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BUNCH OF THIEVES!

PO's Call For Burden Sharing In Post Brexit Deal. See Pages 2-3



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Mary Paul passes Ireland's Eye as she enters Howth Harbour for the 1st time. Photo: Padhraic Cuthbert

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Burden Sharing Imperative For Survival Of Irish Fishermen



Carmarose passing Slieve League heading for Killybegs. Photo Ryan McNern

Fishing representatives have reacted angrily to suggestions from the European Commission that there would be no reallocation of fish stocks between EU countries to ease the burden faced by Ireland, post Brexit.

Charlina Vitcheva, Director-General for Maritime Affairs and Fisheries defended the fact that Ireland is contributing €40million of the €184million of fish being transferred by the EU to the UK stating, "we've been trying to level out the burden between the member states concerned, but inevitably Ireland is so much closer and so much interlinked in terms of fisheries activities with the UK, so it is inevitable."

Asked by The Skipper to clarify the DG's comments a Commission's spokesperson stated:

"The Parties agreed to a transfer of quota shares, as part of the EU-UK Trade and Cooperation Agreement (TCA). The UK will gain on a number of TACs a larger quota share than it had when part of the EU. This will imply a reduction in quota shares for our Member States, accordingly. Ms Vitcheva made the remark that the Commission is not looking into a reallocation of quota shares among Member States as a result of these reductions."

THROWN TO THE WOLVES!

However KFO CEO, Seán O'Donoghue has taken umbrage at the comments stating that this is an ill-informed comment that does not stand up to a factual analysis of the Trade and Cooperation Agreement

(TCA) and there is no way that Ireland is going to tolerate a situation whereby its fishermen are thrown to the wolves on the double, as a result of Brexit.

"We have formally requested our Government to go back to Brussels and initiate an immediate process whereby the eight other EU coastal countries step up to the plate to take a proportionate hit on fisheries as part of the Brexit deal. We believe that the pain must be shared equally, as was stated by the European Fisheries Alliance (EUSA) when it set out in its mission statement that no single sector should bear a disproportionate burden once Brexit was done. The Government must redouble its efforts in light of Director-General's poorly-judged remark."

"Before Brexit, about 30% of fish caught by the Irish fleet was from UK waters. This was cut by average of 13% in the deal but our two main fisheries mackerel and prawns were cut by 26% and 14% respectively. In comparison, the Belgian fleet caught over 50% of its fish in UK waters and is facing an average reduction of only 6%. The Danish fleet, which caught under 50% in UK waters, is facing average reduction of 8% and the French fleet which caught about 36% in UK waters is facing an average reduction of just 6%."

Brexit has resulted in a UK fishing windfall of €184million from the EU which consists of a staggering €40million - with mackerel at €26million and prawns at €7million making up almost 83% of this figure of Irish fish gift-wrapped for the UK. Based on a simple burden sharing equation with the nine

member states involved, Ireland should be shouldering a loss of €20million - not €40million as was foisted upon us.

"There is a precedent for achieving this and it harks back to the mid-1970s when ironically, the UK benefitted from a process of reducing the percentage quota share of other member states in order to protect its fishing sector. It also benefited from the Hague Preferences which gave both the UK and Ireland additional tonnage of certain species. Burden sharing or 'equalisation' as it was known, saw Britain compensated for forfeiting certain stocks and grounds to the tune of 90,000 tonnes of valued at €80million which came from the other Member States."

"Our ask now is that the EU revisits this policy traditionally referred to as jurisdictional and third country losses/gains and Hague Preferences and applies the same rationale and fairness in order to render our key fisheries viable after the crippling and unsustainable cuts divvied out by Brexit."

"In the waters off Donegal alone for instance, an eye-watering 82% of stocks in tonnage terms - both pelagic (mackerel, herring and blue whiting) and demersal species (monkfish, megrim, haddock, cod and saithe) - have been forfeited to Britain in the crudest and most brutal example of how Brexit has shafted fishermen in the North West"

"What's perhaps most galling about the loss of mackerel is that the fish are spawned in Irish waters. While we cannot nor do not claim ownership of them, we're now being discriminated against catching the fish off the

coast of Scotland when they are in their prime and at their most valuable as a result of the 26% reduction in our quota. In essence, we're providing the fish for Britain to net, we're a 'mackerel maternity ward' for others to profit from. We now have a miserly share of 16% whereas the UK - mainly Scotland - has 70%". stated Mr O'Donoghue.

BUNCH OF THIEVES

Patrick Murphy CEO of the IS&WFPO voiced his opinion that the Commission are nothing more than a bunch of thieves. It is his opinion that the clear ignorance of the Aims and Objectives of the CFP exhibited by Commission Official Charlina Vitcheva require her to be sacked from her position with immediate effect.

"The new reality is the theft of 20% of our Maritime Natural Resources, taken without our consent on Christmas Eve and given to our nearest neighbour who decided to leave the European Union. It is clear now that the EU Commission couldn't care less about the crisis our Coastal Communities are facing and care even less about the goals clearly set out in the EU Common Fisheries Policy of 2013 requiring the interests of remote, far-distant Coastal Communities to be protected."

"She believes there is no legal text written to -date that would allow the taking of up to 20% in Monetary value of one of Ireland's most precious Natural Resources represented by the "Migratory Fish" that breed, spawn, feed and grow in our water that have been gifted to our nearest neighbour the United Kingdom when this represents €43 million of the €182 million in annual value the Commission and EU Council gave to the United Kingdom on the 24th December 2020."

The United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS) is an international agreement that resulted from the third United Nations Conference on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS III), which took place between 1973 and 1982 with further negotiations between 1991 and December 1995 producing the specific wording of how the requirements of the Convention should be applied insofar as they relate to both Migratory Fish Stocks and Straddling Fish

Stocks, the latter representing fish that swim, breed and spawn while straddling the line between adjoining Coastal States.

UNCLOS as the prevailing International Law of the Sea is completely binding on all UN Member States and it also binds the European Union which is a Signatory to the Convention.

Articles 63 and 64 of UNCLOS are designed to regulate the exploitation and protection of particular Fish Stocks which straddle the borderline between the adjoining Exclusive Economic Zones of Coastal States (Article 63) such as is the case between the United Kingdom and Ireland while Article 64 is designed to regulate the exploitation of Highly Migratory Fish Stocks which move between and within the Exclusive Economic Zones of a number of Coastal States while breeding spawning and nursing in the Waters of one or a number of Coastal States and then migrating beyond those Exclusive Economic Zones into International Waters or into the EEZ of adjacent or even far-distant Coastal States where they feed as is the case when Bluefin Tuna and Albacore Tuna swim and feed in Irish Waters from mid-Summer to early Winter when they begin to return south to spawn and lay their eggs again and repeat the cycle.

Having regard to the requirements of the Convention regarding Highly Migratory Species such as Mackerel and Blue Whiting which breed, spawn, lay their eggs and nurse their young in Irish Waters before they depart to the north to visit Scottish, Faeroese, Icelandic and Norwegian waters over a period of 6 months before they return to the west and south west coast of Ireland to repeat the cycle for 6 months, the Agreement reached between the EU and UK on Christmas Eve which grants 25% of our Mackerel to the UK together with 20% of our Blue Whiting represents as outrageous a daylight robbery of the native Resources of Ireland's Coastal Communities as is possible to imagine.

"I believe the treatment of our fishermen & fisherwomen is already negatively impacting our coastal communities, costing jobs that will result in the further depopulation of Rural and Coastal Ireland." Mr Murphy concluded.

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Eco Eye episode provokes anger from Irish fishing industry

On Tuesday 9th February last at 7pm RTE broadcast an edition of "Eco-Eye" portraying the Irish fishing industry as hostile to the environment and as a contributor to overfishing in our waters. The Skipper subsequently was inundated with complaints and criticisms by our readers to the tone and content of the programme and many felt this portrayal of our industry was both one sided and biased. Patrick Murphy, CEO of the IS&WFPO has penned the following open letter to Dee Forbes, Director-General of RTÉ to highlight the many concerns of fishermen and their families about how they were portrayed.

Dear Director General,

On Tuesday 9th February last at 7pm RTE broadcast an edition of "Eco-Eye" portraying the Irish fishing industry as hostile to the environment and as a contributor to overfishing in our waters.

Our organisation – the Irish South and West Fish Producers Organisation (ISWFPO) represents over 400 men and women of the fishing industry, their families and the communities who depend upon the employment they create. In excess of a further 16,000 men and women work in related industries, many of them working in coastal and rural communities devastated by the Covid-19 crisis and by the existential challenges of Brexit and a loss of fishing waters.

On their behalf we want to

express our deep disappointment that a normally professional programme presented such an imbalanced portrayal of our industry's environmental impact and, in particular, the programme's seeming determination to make Ireland accountable for the impact of the entire EU-wide fishing industry's impact on the marine environment.

One contributor to the programme, Fintan Kelly of Birdwatch Ireland, is a past member of the North West Waters Advisory Council of which I remain an active member and which could have been used as a source of information in relation to Ireland's very small role in EU fishing rather than focusing on the negatives of the European Common Fishery Policy.

