-suited in assisting an industry on the verge of collapse," she said.

"The Irish South and West Fish Producers Organisation called the scheme "botched" and more than 98% of respondents to a survey for *The Irish Skipper* said it will not cover fixed costs. The Minister met fishing representatives in March and April but in May, this unpopular and unsuitable scheme was launched. That is the result of a failed engagement process. This is why farmers and fishing communities are so often negative about policies; their concerns and suggested solutions are disregarded."

The Cork South-West TD went on to state that alongside "immediate adjustments" to the scheme, assurances were also needed that "the flawed systems which created the scheme" are reformed, before asking: "Will the Minister commit to engaging actively with fishing communities and representative organisations to make adjustments to the scheme?"

While the sitting government may be scant on answers for the fishing industry, not so, however, for other sectors in the economy. Asked in a month that saw a €50 million support package for beef farmers announced, wholly funded by the Exchequer (something which according to industry sources was ruled out from the get go with respect the fishing industry... the words fairness, discrimination, and transparency come to mind here), it is especially difficult to fathom the government's resistance to supporting its primary seafood producers...

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No-deal countdown ticking once again?

Last month, the fourth round of talks between the EU and UK on their future relationship once again ended without agreement. To date, there has been no substantial progress since the beginning of negotiations. In a statement following the talks at the beginning of June, the EU's chief negotiator Michel Barnier said that during the talks "there was no substantial progress" on

the "four big sticking points", included among them fisheries. "On fisheries, the United Kingdom did not show any real willingness to explore other approaches than zonal attachment on quota sharing. It also continues to condition access to its waters to an annual negotiation – which is technically impossible for us. Whereas the EU wants to build a more stable economic partnership," he said.

The UK's chief negotiator, David Frost said, "The EU continues to insist on fisheries arrangements and access to UK fishing waters in a way that is incompatible with our future status as an independent coastal state." Whether a deal can at this stage be reached between the UK and EU at all, according to the Michel Barnier, will depend on whether Boris Johnson stops "backtracking"

on commitments he has already made, indicates a report from the Press Association as *The Skipper* was going to print. At an event hosted by the Brussels-based European Policy Centre think tank, the EU's chief negotiator, however, said he still believed a deal was possible as he prepared for an intensified talks process next week (beginning June 29th).

State-led or developer-led? Tight Consultation Deadline on Key Model for Offshore Wind Development

By Lorna Siggins

STATE-led or developer-led? That's a key question in relation to the best model for Ireland's offshore wind farm development which coastal communities have been asked to respond to.

However, outgoing Minister for Communications, Climate Action and Environment Richard Bruton has given a closing date of July 1st for views on how to scale up renewable energy output through offshore wind.

Launched on June 10th, the tight deadline for public consultation—on adopting an approach which could have lasting implications—took sections of the renewable energy industry by surprise.

Mr Bruton's call for responses was issued while negotiations were still in train between his party, Fianna Fáil and the Green Party on a new programme for government.

That draft programme published on June 15th is due to be voted on by members of the

respective parties as *The Skipper* goes to press.

If adopted, it pledges to extend Marine Protected Areas in up to 30 per cent of Irish coastal and offshore waters by 2030, and to increase the current target of offshore wind energy from 3.5 gigawatts (GW) to five GW off the Irish east and south coasts by 2030.

The draft programme also commits to drawing up plans for exploiting the west coast renewable energy resource.

Irrespective of what new government is in place, offshore renewable energy has the wind behind it – not least because of the planning rows over onshore wind energy locations.

Under the Government's Climate Action Plan, 70% of Ireland's electricity will be generated from renewable energy by 2030.

"It is crucial that we put in place a model that allows us to scale up and realise the changes required," Mr Bruton has said in relation to the new consultation.

A consultancy report, published by Mr Bruton, outlines four options – ranging from



The O'Flaherty brothers' *Hornsrif* WD-43 in Kilmore Quay with wind turbines at Carnsore Point in the background. (Credit: Finbarr Healy)

a "developer-led" scenario, where each offshore wind farm would design its own connection to a more centralised "plan-led" offshore transmission development with more State involvement.

The selected model will be aligned with Ireland's new National Marine Planning Framework, and the development consent regime for the maritime area as set out in the Maritime Planning and Development Management legislation, Mr Bruton has said.

The report by Navigant consultants, based in the Netherlands, examines how other European countries approach offshore grid planning and outlines four variants of "developer-led" and "plan-led" approaches that might suit Ireland.

Under the "developer-led" model, applied in Britain, developers would prepare requirements for consents, select and pre-develop wind farm sites, plan and build farms and transmission assets.

Under the "plan-led" model, a State body would select wind farm sites and undertake pre-development and offshore grid connections – an approach applied in the Netherlands, and one which would give more responsibility to Eirgrid and ESB Networks.

Under three of the four options outlined, the offshore wind transmission assets are owned and operated by the developer, who manages and bears the risk of outages to its transmission assets.

The Marine Renewables Industry Association (MRIA) chairman Peter Coyle said he welcomed the report's publication as another example of Government commitment to renewable energy.

However, he also warned that new government needed to give

extra resources to State agencies, as in the new government's department handling energy projects, and Bord Pleanála, if ambitious targets are to be realised.

"This consultation is going to set the rules for the game for the next 50 to 100 years, so the MRIA will be making a strong input," he said.

Mr Coyle also noted that the Government had recently designated seven offshore renewable energy projects in the Irish Sea and outer Galway Bay as "relevant" or transition projects.

"Relevant" projects were those which applied for and substantially advanced, or were granted a lease, under the Foreshore Act 1933 and/or offshore wind projects which have a valid connection agreement from Eirgrid, or are confirmed by Eirgrid as eligible to be processed to receive a valid connection offer.

They include Oriel Wind Park off the Louth coast in the north Irish Sea; Innogy Renewables, which has two projects Bray and Kish Banks in the Irish Sea; the Codling Wind Park, (two projects, Codling I and Codling II); Fuinneamh Sceirde Teoranta, as in the Sker Rocks in outer Galway Bay; and North Irish Sea Array Ltd.

Irish Wind Energy Association chief executive Dr David Connolly said that it was "essential that an effective model for the grid is partnered with a robust planning system".

"Passing the Marine Planning and Development Management Bill, which will put in place a planning system for offshore wind energy, and giving An Bord Pleanála the resources to administer it, must be top priorities for the next Government if we are to build these projects in time," Dr Connolly said.

Commission takes stock of the CFP

The Commission has published its yearly Communication outlining progress on the management of fish stocks in the EU and launching a public consultation on the fixing of fishing opportunities for next year, the main objective for which will be to maintain or reach a level of fishing that allows for maximized, but sustainable harvesting from the stocks.

Based on 2018 data, this year's edition "*Towards more sustainable fishing in the EU: state of play*

and orientations for 2021", shows progress on environmental and economic indicators. With scientists estimating there are 50% more fish in the North East Atlantic today than in 2003, changes to fishing practices are seeing a more abundant stock. On top of this, the economic performance of the fleet as a whole continues to be very good, with a net profit of around €1.4 billion in 2018.

Despite significant improvements, challenges do remain. While similar economic performance is

expected to be confirmed for 2019, projections for 2020 remain highly uncertain due to the impact of the coronavirus crisis. Alongside this, management issues persist in the Mediterranean and Black Seas, and in the Atlantic sea basins, some stocks continue to be overfished or remain outside safe biological limits.

Implementation of the landing obligation also remains a concern, and here the Commission says Member States need to step up enforcement and control, in

particular by using control tools, such as remote electronic monitoring systems. The Commission, it says, will continue to work with the European Parliament and Council to reach an agreement on the revised fisheries control system, which will facilitate the use of these tools.

Feedback on the policy orientations set out in the Communication, which can be accessed at <https://bit.ly/2Vjehvj>, can be provided to the Commission until August 31st.

High Court to hear challenge against 'unsustainable fishing'

Proceedings aimed at challenging the EU Regulation setting 2020 fishing quotas due to a "failure to meet a legally defined deadline for ending overfishing in all stocks by 2020" have been formally initiated in the High Court. Brought by the environmental group 'Friends of the Irish Environment', a judge will be assigned on July 15th to hear the application for leave to apply for a Judicial Review.

A press briefing issued by 'Friends of the Irish Environment' indicates the action has been taken on the back of a 'failure' to bring all stocks managed under the CFP in line

with their MSY levels by 2020, and the setting of quotas in excess of the scientific advice.

According to the group's spokesperson Kate Ruddock, "This legal action aims to challenge the short-term political decision-making process which in the long term is destroying the Irish fishing industry. If this challenge is successful it will push politicians to take decisions that allow stocks to recover to a level where fishing can be guaranteed into the future. However, no request has been made to suspend the implementation of the 2020 decision on TACs because we do not want to

harm fishing activities".

Ireland in particular has been signalled out by the group on the back of a study by the international NGO ClientEarth that claims Ireland is among the Member States that have most actively advocated for higher TACs and "benefits significantly from unsustainable TACs by having considerable shares in 13 of the stocks that exceed the scientific advice." The group are asking the Irish Courts to refer the case to the European Court of Justice.

"Even though the Irish government and Minister Creed are partly responsible for the decisions

taken regarding catch limits and quotas, ultimately these decisions are taken by the Council of EU fisheries ministers as a whole, who are both collectively and individually bound by the CFP's rules. Exceeding the MSY exploitation rate is incompatible with the basic regulation of the CFP and must be annulled by the Court of Justice of the European Union", said Ms Ruddock.

Now where did we leave that copy of the recently published Scientific, Technical and Economic Committee for Fisheries' (STECF) annual report on the performance of the CFP...

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€3.5million investment in six seafood processing companies announced

Last month, the Minister for Agriculture Food and the Marine, Michael Creed T.D. announced €3.5 million in new investment for six seafood processing companies, with his Department's European Maritime and Fisheries Fund (EMFF) Programme providing grants of €1,081,192, co-funded by the Government of Ireland and the European Union.

€904,452.59 has been granted under the Seafood Processing Capital Investment Scheme, which provides up to 30% aid to seafood processing premises to encourage capital investment in value-adding production capacity. A further €176,740.00 has been granted under the Seafood Scaling & New Market Development Scheme, which provides up to 50% aid to groups of seafood processing enterprises who work together to develop new export exports.

Minister Creed said, "In these very challenging times for business generally and notably our seafood sector, I am delighted to support these

six companies in building for the future."

The Minister went on to state the six companies were preparing their businesses to grow exports and value as "they have the confidence to know that our seafood sector is a high growth sector and that it will resume its long-term growth pattern now that markets are getting over the recent temporary, albeit severe difficulties."

"The national strategy is to add value wherever possible to our seafood products to ensure those products are well placed in the market. These grants will assist these Irish Seafood companies to deliver on that strategy," he said, before adding that his Department's EMFF Programme "is ready to assist seafood companies get back to

business with capital, innovation, marketing and other supports."

Investment Breakdown

Grant approvals - Seafood Processing Capital Investment Scheme				
Beneficiary	Location	Project	Total Investment	EMFF Grant
Carr & Sons Seafood Ltd.	Mayo	Extension to Modernise Process Facility	€387,141.80	€116,142.54
Sofrimar	Wexford	Automated Processing & Packaging Line	€562,035.91	€168,610.77
Seafood Processors Ltd.	Louth	White Fish Filleting Processing Technology	€370,000.00	€111,000.00
Good Fish Processing Ltd.	Cork	Packaging Capacity & Efficiency 2020	€396,011.00	€118,803.30
Keohane Seafood	Cork	Improving factory flow, efficiency and environmental sustainability	€1,442,413.26	€389,895.98
Total:			€3,157,601.97	€904,452.59

Grant approvals - Seafood Scaling & New Market Development Scheme				
Beneficiary	Location	Project	Total Investment	EMFF Grant
West Cork Export Market Collective	Cork	Leveraging Collaboration to boost export sales	€353,480.00	€176,740.00
Union Hall Smoked Fish Ltd & Keohane Seafood				
Total:			€353,480.00	€176,740.00

Ireland's Fish Imports and Exports continue to Rise

Fish imports into Ireland from outside the EU continue to rise, according to figures released by the Sea Fisheries Protection Authority (SFPA).

In 2019, over 4,000 tonnes of fishery products were subject to SFPA import controls, up 26% on 2018.

Fish and fishery products that are traded into the EU are subject to specific regulatory controls to prevent illegal, unreported and unregulated (IUU) fish and fishery products from entering the food supply chain.

The anti-IUU regulations were introduced as part of EU measures to tackle the estimated €1.1bn in IUU products that were being

imported into the EU annually. The SFPA figures were released ahead of World Oceans Day (June 8th) and World Accreditation Day (June 9th) which marks the critical role played by certification in assuring food security and safety.

Under EU regulations, all imports of fish from third countries (countries outside the EU) must be accompanied by a catch certificate which confirms that the fish was caught and declared legally, including where and when the fish was caught and by which vessel.

Last year, the SFPA provided catch certificates for over 11,500 tonnes of Irish exports to third countries, an increase of 8% on 2018. In addition, the SFPA

provided health certificates for almost 84,000 tonnes of exports to third countries, confirming the products were handled under satisfactory hygienic conditions in an SFPA approved establishment and accurately described.

"As regulators, we are committed to utilising all the controls available to us to help detect and deter IUU fishing and fishery products within our jurisdiction," said Dr Susan Steele, Chair of the SFPA.

"Regulation, including health certification, also underpins confidence in the safety of Irish seafood products, providing vital reassurance to retailers, hospitality businesses and consumers at home

and abroad," she said.

"This is especially important given that the seafood sector is one of the main drivers of export growth for agri-food within Food Wise 2025."

Fish and fishery products from China, Ecuador and India accounted for almost half of the total volume of imports in 2019, while Nigeria, China and Egypt accounted for almost two-thirds of the Irish seafood exports outside the EU.

Dr Steele confirmed the SFPA is anticipating and preparing for the possibility that exports to the UK may require health certificates in the future. However, during the current transition period, EU rules and regulations continue to apply.

SFPA Issues Reminder on Crab and Lobster Fishing Regulations

With the recreational crab and lobster fishery reopening on May 1st, the Sea Fisheries Protection Authority (SFPA) has issued a reminder of the importance of compliance with the regulations and best practice that govern the catching, selling and buying of crabs and lobsters.

EU regulations were updated last year to help in the conservation of fisheries resources and the protection of marine ecosystems and are part of a range of conservation measures to help ensure the viability of the commercial inshore fishing industry. Dr Susan Steele, Chair of

the SFPA, is urging everyone to pay particular attention to the regulations regarding the size of shellfish caught and the quantity of crab claws without bodies which can be retained onboard a vessel.

The regulations concerning the size that can be caught in Irish water apply to all fishers. The minimum size for crab in Irish waters is as follows; edible/brown crab 140 mm, spider crab 120mm and velvet crab 65mm, while European lobster have minimum size of 87mm and maximum of 127mm (carapace length).

A crab or lobster outside these sizes limits must be returned immediately to the sea. Undersize shellfish cannot be retained on board for any reason including for use as bait. Furthermore, lobsters that have been V-notched or have mutilated tails must not be retained

on board either.

For edible crabs caught in pots or creels, a maximum of 1% by weight of the total catch of edible crab may consist of detached claws. For edible crabs caught with any other fishing gear other than pots or traps, a maximum of 75kg of detached crab claws may be landed.

Sea Fisheries Protection Officers continue to be available to assist fishers and they are contactable on their mobile numbers and by email. The SFPA can be reached at its usual main landline numbers or by email at sfpa_info@sfpa.ie.

Dr Steele also urged anyone who had concerns around fishing activity that might be illegal or against best practice to contact the regulator directly or by calling the SFPA confidential telephone line at 1890 76 76 76.



European lobster have a minimum size of 87mm



New date – Irish Skipper Expo to be held in March 2021

Mara Media, the organiser of Irish Skipper Expo 2020, has been informed by the event venue, UL Sport Arena, that it has entered into an agreement with the HSE (Ireland's Health Service Executive), to use its facilities as a field hospital in response to the COVID-19 pandemic, and as such, the venue will no longer be available to host Irish Skipper Expo 2020. In light of this, the show will now be moved to the 12th and 13th of March 2021.

Hugh Bonner, managing director of Mara Media said: "Although disappointed, moving the show forward to March 2021 will provide an opportunity for the industry to reinvigorate itself and enable forward planning to take place with more confidence.

"Over the years we have developed a very special relationship with the fishing community, the support and loyalty they have shown during this challenging period has been incredible, for which we express our sincere thanks.

"In conjunction with BIM and Cavanagh Hooper Dolan, our show sponsors, we look forward to bringing Irish Skipper Expo 2021 to you on 12th and 13th of March. The show will be held at the UL Sport Arena in Limerick and promises to be bigger and better than ever. We look forward to welcoming everyone there."

Meanwhile, the much anticipated "Fishermen's Fling", the Lost At Sea Tragedies (LAST) Charity Ball, has also been rescheduled to coincide with Irish Skipper Expo 2021. The event will take place at the Castletroy Park Hotel on the 12th of March 2021. All tickets remain valid for this date.

For updates visit www.theskipper.ie



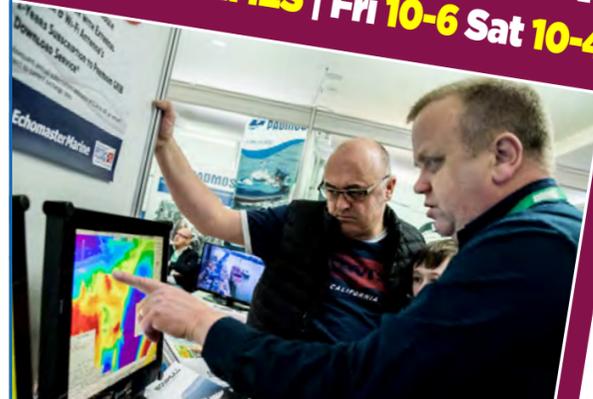
L-R: Jonathan O'Donnell, Don Fullerlove, Thomas Moran, Pat O'Donnell at the Irish Skipper Expo last year



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IRISH AQUACULTURE STILL WAITING ON SUPPORT

At the time of writing, another COVID-19 month has passed and Irish aquaculture producers are still waiting on support from outgoing government, despite IFA Aquaculture having had several discussions with the Department and BIM relating to proposals for supports for the sector, particularly the hard hit shellfish sector, in the wake of global pandemic's impact on Irish aquaculture over the past months.

Last month, IFA Aquaculture Executive, Teresa Morrissey told *The Skipper* a solid response from the Department as to what kind of scheme, if any, might be made available to the sector under new EU rules which allow

for supports from European Maritime and Fisheries Fund (EMFF) budgets had not yet been forthcoming.

This month, Ms Morrissey said, "DAFM and BIM are evaluating our latest proposal and we are awaiting a meaningful response on this." Meanwhile, a £360,000 emergency support package, similar to that which has been proposed by IFA for the sector here, was announced at the end of May for Northern Ireland's sector, while in Scotland a 'COVID-19 Aquaculture Hardship Fund' has been made available to producers.

"DAFM must now redirect available EMFF funds as financial aid for the Irish

aquaculture industry to support them in dealing with the COVID-19 crisis. In addition to redirecting available EMFF funds as financial aid for the Irish seafood sector, both fisheries and aquaculture, additional funding has to be pursued both at EU and national level," urged Ms Morrissey.

Emphasising the ongoing challenges facing the sector across Europe, in a statement issued at the beginning of June following an online General Meeting with the participation of national aquaculture associations, the Federation of European Aquaculture Producers (FEAP) said that despite initial swift action at European level they were

"extremely concerned that what was envisaged to provide swift aid to the EU aquaculture sector has entered the same doldrums than the conventional EMFF regulation suffered."

"Competent authorities responsible to manage the EMFF at national and regional level are proving again that they are unable to handle these funds in an effective way," they said.

Though the total unspent funds in Ireland's budget remains a mystery, according to FEAP, the 2014-2020 EMFF "with a budget of Euro 6.5 billion, has been underused from its beginning for several causes and more than Euro 1 billion remain today unspent."

Oyster farmer urges restaurants to source Irish seafood to aid recovery from Covid-19

As restaurants and gastro pubs prepare to re-open following the lockdown, Achill Oysters, a successful oyster producer, has urged restaurants to include local oysters and seafood on their menus to help offset the economic impact of COVID-19.

Explaining how supporting local businesses particularly in remote coastal areas is crucial at this time, Hugh O'Malley, owner and farmer of Achill Oysters based on Achill Island, Co Mayo said: "We produce premium Irish rock oysters for the domestic and international market. Pre COVID-19, our international business was thriving. We were exporting over two tonnes of oysters to China every week on top of orders to Singapore, Taiwan, the UK, Iceland and the Netherlands.

"We have seen a 80% drop in our export sales but I am confident we, and the rest of the industry, will recover. Until then, we have an opportunity to work with restaurants to grow the domestic oyster market and in doing so, directly and indirectly support Irish businesses"

Renowned worldwide for their quality, Irish oysters achieve premium prices particularly on Asian markets, and the majority grown around our coast are exported to meet this international demand. However, according to BIM's 2019 Business of Seafood Report, the domestic market for seafood is growing year on year with the latest figures estimating the sector to be worth €496 million in 2019, with the main growth in the foodservice sector as seafood becomes increasingly popular in our restaurants and gastro pubs.

Hugh saw the opportunities for oyster farming early on and he knows just how important local maritime businesses are to the community. Five generations of O'Malley's have made a living from the sea in Achill. Following a successful career

running his own technology firm, Hugh has used his IT and entrepreneurial skills, to develop the business.

After only six years of trading, he has grown the business from 50kg of stock arriving on the farm in 2014 to a farm ten times the size, a processing facility in Ennis, Co. Clare and an e-commerce solution to sell his oysters online.

Hugh concluded; "Our oysters take three and a half years to reach market size. Like a fine wine, their taste is defined by how well they are tended to and the quality of their environment. We couldn't have a better location than Achill Island. We are proud to be part of this community employing local people on our farm. We are also very grateful to our Irish customers and fishmongers who have continued to support us. In fact, our online sales increased twentyfold during the lockdown. If COVID-19 has thought us anything, it is to continue to appreciate what we have in this country including fantastic seafood right on our doorstep."



Tending to the oysters on the farm



A shucked Irish rock oyster from Achill Oysters



Hugh O'Malley, Achill Oysters founder and oyster farmer at his oyster farm on Achill Island, Co. Mayo



Growing of seaweed on a line

From mono- to multi-trophic: The Future of Aquaculture

With the average Irish person today consuming about 22kg of fish per year, seafood is a popular and healthy food product in Ireland. Though there is still a way for us to go, in terms of catching up with some of our European neighbours, people recognise the health benefits, with fish being low-fat and a good source of omega-3 fats, which are vital for brain function, heart and many other benefits. Salmon is the most popular fish bought by Irish families. In Ireland, most of our salmon is farmed, and along with mussels and oysters, it is the main farmed species in the country.

Aquaculture, the farming of animals in the water, has been practised for centuries, with the monks farming fish in the Middle Ages using fairly simple techniques. More recently the technology has progressed and the aquaculture sector is now producing in the region of 50 thousand tonnes annually, and provides a valuable food product as well as much needed employment in many rural areas of Ireland.

A typical fish farm involves keeping fish in pens in the water column, caring for them and supplying them with food so they grow to market size. Or for shellfish, containing them in a specialised unit and allowing them to feed from natural plants and materials in the water column until they reach harvestable size.

While farming fish has a lower carbon and water footprint to those of land animals, and a very efficient food fed to weight gain ratio compared to beef, pork or chicken, farming does require protein food sources and produces organic waste which is released into the surrounding waters. Finding sustainable food sources, and reducing the environmental impacts are key challenges facing the sector as it continues to grow.

One innovative solution being investigated to deal with these issues is called integrated multi-trophic aquaculture, or IMTA. IMTA is a different way of thinking about aquatic food production and is based on the concept of the 'food chain'. It involves farming multiple, complementary species from different levels of the food chain together for their mutual benefit, where the

waste by-products from the fish providing food for another species.

Shellfish filter out microscopic plants and organic content from the water column to grow, and seaweeds and plants absorb the minerals from the water for them to grow. Growing shellfish and seaweed species in close proximity to feed fish mimic these natural cycles in the seas and creates a local ecosystem where the wastage and impacts are reduced, and the productivity and diversity of products from the site is increased.

The Marine Institutes' aquaculture research site in Lehanagh Pool in Connemara is an example of IMTA, where salmon are reared on site, with scallops and seaweeds growing alongside helping to remove the organic inputs. IMTA is seen as a promising solution for sustainable aquaculture development.

The institute is coordinating the innovative Horizon2020 IMPAQT project which is working to promote aquaculture production based on IMTA, by addressing the lack of data and tools to assess the factors that affect IMTA, and to enable a real-time response to production challenges, environmental impacts and seafood quality.

The project is developing a computerised, artificially intelligent, management platform which analyses the environment, the fish behaviour, and data from other sources such



Growing of scallops (Lehanagh Pool)

as satellite data, image analysis, and inputs from the farmer on site. This is used to inform fish welfare and water quality and to provide real-time operational feedback and advice to the farmer on the management of their site.

The technologies include new sensors, wireless communication systems, and state of the art software utilising the internet of things. This system is being designed and tested at the Institute's research site in Lehanagh Pool, at Keywater Fisheries IMTA site in Sligo, in collaboration with international partners at other sites across Europe, and in Turkey and China.

The IMPAQT project has received funding from the European Union's Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme under grant agreement No 774109. For more information visit <https://impaqtproject.eu/>



The IMTA Impact pilot site at Lehanagh Pool, Ireland



By LORNA SIGGINS

Ros a' Mhíl. (Credit: John Loughlin)

A Draft Programme for Government

More of 'Our Oceans Wealth'... with 30% MPAs for good measure

By Lia ní Aodha

Last month, following intense negotiations (that apparently involved a dispute about a standalone Department of the Marine), and more than 120 days since the General Election, Fine Gael, Fianna Fáil and the Green Party published their agreement on a programme for government.

Comprising a section on the marine that is quantitatively, if not qualitatively, substantial in terms of representing a 'new deal' for Ireland's fishermen, women and coastal communities, without sounding too pessimistic the draft programme for government reads (to me) like much of the same, with a dose of Marine Protected Areas (MPAs) thrown in for good measure, and to keep the Greens happy (and who reportedly pushed for a Department of the Marine, though no comment from the Party has been forthcoming on this, despite request).

Essentially a long list, with some lofty platitudes and party-specific compromises, filed under the Mission: Balanced Regional Development, page 71 of the document espouses a commitment to recognising the importance of agriculture, fisheries, tourism and other sectors that support balanced regional development and employment.

Listed under Agriculture and Food is a lengthy section on the Marine (running from page 88-91) which begins by espousing a commitment "to prioritising the development of the marine" – though many in the fishing industry will, no doubt, be

wondering for whom.

Lofty aspiration number one of the section follows, stating: "As an island nation, Ireland has a special relationship with the ocean. Everything must be done to protect marine biodiversity and to secure a sustainable future for the fisheries sector while supporting coastal communities." So far, so good. But how?

To achieve this, the coalition promise to:

- Develop a new integrated marine sustainable development plan, as a successor to *Harnessing Our Ocean Wealth*, focusing on all aspects of the marine, with a greater focus on sustainability and stakeholder engagement and centrally coordinated by the Department of the Taoiseach to be implemented over the life of the Government.
- Ensure protection of the interests of the Irish Fishing industry by insisting that a Fisheries Agreement with the UK is concluded as an integral part of an overall EU Free Trade Agreement with the UK.
- Recognise that the critical issue in these negotiations for the Irish industry is continued access to UK waters and quota share and the danger of displacement of the EU fleet into Irish territorial waters.
- Seek EU Commission contingency supports and market disturbance funding for the fisheries sector to mitigate against the impact of COVID-19 and Brexit.
- Ensure that inshore waters continue to be protected for smaller fishing vessels and recreational fishers and that

pair trawling will be prohibited inside the six-mile limit.

- Support the inshore fishing fleet in generating greater marketing and promotional capacity by facilitating the establishment of a Producer Organisation for these smaller fishing vessels, thereby providing additional opportunity for the island and coastal communities involved in the inshore sector.
- Aggressively tackle the issue of waste, ghost nets and illegal dumping in the marine environment through rigorous implementation of the Port Reception Facilities Directives and by requiring all Irish fishing trawlers to participate in the Clean Oceans Initiative, ensuring that plastic fished up at sea is brought ashore.
- Continue to invest in coastline communities through the Fisheries Local Area Group (FLAG) programme, providing support for innovative projects to boost economic growth and job creation.
- Invest *strategically* in harbour infrastructure to attract increased landings into Ireland of sustainably caught fish in our waters, driving the development of the seafood processing sector and the blue economy in coastal communities.
- Work to develop the aquaculture sector sustainably, including shellfish aquaculture using native species, and implement the recommendations of the report of the Independent Aquaculture Licencing Review Group, to ensure that feed products for aquaculture are sourced

and produced in the most sustainable manner possible.

- Progress a national policy on coastal erosion and flooding having regard to climate change.
- On the Common Fisheries Policy specifically, the draft programme for government states: "We are fully committed to the environmental objectives of the CFP, which has introduced measures aimed at sustaining fish stocks, through the ending of discards, quotas based on science and the internationally recognised concept of Maximum Sustainable Yield (MSY)."

Though you wouldn't know it from this document, the CFP does also have social and economic objectives... Those aside, on the environmental front the coalition, if they actually do manage to form a government, will:

- Actively promote setting annual quotas in line with MSY principles.
- Promote the introduction of constructive technical measures that promote sustainability, decrease by-catch and protect fish stocks for the future.
- Protect Ireland's interests in the future review of the Common Fisheries Policy.
- Work to eliminate illegal fishing and promote a culture of compliance by all EU vessels in our 200-mile zone, to protect the fish stocks on which the Irish Fishing industry depends.
- Implement the Sea Fisheries Protection Authority (SFPA) capability review to enhance governance issues and consider any other measures that may be necessary.

"As an island nation, Ireland has a special relationship with the ocean. Everything must be done to protect marine biodiversity and to secure a sustainable future for the fisheries sector while supporting coastal communities."

- Implement a fair EU points system in order to *protect fish stocks and ensure the release of suspended EU funding.*
- Work to retain factory weighing of pelagic fish in the context of negotiations on the new EU control regulation.
- Support the completion of the new Fisheries Control Regulation to increase the effectiveness of existing control measures and agree rules that will ensure a level playing field for all EU vessels. Increasing the level of transparency and access to information in regards to infringements within Irish waters will be key to measuring the effectiveness of the new system.

Accommodating one of the key promises on the Marine made by the Greens in their election manifesto, an entire subsection is dedicated to MPAs. "We support the principles and ambition of the EU Biodiversity Strategy and will develop comprehensive legislation for the identification, designation and management of Marine Protected Areas (MPAs) in Irish territorial waters," it states.

What does this mean? Not quite the 50% target espoused by the biologist E.O. Wilson, or the Greens in their election manifesto, the draft programme says: "We will realise our outstanding target of 10% under the Marine Strategy Framework Directive as soon as is practical and aim for 30% of marine protected areas by 2030."

And how will this half earth-sea utopia be created? Based on

scientific expertise and in close consultation with all stakeholders, in particular the fishing industry as well as environmental and community representatives, it says, with this consultation process to begin in the first 100 days of Government. The (at the time of writing) might-be government promises also to examine the establishment of an offshore maritime area as Ireland's seventh national park, which would form part of the expanded MPAs.

In news which will come as music to the ears of inshore fishermen and women who over the past months have been left in the dark on several foreshore applications and surveys, under "Marine Planning" the coalition promise to "prioritise the passage of a balanced and Aarhus Convention compliant Marine and Planning and Development Management Bill through the Oireachtas."

"We will publish Ireland's first ever marine spatial planning policy setting out a clear vision for the future development of our marine planning system. The development of this policy will involve a full public and stakeholder consultation," they say, adding that on completion of this they will bring forward Ireland's first ever National Marine Planning Framework.

"This will introduce a planning system for the development of Ireland's maritime area in the same way that the National Planning Framework fulfils this function on land. These two

documents will form the basis for Project Ireland Marine 2040, our long-term overarching strategy to manage Ireland's seas for the benefit of all its people. A marine planning oversight delivery board on the same model as the Project Ireland 2040 Delivery Board will be established to provide leadership and oversight to the implementation of these policies."

Under the subheading "Coastal Blue Carbon", the coalition states they "recognise the enormous 'blue carbon' potential that the ocean has to offer in tackling climate change but we appreciate that further scientific research is needed to understand and develop this potential."