Visiting the sins of the entire

EU fishing industry on its smallest fishing nation is not only grossly unfair, but will enable the largest polluters and violators of our marine environment to avert scrutiny. Given the significantly larger size of French, Spanish, Portuguese, Danish and Dutch fleets, a given percentage of overfishing by vessels from these countries has a much more disproportionate impact on the marine environment. This is a point that should have been made by the programme, a point that any serious research would have uncovered.

As a body which is publicly funded in order to thoroughly investigate and truthfully report facts to facilitate accurate public understanding and debate, this programme fell well short of what is required. At a time when the National Union of

Journalists – whose General Secretary we have cc'd in this letter – is advocating public funding for the media, it serves as a particularly unwelcome example of how Dublin-based perspectives can, when unaccompanied by thorough research and investigation, produce an utterly false picture of reality.

As you will be aware, the Commission on the Future of the Media is currently holding public consultations in relation to ensuring plurality and diversity in Irish media. While Eco-eye has produced many excellent editions, we believe that sadly this particular edition of the programme fell well short in relation to plurality and diversity of perspective, never mind basic research.

The contrast with the edition of February 2nd last - when

Eco-eye investigated the planning and other challenges in revitalising small towns and villages in a sustainable manner in the wake of the impact of lockdown – is particularly ironic: Few industries are more vital to marginalised small towns and villages in coastal Ireland than the Fishing industry and unless those who inhabit the small towns and villages of our coastal areas have jobs and livelihoods, no amount of planning and revitalisation will bring them back to life.

The shibboleth that preserving the environment means destroying whole industries needs to not only be challenged, but countered. Far from damaging the environment, the fishing industry – if adequately supported – has huge potential to greatly improve the environmental and climate friendliness of the recovery and of our future economy and to improve the health and well-being of the Irish people. Had the show's researchers consulted us – or indeed the websites of semi state agencies or google – in relation to sustainability and the healthiness of the fishing industry, they and the show's Presenter Anja Murray would have been made aware of and would have been able to make viewers aware of the following salient facts about the industry we represent:

Specifically: As a leading study (Parker, April 2018) shows, global fisheries account for just 4% of carbon emissions-related total food production and the carbon footprint of CO2 emitted per kilogram of protein is substantially lower for fishery products than for pork, lamb or beef.

The EU accounted for 6,800,582 tonnes of fish production (catches and aquaculture) in 2017, which represents about 3% of global

production. The Irish fleet has access to 1.18 million tonnes of fish in the North-West Waters of Europe 2 amounting to 17.4% of the total of Catches and Aquaculture, representing some 0.52% of Global production. Of this 0.52% share of Global catches, Ireland has access to in the region of 14% of the European Share in Irish waters and UK waters giving Ireland's fishermen 0.073% Maximum share of the fish caught in the World's Oceans.

The total number of EU fishing vessels in 2019 was 81,253 with an average age of 29.9 years. Vessels >24m account for 3% of the overall European fleet. Ireland has 1,924 vessels (2.4% of EU total) with a gross tonnage of 61,156 tonnes (4% of EU total) while our boats over 18 meters (60 feet) constitute only 220 vessels representing only 0.3% of the European fleet. The total number of fishing vessels in the world in 2016 was estimated to be about 4.6 million and this means that Ireland's entire fishing Fleet, from the smallest punt to the largest Mackerel vessels is equal to 0.044% of the world's entire fishing fleet. 3

The STECF report5 on the performance of the CFP highlighted the huge progress that has been made towards the CFP goals. It showed that in the North-East Atlantic, total Sustainable Stock Biomass has increased by 50% since 2009.

In several reports (Bord Iascaigh Mhara, 2018) Bord Iascaigh Mhara has stressed the importance of and potential for Ireland's seafood industry to advance the agenda of environmental sustainability. Initiatives such as the promotion of Origin Green in the industry, organic certification, fishing for litter and Co-ordinated Aquaculture Management Systems demonstrate a growing commitment to preserving the



Eco Eye Presenter Anja Murray.

environment that needs now to be matched by a commitment to preserving jobs.

Successive studies have shown that the benefits of eating fish include increased brain capacity, benefits to unborn children and possible reduced risk of a range of disorders including Dyslexia, Dyspraxia, Alzheimer's, Dementia and Depression (Bord Bia, 2020).

Had we, as the largest fishing industry representative body in the South-West Cork been interviewed by the researchers and producers of this programme I can assure you we would have been helpful in honestly and openly addressing the issues dealt with by the show. They would have found out that the fishing industry is, in fact, one of the most environmentally friendly and healthy industries.

We also believe that in the coverage of the economic implications of Brexit, the hugely disproportionate impact on the fishing industry has been sadly neglected, as has a decade's long neglect of our industry in terms of overall political priority, public investment and in relation

to support in Brussels. The exciting potential of our industry and Ireland's Green brand can deliver sustainable jobs in producing a foodstuff that is significantly carbon friendlier and healthier than other food options.

The Irish Fishing industry is therefore, far from being a threat to the environment, one which has the potential to lead a sustainable and health and well-being oriented recovery.

Given the existential threat to jobs and livelihoods due to the double challenge of Brexit and Covid-19, our industry and the thousands of people whose livelihoods depend upon it in rural communities from West Cork through to Donegal, we appeal to you to meet with us and open the opportunity for us to present the full truth of our industry and its potential to contribute to climate action and sustainability.

We look forward to hearing from you.

Yours Sincerely,

PATRICK MURPHY
CEO IS&WFPO

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HUGO BOYLE R.I.P

On behalf of the entire Boyle family we would like to extend our heartfelt thanks to all those who went out of their way to express their condolences to us on the recent passing of our beloved Hugo.

To his work family in the ISEFPO, all his work colleagues and the entire fishing community around the coast of Ireland and beyond we say thank you for the overwhelming showing of support at this difficult time. It really has meant so much and we are forever grateful for all the thoughtful calls, messages, letters, Mass cards, flowers and media reports acknowledging his work for the industry.

As it is impossible to thank you all individually or meet up during these strange times a holy sacrifice of the mass will be offered for you all at a later date. Thank you all.

Ellen Boyle & family. Achill.

Fishing Excluded From New Marine Planning Bill

By Lorna Siggins

A Government decision to exclude marine protected areas from the new Marine Planning and Development Management Bill has been called into question by an Oireachtas committee chaired by Green TD Steven Matthews.

The Oireachtas committee has also queried the absence of fishing and aquaculture from the proposed Bill.

It says it was informed by its own Department that it “would not be appropriate to provide for either activity as “fishing is a competence of the European Union”.

Mr Matthews has flagged the Bill as “the most significant piece of Irish maritime legislation since the Foreshore Act was enacted in 1933” as it will “fundamentally transform how Ireland manages its marine space”.

The “pre-legislative scrutiny” of the new marine planning Bill by the Oireachtas committee on housing, local government and heritage was published in the same week in February as the Government’s advisory group report on marine

protected areas (MPAs).

The Bill proposes to establish a new legal framework for the maritime area, which will replace the existing State and development consent systems and streamline arrangements into a single consent process.

This will involve one State consent - Maritime Area Consent or MAC - to enable occupation of the maritime area and one Development Consent - as in planning permission- with a single environmental assessment.

A “pre-legislative scrutiny” of the new marine planning bill by the committee has identified nine key areas among its 29 recommendations (see summary in panel).

First and foremost, it recommends that MPAs be provided for in the proposed bill as a precondition to the making of any plan or the granting of any consent under the legislation.

MPAs are geographically defined maritime areas that provide levels of protection to achieve conservation objectives. Currently, about 2.14 per cent of Ireland’s maritime area is protected under the existing EU Birds and Habitats



Crow Head, West Cork

directives,

The Programme for Government includes a commitment to expand Ireland’s network of MPAs to 10% of its maritime area as soon as is practical - and to meet a higher target of MPAs constituting 30% of its maritime area by 2030.

As an alternative to including provision in the marine planning Bill, the Oireachtas committee recommends that the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage should “prioritise the introduction of separate and complementary legislation to complete the designation, regulation and management of MPAs”.

It should ensure they are included in the National Marine Planning Framework and Marine Spatial Plan, the committee says. The Oireachtas committee also recommends that the Government implement “interim measure”s to protect areas of the marine environment, given “the disparity between the introduction of the proposed legislation and the absence of legislation regulating MPAs”.

One of the key findings of a separate study on expanding Ireland’s MPAs is that there is no enabling legislation for these protected zones.

The Irish Wildlife Trust had expressed concern that offshore winds farms could be approved and planned before work had even begun on enabling legislation for MPAs.

The MPA Advisory Group, chaired by Prof Tasman Crowe of the University College, Dublin Earth Institute, identified the legislative gap in one of a number of issues in a 250-page report submitted to Minister for Housing Darragh O’Brien last October.

Mr O’Brien published this report last month (Feb) and opened it to six months of consultation until July 30th.

When he appeared before the

Oireachtas committee scrutinising the new marine planning Bill late last year, Prof Crowe suggested a “rapid assessment or sensitivity analysis” should be made, using “available evidence” to “identify areas of potentially high conservation value so that they can be temporarily protected”.

This would cover protection of sensitive habitats, “pending a more formal process of MPA site selection and designation”, he told the committee.