How do they plan to tap into the Marine's potential for acting as a carbon (waste) sink? "We will task the Marine Institute with a collaborative EU wide research initiative, aimed at investigating the climate change mitigation potential of blue carbon and working towards a means of creating a validated inventory that will in the future assist the EU in meeting our climate change objectives."

And there concludes the section on the Marine, which although lengthy in reality reads like a checklist which in many places look like promises to continue doing more or less the same thing as the previous Government has been doing, though granted in others represents compromises won by the other two parties.

(Two pages of Fine Gael's election manifesto was dedicated to promises relating to *'Protecting Our Ocean Wealth'*, while also included among the party's other promises was a commitment to expanding the Clean Oceans initiative, and further developing the inshore fisheries sector.

Among Fianna Fáil's aspirations was a promise to introduce a 'fair' penalty points system that meets EU obligations while safeguarding the rights of Irish fishermen, to explore "a more flexible and proportionate

approach to inspections", and review the current implementation of the recommendations of the *Report of the Independent Aquaculture Licencing Review Group*. The Greens wanted MPAs and a ban on pair trawling, among others.)

Whether any of these (expanding the clean oceans initiative, a 'fair' penalty point system, banning pair trawling, more MPAs...) really represent a programme for change and a move towards 'a shared future' that involves a fair deal for Ireland's fishermen and women (big and small) is debatable, My money says that it doesn't.

Of course, not forgetting the ever present question of Brexit, on page 135 Fianna Fáil, Fine Gael and the Greens promise to "defend the interests of Irish agriculture, fisheries, export businesses and the wider economy." Their priorities in the negotiations will include achieving the best possible deal for the Irish fishing industry in relation to access conditions, quota shares and the *traditional activity of the EU fleet* while insisting that fisheries issues are dealt with as part of an overall trade deal.

On offshore wind, however that will ultimately work in terms of an easy or uneasy coexistence with the fisheries sector, the draft programme—unsurprisingly given all three parties had espoused a commitment to rapidly scaling up the exploitation of Ireland's offshore wind potential—promises "a major drive to realise the immense potential of Ireland's offshore renewables" and to "set out a path to achieving 5GW capacity in offshore wind by 2030 off Ireland's Eastern and Southern coasts."

Published on June 15th, the draft programme, *Our Shared Future*, is due to be voted on by members of the respective parties as *The Skipper* was going to print, the results of which will be announced on June 26th. A 'blue new deal' indeed!

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NORTHERN IRELAND NEWS *By Dick James*

The Fishery

There appears to be a bit of consistency (if not normality) coming into the fishery with a pattern emerging for the prawners, and markets for whitefish allowing a more consistent pattern of operations.

After the PO's intervention in the Nephrops market the tails situation seems to have regularised, with those landing to the major buyer working on 50% of last year's landings, however that may be translated.

For some, it is a 3 day week, for others a daily quota, and for the larger boats a set tonnage for the summer. And when that is finished back to furlough or whatever. No doubt minds are super active in exploring options with diversification being preferred but what into being the question, no doubt into some others patch...

For the smaller boats 3 days is just about the normal trip length so Monday to Wednesday sees a concentration of landings on a Wednesday night or Thursday morning. This fleet obviously works close to base with effort mainly in the western Irish Sea and for some Portavogie boats in the lower reaches of the Clyde.

There is also a fleet working the Cumbrian grounds. Mainly of the larger boats but these are having to return to base in Co Down to land, and they seem to favour back to back trips working to the slack tides.

Another fleet is working in the southern area of the prawn ground off Co Louth mixed in with an Irish fleet again working the tide cycle on extended trips. Word from the fleet is that prawns are thick on the ground, mainly of the smaller kind suitable for the tails market and taking pressure off the whole prawn market.

Other local boats landing to a different market are fishing as normal with no limitation (other than that expected of normality). Again, they are working across the Irish Sea grounds their operations influenced by tide and weather. One or two boats made for the Smalls grounds where a fleet of Irish prawners



Earling morning haul. (Credit: Stephen Moore)

were working but for whatever reason they did not stick at it, maybe the volume of prawns going in the Irish Sea made it difficult to pass over them for distant grounds.

The *Maracestina* put in a trip on the Porcupine after a lengthy lay-up but there was no rapid turnaround. The PO's intervention was intended to stabilise prices but tails have since dropped and the whole prawn market is apparently chaotic, with rumours of offloading of Scottish produce rife. Fortunately for the Co Down fleet, this is the season for tails and the head-on fishery is distant enough that matters have time to sort themselves.

On the whitefish front, the haddock fishery off the Co Louth coast is drawing little interest with only the occasional trip being made by Kilkeel based boats, the main focus of late being in the North Channel where a mixed fishery based on hake is attracting regular interest from four boats with occasional additions. A significant bycatch, which now has to be landed, is generally welcomed but the fairly low numbers of cod through the shot could pose quota problems later in a year when, for obvious reasons quota has not been an issue.

The three pelagic boats are readying themselves for the

summer/autumn fishery with the North Sea herring already showing up in early season landings, the Irish Sea fishery somewhat more distant. The *Stefanie M* was in Skagen for a quick maintenance work-over where the *Voyager* lies in waiting, and the *Havilah* remains in Belfast.

The inshore boats are working away as best they can with market restrictions limiting their options, and gear lying ashore is testimony to their problems. The *Freya* working pots for Nephrops in Strangford Lough is working an online sales pitch with some success with super quality prawns to a choice market.



Village Project: One of a number of flower boats placed around Ardglass during the COVID-19 crisis by locals. (Credit: Christopher Feenan)

BACK TO BREXIT

Coronavirus is far from done but focus is now changing as topic of interest and BREXIT is (re) emerging into focus whilst COVID slips to the low point of the radar. Recent talks EU-UK are apparently taking us no further forward in terms of agreement, or indeed narrowing of differences in mindset as far as fisheries are concerned. But fisheries is rapidly gaining an importance within the overall issue, which is unprecedented since Edward Heath gave the whole lot away in the 1970s and the Hague Preference was secretly adopted. If there will be a last minute coming together no one knows (it is the norm for most EU negotiations) but present stances say not. Without wishing to enter the mainstream of the sovereignty vs collectivism debate there are one or two aspects of

recent releases which impinge specifically to Northern Ireland.

In a recent release Michael Gove outlined the UK's approach to the Northern Ireland Protocol. In paragraph 52 he said of the fisheries aspect of the protocol: "The protocol recognises that the Withdrawal Agreement Joint Committee needs to complete a technical exercise to ensure that Northern Ireland fishing vessels landing their catch into local ports are exempt from customs duties. The fishing industry is of great importance to Northern Ireland and we are determined to ensure that fishers from Northern Ireland are not placed at any disadvantage either through customs duties or associated barriers."

Paragraph 58 encompasses the "freedom to control our waters", while Paragraph

59 states: "Northern Ireland to make maximum use of new freedoms alongside the guaranteed unfettered access it will have to the markets in the rest of the UK and the EU"

So, all OK then? I think probably not. No doubt Mr Barnier will have a few "nons" on the matter under prompting from the many within the collective, and with limited support from our devolved neighbours we may have to stick up for ourselves.

Other issues on proposed import tariffs due to take effect from January 1st, 2021 see cod and crustaceans at 12% and minor reductions for tuna, Alaskan pollack and oysters. A previously proposed temporary tariff had seafood free. There is a generalised system of preference for developing countries but... the UK global tariff will apply to the EU!



Sea Harvester coming into Ardglass. (Credit: Stephen Moore)

UNWANTED CATCH

The Ardglass prawn trawler *Katy Grace* caught an unwanted bycatch whilst fishing the prawn ground to the west of the Isle of Man. A human foot was found in amongst the usual catch, and the skipper, being a good citizen, reported the incident to the local authorities whereupon the environmental health inspectors required the skipper/owner to destroy the total catch, for fear of contamination, by incineration (dumping at sea not allowed under landing obligation), the cost to be borne by the boat. Lesson learned, putting your foot in it!

KILLER WHALES IN STRANGFORD LOUGH

At the end of May, the appearance of two killer whales (Orcas) in Strangford Lough was the subject of considerable interest to local folk from around the Lough. This fairly rare event was photographed and filmed, and hailed by some as a sign of the environmental improvements within the lough attracting these visitors. Guidance was given by marine/environmental biologists on how to treat the event including limiting viewing time to 15 minutes, keeping boat speed below 5 knots, maintaining a distance of 100 meters (200 meters if more than one boat) plus other behavioural norms. Apparently, observers were given a problem by the killer whales which exhibited a tendency to approach their boat and circle it.

It seems that these two individuals, known as Aquarius and John Doe, are part of a larger group well known in the area to the west of the UK and Ireland characterised by their feeding pattern where they target marine mammals rather than fish which it is feared may lead to their extinction. Presumably, the two seen in Strangford were on a scouting mission to check out the local seal population. Best advice from local seal watchers is that Strangford Seals are lovely and they go well with chips!

STRATEGIC DEVELOPMENT REPORT

Part one of a report into the strategic development of the Northern Ireland fishing industry was submitted to Government last November. This covered the fishery and was a precursor to the intended part two within which recommendations and timelines were expected to form the basis of future development options. The minister responsible for fisheries, Edwin Poots cleared the part one report for publication by the end of June and commissioned

part two, with specific mention of the timelines for harbour developments to be covered in the report. Other areas of development were not covered in the Minister's statement.

There are at present two harbour development proposals in process. One for Kilkeel envisages the Harbour being developed as a pelagic hub with both berthing and processing facilities being catered for. The other option for Ardglass envisages a harbour deepening to cater for both visiting pelagic

vessels landing to the existing local factories and for the local trawler and crabber sections of the fleet, with enhanced berthing facilities.

What direction phase two of the study will take is not known. Whether either or both options on the table are taken up or a new direction is considered is unknown, but a strategic review commissioned by the Minister will obviously have a major impact on the thought process going forward.



UK NEWS

Three fishermen rescued after *J Sea* capsizes

Three fishermen were rescued last month, following a dramatic all-night ordeal after their boat, the *J Sea* E333, capsized on the evening of Saturday, May 30th, more than 70 nautical miles north east of Flamborough Head, in the North Sea.

The three men onboard—owner-skipper Dominic Welsh, and crewmen Geoffrey Mears and Gert Johnson, who were in the wheelhouse at the time and steaming to Whitby to land following a four and a half day trip—first noticed something was wrong when the vessel listed heavily to one side at around 8pm that evening.

Before they had time to radio in for help the 13.95 metre Devon scalloper had capsized and the fishermen were in the water.

Within minutes all that was visible of the vessel was the hull, which they managed to clamber aboard, and hold onto for over two and a half hours, fearing for their lives as the boat continued to sink.

On sinking, the vessel's emergency life raft was activated and a distress signal was sent from the vessel's Emergency Position Indicating Radio Beacon (EPIRB), automatically alerting the Coastguard.

Humbly Grove search and rescue helicopter was subsequently launched, and Whitby and Scarborough RNLI lifeboats tasked.

The fishermen, in the meantime, had managed to climb into the raft, where they were able to access and set off the flares on board, in an effort to alert nearby vessels to their location, 79 nautical miles north east of Whitby.

A mayday signal was also sent to all nearby vessels by the Coastguard. One, *Stella Nova*, was able to reach them and remove them from the water, providing the three fishermen with warm clothes and food once onboard.

Shortly after, the Coastguard helicopter arrived and a paramedic was winched down to the three



Whitby RNLI attend mayday distress call to sinking fishing vessel. Credit: RNLI/Richard Dowson

men on board the *Stella Nova* that had rescued them, where they were checked and it was decided they were well enough not to need to be airlifted to hospital.

Whitby's RNLI crew, which had launched around 11pm, arrived on the scene in the early hours of Sunday morning and transferred the casualties onto the all-weather lifeboat. Scarborough RNLI was subsequently stood down.

As the sun rose over the water the volunteer crew made the three hour journey back to Whitby harbour with the three men aboard, arriving back in station around 7am that morning.

Richard Dowson, Station Mechanic at Whitby RNLI who attended the rescue said: "When you get a call to an EPIRB who don't know what to expect, you know it is a serious emergency. These three men had a very lucky escape and we send our thanks to the fishing vessel that answered the Mayday call and retrieved them from the life raft.

"The men showed great bravery managing to get out of the water

and onto the hull of the boat, not knowing when help would arrive. Luckily the life raft had the beacon fitted which alerted the emergency services with an exact location, or the outcome would have been very different.

"The was nothing the three men could have done to prevent the rapid sinking of their fishing vessel, and we are sad for them that they have lost their livelihood but the main thing is they have come away with their lives."

Emphasising the importance of an EPIRB in such a situation, Dai Jones, Duty Controller for HM Coastguard, said: "When an emergency beacon is activated we have to assume the worst, that a vessel is in difficulty and people are in need of urgent help.

"Personal Location Beacons (PLBs) and EPIRBs are a really effective and vital tool in an emergency, but even more so if they are registered to a person and vessel, so help us to help you, and make sure you and your vessel are registered and up to date. It's free to do."



J Sea in Scarborough. (Credit: Mick Bayes Jr)

From bad to worse: Value of UK landings down 54% for April

Provisional figures from the Marine Management Organisation's (MMO) latest ad hoc statistical release: *UK Sea Fisheries Statistics April 2020*, comparing fishing activity recorded in April 2020 with that of April 2019, indicate things went from bad to worse for the UK fleet between March and April of this year.

Published in response to the COVID-19 pandemic to provide timely evidence on impacts on commercial sea fisheries, according to the MMO's figures, compared to the same month last year, April saw landings

by UK vessels fall by 35% to 24,878 thousand tonnes in terms of volume, plummeting 54% to £28,579,000 in terms of value.

Shellfish saw the greatest drop, falling by 46% in terms of volume, 68% in terms of value. In terms of vessel size, smaller vessels saw the greatest decrease in value and quantity, with the value from the under 10m and 10-12m fleet falling by 65 and 69% respectively, volumes by 39 and 40%. For the over 12m fleet, landed values fell by 50%, volumes by 34%. By nationality, the Northern Irish fleet saw the largest percentage decrease with

value falling 71%, volumes down 56%.

Similar to the overall picture of UK fishing activity, the greater impact on the shellfish sector and smaller vessels (12m and under) is the same in March and April of this year. The sharpness of the decrease was, however, more severe in April. This, according to the MMO, was due to April being the first full month of lockdown in the UK.

Compared to the same month last year, March saw UK vessels' landed fall by 17% to 59,027 tonnes, while the value of those landings fell by 26% to

£46,563,000. That month, the value from the under 10m and 10-12m fleet fell by 47 and 60% respectively, while volumes fell by 35 and 32%. For the over 12m fleet values decreased by 20%, volumes by 16%. Landed shellfish volumes fell by 29%, value by 43%.

By vessel nationality, contra April, however, in March it was the Welsh fleet which saw the largest percentage decrease with value down 87%, volume by 83%. According to the MMO, this staggering drop was due to the fact that Wales has a large proportion of under 10m vessels that target shellfish in its fleet.

Benyon Review recommends Highly Protected Marine Areas

Published to coincide with this year's World Oceans Day on June 8th, the Benyon Review has called for the introduction of new Highly Protected Marine Areas (HPMAs) in UK waters, deeming them as 'essential for marine protection and recovery' and recommending the identification of new pilot sites.

Commissioned on last year's World Oceans Day by then Environment Secretary Michael Gove and led by former Fisheries Minister, Richard Benyon, the review covers English inshore, offshore and Northern Irish offshore waters.

Its publication comes as several new countries joined the UK led Global Ocean Alliance – an initiative which now comprises 20 countries and aims to designate 30% of the world's oceans as Marine Protected Areas (MPAs) by 2030.

Currently, the UK has a network of 355 MPAs in place. Just last year, 41 protected zones were added to the already extensive network. Together, these comprise an area of 92,000 square km, or 40% of English seas.

Claiming the introduction of HPMAs could lead to a significant biodiversity boost, with potential socio-economic boosts too, among the key recommendations made by the review panel are the introduction of these areas within the UK's already existing network of MPAs.

By taking a 'whole site approach' and only permitting certain activities within their boundaries such as vessel transit, scuba diving and kayaking, HPMAs they say would go further than the UK's existing protected areas. Activities such as fishing would be banned.

Potential sites, they recommend, "should be identified on the basis of ecological principles." Once these are met, the selection of sites "should seek to minimise any negative effects on stakeholders."

To ensure this, identification and regulation of sites should be agreed "in partnership with sea users."

Commenting on the review, Environment Secretary George Eustice said the UK's system of MPAs had "already raised the bar" and the government was "committed to the highest standards of sustainability for our seas that set a gold standard around the world."

"That's why we asked the panel to conduct this Review and I am very grateful to them for their work. I welcome and agree with the spirit of ambition, which is in line with our 25 Year Environment Plan, and we will now carefully

consider the recommendations set out in the Review."

Chair of the Review Panel Richard Benyon said: "Our review demonstrates that in order to deliver the protections our most threatened habitats need, Highly Protected Marine Areas need to be introduced, and I hope that government will engage with local communities and stakeholders to move forward plans to designate these new sites."

Richard Benwell, Chief Executive of Wildlife and Countryside Link, said: "The panel's work shows strong consensus from conservation, industry and fisheries perspectives: highly protected areas are essential in reviving the ocean. We urge Ministers to now implement the recommendations quickly and create fully protected HPMAs for our seas."

Review comes as 'a hammer blow' for fishing communities

Emphasising the UK's already extensive network of MPAs, a statement from the National Federation of Fishermen's Organisations (NFFO) says the Benyon Review comes as 'a hammer blow' for fishing communities.

Contra the independence of the review panel stressed in the Government's statement on the review's publication and claims of consensus from conservation, industry and fisheries perspectives the NFFO state:

"The government sponsored Benyon Review, and its all-out advocacy for banning fishing in a new set of areas referred to as Highly Protected Marine Areas (HPMAs), comes as a hammer blow for fishing communities having to cope with the impacts of the Coronavirus pandemic and the uncertainties of the Brexit negotiations.

"This is despite Marine

Protected Areas (MPAs) already comprising 40% of the total area of English waters, with a swathe of 41 sites being designated only last year."

Coming "off the back of a sustained campaign by environmental lobbyists claiming that the UK MPA network amounted to "paper parks" that offered little protection", the review, they say, "downplays the benefits of the existing large network in order to justify a new set of areas that would exclude all fishing activities."

In their selection, while having to meet strict ecological criteria, the existing network allowed some latitude for livelihood needs, say the fishing representatives.

Layering HPMAs on top of this, as recommended by the review, "would ride a coach and horses through the finely balanced calculations that

coastal communities were forced to make at the time to try to ensure MPA designations did not undermine marine livelihoods."

The Cromer Shoal MCAZ is one proposed site example put forward to the review panel, which according to the NFFO undertook only minimal engagement with fishing bodies. The site nationally famous for the Cromer crab would, if chosen, see the local industry and its traditions terminated overnight, they say.

"Despite paying lip-service to the need for sustainable management of UK seas and recognising the risk to small scale fishing communities, who are vulnerable to being displaced, the report comes out firmly in favour of weighting any selection process to ecological criteria. If taken forward, this will further marginalise local fishing communities in any consultation

process," warn the fishing representatives.

Highlighting the pressure, in terms of space, fishermen are already under, Dale Rodmell, NFFO Assistant Chief Executive said: "The fishing industry is already facing considerable loss of fishing grounds as management measures are steadily introduced in the existing MPA network and as a result of the huge expansion of offshore windfarms and cables infrastructure."

"It is surprising how easily the government appears to be giving way to a conservation lobby rhetoric criticising its own world beating record on MPAs. In the Brexit negotiations it is fighting to secure fairer access to fishery resources for the UK but if it follows the findings of this report it will then be taking away those hard-won opportunities."

Next steps for the Future of UK's Inshore Fisheries

Comprising both a report, detailing discussions from a conference on the topic held last year and an action plan, which sets out the first stage of practical actions to reform the management of UK inshore fisheries, the next steps for the ambitious and collaborative project aiming to improve how inshore fisheries are managed in the UK were published last month.

With details of conference presentations, findings from group

discussion sessions and results of live polling, though the *Future of Our Inshore Fisheries* conference report does not make specific recommendations, it does outline key themes which emerged and captures priority areas identified by participants, and concludes by recognising that the scale of desired and required change is significant.

Based on the report's findings, the project's industry-led steering group have identified five themes that will shape future work: co-

management; collaborative science; credible fisheries management; rights and access; and effective compliance.

Key actions across these themes included in the action plan, to be progressed over the next 12-18 months, include mapping inshore fisheries by species, stock and management status, and establishing a formal process that enables scientists, industry and policymakers to collectively 'peer review' the science that is used to

inform management decisions.

Also included is the development of a 'harvest strategy standard' that will guide how inshore fisheries will be managed and reviewing access across priority inshore fisheries to determine the optimal arrangements to prioritise sustainability, deal with excess capacity, address technological development and test new ways of allocating fishing opportunities.

SCOTLAND NEWS



Antaries landing in Fraserburgh last month. (Credit: Eugene Rutter)

Mk3 FishSAFE unit now available

The latest version of the FishSAFE unit, the essential safety information tool for fishermen working near offshore oil and gas infrastructure in the UK Continental Shelf, is now available.

FishSAFE Mk3 includes major improvements such as a high-resolution touch screen and trackball option, and updates its internal hazards database automatically from the internet and there is also an online messaging facility. The internet connection uses cable or WiFi, including via mobile phones on tether.

These enhancements, among others, will make it even easier for fishermen to obtain and view the latest oil and gas related data. The feedback from skippers who have trialled the new units has been very positive.

FishSAFE displays a map of relevant information showing what is on or above the seabed and incorporates an audible and visual alarm, activated when a boat approaches offshore infrastructure or a safety zone. Crucially, FishSAFE contains information on pipeline spans which, standing proud of the seabed, create an even greater risk of the snagging of fishing gear.

The new unit has been developed by FLTC Services, the operational part of FLTC, the charity which promotes the distribution of vital data to fishermen. It is available only to fishermen in the UK fleet.

To purchase a unit, download and complete the purchase order form on the FishSAFE website (www.fishsafe.eu) or alternatively, contact the Scottish Fishermen's Federation at accounts@sff.co.uk

More than £5 million provided to processors

A total of 128 companies have now received support through the Scottish Government's Seafood Resilience Fund, which was launched in April and has since paid out grants of £5.6 million to assist seafood processors impacted by the collapse of international markets and the shutdown of the UK's foodservice industry due to COVID-19.

Acknowledging the "immediate and severe" impact the global pandemic had on the market for seafood, Rural Economy Secretary Fergus Ewing said the fund had been "set up to protect the processing companies that form such a crucial part of our coastal economies."

I am pleased that we have been able to support 128 companies through the scheme, and I know that—although times continue to be difficult—these funds have made a

difference," he said.

"The Scottish Government will continue to work with our seafood sector to provide targeted support and guidance as we begin to carefully move towards the safe restart of the economy. As we begin to consider how to recover from the impact of the pandemic, it will be important to explore how to build greater resilience and more local opportunities for people in Scotland and the UK to enjoy our fantastic seafood."

Stephen Thomson of JK Thomson, a seafood processor based in Musselburgh, East Lothian, which received a £100,000 grant through the scheme, said that "the timing of this fund and the speed in which it was paid—so soon after the application went in—was vital."

"When we filled in the application form, things appeared to be very bleak, and to

know the Scottish Government was behind us was very comforting, and gave us great encouragement," he said.

The Scottish Seafood Association's (SSA) Jimmy Buchan said the SSA was "very appreciative of the speed and delivery of the resilience fund for the processing sector."

"This has saved several businesses from failure," he said.

"By and large, the COVID-19 shutdown affected most Scottish processors, and without the fast action of the Scottish Government would have led to job losses right across the seafood supply chain.

"The Scottish Government, along with the Rural Economy Secretary, actively engaged with the SSA during the industry's most important hour of need. There is still much work to be done, with the SSA actively engaged with all in the supply chain."

Scots restate Brexit demands

As talks between the EU and UK resumed last month, Scottish fisheries leaders reiterated their Brexit demands.

Scottish Fishermen's Federation (SFF) chief executive Elspeth MacDonald said the UK's departure from the EU and its Common Fisheries Policy would allow the UK to become an independent coastal state and to control access to its fishing waters.

"This is an opportunity—the Sea of Opportunity—to re-set the dials on fishing in the future in the UK. Getting this right will give the Scottish fleet the opportunity, over time, to as much as double the amount of raw material that it catches and that can then bring benefit to the wider supply chain and to our coastal communities,"

she said.

According to Ms MacDonald, the key to unlocking 'these opportunities' is controlling access to the UK's Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ).

"This is what all our neighbouring sovereign coastal states do – including the EU itself. Determining on an annual basis, who can enter their waters and what they can catch, and in every case, maintaining first call of their own natural resource for their countries' benefits," she said.

"And getting this right means there must be no concessions on access to fishing waters other than those granted through annual negotiations as an independent coastal state – again, just as all our neighbours do.

"The way to achieve this is through a standalone fisheries agreement with the EU. This is what the EU has with every other country with which it has shared fish stocks, and must be the basis of a deal on fishing between the UK and the EU.

"What we are calling for is no more and no less than international law permits, and what EU has with others, including our neighbours across the North Sea in Norway. We must have sovereignty over the resources in our waters when we leave the CFP."

Ms MacDonald added that the SFF had never said it wanted to deny the EU fleet the opportunity to fish in UK waters.

"But we are very clear that we must control access to these waters, so that as an independent coastal

state under international law, we can negotiate with the EU on an annual basis, just as it does with others," she said.

"And we must redress the balance of quota shares, based on an approach called zonal attachment, a science-based approach based on where fish actually are, rather than on the historic fishing practises of almost half a century ago. This would give the UK a much fairer share of the quota in our own waters than the less than 40% that we are currently entitled to under the CFP.

"We just want to be like those who surround us, to take this once in-a-generation opportunity to redress the long-standing injustice of the Common Fisheries Policy, and determine who can catch what, where and when in our waters."

Additional quota for inshore fleet

INSHORE fishermen hit by the sudden closure of many of their UK and European markets as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic have been thrown a further £2 million lifeline by the Scottish Government, reports Shetland News.

Shellfish boats will now be able to access additional fish quota to help them diversify into new markets by accessing different fishing opportunities around the North Sea and west coast of Scotland.

The government said this latest help was potentially worth up to £2 million for the inshore fleet.

In March, an initial package of £5 million was offered to around 650 Scottish full-time shellfishermen who had lost their livelihoods when the export and hospitality markets collapsed.

This additional quota includes 800 tonnes of mackerel (500 tonnes in the North Sea and 300 tonnes in the west coast) as well

as additional demersal quotas including haddock, monkfish, whiting, pollack, saithe, ling, lemon sole and skates and rays.

Of the package, Fisheries Secretary Fergus Ewing said: "Fishing in our inshore waters for shellfish is a longstanding and lucrative part of our wider fishing industry but the loss of markets practically overnight due to the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic has resulted in many businesses tying up their vessels.

"With continued uncertainty regarding future market access and demand, this additional £2 million of potential fishing opportunities will provide scope for some vessels to diversify, and help families and businesses in our coastal communities. It also has the potential to ensure that more people in the UK get to enjoy locally and sustainably caught fish from our waters and I hope retailers will play their part in making that happen.

"This support is in addition to the £22.5 million that has already been made available by the Scottish Government to the seafood industry, and which was the largest support package in the UK."

Chief executive of Shetland Fish Producers' Organisation (SFPO), Brian Isbister, however, while welcoming the announcement pointed out that the reference to 'additional' quota opportunity was somewhat misleading as in different circumstances this quota would have been allocated to a larger sector of the industry.

"This announcement provides for an increased mackerel quota for the under 10m metre boats which regularly jig for this stock from the early summer through to late autumn period," Isbister said.

"This will come as welcome news to the large fleet of vessels now involved in Shetland. The rest of the quota on offer, most of which wouldn't create a directed fishery on

its own, at least not for very many vessels based in Shetland, is much less likely to make a difference.

"Shetland's inshore fleet, while not catching shellfish, has developed two distinct and very successful hook and line fisheries for both cod and mackerel.

"There are only a relatively small number of the inshore fleet based in Shetland equipped with either trawl gear or have long-line gear that might be better suited to catch the other quota stocks on offer."

In terms of a further breakdown, the quota package, which applies to vessels that are not members of a producer organisation and is not restricted by vessel length, includes the following demersal quotas:

- North Sea (IV): Haddock (120t), Whiting (260t), Saithe (120t), Lemon Sole (50t), Ling (30t) and Skates & Rays (20t)
- West Coast (VI): Anglerfish (15t), Pollack (25t), Ling (50t) and Skates & Rays (25t)

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SHETLAND NEWS By Peter Johnson, Chris Cope and Hans J Marter / www.shetnews.co.uk

Fishermen post shocking video footage of 'intolerable' behaviour

FISHERMEN have described the conduct of Spanish gillnetters to the northwest of Shetland as "intolerable" after video footage was posted on social media showing a German registered gillnetter allegedly attempting to run a rope through the propeller of local whitefish trawler *Alison Kay*.

This latest video evidence—recorded on 11 June—takes the ongoing skirmishes over access to fishing grounds to a new level and highlights why the local fishing industry is so keen to leave the European Union, and with it the Common Fisheries Policy (CFP).

The confrontation has been reported to Marine Scotland and the Maritime and Coastguard Agency (MCA).

The MCA described the incident as "concerning" and added that the "consequences could have been extremely serious". However, since the incident happened outside the 12-mile jurisdiction it will need to be investigated by the flag state. The German authorities have been alerted, the MCA said.

The battle between EU-registered gillnetters and local trawlers has been ongoing for a long time with most local whitefish boats reporting over the years that they have been at the receiving end of attempts to drive them out of their traditional fishing grounds.

Spanish fishermen counterclaim that Scottish whitefish boats deliberately trawl through the areas where nets have been set. Skipper of the *Alison Kay*, James Anderson said a vast area to the west of Shetland has been "netted out" by mainly Spanish gillnetters preventing local trawlers from fishing in their traditional fishing grounds.

Anderson said the 27-metre long German-registered fishing boat *Pesorsa Dos* could have caused serious damage to the *Alison Kay* had she been successful in her attempts of running a line through the *Alison Kay's* propeller.

Anderson said the ongoing conflict between Scottish trawlers and EU boats stemmed from the facts that the two fisheries—gillnetting and trawling—were "completely incompatible".



Alison Kay passing Whalsay. Photo Ivan Reid

He said the EU boats—the German-registered *Pesorsa Dos* with a crew of 17 is mainly operating out of La Coruña in Spain—had moved into the area effectively pushing out the local fleet.

"You used to see these boats further out, and they could not come in because we were fishing there with so many boats; but lately they have moved in, and this is the worst I have ever seen," Anderson said.

"They now quite boldly tell us that we need to move, and when we tell them that we won't move then we get things like what happened the other night.

"That area now is completely netted out, and it is layers of net, not just one curtain stopping fish coming in to the shallower waters. It completely covers an area from the 4-degree line, out from Foula and the complete westside of Shetland."

Anderson said the fish taken is being landed at either Scrabster or Ullapool, loaded on to trucks and taken straight to Spain.

He said that fishing activity was hugely damaging for the local economy in Shetland,

as over the years fish worth millions of pounds have been caught in the area and landed locally.

"We need to get out of the EU before we can start doing something about it," he added. "It looks as though Brexit has made them really go for it so that they get a kind of a foothold.

"The boat we had difficulties with is flagged in Germany. How a Spanish boat registered in Germany can come here and take over the fishing grounds of Shetland beats me.

"Is not what would happen in Iceland or in Norway. Both countries are very protective of their fishing areas; they would never let this happen."

In a joint statement, the Scottish White Fish Producers' Association (SWFPA) and Shetland Fishermen's Association (SFA) said the MCA must start taking action before a fatality occurred.

SWFPA chief executive Mike Park said: "We have been fighting this battle for many years sadly, but the number and severity of incidents involving Scottish vessels has increased markedly in recent times."

SFA chairman Leslie Tait added: "These semi-permanent gill-nets are covering increasingly large areas of the seas around Shetland, which is a massive problem for our fishermen who are unable to fish in traditional areas.

"But when it gets to the stage when one of these vessels is actively and repeatedly attempting to foul the propeller of one of our boats, the authorities must crack down at once."

He added: "When we are free to depart from the Common Fisheries Policy at the end of the year, the UK and Scottish governments must end or severely restrict the activities of non-traditional gill-netters in our waters."

Northern Isles MP Alistair Carmichael similarly called for an urgent response from the MCA following the incident.