However, Prof Crowe says that after some consultation and consideration, a second submission “drew back from that position” and proposed an alternative approach, which is to ensure that “existing provisions integral to the planning process should be used to protect vulnerable habitats and species until MPA legislation can come into force”.

Significantly, no representative of any fishing industry organisation appeared during the committee’s consultations on the new Bill, while representatives of offshore renewable energy, wind, and environmental non-governmental organisations did appear and made submissions.

Yet, last summer, the Eirwind consortium had said that the fishing industry has to be treated as the “primary stakeholder” in Ireland’s plans for developing the offshore wind industry right around the coast – plans which the new Bill will underpin.

The industry-led Eirwind consortium involving University College, Cork (UCC) researchers urged that a joint forum between the fishing and offshore wind sectors be established.

In its submission to the Oireachtas committee, the Marine Institute said that it supported its general aims and believes it will contribute to the Harnessing Our Ocean Wealth goals and objectives, and provide a legal basis for the sustainable management of

Ireland’s marine resources.

The Marine Institute also notes it will “contribute to the generation of jobs and economic growth in coastal communities; and assist in ensuring that Ireland can continue to meet its obligations under current and future marine-related EU Directives”.

The Marine Institute did note that the marine planning Bill “does not appear to make reference to or consider Fishery Order (FO) Areas and their ongoing regulation”, currently under the remit of Inland Fisheries Ireland and Department of the Environment, Climate and Communications.

It says, however, that consideration “could be given to the management and regulation of activities within such areas e.g. installation of structures for shellfish cultivation”.

“Given the extensive nature of these Fishery Order areas in what is likely to be the ‘nearshore’ area around the coast, it would be helpful to clarify the ongoing regulation of these areas and how they may interact with other provisions within the Bill,” the institute notes.

The Marine Institute also raised questions about a provision in the Bill allowing the minister to grant, subject to certain criteria, a “planning interest” to a project proponent that would allow the proponent to reserve a portion of the maritime area for a limited period while they apply for the necessary development consents.

“We acknowledge that this is an administrative/legal issue and, as such, is beyond the remit of the Marine Institute. It is our view, however, that the effective and efficient operation of such a system would require a high level of co-ordination across all licencing authorities ... to ensure each authority is aware of the demand, and in particular overlapping demand, for marine space”.

“Applications for different activities e.g. aquaculture, dumping at sea, marine aggregate extraction, sub-tidal seaweed harvesting could, at least in theory, be made to a number of different authorities for the same marine space,” the institute notes.

The pre-legislative scrutiny of the new marine planning Bill is here:

https://data.oireachtas.ie/ie/oireachtas/committee/dail/33/joint_committee_on_housing_local_government_and_heritage/reports/2021/2021-02-16_report-on-pre-legislative-scrutiny-of-the-general-scheme-of-the-marine-planning-and-development-management-bill_en.pdf

The MPA report which is open to public consultation until July 30th is here:

<https://www.gov.ie/en/consultation/45271-public-consultation-on-expert-advisory-group-report-entitled-expanding-irelands-marine-protected-area-network/>

Recommendations

The Oireachtas committee made 29 recommendations in all, a summary of which is here:

1. The completion of designation, and specification of regulation and management of MPAs based on ecosystem requirements be provided for in the proposed bill as a precondition to the making of any plan or the granting of any consent under the legislation.
2. Alternatively, the department prioritise the introduction of separate and complementary legislation to complete the designation, regulation and management of MPAs and their subsequent inclusion in the National Marine Planning Framework and Marine Spatial Plan.
3. The Government implement interim measures to protect areas of the marine environment, given the disparity between the introduction of the proposed legislation and the absence of legislation regulating MPAs.
4. All ecosystem requirements of the Maritime Spatial Planning and Marine Strategy Framework Directives, particularly species and habitats listed under the EU Birds and Habitats directives, the OSPAR Convention and the International Union for Conservation of Nature Red lists be taken into account as part of any planning process in the proposed legislation.
5. A statutory obligation requiring effective and adequate public consultation and participation as required by the Strategic Environmental Assessment Directive and Aarhus Convention, be included in all provisions relating to adoption of programmes of measures, marine spatial plans, and individual Maritime Area Consents.
6. The bill provide for the refusal of Maritime Area Consent where an adequate level of public participation and consultation has not been met.
7. The bill provide for enhanced public consultation measures surrounding the notification of the public in relation to the adoption of marine protected area designations, the drawing up of marine spatial plans, the designation of strategic marine activity zones and the determination of applications for planning permission or consent. This should include notifying the wider public of any developments and should not be confined solely to the locality in which the development is being proposed. Measures employed should include electronic means via websites and social media, as well as traditional media such as various national and local newspapers. Time periods for public participation should allow the public sufficient time to plan and participate effectively and in recognition of the volumes and complexity of information involved.
8. The regulation and management of aquaculture be provided for in the bill.
9. Alternatively, that the spatial planning for aquaculture be provided for in the bill, in order to meet the requirements of the Maritime Spatial Planning Directive that consent can only be granted in areas that are designated as suitable in the spatial plan, and to provide for overall compatibility and compliance of marine planning and consents
10. The bill be proofed to ensure full compliance and compatibility with The Marine Strategy Framework Directive, Environmental Impact Assessment Directive, Habitats Directive, Birds Directive, Water Framework Directive, Shellfish Waters Directive, Bathing Waters Directive, Waste Framework Directive, Maritime Spatial Planning Directive, measures implementing those Directives, and the Dumping at Sea Act and Sea Pollution Act.
11. Future skills shortages in offshore renewable energy be examined by the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage together with the Department of the Environment, Climate and Communications and the Department of Further and Higher Education, Research, Innovation and Science, along with education institutes and industry bodies with a view to developing and implementing a range of courses and apprenticeships.
12. Local employment and training should be part of approval for large developments to ensure a return to the community, as in “community gain”.
13. Consideration be given to allowing, design envelope flexibility subject to periodic review as part of the planning process in instances where there are no detrimental environmental impacts.
14. Consideration be given to the streamlining of the consent process to one authority in all instances, and subject to adequate public consultation procedures and in accordance with the Aarhus Convention.
15. The bill be amended to provide for a requirement for developers to meet time-limited specific development milestones.
16. Consideration be given to inserting a provision in the bill to facilitate the change of ownership of a project during the consenting process.
17. Consideration be given to subjecting marine environmental surveys to a streamlined process.
18. Further clarity in the bill be provided for surrounding the criteria used to distinguish between small and large marinas, and minor and major outfalls.
19. Consideration of the management and regulation of hybrid connections be provided for in the proposed bill.
20. The Good Practice Principles Handbook provide for an adequate, transparent and fair distribution of benefits to communities. However, given the nature and scale of development envisaged it would be appropriate to provide for wider public consultation on the matter of community dividend.
21. Future iterations of the Renewable Electric Support Scheme provide for community benefits stemming from offshore wind projects.
22. Consideration be given to the potential for wider dividends to be provided in respect of protecting and preserving biodiversity.
23. Consideration be given to the potential for wider dividends to be provided in respect of grants and scholarships to promote academic excellence in marine biodiversity
24. All Government departments and bodies be adequately resourced to effectively and efficiently carry out the functions stemming from the introduction of the new marine planning system, both in terms of facilitating efficient development and effective marine environmental protection. Consent application fees should be calculated to contribute to the costs of such resourcing.
25. Consideration be given to the expertise and benefit provided by eNGOs to the decision-making under this legislation and the additional burden and volume of consultation which is likely to arise, and the need to provide for additional supports to enable them participate effectively in the environmental decision-making under the legislation.
26. Further clarity surrounding the enforcement regime be provided for in the bill, particularly in relation to the enforcement of environmental provisions contained in both the current bill and existing environmental legislation.
27. The enforcement body provided for in the bill be adequately resourced to enable it to effectively administer its obligations under the bill and related legislation. It should also be subject to external supervision, and should be required to provide publicly available detailed quarterly reports on their activities.
28. Consideration be given to transferring the responsibility for foreshore licensing to the proposed independent enforcement body.
29. Consideration be given to the provision of surety or bonds against the potential costs of cleaning up and/or otherwise remediating or addressing environmental damage



Sea-Fisheries Protection Authority are Hiring

The Sea-Fisheries Protection Authority (SFPA) wishes to fill two roles in the SFPA’s Trade Department specialising in Export/Import Trade Compliance. These roles will be based in Clonakilty, Co Cork and will be primarily involved in the SFPA’s import/export compliance and verification process.

For more details please see www.sfpajobs.com
Closing date for applications: Monday 22nd
March 2021 @ 12 noon.



The Barnacle is your Oyster

Pacific Oysters (*Magallana gigas*) discovered on the Kish Bank, Dublin Bay

By Declan Quigley

During September 2020, a total of five live Pacific Oysters (*Magallana gigas*) [*Crassostrea gigas*] were retrieved by the MFV 'Dignity' (D727) Skipper: Ivan Toole and MFV 'Orca' (WD312) Skipper: Eric O'Riley while potting for whelk at depths of 22-44 m on the Kish Bank, Dublin Bay (Irish Sea). The size range of the oysters was 79-100 mm shell length, 53-60 mm shell width, and weighing 58-77 g.