New *Opportune* joins the local fleet

A BURRA fishing family last week completed their first trip with a new trawler *Beryl*, which replaces their old vessel *Opportune* (LK 209) with the name change still being processed. *Opportune* has been sold to other Shetland partners of Avrella Fishing Company and will be re-named *Avrella* in due course.

Skipper Ross Christie and his father Jim own the 28m long vessel which was bought from Whitehills, near Macduff, and was shot blasted, repainted and had her three Caterpillar engines overhauled and hydraulic pipework renewed at Peterhead before she was taken north. Ross's brother Alwyn is mate on the vessel, which was built in 1998 at Astilleros Armon in Spain as *Harvest Moon*. The Christies' cousin George Jamieson is engineer and Tom Robertson is the second skipper. Also in the crew are two men from Ghana and two from the Philippines plus local trainees Jimi Kerwin and Fraser Smith. Three other overseas fishermen are normally in the crew, but are presently stranded owing to travel restrictions. *Opportune* was at sea with 10 crew on her first trip, but will normally operate with seven. She landed 340 boxes of fish from 10 hauls at Scalloway on 11 June after fishing at Flugga. The vessel means a change of method for the crew, with *Opportune* twin-rig trawling for high-value species like megrim and monkfish, Ross Christie says is a result of the cod quota being slashed this year. He said: "She is a fine boat, as was the old one. We are trying to catch something that we can keep. They slashed the cod quota at Christmas and we



The new *Opportune*

are knee deep in green (cod) now." Alwyn Christie said that the new *Opportune* was a "fine big boat. She has a bit of comfort and plenty of room."

The old *Opportune* was refitted three years ago by Macduff Shipyards before joining the local fleet. She is understood to have been fitted for seine netting as well as demersal trawling.



The crew of the *Opportune* mending nets on Blacksness Pier in Scalloway.

Fishing industry shows signs of recovery



Brian Isbister, SFPO

THE WHITEFISH industry is starting to get back on its feet although the delayed opening of two new fish markets is proving a bottleneck for landings.

Shetland Fish Producers'

Organisation chief executive Brian Isbister said that he expected the industry to be back to normal by August, when, he hoped, final work would be concluded at Lerwick's new fish market and at Scalloway, which just needs floor markings to be laid out.

He said that landings were presently at the limit of what was workable with social distancing measures in place at the much smaller old markets at Lerwick and Scalloway and coming close to last year's weekly average of 7,700 boxes.

According to Isbister, quota uptake is slightly down on last year while the reduction in this year's cod TAC has made things administratively easier for that species.

Provision is there for some species quotas to be rolled over until next year, if need be, but with uncertainties still looming

over Brexit, he said that the industry would be aiming to catch as much of this year's quotas as possible.

Isbister said: "The last couple of weeks we have been getting 7,000 to 7,500 boxes – getting near to the average of last year. But we are at the limit of what we can land now.

"What would make the biggest change to us is access to the new markets. If phase two can allow construction to start up, we are a couple of months away from the markets being ready."

In the case of Scalloway, only layout grid markings remained to the painted. This contract has gone to a mainland firm who are not yet able to travel north to complete the job because of COVID-19 restrictions.

Isbister said that fish sales had been decent throughout the coronavirus period, even if prices had been suppressed. He said

that the larger UK processors had continued in operation, with smaller operators more likely to shut down their lines.

Isbister said that it had been encouraging that the continental market had "held fairly well" with species like megrim, monkfish, saithe, whiting and to some extent cod, all finding buyers.

Aside from that, the Spanish demand for fresh seafood had remained, despite the closure of the restaurant trade.

France had been more unpredictable with periods of fluctuating demand for fish, while Italy, which had suffered heavily from lockdown had been a smaller, but still important market.

Isbister said that while he expected substantial recovery within three months, overall prices for the year would be down, with less money about affecting demand for fish.



The German registered *Pesorsa Dos*. Credit: Conor Mulligan, Marine Traffic



ORKNEY NEWS *By Craig Taylor*

Broken up at Kirkwall Harbour



The *Nimrod* at Kirkwall Harbour. Image: Craig Taylor

The former fishing vessel *Nimrod*, which has been laid up in a state of disrepair alongside the breakwater pier at Kirkwall Harbour for months, was broken up and disposed of in June.

The vessel sank and partially capsized alongside the pier last September. Despite efforts, nothing could be done to refloat the vessel. Fuel was removed from the *Nimrod* and harbour staff put an anti-pollution boom in place around the vessel. The boat was then pulled upright to prevent it from capsizing fully, but it has been largely underwater at high tide ever since

Back in September, Orkney Islands Council (OIC) also said it had informed the owners to give them the opportunity to take action because of the state of the vessel. Should this not happen, the Harbour Authority will take its own action to remove the vessel, the OIC added.

When asked for an update in June, a further statement said: "The *Nimrod* vessel, which has been partially submerged at the Kirkwall Pier breakwater for some time, is now at risk of breaking up.

"For the safety of harbour users, to negate any potential oil spillage and to open up the berth, OIC Marine Services are removing the vessel."

Carmichael welcomes progress on plastic pollution regulation

Orkney and Shetland MP, Alistair Carmichael, has spoken in the House of Commons in support of new regulations on single-use plastic.

He said: "The territorial application of the regulations is limited to England and Wales, but much of this plastic waste ends up in the sea, so we are as likely to find this waste on the beaches in Orkney and Shetland as we are in Cornwall.

This affects my constituents substantially, and I am sure that they will be as pleased as I am to see this progress being made.

"We need to look at the nature of our consumption as a whole. I would add to that the relationship between developed western countries and developing countries, because so many of these items are exported. It is infinitely preferable to cut off the use and supply of these items at

source.

"I am sure we have all noticed that the great progress we have made on the removal of disposable items has faced a setback as a consequence of the COVID-19 pandemic. We will have to deal with this, because the pandemic may be with us for months, but the damage done by plastic pollution and microplastics will be with us for decades, if not centuries."

New head of marine services in Orkney

There is a new man at the helm of OIC Marine Services, who officially took up his post in mid-June.

Jim Buck replaces Brian Archibald who has now retired after eight years in the role of Orkney Islands Council harbour master, head of marine services, engineering and transport.

On his retirement Mr Archibald, 62, said he had enjoyed his time in the role, a period when the fortunes of marine services had turned around.

Mr Archibald said he felt the time was right for retirement for a host of reasons, and that he was very much leaving on an upward swing, with a lot going on in the future for marine services. This includes the port master plan, the ferry replacement programme and new vessels arriving.

It is now, he said, time to allow someone with "new energy, fresh ideas and a different style to drive things through to the next stage."

On his eight years in charge he said it had very much been a team effort turning around the port from a loss-making situation to a highly profitable one, which would have been even better this year if it had not been for the coronavirus

pandemic.

He said he was "leaving with a happy heart" having been the figurehead of a team that had worked so well to bring such success, and he was very proud of what the team had achieved during his tenure. Indeed, working with the team had indeed been the highlight of his time working in Orkney, he explained.

His replacement, Mr Buck said the opportunity to come to Orkney came about at a time when he was looking for a new challenge, and the move had brought him to Orkney, a place he loved and always enjoyed.

He said his family was friends with Orkney writer Gregor Lamb, and they had been coming to the islands for many years. He also visited Orkney at times during his naval career, a career background he shares with Mr Archibald.

On leaving the Navy, he continued his maritime career, working first at Peel Ports Great Yarmouth as the head of marine service and operations and then for OSI Maritime Limited as a business development director.

"I am very much looking forward to the challenge. Brian will be a hard act to follow and I am

grateful that he and the team have set up the position as they have. I hope I can do them service and take it on to what he sees it to be."

Executive director of development and infrastructure at the council, Gavin Barr said it had been a privilege to work with Mr Archibald over the last eight and a half years, and that Mr Archibald had built a strong reputation and all wished him well on his retirement.

He also welcomed Mr Buck to the role, saying he was sure he would bring the same level of professional experience and same level of well-meaning community-orientated support and approach to the job.

"Brian and his team succeeded in bringing the service forward significantly over the last eight years and I am sure that Jim will carry that forward."

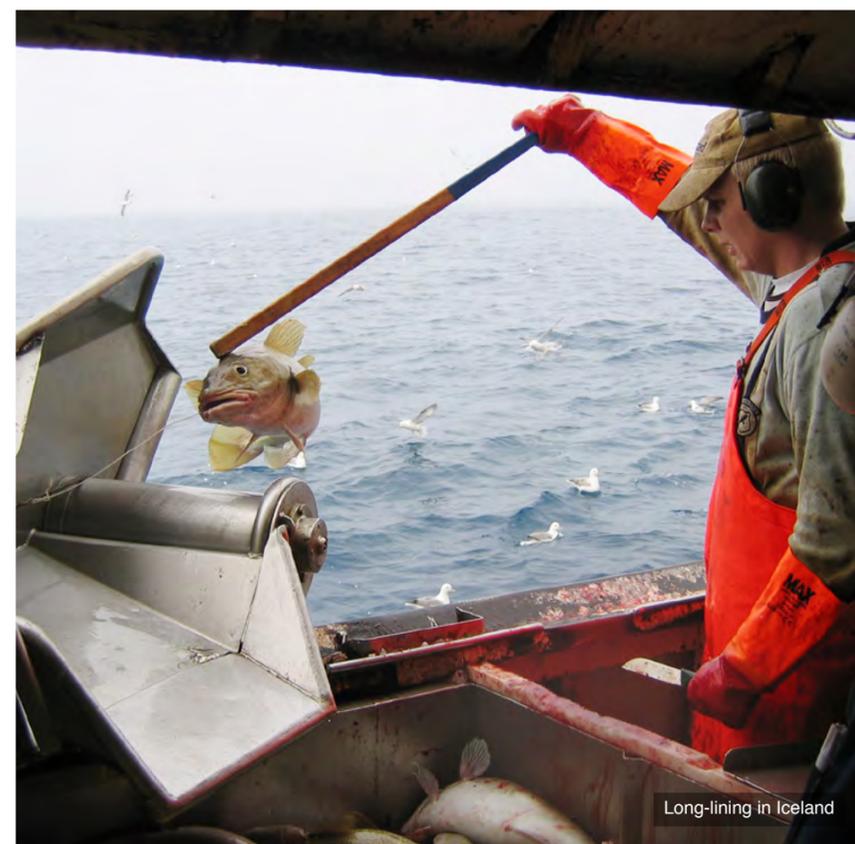


Pictured from left, while adhering to social distancing at OIC Marine Services HQ are, Gavin Barr, Brian Archibald and Jim Buck. Image: Craig Taylor



ICELAND NEWS *By Guðjón Einarsson*

Cod quota cut by 6%



Long-lining in Iceland

Icelandic fishermen will have to settle for a 6% reduction of their cod quota in the coming fishing year that starts in September. Cod being by far the most important species in Iceland, rendering over 40% of the total export value of seafood, means this announcement made by the Marine and Fresh Water Research Institute of Iceland (MFRI) was certainly a disappointment. The total cod quota will be reduced by almost 16,000 tons, from 272 thousand to 256 thousand tons.

Sticking to the management plan

When it comes to deciding the Total Allowable Catch (TAC) of cod and many other important species the scientists do, in fact, have the last word. According to a management plan which the Icelandic Government has committed itself to and which has been approved by the International Council for the Exploration of the Sea (ICES), the TAC of cod must not exceed 20% of the size of the stock (cod age 4 and older). A similar plan (with various percentages) has been adopted for many other species such as haddock, saithe, redfish and herring, but not for all. However, the Minister of Fisheries in recent years has, almost without exception, followed the advice of the scientists to the letter when it comes to issuing yearly fishing quotas. That is quite a change compared with

earlier decades when politicians and scientists were frequently at loggerheads when it came to estimating how much pressure the fish stocks could endure without harm. At that time the Minister's point of view usually prevailed.

Ups and downs

While the cod stock is at present slightly deteriorating the haddock stock is on the rise and allows for a 9% quota increase (3,600 tons), from 41,800 to 45,400 tons. Similarly, the Greenland halibut stock is improving and can, therefore, sustain a 10% quota increase, up to 23,500 tons.

The golden redfish, on the other hand, is in its poorest condition since 2009 and the spawning stock continues to decrease. According to the current management plan, the quota will be cut by 9% and will amount to roughly 38 thousand tons for the next fishing year.

Plagued by infections

The Icelandic herring is a special case. For years the stock has been plagued by an Ichthyophonus infection which has reduced its size by nearly 60%. The stock which once sustained a quota of up to 150,000 tons now allows only roughly 35,000 tons. Fortunately, its recruitment seems to be slowly improving.

Another stock, that of the scallop in Breidafjörður on the west coast of Iceland, collapsed in the wake of the millennium due to a natural infection and has not recovered yet. During the eighties and the nineties the yearly catch reached up to 17,000 tons but in 2004 a total fishing ban was issued and, apart from an experimental fishery in recent years, it is only now that a very limited quota has been allotted. Only time will tell whether the scallop stock will recover any time soon.

Shared stocks excluded

The fishing quotas issued now do not include stocks that Iceland shares with other nations, such as mackerel, blue whiting and herring. The list also excludes the Icelandic capelin which was under a total fishing ban last season.

Iceland - Recommended TAC (tons)

Species	2019/2020	2020/2021
Cod	272,400	256,600
Haddock	41,823	45,389
Saithe	80,588	78,574
Golden redfish	43,568	38,343
Demersal redfish	12,492	12,384
Norway redfish	697	684
Greenland halibut	21,360	23,530
Plaice	6,985	7,037
Dab	399	319
Witch	1,067	854
Lemon sole	1,341	1,073
Atlantic wolffish	8,344	8,761
Spotted wolffish	375	314
Ling	6,599	5,700
Tusk	3,856	2,289
Whiting	836	1,003
Anglerfish	441	503
Icelandic herring	34,572	35,490
Great silver smelt	9,124	8,729
Common whelk	220	264
Sea cucumber	2,245	2,203
Sea urchin	275	220
Iceland scallop	0	93

Icelandic Quotas

Fishing fleet and catches

The Icelandic fishing fleet is diverse, ranging from small boats with a crew of one person to factory trawlers with a crew of 20 or more. Around 1,600 Icelandic boats and ships participated in the fishery in 2019 and the total catches amounted to more than 1.05 million tons. That was about 211 thousand tons less than in 2018, mainly due to the total collapse of the capelin fishing. Pelagic catches (herring, blue whiting and mackerel) amounted to 534 thousand tons or around 50% of the total catch. Bottom fish catches decreased by 7 thousand tons between the years 2018 and 2019.

Georgina of Ladram in the Wadden Sea. Image: Jan Koster



Crew of Georgina of Ladram. Image: C. Hameeteman



Georgina of Ladram in drydock. Image: Jan Koster



Skipper Trevor Sclater in the wheelhouse. Image: Hanneke de Boer



Main engine Desmi water pumps. Image: Hanneke de Boer



Preparing gear. Image: Hanneke de Boer

NEW BEAMER STARTS FISHING



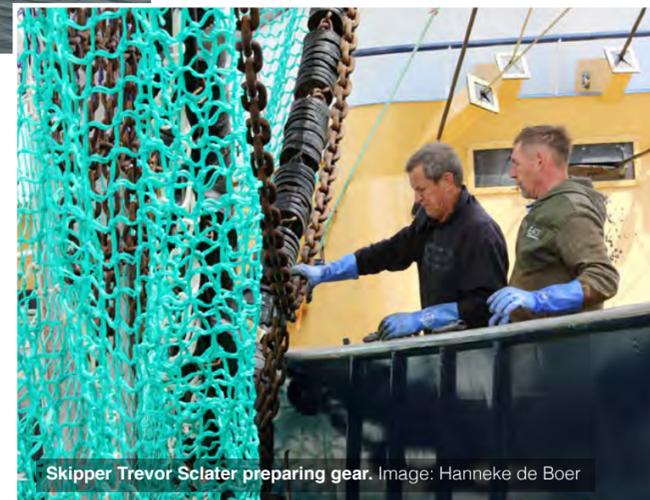
LUYT GROEP

Shipbuilding Winches Engines Propulsion Overhaul/shiprepair Drydock

Congratulations to Waterdance owners, skipper and crew from all at LUYT. We would like to wish Georgina of Ladram BM-100 every future success.



LUYT GROEP B.V. | DEN OEVER | T +31 (0)227 512 341 | INFO@LUYTGROEP.NL | LUYTGROEP.NL



Skipper Trevor Sclater preparing gear. Image: Hanneke de Boer

Less than a week after making her way home to Brixham from Holland, Waterdance's new beamer *Georgina of Ladram* BM 100 has started fishing.

The first new beamer for Brixham in thirty years, at 35.25 metres in length, and with a beam of 8.70 metres and a depth of 5.2 metres, *Georgina of Ladram* also has the distinction of being Brixham's largest-ever beamer.

Acting as the main contractor, responsible for the entire build from design to completion, the vessel was designed by LUYT BV in collaboration with Marimecs Marine Design and Engineering for the Devon company, with the hull and wheelhouse constructed at

the Ibis yard before being transferred to LUYT's Den Oever yard for completion.

The new vessel is powered by an ABC 6DZS main engine producing 736kW @ 810rpm, connected to a ZF W10230, 7.524:1 reduction gearbox, powering a 3200mm-diameter fixed-pitch propeller designed by SC McAllister & Co Ltd.

Electrically driven and pneumatically controlled, the vessel is also fitted with two Mitsubishi S6B3-MPTAW auxiliary engines producing 335kw@1500rpm driving a 405kVA Padmos supplied

generator, and a Caterpillar C4.4 harbour Genset supplied by the yard themselves.

Also kitted out with a pneumatically-controlled tendrum LUYT winch, *Georgina of Ladram's* impressive array of wheelhouse electronics were supplied by Globe Marine Ltd of Paignton and Echomaster Marine of Macduff, with steering gear supplied by AS scan steering.

The latest addition to Waterdance's already impressive fleet of over twenty boats, comprising a mix of beamers, netters, potters and scallopers, landing mainly into Brixham, Newlyn, Salcombe and Exmouth, *Georgina of Ladram* is the second vessel by LUYT for the family-owned fishing company.

Last year the Dutch yard completed the new 14.95 metre

crabber, *Nichola of Ladram*, for the Greendale Group subsidiary, with that vessel having the distinction of being the first to be built by LUYT for a UK owner.

The Skipper team would like to wish Waterdance, skipper and crew every success and safe fishing with the new *Georgina of Ladram*.

FACT FILE

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COMPANY: Waterdance
SKIPPER: Trevor Sclater
YARD: LUYT
TYPE: Beam trawler
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MFV *Ella* launched in Riga

At the beginning of last month (June 2nd), Mooney Boats Ltd's latest new build, the Atlantic Dawn Group's MFV *Ella* was launched in Riga, Latvia. At the time of writing, the hull of the 27 metre *Ella* was making the journey home from Riga, being towed by the tug *Hunter* to Killybegs where Mooney Boats Ltd will oversee the final construction and fit-out of the new vessel.

Busy as ever, at the Mooney Boats' yard it's business as usual, albeit under a stricter set of health and safety protocols, and working following social distancing guidelines. Alongside several maintenance jobs, work on the *Ocean Challenge* fit-out is nearing completion at the Killybegs based yard, and it is anticipated the vessel will be delivered to Shetland by the end of the summer – all going well and notwithstanding any further lockdowns.

On the whole, and with the two new recently announced new build projects for Castletownbere—B50 *Eilean Croine* for Eric Murphy, and B51 *Sparkling Star* for Donal O'Neill—also in the pipeline, with the main construction and fit-out on the 31 metre pair to be carried out in Killybegs, at Mooney Boats things are looking positive and there is an optimism not only for the yard, but for Killybegs as a whole.

All images courtesy of Mooney Boats



MFV Ella



MFV Ella

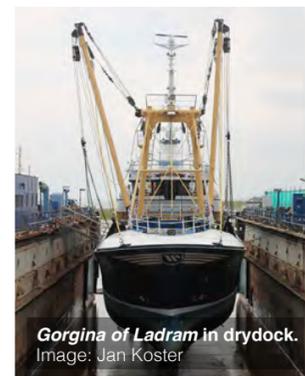


Ocean Challenge

Georgina of Ladram in the Wadden Sea. Image: Jan Koster



Crew of Georgina of Ladram. Image: C. Hameeteman



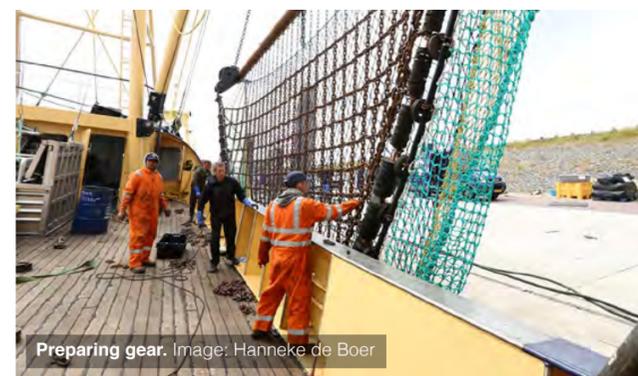
Georgina of Ladram in drydock. Image: Jan Koster



Skipper Trevor Sclater in the wheelhouse. Image: Hanneke de Boer



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All images courtesy of Mooney Boats



SNG now stockists for leading workboot

SwanNet Gundry are pleased to announce that they have been appointed sole Irish agents for the marine sector for the world-renowned Techno Boot range.

Manufactured in Turkey, the Techno Thermo -50°C UltraGrip and the Techno -30°C Troya UltraGrip have revolutionised work footwear for even the most challenging of environments and naturally, due to the harsh conditions of the fishing and seafood sector, have become extremely popular with fishermen the world over.

The boot is resistant to oils, fats, organic solvents and chemicals. The UltraGrip SRC outsole offers superior safety in all conditions. The manufacturers believe that it is thanks to the best BASF polyurethane raw material that this is the world's most comfortable thermo boot.

"Lightweight, strong, flexible and with a durability of up to four times

longer compared to the traditional PVC and rubber boots. The superior durability offers important cost savings," the Techno Boot company states, adding that the orthopaedic removable footbeds with arch support give the wearer the comfort needed during long work sessions and means no more heavy or tired legs after a hard day working.

For extremely cold and harsh working conditions the Techno Thermo -50°C UltraGrip (RRP €85.00) offers all the solid ruggedness of a solid work boot without compromising on the comfort of a cushioned interior sole and, for more general workwear but still with thermal protection to -30°C the Troya UltraGrip (RRP €55.00) is slightly lighter but still high strength and with all the features of the Thermo UltraGrip version.

The full range of Techno UltraGrip boots, in sizes from 6 to 13 are now available from SwanNet Gundry's

Marine division (<https://sng.ie/fishing> inshore).



Brian J McMullin Solicitors open office in Killybegs

Donegal law firm Brian J McMullin Solicitors has opened an office in Killybegs at Bruach Na Mara, the Killybegs Fishermen's Organisation headquarters.

A finalist at the Irish Law Awards 2019, the firm provides a wide range of legal services to individual, business and public body clients across Donegal, the North West, Dublin and further afield, and also provides in-house legal services to Waterways Ireland at that organisation's headquarters in Enniskillen.

Incorporating VP McMullin (Ballyshannon), Brittons, Ramage & Britton and Lipsett & Ramage, the Ballyshannon

firm traces its origins to 1899 and is currently celebrating 120 years in practice. The firm merged with VP McMullin (the practice established in 1921 by Vincent P. McMullin in Donegal Town) in 1991. Under the longstanding stewardship of Brian McMullin, former Partner in VP McMullin, who acquired the practice in 2018, the practice continues to evolve and embrace technology and innovation for the benefit of its clients.

Mr McMullin said, "We are absolutely delighted to open in Killybegs and to provide a more convenient base for our friends and clients in the Killybegs area and throughout

West Donegal". He added: "The delivery of quality legal services in a cost-efficient manner has always been, and continues to be, our focus."

Whilst the present needs of the firm's clients are always the primary focus, the firm is proud of its link with the past through their principal Brian McMullin, grandson of Vincent P. McMullin and son of Eunan T. McMullin.

The firm was a finalist in two categories of the Irish Law Awards 2019, with its work for Waterways Ireland earning it a finalist's place in the 'In-House Legal Team of the Year' category and Mr McMullin was also one of four finalists in the 'Connacht/Ulster Lawyer of the Year' category.

Brian McMullin is assisted by solicitors Jane Flannery, Orla Moran, David Royston and a very dedicated support team.

Jane Flannery worked for a number of years in Dublin gaining experience in conveyancing, litigation and probate, subsequently returning to her native Donegal working initially in the Letterkenny office of VP McMullin before joining the Ballyshannon practice.

Orla Moran, formerly an associate solicitor with Callan Tansey Sligo before joining the firm, specialises mainly in the area of administrative law. David Royston, a native of Sligo, is involved primarily in property and commercial law.

An experienced and skilled legal advisor and litigator with a proven track record, the firm's principal, Brian McMullin has also had an involvement in the regulation of the solicitors profession in Ireland, and is currently a member of a number of Law Society Committees, chairs a division of the Solicitors Disciplinary Tribunal and is a qualified mediator.

The solicitors at Brian J. McMullin have a long-standing reputation for providing legal services that combine the highest levels of quality with professionalism and integrity, and enjoy an excellent reputation amongst their peers and with their clients.

The firm is a full-service law firm, that is nonetheless able to provide advice that is uniquely tailored to suit the specific needs of its clients.

For more information visit <https://brianjcmullin.com/> or contact (074) 9708030



CHPM continue to support the fishing industry during the pandemic

Operating a nationwide service, Christopher Hannon & Co Precision and Marine Engineering (CHPM) have continued to support their customers during the COVID pandemic, providing maintenance and repair services to both the commercial and fishing industry, as well as supplying new engines, filters, oils and spare parts which were in high demand as well as the JMP pump range.

With contracts including a full overhaul of the Baudouin 12M26.2 main engine on board the *Celtic Voyager* and a number in the United Kingdom, 2020 looked to be a busy year for the Co Waterford based company. Full engines sales picked up after a slow 2019, with Doosan engines supplied to a number of Irish companies and vessels.

Interest has grown steadily in the Sole Diesel range of engines with several orders placed this year, and the



company has received orders for their stock of refurbished Schottel units as well as overhauling units for overseas customers.

Providing world-class products and services to the marine industry with over thirty years, with a facility covering 18,000 sq. ft, CHPM is well equipped with ample supply of Doosan, Baudouin,

Perkins and Solé engines and parts to fulfil orders without delay.

Disappointed the cancellation of the Skipper Show in Limerick has delayed the opportunity to meet their customer and friends until 2021; in the meantime, they can be contacted at info@chpm.ie or phone 0872574507/051306017



Modern diesel does not store well

Since the global lockdown oil refineries have had to cut back on production as they found the demand for fuel plummeted. You cannot shut down a refinery easily so many are still operating at 65% capacity. As a consequence, there are presently billions of barrels of crude oil being stored in ships since OPEC didn't cut production, writes Peter Weide of diesel engine specialists MarShip

But how does this affect our business? All those refineries are churning out finished product, and with no customers, they are having to secure Oil Tankers to hold millions of barrels of surplus Diesel. But modern Ultra Low sulphur Diesel (ULSD) does not store well.

Thirty years ago relatively low sulphur "sweet" crude of about 0.4% sulphur would go through a simple Fractional distillation unit to produce a

finished product with the same sulphur level, no one was concerned about sulphur levels in diesel. Then with reports of the sulphur being harmful to health and so-called "acid rain" governments were forced to act to progressively remove sulphur from diesel.

Meanwhile, "Sweet" crude has been replaced by "Sour" crude of 3%. To achieve the ultra low sulphur levels of 0.001% required of modern diesel there are many, many, more process the oil has to go through to create a finished product. All these processes combine to make modern diesel a highly unstable product prone to sludge formation and leaves lacquering and deposits on fuel system components.

It is widely accepted by all the oil majors that diesel should not be stored longer than 6 months, after which it is degrading very rapidly. They put additives into the fuel, but only the bare minimum, after all they make

diesel for you to buy not store. Additives are a cost and no one is making money on diesel.

So in a few months, all these millions of barrels of diesel on the ships will filter through the system and end up in your fuel tanks.

Never has there been a greater need for fuel additives than now... Our DieselAid® LD will protect the fuel system from lacquering and add the much needed Lubricant that is often lacking. Dose rate is 1:5000 litres. If there is concern over Diesel Bug then we blend in our engine manufacturer approved Biocide DieselAid® B to give DieselAid® LDB to prevent Bug.

Peter Weide is Director of MarShip, formerly a Chief Engineer he has 40 years' experience in the marine industry, including as ShipRepair yard Director, Manager in Mobil Marine Lubricants and latterly head of service sales with Wärsilä UK.

The Skipper

In light of the current coronavirus pandemic and the impact it's having on businesses across the fisheries sector, we wanted to see if we can help. If there is anything we can do in these worrying times, please let us know.

Do you have a new product, solution, or service you're trying to promote to the fishing industry? Do you need help promoting an existing product or service? Do you have an innovative idea that might help the industry through these tough times? Do you have some news that you feel the industry should hear?

Simply email editorial@maramedia.ie with your news, and we will make every effort to post it on *The Skipper's* website for our audience to see. Since launching www.theskipper.ie last autumn we've had more than 130,000 hits from visitors right around the world.

You can also send a direct message to our social media accounts:

- **Instagram:** www.instagram.com/the_skipper_editor/
- **Facebook:** www.facebook.com/TheSkipperOnline/
- **Twitter:** twitter.com/SkipperEditor

For advertising contact sharon@maramedia.ie

We understand these are trying times. Whatever happens amidst the great uncertainty we all face, over the coming months we will strive to continue to serve the industry as best as we can across our various platforms, from the print edition to our social media accounts and website.

In this regard, we would like to take the opportunity to thank you for your continued support. The industry is resilient, it has been through tough times before. We are here to help you through this and if there is something we can do to help your business we will.

Though the current situation is unprecedented, we have no doubt that by supporting one another we will all manage to come through this.

CREW SHOTS

The global pandemic has been especially hard on the fishing industry. To celebrate those who fish & their resilience over the past month we've been asking you to send in your crew shots to us at *The Skipper*. Here is a selection of just some of the great shots we've received from around the coast, and further.

If you have a great crew shot you would like to send in, whether you are tied up of fishing, working inshore or offshore, you can email

us at: editorial@maramedia.ie

The best picture each month will be featured in *The Skipper*, with the best overall picture featuring on the cover of *The Skipper*. To be in with a chance all you have to do is make sure to send in the original hi-res version of the image and email it to us rather than sending via social media.

Please make sure you include the names of everyone in the photo (from left to right), what you are fishing, the boat, the home port and the location of the shot (if not the home port).



Skipper Brendan O'Flaherty & crew on the Kilmore Quay beamer *Mary J*, just in from a trip. (Credit: Stephen Jones, i-Fish)



Skipper James Hughes & crew of the *Endeavour* B336, about to head out of Kilkeel harbour. (Credit: Stephen Jones, i-Fish)



Crew on the *Success* WY212 quad-rigging for prawns. (Photo courtesy of Gareth Baines)



Thinking of going to sea. Skipper Willie Bates and crew onboard the Kilmore Quay scalloper *Chloe B*. (Credit: Stephen Jones, i-Fish)



The crew on the *Ark Angell*. (Photo courtesy of: Liamí Ronan)



Some halibut on the ground last month... fishing seems to be picking up! (Photo courtesy of Gareth Baines on the *Success* WY212)



Mark Dowdall & Liamí Ronan aboard the *Ark Angell*. (Photo courtesy of Liamí Ronan)



Crew on the *Success* WY212 quad-rigging for prawns. (Photo courtesy of Gareth Baines)



The crew on the *Strathyre* N85, sent in by skipper Stewart Curran (middle). (Credit: Ross Mulhall)



Fishing on the *Atlantic Dawn*, off the Wairarapa Coast, New Zealand. (Photo: Mike Terry)



Lucy Ward (13), crew on the *Amy Marie* SO608. (Credit: Eunan Ward)



The O'Connells of Youghal. (Credit: O'Leary Photography)



Adam Griffin in the skipper's seat on the *Sile May 2* G725 in Cuan Casla, Conate na Gaillimhe. (Credit: Christopher Griffin)



Ben Kennedy, MFV *Abigale's* SO 354, Inver, Co Donegal. (Gearóid Ó Cinnéide)



Amy and Lucy Ward, crew on the *Amy Marie* SO608. (Credit: Eunan Ward)

New book *'Surviving the Storms'* showcases incredible RNLI rescues

On sale now, with royalties from all sales supporting the lifesaving charity, a new book providing a collection of first-hand accounts of some of the most dramatic rescues carried out by RNLI lifesavers around Ireland and the UK over the past 20 years, features accounts of the incredible bravery of a Cork lifeboat crew, and that of a former Portrush RNLI crewmember.