Pacific Oysters are an important aquaculture species, extensively farmed in inter-tidal waters around the Irish coast. According to FAO statistics, a total of 10,122 tonnes was produced in Ireland during 2018. Although inter-tidal feral populations have been recorded at various locations, the species has rarely been recorded from sub-tidal depths in Irish waters.

Although it is possible that the oysters may have been derived from a natural settlement of pelagic larvae (spat), or transport via ballast



water or hull fouling, the presence of encrusting inter-tidal Acorn Barnacles (*Semibalanus balanoides*) suggests that the oysters might have been recently dumped in the area. However, further research is on-going, including the analysis of barnacle species encrusting other demersal marine biota in both the Kish area (e.g. lobsters, crabs, scallops, and whelk)

and at oyster farms located north and south of Dublin Bay, and on the UK side of the Irish Sea.

Declan would welcome reports from fishers who come across any sub-tidal Pacific Oysters or who may be aware of feral inter-tidal populations along the east coast of Ireland. declanquigley@eircom.net; 087-6458485.

Ireland's new marine research vessel to honour Irish explorer Tom Crean

Ireland's new marine research vessel will be named the RV Tom Crean, after the renowned seaman and explorer who undertook three major ground breaking expeditions to the Antarctic in the early years of the 20th Century which sought to increase scientific knowledge and to explore uncharted areas of the world, at that time.

The new 52.8 metre modern research vessel, which will replace the 31 metre RV Celtic Voyager, has been commissioned with funding provided by the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine approved by the Government of Ireland.

The new marine research vessel will provide a year round service for expanded fisheries surveys, seabed mapping, deep water surveys and support increased research in the Atlantic Ocean. The new vessel will enable 300 operational days at sea each year, and up to 3000 scientist days per year. The new vessel will also enable the Marine Institute to continue to lead and support scientific, high quality surveys that contribute to Ireland's position as a leader in marine science.

A native of Annascaul in Co Kerry, Crean volunteered for Robert Falcon Scott's Discovery expedition in 1901 and for his Terra Nova expedition in 1910. During the Terra Nova expedition, Crean made an 18 hour solo journey in desperate conditions to save the life of a fellow crew member and was awarded the Albert Medal for his acts of heroism. In 1914, he joined Ernest Shackleton on the Endurance expedition and, again, he proved himself to be a much trusted crew member and someone capable of great



endurance and heroism.

Dr Paul Connolly, CEO of the Marine Institute said, "The decision to name Ireland's new research vessel after Tom Crean honours his achievements and gives due recognition to an Irish explorer of international renown. The Institute greatly appreciates the support of the descendants of Tom Crean in this decision. This naming decision also reflects the values of the Marine Institute, the collaborative efforts and achievements of its staff, particularly the service provided by all staff who go to sea."

Speaking on the announcement, grand-daughter of Tom Crean, Aileen Crean O'Brien, on behalf of the family, said: "We welcome the decision by the Irish government and the Marine Institute to name their new marine research vessel after Tom Crean, of whom we as a family are very proud."

Dr Connolly continued,

"This new multi-purpose research vessel, the RV Tom Crean will greatly enhance Ireland's capacity to undertake collaborative research and acquire the data and knowledge essential to managing our marine resources."

The two Marine Institute research vessels currently in operation, the RV Celtic Explorer and RV Celtic Voyager, are among the most intensively used research vessels in the world.

The new vessel will replace the RV Celtic Voyager, which was Ireland's first purpose built research vessel and was commissioned in 1997. It has been vital in providing marine scientists, researchers and its crew members with many years of valued experience at sea, expanding and strengthening marine science in Ireland to help inform decisions affecting our oceans. It was joined by

its 65 metre sister RV Celtic Explorer in 2003.

The construction of the new national research vessel continues on schedule in 2021 at a total build cost of €25 million, with the build process expected to be completed by summer 2022. Spanish shipyard Astilleros Armon Vigo S.A. were awarded the contract to build Ireland's new state-of-the-art marine research vessel in 2019, following the completion of the design by Norwegian ship design consultants Skipsteknisk AS.

The new research vessel will be a modern, multipurpose, silent vessel, capable of operating in the Irish Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ). The new vessel will be able to go to sea for at least 21 days at a time and will be designed to operate in harsh sea conditions. Based in Galway, the vessel will be used by the Marine Institute, other state agencies and universities to undertake fisheries research, oceanographic and environmental research, seabed mapping and other multidisciplinary surveys. It will also maintain and deploy weather buoys, observational infrastructure and our Remotely Operated Vehicle (ROV) Holland I.

It will be designed to incorporate the latest proven technologies to ensure that it operates as efficiently as possible, ensuring minimal fuel consumption and minimising the vessel's environmental impact and carbon footprint.



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The following information can be found in the Brexit section on the homepage of the website:

- EU-UK Trade Compliance as of 1 January 2021: *Guidance for Industry*
- Third Country Transhipment & Landings Notifications

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From Tom & Dad



We seen all the tears and heartache,
But we also seen the hugs and love.
We seen all who were there trying to help us,
From our stars above.
We were thankful of the care taken with us
As we were prepared to rest.
With the words and prayers you wished to us
All we could feel was blessed.

We loved the new fishing gloves you gave us
And the pocket hugs you placed within our hands;
Know that we will always be with you
As sure as the sea touches the sand.

We seen every person who stood along
The streets in memory of us,
We shone the sun on each of you
To send you warmth and love.

Although all of you could not be in the church;
Know it was the most beautiful mass and songs.
We were very proud that through this
You all have remained so strong.

We watched you as you all followed by,
The Claddagh quay and long walk;
Through the Spanish Arch right down
To our home from home at the dock.
We heard the beautiful music as the flowers
Drifted in the bay,
You all really kept our 'True Lights' shining
So very bright that day.

We thank you for your kindness
In donations big and small.
Your heartfelt words and helping hands
Had us both standing extra tall.

Know that not even death
Can break the connection we have with each other;
For we only pass in body
Our spirit and energy lives on forever.

So see us in the music, the sunset
And the rustle of the trees;
In the freedom of the birds
And in the salty sea breeze.
Try to smile for us now
And keep your love for the sea.
Live your lives as best you can;
Be happy and be free.

Written for my beloved Dad and brother to you all
By Susanne Oliver (Boyle)

Consultation Process Begins Towards Marine Protected Areas Forming 30% of Ireland's Waters



The Minister for Housing, Local Government and Heritage, Darragh O'Brien, and the Minister for Heritage and Electoral Reform, Malcolm Noonan, have launched a public consultation on the process of expanding Ireland's network of marine protected areas (MPAs). MPAs are geographically defined maritime areas with certain protections for conservation purposes. The Government aims to expand Ireland's MPA network from 2.13% to 30% of Ireland's maritime area by 2030.

Creating an MPA regime will constitute a major change in marine environmental protection in Ireland. At present, there is no definition of an MPA in Irish law. Environmental protections under the Wildlife Acts only apply to the foreshore. Protection in marine areas beyond 12 nautical miles is limited, both in terms of space and species.

Ministers O'Brien and Noonan are asking the public, stakeholders, industries and others for their views on the final report of the MPA Advisory Group, which was chaired by Professor Tasman Crowe of UCD's Earth Institute. In addition to conserving marine species and habitats, MPAs can support maritime economic activity and reduce the effects of climate change and ocean acidification. The report quotes economic data showing Ireland's ocean economy has a turnover of €6.2 billion and provides stable, sustainable work for 34,132 full-time equivalent employees.

Launching the consultation, Minister O'Brien said:

"Ireland, along with the rest of the world, faces the twin crises of climate change and accelerating biodiversity loss on land and at sea. The Government has a vision of clean, healthy, diverse and productive oceans and seas around Ireland. This report is a solid basis for a national dialogue on how we progress that vision. I urge all with an interest in our seas – whether you live in a coastal

area, earn your livelihood from the sea, want to protect our marine life or simply value our seas – to have your say by the end of July. Once again I'd like to thank Professor Crowe and the expert group for this excellent report."

Minister Noonan added:

"By expanding Ireland's Marine Protected Area network, we will give vital protection to vulnerable marine species and habitats, and also support the functioning of these ecosystems to provide us with a whole host of benefits including climate change mitigation and enhanced resilience for fisheries into the future. By realising this vision to expand our MPA network, Ireland will play an exemplary role in global efforts to protect marine ecosystems, the extraordinary species and habitats they hold, and the benefits they provide to people."

In parallel with plans to increase Ireland's MPA network, the Government will soon publish Ireland's first Marine Spatial Plan – the National Marine Planning Framework (NMPF) – and the Marine Planning and Development Management Bill 2021. The NMPF is the national plan for Ireland's maritime area setting out how we want to use, protect and enjoy our seas. It will outline the national approach to managing Ireland's marine activities and ensuring the sustainable use of marine resources to 2040. The Marine Planning and Development Management Bill will serve as the cornerstone of the marine planning system in Ireland and it brings together and creates the legal foundation for forward planning and streamlined development management and enforcement. Both the new forward planning model envisaged by the Bill, and a future MPA regime, will secure the objectives of the NMPF.

The public consultation on the MPA process launched by Ministers O'Brien and Noonan will inform development of new legislation on the identification, designation and management of MPAs, to begin later this year.