With an abundance of drama told from the unique perspective of the RNLI lifesavers, as well as those they rescue, *Surviving the Storms* features 11 stories of extraordinary courage and compassion at sea, providing a rare insight into the life-or-death decisions the RNLI have to make when battling the forces of nature and saving lives.

Told in the words of Castletownbere RNLI Coxswain Dean Hegarty, included in the book is a first-hand account of the dramatic 2018 rescue of the crew on the *Clodagh O* in storm force conditions after the vessel lost all power at the harbour entrance of Castletownbere in West Cork. Six lives were saved that night and the Coxswain is set to receive a medal for gallantry, and the crew and launching authority, letters of thanks from the Institution.

In an extract from the book, the 24-year old coxswain—who at the time was on what was only his second callout in charge—explains what he saw when he and his lifeboat crew came on scene: “Within 10 minutes of the original mayday call, we were on the scene. What I saw when we arrived, I can’t lie; It almost gave me a heart attack. The way the tide was going out and the wind was coming in, it was churning the sea up and creating a big, watery explosion.

“There were huge swells reaching six metres, the height of a two-storey house, tossing the fishing boat around like a rag doll and pushing her ever closer to the sixty metre cliffs to the west of the harbour mouth. The gales were now peaking at storm force 11. My heart started to race as I watched waves crashing up against the cliffs, with the vessel only 30 or so metres away from the rocky shoreline.”

Also featured among the collection is an incredible feat

of bravery by Portrush man and former RNLI station mechanic, Anthony Chambers, who, in 2009 swam into a cave near Castlerock Strand to rescue two 14-year-old boys when they became trapped with a fast-rising tide in dangerous conditions, receiving the RNLI’s medal for gallantry for the callout.

To rescue the boys Anthony, whose family’s involvement with Portrush RNLI spans generations, had to swim from the all-weather lifeboat into the cave carrying lifejackets in terrible conditions. He did this twice to bring both boys to safety.

In the book the recently retired mechanic describes the moment he brought the second boy to safety, utterly exhausted after the rescue, to be met by another lifeboat crewmember Gerard Bradley who was onboard the waiting inshore lifeboat outside the cave.

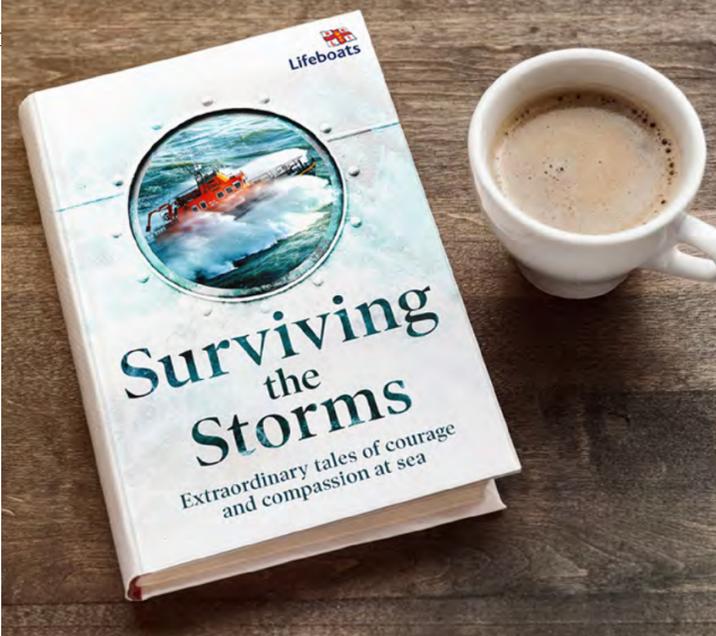
“As we kicked our way towards the boat I felt the strength draining out of me, like sand out of an egg timer, it slipped away. I’m going to have to let him go. The lifeboat was just ahead of us and Reece was secured in his lifejacket. I knew Gerard would get him within moments. The boy would be safe. But I can’t keep on.”

“Despite the ordeal almost being at an end. The exhaustion was too much. I prepared to let go and let the waves take me. I knew that as soon as I did, I’d be swallowed up and drown. I just didn’t have it in me to fight the waves anymore. But just as I went to release my grip and surrendered myself to the sea, Gerard came up alongside us. They’d got to us. I thought.”

RNLI Chief Executive, Mark Dowie described *Surviving the Storms* as “a wonderful account of selflessness and bravery”.

Emphasising the dedication of all those involved in the RNLI he said, “We have hundreds of lifeboat stations and thousands of crew members and lifeguards all dedicated to saving lives. Between them, they’ve helped so many people survive the storms and I’m proud of every one of them.”

Also available on Kindle, Apple Books and as an audiobook, *Surviving the Storms* is available to buy in all good bookstores now. **To order a copy online visit <https://books.harpercollins.co.uk/surviving-the-storms/>**



Castletownbere RNLI Medal rescue crew

Social Prescribing Service Reducing Isolation and Loneliness

Social needs such as depression, anxiety and loneliness are the reason for roughly 20% of visits to healthcare professionals in Ireland. However, an increasing number of GPs are now referring patients to Social Prescribing programmes that help them with complex health conditions, as well as social isolation, anxiety, loneliness and other issues.

Relatively new to Ireland, Social Prescribing is community-based and links people experiencing loneliness, isolation and those with chronic health conditions such as heart conditions, diabetes, COPD and mental health issues with sources of support in their community to improve their physical and emotional wellbeing.

Many groups such as fishermen and farmers work in isolating occupations full of uncertainty, this uncertainty can sometimes lead to stress, anxiety and/or mental health difficulties. Social Prescribing can provide support by offering ways to manage stress. The service can also provide links to community-based exercise groups, volunteering, creative activities, employment supports,

and social outlets etc.

The Sláintecare Integration Fund is supporting seven Social Prescribing projects all over Ireland. Addressing many of the goals of Sláintecare, the service creates opportunities for people to get involved in caring for their own health and wellbeing, deepens links between community and medical care, and reduces the need for people to seek medical appointments with either their GP or to attend hospital for care for their chronic conditions.

Thanks to Sláintecare, Waterford Social Prescribing Service, which is led by the Sacred Heart Family Resource Centre, has two fulltime workers and is available right across the county for anyone over the age of 18. People can self-refer or be referred by their GP or other health professionals. The Social Prescriber meets participants in various locations right across the city and county.

One of many Social Prescribing projects across Ireland—with services also offered in Dublin, Wicklow, Donegal, Offaly, Cork, Kerry and most recently in Kilkenny—Waterford Social Prescribing



is having a positive effect on the people who access its programme with improved quality of life, increased ability to manage health conditions, increased self-confidence, and learning new skills.

To find out more visit: www.gov.ie/slaintecare and www.fgu.ie or for the Waterford Service contact: Fiona on 089 4917360 Socialprescribing-county@sacredheartfric.ie or Niamh on 089 2501413 socialprescribing@sacredheartfric.ie

Waterford Social Prescribing Service
Improving Health & Wellbeing

Would you like to try something new?
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The Waterford Social Prescribing Service is a new free support that aims to reduce social isolation and improve people's health and wellbeing.

We can give you information on social groups, exercise classes, relaxation sessions, volunteering opportunities, support services and much more all in your local area.

Phone: Fiona on 089 491 7360
Email: socialprescribing-county@sacredheartfric.ie

Carr & Sons Seafood Take Full Ownership of the Nolan Brand

— ESTD 1946 —
CARR & SONS
OF IRELAND

Award-winning Seafood Producers Carr & Sons Seafood Ltd, The Pier, Killala, Co Mayo have acquired HJ Nolan Seafood, Dublin, effective from March 2020. Going forward both Carr & Sons Seafood and the HJ Nolan Brand will be part of the Mondri Group.

Located on the Wild Atlantic way in the idyllic fishing village of Killala, Co Mayo, Carr & Sons Seafood hold a Grade A BRC – an accreditation which offers assurance to food retailers, customers and consumers that Carr & Sons Seafood adhere to the

highest quality standards within the food processing industry.

The Killala based company have always focused on craftsmanship and quality, which is reflected in their premium ready to eat seafood range, meaning Nolan customers can expect the same high quality which has been associated with their prestigious brand for over 100 years.

Founded in 1912, Nolans remained a family run business until present, earning worldwide recognition for their products. Now entrusted by George Nolan to carry on the family tradition, Carr & Sons considers it an honour to produce this prestigious brand to the standard and respect it has acquired over the past century, and Nolan’s loyal customers can be assured of continuity of their beloved brand.

Going forward, Nolans Products will be produced at the Grade “A” accreditation facility in Killala, Co Mayo. Supplying both domestic

and export markets, the company’s ethos is to maintain its commitment to environmentally friendly business practices which in turn will guarantee a sustainable future for all stakeholders involved.

Originally established in 1946, Carr & Sons were acquired by Swedish seafood company, Mondri Group AB in 2014. Mondri, whose business links with Ireland go back as far as 1984, have continued the tradition of the previous owners to produce and distribute a range of award-winning chilled pre-packed smoked, fresh and ready to eat seafood products for the retail trade.

Thrilled for this opportunity to continue the legacy of the historic Nolan brand into the future, Erling Charleson, owner and founder of Mondri stated: “this is a very exciting chapter for our Irish company, this acquisition will make Carr & Sons one of the strongest ready to eat Seafood Company’s in Ireland.” Erling attributed the Killala company’s success to

continued investment in both their workforce and plant, and to the outstanding commitment of its management team.

For further information please contact Carr & Sons Seafood Ltd, The Pier, Killala, Co Mayo F26 DE42 Ireland Tel: 00353 96 32755 Email: info@carrandsons.ie Website: www.carrandsons.ie



Thinking about Ireland's National Marine Planning Framework through the lens of the COVID-19 pandemic

By Dr Ruth Brennan,
Trinity Centre for
Environmental Humanities,
Trinity College Dublin

During these unprecedented times, we are being forced to reflect on the values that are needed to underpin the kind of society we want to live in, and the inadequacies of the current status quo. In Ireland, in the context of the COVID-19 crisis, the values that come consistently to the fore include solidarity, equity, empathy and care for fellow citizens. The big picture questions that we are currently reflecting on are not limited to our economy and healthcare system. They are permeating every single aspect of our lives. These reflections are therefore directly relevant to the framework we choose to manage our marine environment.

For the past two years, the Irish Government has been developing a national marine planning framework, led by the Marine Planning Policy and Development Division in the Department of Housing, Planning and Local Government. A public consultation on the draft National Marine Planning Framework (NMPF) finally closed on 30 April 2020, two months later than originally anticipated. Delays were caused first by the General Election in early February, and subsequently by the COVID-19 pandemic. In my submission to the policy consultation on behalf of the Trinity Centre for Environmental Humanities, I reflected on the national marine planning process in the unexpected context of a global pandemic.

While climate change is (rightly) positioned as a central consideration throughout the NMPF, the principle of “building back better” (e.g. increasing resilience and equity) and global pandemic preparedness should be integrated as related, cross-cutting considerations. A recent report [1] from the Global Preparedness Monitoring Board pointed to climate change as one of the factors in heightening our vulnerability to infectious pathogens and warned that we are more and more susceptible to “global, biological catastrophic

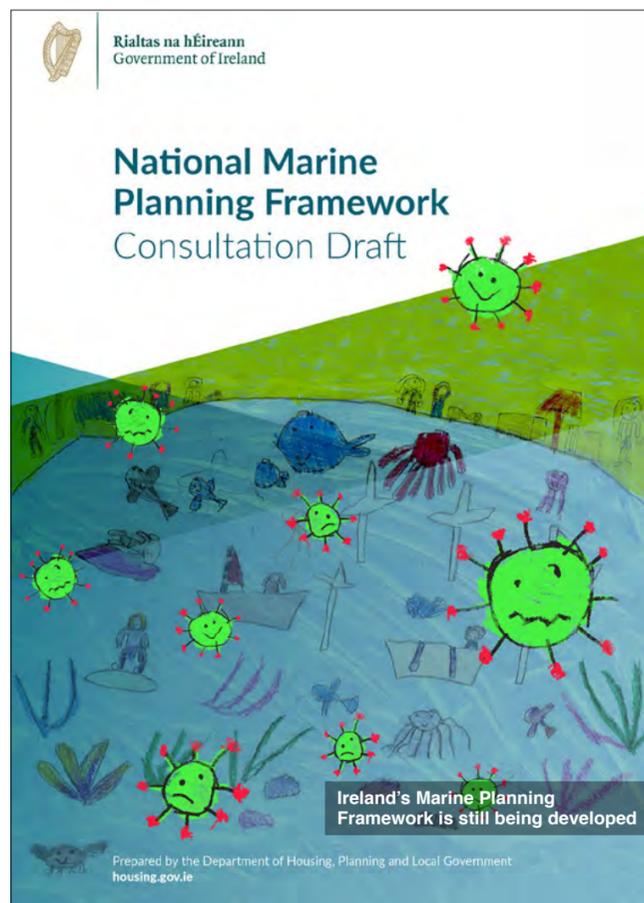
risks”. The NMPF should explicitly acknowledge the societal upheaval caused by the COVID-19 pandemic and reflect on how this is shaping/should shape the national approach to planning and managing our marine environment.

For example, what revisions and reframings are possible, and desirable, if we look beyond economic indicators and move beyond the current vision for Ireland's marine environment in *Harnessing Our Ocean Wealth*, that is dominated by market-driven logic? This logic assumes, for example, that growth is the best way to measure sustainable economic policies, and that framing the biophysical environment as natural capital will achieve a socially inclusive and environmentally sustainable marine environment.

The societal upheaval we are experiencing provides an opportunity to make space in policy-making practices and processes for imagining new ways of being in the world, for imagining a world that contains many different worlds, as opposed to the world that our policy systems are embedded in, a world where only one world fits. We need to create space for different starting points so that we are not limited by the idea that we must take “the world that is responsible for the plausible destruction of the planet as the exclusive starting point in a conversation about the current condition of the planet.” [2]

In the context of COVID-19, this potential imagining of new worlds has gained prominence. Journalist Peter Baker wrote recently that “disasters and emergencies do not just throw light on the world as it is. They also rip open the fabric of normality. Through the hole that opens up, we glimpse possibilities of other worlds.” [3]

Over a decade ago, in her book on the societal potential of disasters and emergencies, *A Paradise Built in Hell*, author Rebecca Solnit observed that “In the moment of disaster, the old order no longer exists, and people improvise.... Thereafter a struggle takes place over whether the old order with all its shortcomings and injustices will be reimposed or a new one, perhaps more impressive and perhaps more just and free...



will arise.” [4]

Setting aside any cynicism around an aspirational document that has been crafted to entice the smaller, left-wing parties into government with Fianna Fáil and Fine Gael, the new Programme for Government appears to be tapping into this potential for a new order. It acknowledges that there is “no going back to the old way of doing things”, commits to working together to achieve a “stronger, more inclusive Ireland”, and declares that the spirit of people and communities coming together to help each other “must guide any new Government that is formed. These are the values which have been central to our shared national response to this Emergency and they must be the values that drive the work of the next Government”. Of course, there is politicking involved in these carefully chosen words. But it also opens a door to shaping other, possible worlds.

Dr Ruth Brennan is a Marie Skłodowska-Curie Individual Fellow (2018-2020) at Trinity College Dublin's Centre for Environmental Humanities. She is also sea Fisheries Advisor to Luke 'Ming' Flanagan MEP.

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[1] Global Preparedness Monitoring Board. A world at risk: annual report on global preparedness for health emergencies. Geneva: World Health Organization; (2019) Licence: CC BY-NC-SA 3.0 IGO. https://apps.who.int/gpmb/assets/annual_report/GPMB_annualreport_2019.pdf

[2] Blaser, M. and de la Cadena M. 2018. Pluriverse: Proposals for a World of Many Worlds. In: De la Cadena, M. and Blaser M. (eds). A World of Many Worlds. Duke University Press, Durham and London.

[3] Baker 2020 ‘We can't go back to normal’: how will coronavirus change the world? The Guardian, 31 March 2020 <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2020/mar/31/how-will-the-world-emerge-from-the-coronavirus-crisis>

[4] Solnit R. (2010) A Paradise built in Hell: The Extraordinary Communities That Arise in Disaster, Penguin, p16

North Atlantic Pelagic Advocacy Group established

A new supply chain led initiative, focused on improving the management of North East Atlantic fisheries for mackerel, herring and blue whiting—fisheries whereby management is complicated as they involve six coastal states and ongoing quota disputes—has been established.

The formal creation of the group is the latest step in a project which began in 2019 in response to the suspension of the Marine Stewardship Council (MSC) North East Atlantic mackerel fishery certification.

Formed by retailers and processors from across the UK to consider how the supply chain could drive management improvements in these fisheries, the North Atlantic Pelagic Advocacy (NAPA) Group is seeking to achieve a formal agreement on catch limits for North East Atlantic pelagic fisheries that reflects scientific advice.

Since its formal creation in early 2020 membership has expanded to include European retailers and processors. The group has already made considerable progress since

its first meeting. In late March members held a workshop to develop an action plan to drive the work of the group over the next 12 to 36 months. A priority action is the creation of a Fisheries Improvement Project and a comprehensive engagement strategy with key decision-makers for herring and blue whiting.

For further information contact Aoife Martin at Seafish on aoife.martin@seafish.co.uk or visit seafish.org/article/north-atlantic-pelagic-advocacy-group

EU tops up EMFF by €500 million as part of recovery plan

Following earlier EU support measures to alleviate the immediate socio-economic impacts of the coronavirus pandemic on the fisheries sector, the European Commission has added €500 million euro to the upcoming 2021-2027 European Maritime and Fisheries Fund (EMFF) to aid recovery across the hard-hit sector.

Explaining the top-up, European Commissioner for the Environment, Oceans and Fisheries, Virginijus Sinkevičius said the Commission will work closely with EU countries to ensure that the additional funding contributes to a swift recovery.

Aiming to support the sector, with measures including support for temporary cessation, storage aid and temporary state aid, (though Irish fishermen and women were left waiting at home) the Commission had quickly acted to avoid a worst-case scenario for the sector.

In contrast with these earlier initial supports, the

Commissioner explained that now that economic activity is slowly picking up again the Commission is moving to a second phase of action, which is to support the recovery and “make the sector more resilient to future crisis.”

To this end, in May the Commission presented the Recovery Instrument, which included the €500 million addition to the upcoming EMFF budget, representing an increase of more than 8% compared to the budget initially proposed for the EMFF in 2018.

This additional money will feed Member States' programmes from next year, “frontloading financial support in the crucial first years of recovery.”

“All-in-all, this funding is for an inclusive and fair future for Europe, for our fishermen and women, for our seas and oceans, for each of us,” said the Commissioner. Let's hope somebody tells the Irish government that!



Seafood Markets Remain Sluggish

Bord Bia's June 19th 'Market and Sector Insights Covid-19 Impact on Trade' report indicates seafood markets, while displaying some signs of movement, on the whole remain sluggish.

Citing the most recent EUMOFA report, according to the report though positive reports have emerged with respect demand for pre-packed fish, demand in France remains low with first sale volumes fluctuating with the consequent impact on prices. Though

growing, foodservice demand remains very slow, and with the market oversupplied, prices are volatile and generally low. On a more positive note, the UK foodservice sector is improving meaning demand is slowly rising, and prices for species such as haddock and whiting are picking up.

On the pelagic front, according to the report, processors are reporting lower than usual demand in Europe with orders down on the same time last year. The Japanese market is also sluggish for

mackerel fillets, with knock-on impacts on orders for raw material in Ireland. As a result large stocks still remain in cold stores in Killybegs, with processors closing out on committed orders and seeking new customers for current stocks.

Though some volumes of Irish brown crab are reaching the Chinese market via Holland, prices are low as the market is being flooded with product from all over Europe seeking outlets in the context of a slow to reopen European

foodservice market.

On top of this, additional concerns in the Chinese market are now emerging due to the latest COVID-19 outbreak in Beijing, which is leading to some consumer concern around the safety of imported seafood. This, it seems, is already having a knock-on impact on demand for fresh imported seafood such as oysters, and is leading also to 100% port inspections on imported seafood which will be another major challenge for Irish exporters to the region.



The CO-SUSTAIN project (www.belongingtothesea.com) has received funding from the European Union's Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme under the Marie Skłodowska-Curie grant agreement No 789524

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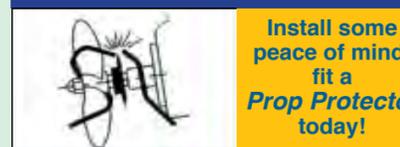
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IN ASSOCIATION WITH
GUY COTTEN
SWAN NET GUNDRY

MONTHLY COMPETITION

Send in your best fishing related photo and you could win a Sotra Fleece by Guy Cotten plus the chance to win overnight accommodation at the Irish Skipper Expo 2021.

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 might also be used in other areas of the magazine if suitable.

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Frank Doherty's MVF Oilean Croine



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No. 54. JULY, 1968.

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With the sun to starboard, William Deasy's new 50-foot trawler, Silver Rose (120 h.p. Kelvin) shows her paces shortly after delivery from B.I.M.'s Baltimore yard last month. The Deasys, of Union Hall, Co. Cork, now have five skippers in the family.

OVER 20 TAKE ADVANCED SKIPPER'S COURSE

OVER 20 Killybegs fishermen, holders of Skippers' Certificates of Competency, are undergoing an advanced course for skippers under the aegis of Bord Iascaigh Mhara. This advanced certificate will enable the skippers to command trawlers of any size operating in waters from south of the Faeroe Islands to the Normandy coast, an area which comprises such well-known fishing grounds as Rockall, Porcupine Bank, St. Kilda and Shetlands, including North Sea and Baltic.

USED TO FISH AT DUNMORE EAST

Bill McCrindle, the Clyde skipper who was well known at Dunmore East during the late 1950s and early '60s, has died in Ayr, his home town. He fished the Silver Fern in those days, usually in partnership with the Elizmor, but in later years retired and became Ayr's port officer, visiting Ireland only for holidays.

CO-OP PROGRESSES

Sixty fishermen attending the annual meeting of Porthall Fishermen's Co-operative Association, Co. Donegal, were told by the chairman, A. Marreco, that the organisation had begun exporting its salmon and was building up a reserve of funds. It was hoped to sell gear next year.

EUROPE'S largest fishing port is now Vigo in Spain. Landings last year were 152,000 metric tons. Much of the fish was caught off South Africa.

GRANTS TO BE PAID ON CERTAIN TYPES OF EQUIPMENT

Market Price Review

SUPPLIES on the Dublin Market during the four-week period ended June 14th were 19,787 boxes compared with 19,408 boxes for the corresponding period in 1967. The following ports accounted for 77% of total supplies: Howth (27%), Castletownbere (14%), Killybegs (12%), Dun Laoghaire (9%), Greencastle (9%), and Kilmore Quay (6%).

Prices were: Salmon (including grisle) 4/6 to 12/10 lb., Trout 3/- to 7/9 lb., Lobsters 7/- to 12/3 lb., Crayfish 4/- to 8/3 lb., Prawn tails 2/- to 12/- lb., whole prawns 30/- to 55/- case, Black sole 3/- to 4/- lb., Slips 1/- to 1/6 lb., Turbot 1/- to 2/- lb., Brill 1/- to 2/- lb., Halibut 3/6 to 5/6 lb., Plaice 4/- to 33/- st., Lemon Soles 7/- to 14/- st., White Soles 3/- to 6/- st., Dabs 2/- to 5/- st., Flounders 2/- to 5/- st., Ray 4/- to 14/- st., Ray Wings 8/- to 24/- st., Cod 6/- to 24/- st., Codling 4/- to 18/- st., Hake 7/- to 23/4 st., Chat Hake 3/6 to 14/- st., Whiting 4/- to 20/- st., Whiting (ungutted) 15/- to 97/- case, Haddock 7/- to 25/- st., Black Pollock 3/- to 7/- st., White Pollock 3/- to 12/- st., Red Gurnards 7/- st., Herrings 10/- to 30/- case and Mackerel 15/- to 117/- case.

Good supplies were purchased at Galway, Dingle, Castletownbere and Killybegs for local distribution.

THE B.I.M. Marine Credit Plan has been extended to include improvements to fishing vessels and the installation and replacement of electronic equipment.

Up to now, the grants and loans have applied only for the purchase of new and second-hand vessels and the replacement of engines and winches.

Grant assistance of 25% of the cost is now available to any skipper who wishes to carry out structural alterations on his vessel, such as enhancing the crew accommodation or improving the fishroom, for instance.

A maximum loan of 50% of the cost of this work will be provided to be repaid over a three-year period, and radio, echo sounder, radar and sonar equipment can also be acquired or replaced by the owners of existing craft on the same terms.

SHORTER LOAN PERIOD Grant and loan facilities apply to Decca Navigator installations also, but the loan must be repaid over a one year period.

The new facilities are intended to improve the earning power of secondhand vessels, which are often the means whereby skippers are introduced to larger and more expensive craft. Their equipment is not always the best, and the quality control regulations make certain fishroom standards essential in any case.

(See also page 3)

'SILVER ROSE'

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Atlantic Dawn, fishing off the Wairarapa Coast, New Zealand. (Credit: Mike Terry)



Mary James. (Credit: Tomas Sullivan)



OUT & ABOUT
GOT A GREAT PHOTO? SEND IT TO THE SKIPPER email it to us at: editorial@maramedia.ie



Local inshore Shetland boat, Verania taking advantage of the calm conditions at the fishing grounds. (Credit: Ivan Reid)



Catching up on all of the latest news from around the coast. (Shaun Heena)



Imogen III heading into Ardglass Harbour. (Credit: Stephen Moore)



Home safe home. Tonragee, Achill. Skipper onboard - David Campbell of Tonragee. (Photo: Victoria Calvey)



View from the Dayagelle crabber, on the way into Hartlepool. (Credit: Martin Toland)



Scarborough. (Credit: Mick Bayes Jr)



Lia Jan. (Credit: Tomas Sullivan)



The tug boat Leopard before she departed Waterford to tow a barge to Gdańsk last month. (Credit: John Glody on board the Dunmore East pilot boat with Joeey Murphy, taking pilot Peter O'Rourke off the tug boat)

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ACROSS

- Poked
- Genghis ...
- Lay oneself open to
- Window ledge
- Inscribe
- Sparkle
- Madness
- Slope
- Game park tour
- Change title of
- Criss-cross structure
- Uneven (in quality)
- Below
- Territory, Puerto ...
- Swoop
- Turn upside-down
- Performs slalom
- Tribal seniors

DOWN

- Bumps roughly
- Light timber
- Drab
- Conspirator
- Moscow citadel
- Praise
- Aggressive dog
- Ill on plane
- Laborious
- Chilled cuppa (4,3)
- Argentina's ... Peron
- Paris boulevard, Champs ...
- Priggish person
- Kept us going, ... us over

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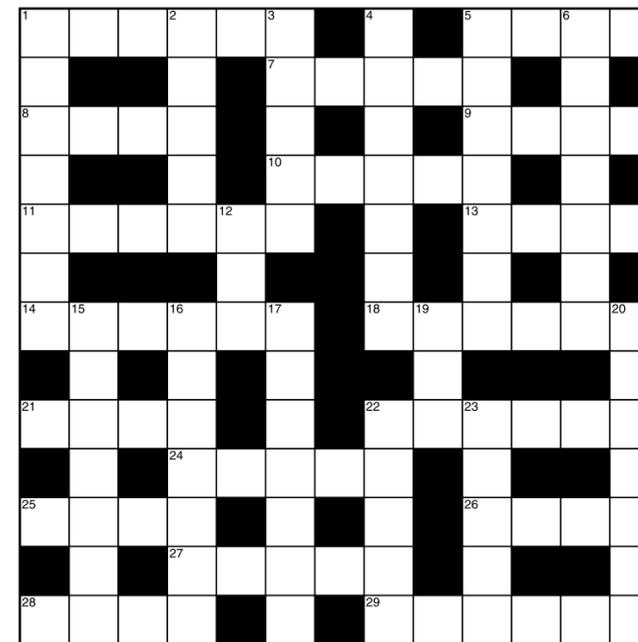
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The Importance of Ireland's Coastal Communities 'Without the ocean, we wouldn't have a living'

In Ireland, 1.9 million people live within 5km of the coast and many communities along the Irish coast depend on industries such as fishing, aquaculture, and tourism. Furthermore, there is now mounting evidence that the ocean plays a key role in the general wellbeing of our coastal communities.

Last month, the Marine Institute's *Oceans of Learning* series—the 10-week series which explores our connection to the sea, sharing news and offering online interactive activities, videos and downloadable resources on a new marine topic each week—explored the importance of Ireland's coastal communities with resources from the Marine Institute, Commissioners of Irish Lights, Údarás na Gaeltachta, Galway City Museum and the Explorers Education Programme.

Dr Paul Connolly, CEO of the Marine Institute said, "As an island nation, our 7,711 kilometres of coastline is one of our greatest assets. Our fishing and aquaculture industries, tourism and marine leisure make a significant contribution to the economic development of Ireland's coastal regions, and provide employment opportunities for many in our coastal communities. At the Marine Institute, we support Ireland's coastal communities and economies, through our research, ocean knowledge, infrastructure and advisory services."

The Irish coastline is dotted with inlets, piers and harbours used by fishermen every day. Fisheries in Ireland significantly contribute to the economy as a whole and in particular to coastal communities. In 2019, Ireland had over 2,000 registered commercial fishing vessels and the industry employed 3,000 people. Especially important to coastal communities is inshore fishing, which takes place in many rural communities with fishermen using small vessels to catch species such as lobsters, crabs, oysters, scallops, razors and clams.

Also an integral part of Ireland's rural coastal communities is the broader €1.22 billion seafood industry, which, in 2019, employed more than 16,000 people, with high levels of employment in Ireland's coastal regions in Donegal, Cork, Galway and Clare. With oysters, mussels and salmon all farmed around the coast, the aquaculture industry produces about 37,000 tonnes annually, and the turnover generated by marine aquaculture in 2018 was estimated at €176 million. Alongside aquaculture, seaweed harvesting also generates income and offers employment in coastal areas, taking place around the coast, particularly in counties Galway, Donegal, Sligo, Kerry and Cork.

With Ireland's scenic coastline, rocky escarpments and beaches attracting a large number of overseas visitors every year (76% of overseas tourists visiting Ireland last year visited a coastal area), also contributing to Ireland's ocean and coastal economies is the tourism and leisure industry, which generated a turnover of €1.25 billion in 2018, and provided employment for over 18,000 people.

CLIMATE CHANGE

Today, climate change impacts—rising sea levels, coastal erosion, flooding, and an increase in extreme weather events—pose significant challenges to coastal communities. Adapting to a changing climate is one of the greatest challenges facing society, governments and decision-makers worldwide. The Marine Institute works with national and international partners to observe and understand how our ocean is changing and to determine how to respond to current and future patterns of change that impact Ireland's economy and people.

"As a small island nation, the health of our oceans and the wellbeing of our coastal communities have always been and will continue to be inextricably linked," Dr Connolly said.



Landing lobsters in Heilbhic
(Credit: Cathal Ó hUallacháin)



Dorans on the Pier, Howth.
(By Róisín Curé, BlueFish Project)

Through the BlueFish Project, a unique project linking art and science, the Marine Institute has worked with coastal communities in Ireland and Wales on the importance of the ocean to their livelihoods and the impacts of a changing climate – capturing that importance via a series of watercolour illustrations and interviews with fishermen, restaurateurs, shellfish producers, operators in the tourism sector and seafarers.

"Without the ocean, we wouldn't have a living: it's our only source of income in this rural part of Ireland. Climate change is definitely happening: growth periods are longer than they ever were. But higher water temperatures and higher rainfall could be catastrophic for our business," according to oyster and mussel fishermen, Cromane, Co. Kerry.

Dr Paul Connolly explained that "a central part of the project was listening to people living and working in coastal communities,

and gathering their opinions about climate change and learning about how it might affect their livelihoods. This was a unique opportunity to talk directly to coastal communities and capture their perspectives through art."

"Many of the stories reaffirmed the importance of the age-old relationship between people and the sea, noting that the sea is the life-blood which sustains these communities. The general consensus in both Ireland and Wales coastal communities was that climate change is happening. There was an acknowledgment and a realisation amongst the people interviewed that there was a real looming threat to their livelihoods," said Dr Connolly.

For more information on *Oceans of Learning*, visit www.marine.ie and follow the Marine Institute on Facebook, Instagram and Twitter.

For more on Ireland's Coastal Communities visit <https://bit.ly/2VfyJk>



Oyster and mussel fishermen, Cromane, Co Kerry. (By Róisín Curé, BlueFish Project)

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