New organisation to represent Ireland's fishing, seafood and ancillary service industries

A new organisation, the Irish Fishing & Seafood Alliance (I.F.S.A.) has been established to represent the fishing and seafood coastal communities nationwide.

IFSA has been formed to, among several other agendas, seek recognition by Government and the Department of Marine that the seafood industry in Ireland requires their urgent intervention to redress the devastating outcome that BREXIT has beset upon the industry.

According to a IFSA spokesperson:

With the motto of "your voice in our industry", IFSA is a self-funding, non-profit organisation which is not restrained by any existing regional political divisions, nor is it divided by differing industry sector interests and will be a spokesman for individuals, vessels, fish companies, fish shops, and all ancillary service companies involved in the

industry nationwide.

This provides a unique platform from which to give all interested parties a voice in demanding that the government affords the fishing industry the support it deserves to safely navigate through the storm that BREXIT has forced upon Ireland's coastal communities. The IFSA aims to provide the opportunity for those who have invested and those who work in this industry to voice their frustration and demand action.

"This sector is made up of decent, hardworking people, many of whom have made heavy private investment in vessels, processing companies and ancillary services. But the biggest majority are simply reliant on this industry for their livelihoods."

"The spiral of decline in our traditional fishing ports will be greatly accelerated if our Government is not prepared to support the decent people that are proud to be part of our



industry. The resilience and perseverance of these people has, in the past, helped our country to achieve what it has, against the odds. However, this latest challenge is catastrophic."

"We cannot and will not accept to be relegated to the 'poor relation' of Irish commercial life. We cannot countenance a situation whereby vessels tie up, companies close down and once-thriving coastal towns and villages will face economic collapse."

"Many people in the seafood and fishing sectors believe that the only hope for progress is to unite the industry - a tough task given the challenges of existing regional representation and political restraints on many of the current representative groups - but hopefully IFSA can now be that unrestricted voice that the industry so badly needs"

For further information contact: 087 3913117, Email: ifsacormac@gmail.com



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Access2Sea and marine spatial planning: register for our upcoming webinar

Access2Sea aims to improve the availability of the Atlantic shore for aquaculture SMEs by enabling new business opportunities and a more sustainable operating environment.

Identifying ways and means of improving the business environment for aquaculture in Ireland is interlinked with the development of inshore fishing and tourism since these sectors spatially and regulatorily overlap.

And they're linked specifically to the EU's Blue Growth and Atlantic Strategy.

The Access2Sea project's work packages are detailed and outlined on the project website <http://access2sea.eu/objectives/>. Access2Sea has specific, stated actions in spatial planning, social acceptability, pilot scale projects as well as collecting, analysing and making available in a usable format the relevant information collected across the Atlantic area

from Ireland to Spain. The end result is an Action for Change Plan, based on the findings drawn from the collected data and recommendations of the expert committees, local committees of producers, those working in regulation and support for the fishing and aquaculture industries.

The European Union's aquaculture output has not shown overall growth in the last twenty years. This is contrary to demand and despite market

value attributed to high safety standards and focus on animal welfare. Many of the issues behind this are already known and centrally addressed in the project, as mentioned, this includes social acceptance and spatial planning. Animal welfare and management have seen great improvements in this time although spatial planning is still facing many challenges. Among those challenges are transposition of EU directives to planning regulation at the national level, getting to grips with Natura 2000 regulations which understandably have a heavier footprint in the Atlantic periphery of Europe more than other regions. Facing the periphery, then, and therefore infrastructurally weaker areas of Europe, adds a to a cumulative strain on industry in the region. There are also other issues that are more fundamental to the development of the aquaculture industry, including the lack of scientific infrastructure to support small and medium size enterprises.

To this end, Access2Sea will host a webinar next month on Ireland's keenly awaited Marine Spatial Planning Bill. Kicking off the event will be a presentation of the legislation by the Dept of Housing, Local Government and Heritage followed by perspectives from the Portuguese Aquaculture Association, APA, on marine spatial planning. Access2Sea partner regions are of course Ireland, France, Spain, UK and Portugal.

The Access2Sea webinar kicks off on March 24, 2021 at 10am. For further information and to register for this event, go to <https://access2sea.eu/mara-2021>.

Ar táirgeoir i réimse an docharshaothraithe thú? Ba mhór linn do thuairimí, ach suirbhé atá ar fáil ar <http://access2sea.eu/aiseolas/> a lionadh isteach. Fáiltítear roimh aon aiseolas breise.

Tá togra piolótach ar an mbealach faoi stiúir na bpáirtnéirí Údarás na Gaeltachta. Beidh tuilleadh eolais ar an ábhar seo á fhoilsiú go luath.

Má bhíonn tuilleadh eolais uait ar an togra nó téigh go <http://access2sea.eu/>, cláraigh don nuachtlitr <http://access2sea.eu/newsletter/> nó dean teagmháil leis an Oifigeach Togra, Marcus Ó Conaire ag marcus@udaras.ie nó +353 87 7806924.



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Fáilte an Chathaoirligh

Marcus Ó Conaire

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Údarás na Gaeltachta

An Overview of Marine Planning and Development Bill (Ireland)

Conor McCabe

Principál, Marine Planning Policy and Legislation

Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage

Marine Spatial Planning Perspectives (Portugal)

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Údarás na Gaeltachta



KILLYBEGS ROUNDUP

by John Cunningham

K.T Nets come of age

Established in 2003 and approaching its 18th birthday in May this year, K.T Nets was established by three local net makers all of which have many years of fishing experience under their belts. Based in Ireland's premier fishing port of Killybegs which provides close access to a natural deep water harbour on the edge of the North Atlantic, the K.T Net repair team offers easy access to the North Atlantic Fleet.

The Irish net company has built a strong reputation in the national and international fishing industry for providing the highest quality products comprised of only the best materials. K.T Nets team are proud of their ability to give the best value for money every time regardless the size of the project. The company plays a vital role in international commercial fishing industry with success in both the pelagic and demersal fishing sectors.

K.T Nets are eagerly looking forward to the approaching 2021

Blue Whiting season. Blue Whiting has made the transformation from its previous status as a purely protein-based commercial fishery for fish meal and oil to now, an important human consumption species for Irish processing factories exporting to worldwide companies. This and other pelagic fisheries have become more important for the pelagic vessels in recent years.

K.T Nets have been at the forefront of this development with design and production of specialized trawls and brailers for this sector, complimenting their other types of pelagic designs.

The company have come to the assistance of Norwegians and Danish pelagic boats as well as other nationalities. They have become the vital suppliers of top quality pelagic trawls and this year during the Horse Mackerel (Scad) fishery the company have carried out repairs and maintenance work for K.T's long time Danish friends on the vessels Astrid and Beinur.

The main business of pelagic



KT Nets loading a new brailer onto the Danish pelagic trawler Gitte. Photo John Cunningham

trawl designs and manufacture is not only complimented with the Demersal trawl productions, the company also care for the inshore fleet with the supply of Oliveira leaded and unleaded pot ropes and also buoys fenders from Danfender and a wide range of other essential ancillary items.

The Killybegs Company has recently completed a new Blue Whiting brailer for Henning Kjeldsen MFV (Gitte) as well as producing white fish trawls for Sainte Catherine Laboure and Foyle Fisher. K.T Nets are confident that the success of these trawls will lead to further orders.

Pelagic Fishery season

What can be recorded as the shortest Mackerel and Scad season ever in Killybegs 2021 has seen most of the boats having their quota caught by the 2nd week in February. Some boats have left some of their Mackerel quota for the end of the year, but most boats have their Mackerel quota caught.

As the large marks of Mackerel moved south, the

Mackerel at the South end of the mark were a bigger than normal size with reports of one haul averaging 490 Grams per fish.

Herring

The Westbound changed over from the white fish to Herring at the start of February and it didn't take them long to catch their yearly quota. Three short tows on three consecutive days in Bruckless bay was all it

took them to catch their quota.

Killybegs Port

With the pelagic fleet winding down after the Mackerel and Scad fishery, vessels are waiting on the Blue Whiting season to kick off in mid March. The Port has been exceptionally busy with the arrivals of French and Spanish boats, which normally unload their boats in Scotland, but due to Brexit they have opt to land

in Killybegs. Sinbad Marine have been kept very busy as agents for looking after these boats.

Blue Whiting

With the Norwegian boats starting this fishery later than normal due to Brexit, the first boat to land was the 71 metre Gardar with 750 ton which was bought by Arctic fish. Irish boats normally don't start this fishery to mid March.

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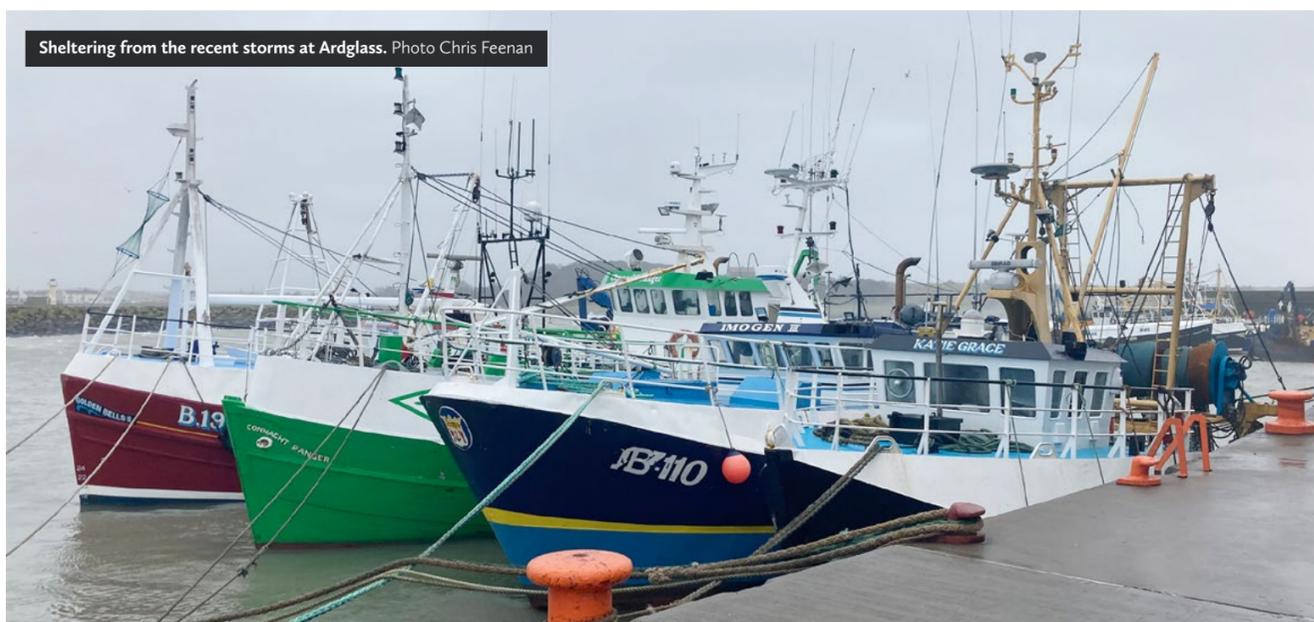
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NORTHERN IRELAND NEWS *By Dick James*



Sheltering from the recent storms at Ardglass. Photo Chris Feenan

THE FISHERY

A new year with changes aplenty. Not sure what the full implications will be but the fleet put to sea in the hope that time will resolve the working parameters. In truth as I write the seemingly endless meeting of officials and politicians are still resolving their difficulties over TAC's, access, swaps and whatever else they may dream up. In the meantime fishermen put to sea to make their living in whatever fashion they may.

The Prawn fleet had a spell of weather in January after the market stop to take advantage of whatever was going on the local grounds. The Portavogie boats generally found the Clyde area to their liking and worked their operations with home port landings after 3/5 day trips whilst export difficulties meant the home fleets were more restricted although this was resolved in fairly short order.

Grossings were reasonable for the time of year but the smaller under 10 meter fleet had a difficult time as size constrains range and sea conditions are more restrictive in this class of boat which has seen an increase over recent months. Crew has been a major problem for the Portavogie fleet with the Indian based foreign crew experiencing travel difficulties due to Covid, this encouraging the move

to smaller more easily crewed boats whilst the larger fleet elements had problems getting returning crew from their Christmas break.

The Ardglass fleet worked local grounds in the north Irish Sea again with acceptable returns the foreign crew here being largely Ghana in and managing the flight return with the aid of health certification pronouncing them Covid free. Now of course most if not all such movement is barred and the fleet are lucky that the majority of crew are now on board.

In Kilkeel the typical non indigenous crew are again mainly from west Africa and have made it back but the choice of fishing ground is problematic as the Dundalk Bay ground is out of bounds from 6-12 mile and the 0-6 mile status is uncertain as the Voisinage access arrangement is not certain from officialdom or authorities depending where they are based. Hopefully this may all be resolved one way or another in the talks but in the meantime the fleet played it safe staying close to home or just outwith the 12 mile line.

There was a fishery there so no inclination to move further away and the Irish registered and Kilkeel based boats that went south did not do any better and generally fished

alongside the local fleet.

Come February it all changed and the prevailing easterly gales confined the fleet to port so nature overruled politics which problems were put on the back burner. However, it is as always frustrating to be stormbound when all indications are that there is a fishing to be had out there. No doubt this latest "beast from the east" was sent from Europe as a salutary lesson that it was a consequence of Brexit and the worst of the snow and ice disruptions witnessed in Scotland and eastern England were spared Ireland by the Irish Sea border. On a positive note, there were rumours that the local scampi processing factories were going on short time so this break in the fishery may balance their inventories and save the market for the main summer fishery.

The boats based in the North Sea and West of Scotland generally returned back home but the Porcupine based fishers battled against any weather there was landing at Killybegs or Castletownbere until the port access dispute was resolved. There was next to no fishing at the Smalls but there are rumours afoot that the Scotch fleet may try their luck in that area, the Jones bank or even the Irish Sea if export problems continue.

There has been a move within the scallop fleet to re-rig for the

Prawns as the fishery is modest and markets again uncertain.

On the Whitefish front operations are again impacted by the access conundrum but a fishing of Haddock was found in the mid Irish Sea with a new year class coming in the fish are on the small side and would improve with a period of growing to achieve better prices. Notwithstanding landings were made to local demand but the Unity worked in the south-west approaches landing there to a limited market.

The Pelagic fleet had no problem finding good Mackerel and made short work of their quota or what they thought their quota might be. The Kilkeel duo of Havilah and Stefanie M putting in three landings into Belfast for the County Down factories before tying-up to be replaced by a variety of Irish small Pelagic boats landing at either Ardglass or Lisahally again for the County Down factories.

The Voyager made a number of landings either in Norway or Killybegs before coming to rest in Lisahally then waiting for the next flurry of activity wherever that may be.

On the inshore front things are really grim with the lockdown impacting on local hospitality markets, exports being flat and weather unkind.

Marine Protected Areas Offshore

The Marine Management Organisation which is charged with the management of "English" waters for both environmental and fisheries purposes (as well as other sundry issues) has launched a consultation on the management measures to apply to Marine Protected Areas within their jurisdiction. As could be expected a prohibition on bottom towed gear is put forward as the preferred option with the prospect for additional measures for static gears as would be decided appropriate. As the Minister George Eustice said it is now possible to do this without reference to the European Commission under the new Fisheries Act. Four areas are proposed, the Dogger Bank in the North Sea is very much an offshore area, the Wash area is somewhat closer to home waters as is the South Dorset area whilst the Canyons is an area south west of Cornwall, definitely offshore and bordering the Irish and French sectors of the European EEZ.

This initiative is done in collaboration with the Joint Council for Nature Conservation and Natural England who are the advisors to the Westminster administration on environmental matters.

What was once a part of the initiative but is missing from these latest consultation proposals are two Irish Sea areas the South Rig and Queenie corner. These two areas lie in the north west of the Irish Sea between Northern Ireland and the Isle of Man



and in the case of Queenie Corner abutting the Welsh zone of the Irish Sea. The zone in question lies between Northern Ireland, Scotland and the Isle of Man in the case of South Rig and Northern Ireland the Isle of Man and Wales in respect of Queenie Corner. Ostensibly they do not fall within the Marine Management Organisation area of English competence and indeed in the exercise of devolution this area was listed as an area of responsibility/authority in respect of fisheries for the Northern Ireland authorities. However in respect of nature conservation the area was deemed to be English under whatever logic is unclear.

So, we seem to have

conflicting areas of competency and whilst JNCC led on the work in defining the zones (opposed by Northern Ireland fishing interests) the legislative process falls between two authorities. If environmental designation comes into play it is England, if it is fisheries then it is Northern Ireland.

For Queenie Corner, that area was actually proposed by the Northern Ireland industry as preferable to previous proposed areas but in respect of the South Rig this was always bitterly contested as it is a fishing ground of great importance particularly for the Portavogie fleet as the area lies offshore Portavogie (due east) and is a source of quality prawns especially significant

to the small boat fleet based in that port.

That the economic appraisal of fishery losses was severely flawed during consultation and at odds with a study done on behalf of the local industry with Seafish support designation of this area with a ban on bottom towed gear and a threat of impact on static gear would be contentious to say the least. In the past the overall competency of the EEC saved the prospect of designation but now that has gone the lack of clarity of authority seems to be the industries potential saviour. May this prove difficult for the two administrations to resolve and the Irish Sea border add to the confusion!

Seafish Board Appointments

■ The Seafish Industry Authority (SEAFISH) are in process of recruiting a total of five Board members (including a Chair) to serve for a period of initially 3 years. The appointments are to be announced in March 2021 following a planned meeting of the present Board in February which will be non quorate unless existing Board appointments are extended or the planned meeting is postponed. The successful applicants will be by Ministerial appointment and three devolved administrations will be involved

in the recruitment the exception being Northern Ireland which takes no part in the process.

SEAFISH is a national body charged with supporting the UK fisheries sector in its entirety but has not had a Northern Ireland Board appointee since 2013 when Mr Paul Kerr sat on the Board. SEAFISH has a local presence in Northern Ireland through a local officer who runs a Northern Ireland development program. This position is also under recruitment at present.

The present appointment process is seeking five members of which two will be independent of the industry. The Chair is

appointed from independent Board members of which two are already in post and two are sought in the present recruitment process. Of the three industry appointees sought one will be from the processing sector, one representing large catcher interests and a third marine or fisheries science.

Harbour Authority Board Meeting

■ The new Northern Ireland Fishery Harbour Authority Board held its first meeting remotely via Zoom on 29th January. This was an Ardglass Harbour stakeholders meeting and unusually for this

type of meeting a full Board turnout was experienced with Authority officers also in attendance. Stakeholders were represented by Mr Dermot Curran a local Councillor from Newry, Mourne and Down District council. Issues raised included the lack of berthing space in the Harbour and an update on facilities for small boats in the Harbour. Grant has been passed for a bottom substrate sonic survey which may assist plans for deepening the Harbour and it was acknowledged that all three Authority Harbours needed major investment to make fit for future purpose.



UK NEWS

NFFO accuses MMO of taking a Sledgehammer approach to Fishing in MPAs

In a shocking development, the Marine Management Organisation has announced that it intends to ban all forms of towed bottom gears in the Dogger Bank SAC and the majority of three other offshore MPAs. The knock-on effects of this brutal approach will not stay confined to MPAs as fishing activity is displaced from its customary areas. The decision has been taken with zero discussion with those affected.

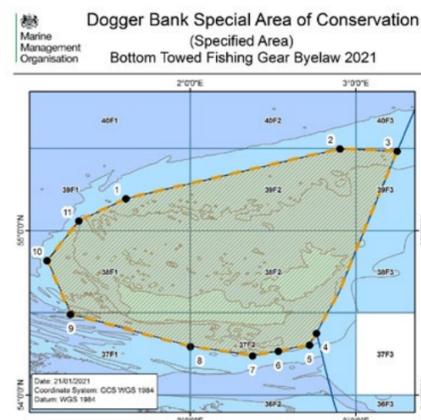
The proposals for the Dogger Bank which is the size of Northern Ireland will generate large scale displacement with knock on environmental as well as social and economic impacts. As a shallow sand bank, the effects of fishing are limited on an ecology that is adapted to the routine impacts of waves and storms. Not even the European Commission that had presided over the development of measures over the last 8 years thought that was necessary or proportionate. Before Brexit it had been working on closing around a third of the site based on plans agreed between the UK, Dutch and German governments.

Many will now be asking what has changed. They will also be asking how the government can permit the development of four of the largest wind farms in the world on the same site but take such a sledgehammer to fishing. This punishing reversal comes

on the back of the government's failure to deliver on fishing in the Brexit negotiations, and damaging delays in the export of fish and shellfish.

Assistant NFFO Chief Executive, Dale Rodmell said, "We have worked with managers and government conservation advisors for more than a decade on this site. We were given no inkling that this would be the approach on one of the most resilient of habitats covered by the Blue Belt. Not even light-weight seine nets are to be permitted – previously it had been proposed this gear type would have full access. This changes the whole calculus on where it was expected that the balance would lie for sustainable fisheries access in meeting site conservation objectives. The proposals amount to a further sell-out of fishing. It augers ominously for other areas and for fishing communities in our increasingly crowded seas."

It is not just the loss of fishing grounds to the Blue Belt which already covers 38% of our seas. The unprecedented expansion of offshore wind also threatens fishing communities, where to meet net zero greenhouse gas emission commitments, a 12-fold expansion of offshore wind is needed. It was expected that marine managers would be proportionate and identify synergies between conservation and different marine uses so to avoid hampering sustainable use of our seas



and impacting customary fishing grounds that are vital to our coastal communities and form a sustainable protein source for the nation. These proposals are anything but that.

Other sites being consulted on include:

- Inner Dowsing, Race Bank and North Ridge Special Area of Conservation (The Wash approaches, off the Lincolnshire and North Norfolk coasts)
- South Dorset Marine Conservation Zone (South West – Dorset)
- The Canyons Marine Conservation Zone (South West – Offshore)

Unique Consortium Seeks To Bring Under-Loved Cornish Fish To British Consumers



Cornish Sole illustration. Credit James Strawbridge

A number of key players in the Cornish seafood industry begin new research into the feasibility of bringing Cornish Sole and Cornish King Crab products to consumers across the nation.

A unique project kicked off this month designed to explore options for increased consumption of sustainably-caught Cornish fish and shellfish

within the domestic market. The consortium behind the project is a collaboration between the Cornish Fish Producers' Organisation, Seafood Cornwall, Ocean Fish, and well-known Cornish chef and author, James Strawbridge.

After competing against many other bids for innovative seafood projects, the feasibility study secured funding from



the UK Seafood Innovation Fund. It will focus on two under-loved species, Cornish sole (also known as megrim sole) and Cornish king crab (also known as spider crab) and attempt to identify which innovative methods and processes can be implemented to create sustainably sourced value-added products.

Whilst the value-added market for protein sources such as chicken is well-established, and a wide-range of meat value-added products are available, equivalent 'ready meal' style dishes incorporating fish are

much less common. Last year Seafood Cornwall, the marketing arm of the Cornish Fish Producers' Organisation, launched #FishToYourDoor, a match-making service connecting consumers to Cornish fish merchants to would-be buyers across the nation.

Thousands of people signed up to the service, keen to buy local, seasonal, and sustainably-caught British fish, but also to purchase fish and shellfish that came filleted and ready-to-eat. Key insights from this campaign fuelled further ideas for innovative ways to increase domestic consumption of UK-caught seafood, and broaden consumer seafood palates.

Paul Trebilcock, CEO of the Cornish Fish Producers' Organisation and leader of Seafood Cornwall, says: "The success from #FishToYourDoor throughout 2020 proved that

there is a nationwide demand for convenient and fresh seafood; now it's about harnessing this appetite with underutilised species. Both Cornish sole and Cornish king crab are delicious and seasonally abundant but prices fluctuate and can be extremely low, and as much as 95% of Cornish sole is currently exported to Europe. This represents a missed opportunity to increase diversity and

resilience in the mixed fisheries in the South West. This scoping study is an exciting opportunity to assess whether change is possible."

Often described as 'the flat version of sea bass' and 'a tastier version of lobster' by fishermen, Cornish sole and Cornish king crab are two of Cornwall's most underutilised and undervalued species.

"It is too early to tell what

this study will mean for the fishing industry," continues Paul Trebilcock, "but it's certainly an encouraging step towards the mammoth task of shifting consumer preferences to increase domestic demand for UK species. Increased demand here would allow fishermen to secure a better price for their catch and avoid exporting; a win-win for British fishermen in the wake of Brexit."



Managing crab and lobster catches could offer long-term benefits to fishermen and the environment

The UK's commercial fishing industry is currently experiencing a number of serious challenges. However, a study by the University of Plymouth has found that managing the density of crab and lobster pots at an optimum level increases the quality of catch, benefits the marine environment and makes the industry more sustainable in the long term.

Published today in Scientific Reports, a journal published by the Nature group, the findings are the result of an extensive and unprecedented four-year field study conducted in partnership with local fishermen off the coast of southern England.

Over a sustained period, researchers exposed sections of the seabed to differing densities of pot fishing and monitored any impacts using a combination of underwater videos and catch analysis.

They found that in areas of higher pot density, fishermen caught 19% less brown crab and 35% less European lobster, and their catches of brown crab were on average 35 grams per individual (7%) lighter.

The effect on marine species was also significant with two ecologically important reef species, Ross coral (*Pentapora foliacea*) and Neptune's Heart sea squirt (*Phallusia mammillata*), 83% and 74% less abundant respectively where pot density was higher.

Researchers say the study provides evidence of a pot fishing intensity 'threshold' and highlights that commercial pot fisheries are likely to be compatible with marine

conservation when managed correctly at low, sustainable levels.

The study was carried out by academics from the University's School of Biological and Marine Sciences, with funding from Defra and the Blue Marine Foundation and working with the Lyme Bay Consultative Committee.

It builds on an interim report published by Defra in 2019, and research published in October 2020 which used previously unseen footage to show the environmental impacts of pot fishing.

Dr Adam Rees, Post-Doctoral researcher and lead author on the current research, said: "The effects of bottom-towed fishing have been clearly shown as part of the University's long-term monitoring project in Lyme Bay. But before we started this research, very little was known about the precise impacts of pot fishing over a prolonged period. We have shown that – if left unchecked – it can pose threats but that changing ways of working can have benefits for species on the seabed and the quality and quantity of catches."

The study focussed on the Lyme Bay Reserve, a 206 km² area that has been protected from all bottom-towed fishing since 2008. It is part of the Lyme Bay and Torbay Special Area of Conservation, a 312 km² section of the English Channel that is predominantly fished by small boats operating out of towns and villages.

The University has been assessing the seabed recovery since 2008 and has



A stack of crab and lobster pots at the end of Lyme Regis harbour, ready for fishing. Credit: Adam Rees, University of Plymouth

previously demonstrated that several species have returned to the area since the MPA was introduced. Recommendations from this work have been included within the Government's 25-year Environment Plan, and a major UK government report into Highly Protected Marine Areas (HPMAs), led by former Defra Fisheries Minister Richard Benyon.

This latest study comes just days after the Marine Management Organisation (MMO) signalled its intent to ban bottom trawling at various offshore MPAs around the UK.

Dr Emma Sheehan, Associate Professor of Marine Ecology and one of the study's co-authors, said: "Over a decade ago, the fishing community in Lyme Bay realised that changing the way they fish was essential to the sustainability of their industry. We have worked closely with them ever since to take their concerns into account and attempt to provide them with solutions. This study is the latest part of our ongoing work to establish the best ways to both preserve their traditions and enhance the environment they work in."

Martin Attrill, Professor of Marine Ecology and senior author on the research, added: "The fishing industry is currently facing huge uncertainty. And we of course know that every fishing community is different. But with the drive to further enhance marine protection around the UK, some of the lessons we have learned in Lyme Bay could help other fleets make changes that can secure their long-term future."



A local fisherman involved in the project out hauling fishing gear within the Lyme Bay and Torbay SAC. Credit: Adam Rees, University of Plymouth

SCOTLAND NEWS

RNLI Peterhead involved in epic rescue



Jacqueline Anne and Opportunus IV near the shore

Peterhead Lifeboat launched in February in treacherous conditions to rescue a fishing vessel which was seconds away from crashing into the rocks at Peterhead Breakwater.

The alarm was raised at 4.30pm

when Fraserburgh based Jacqueline Anne was towing the stern trawler Opportunus IV into Peterhead Harbour and the tow broke numerous times due to the stormy weather conditions.

Tasked by HM Coastguard, the

volunteer crew rushed to the Station, launched Peterhead's Tamar-class lifeboat The Misses Robertson of Kintail and were on scene within minutes. The vessel was dangerously close to crashing into the rocks at Peterhead South Breakwater and due to an easterly gale and significant swell combined with a backwash the conditions were extremely challenging when the lifeboat arrived.

However, the crew established a tow at the first attempt and brought the fishing vessel and its crew back to safety in tough and time critical conditions, saving the five lives onboard.

It was Patrick Davidson's first shout as Coxswain. He said: "This was a really tremendous effort by the crew showing great teamwork and seamanship by all involved in really difficult conditions. If we had arrived seconds later the boat would have hit the rocks and it may have been a different outcome."

"As soon as I saw how close she was to the rocks I immediately

requested the helicopter - due to the perilous situation I realised we only had one attempt to get this right.

"The crew and the skipper of the boat could not thank the lifeboat enough and said they'd be forever grateful which makes all the effort worthwhile."

"There has been weather and flood warnings in place across Aberdeenshire today - the conditions were very dangerous but everyone worked together to ensure the safest outcome."

Jurgen Wahle, Lifeboat Operations Manager, commended the crew for their quick and crucial efforts to save lives at sea. He said: "This was really a phenomenal performance by all involved, showcasing great leadership from Pat on his first shout as Coxswain and excellent teamwork from the rest of the crew."

"This was a critical incident and the effort from everyone on shore and at sea has resulted in five lives being saved. It is a tremendous outcome, and I'd like to commend the bravery displayed by the crew."

Research passing the Adenia towing for mackerel off Shetland. Photo Ivan Reid



lower compared to land-based meat production, including chicken, beef and pork. Seafood production in general has a lower carbon footprint than land-based meat production.

This confirms that sustainably managed Scottish pelagic fish represents a climate smart food source that helps deliver targets for achieving net zero carbon.

Frances Sandison says: "In Scotland we have access to a fantastically low impact, highly nutritious, locally caught source

of protein. Compared to other meat sources the choice is clear for the environmentally conscious consumer - we should be eating more local pelagic fish."

Her environmental impact study also found that fuel consumption in the fishing phase is the main contributor of carbon emissions. Enhancing fuel efficiency through innovations in vessel design and fishing practices, and a transition to alternative fuel sources are part of the Scottish pelagic sector's

efforts to minimise emissions.

Ian Gatt, chairman of the Scottish Pelagic Sustainability Group, said: "We congratulate Frances on the successful completion of her research. For the Scottish pelagic sector there is a lot at stake with climate change, given that mackerel and herring have an established global trade that helps ensure food security as an affordable and nutritious protein in many parts of the world. Scottish fishermen have invested heavily in modern

vessels and fish handling systems, and processors in the latest equipment, to ensure a high quality, low carbon footprint product that can be delivered to market in the most efficient manner.

"As such, Scottish mackerel and herring production really do tick all the right boxes when it comes to sustainability, nutrition, and low carbon footprint."

The full study can be read here: <https://authors.elsevier.com/a/1c15GbiU1p3iu>

More funding for seafood sector

A new £7.75 million funding package will offer support to fishermen, seafood businesses and ports and harbours threatened by the ongoing effects of coronavirus (COVID-19) and EU Exit.

The package includes:

- £6.45 million for the Seafood Producers Resilience Fund which will provide support to eligible shellfish catchers and producers, in addition to trout farmers who have faced issues exporting to the EU and have lost access to domestic food markets as a result of COVID-19
- £1 million to be made available to support the

investment plans of ports and harbours faced with a loss of income through landing fees up to £300,000 to assist the welfare and emergency support activities of the Fishermen's Mission in recognition of the hardship facing people working in the sector at this time

Fisheries Secretary Fergus Ewing said:

"In the absence of any further clarity on resilience funding from the UK Government we are stepping in to support the industry and coastal communities across Scotland and ensuring we meet the emergency needs of crews by providing welfare support

through the Fishermen's Mission. In addition to this funding, last week we also supported calls for a new dedicated task force, and announced funding for two new experts to help businesses navigate the new processes and requirements.

"Both shellfish and trout businesses who have faced losses due to COVID-19 hospitality closures across Europe are now losing products or facing additional costs due to border disruption and new non-tariff barriers. It's not just exporting, we know this has serious knock-on effects that ripples right through the supply chain from boats struggling to land at ports to not

being able to sell their catch.

"The fund for shellfish and trout businesses will help the sector survive the ongoing loss of domestic sales due to COVID-19 and the current immediate challenges of Brexit, giving them some breathing space and allowing businesses to make the changes they need to adapt to the new, tougher, trading realities."

The EU is Scotland's most significant overseas export market for seafood products, accounting for around three-quarters (76%) of Scottish seafood exports in 2019, and worth £777m. Scotland is a net exporter of seafood to the EU, with a trade surplus of £615m in 2019.

New study finds Scottish pelagic fisheries have low carbon footprint

A new study has found that Scottish caught pelagic fish such as herring and mackerel have a low carbon footprint compared to other types of food production, making them a good food choice for the environmentally conscious consumer.

This study, just published,

"The environmental impacts of pelagic fish caught by Scottish vessels" was carried out by Frances Sandison as part of her PhD studies and funded by the Scottish Pelagic Sustainability Group, Shetland Islands Council, University of Aberdeen, University of the Highlands and Islands, and

Shetland Fish Producers' Organisation.

Her study found that Scottish-caught pelagic fish have a lower carbon footprint and environmental impact when compared to other seafood products. This includes UK farmed salmon, which is 7.2 times higher, and Norwegian caught

cod and haddock, which are 3.5 and 3.9 times higher than Scottish caught pelagic fish.

This extended her earlier finding at the NAFC Marine Centre (which is part of the University of the Highlands and Islands) which revealed that the carbon footprint of the Shetland mackerel trawl fishery was much

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SHETLAND NEWS *By Hans J Marter and Chris Cope / www.shetnews.co.uk*



Copious. Photo Ivan Reid

Man dies after falling overboard from fishing boat

An investigation is under way after a crewman died when he fell overboard from the Lerwick registered whitefish trawler Copious 30 miles south east of Shetland in the early hours of Thursday 18 February.

The Sumburgh based search and rescue helicopter and the Lerwick lifeboat were both tasked to rescue the man after the alarm was raised at 3.20am. The lifeboat was stood down before reaching the scene of

the accident.

His identity was announced as Edison Joseph Carrera Lacaste, 45, from the Philippines.

A fundraising appeal for the family, set up by his friend Robie C Johnson, who lives in Shetland, has already raised thousands of pounds: www.facebook.com/robie.johnson21

Police Scotland confirmed that the man died following the incident.

"A body was recovered from the

water with the assistance of a HM Coastguard helicopter. All other crew members were uninjured," a police spokesman added.

"We are working with the Marine Accident Investigation Branch to establish the full circumstances. A report will be submitted to the Procurator Fiscal in due course."

Shetland Fishermen's Association said: "All our thoughts with the bereaved family and the crew of the Copious after this morning's terrible

accident at sea."

Northern Isles MP Alistair Carmichael added: "This is a tragedy that will be felt keenly throughout the whole community in Shetland. Our thoughts and condolences go to his family, friends and neighbours.

"It is also a tragic reminder that fishermen do a dangerous job to put food on our table. We must always ask what we can do to make their job as safe as possible."

Difficult fish talks define future relationship with EU

Protracted annual negotiations to set total allowable catches (TACs) for shared fish stocks in the North Sea between the EU, the UK, Norway as well as the Faroe Islands are ongoing almost two months after the end of the Brexit transition period.

With the UK acting as an independent coastal state for the first time, those close to the negotiations - which are being held entirely remotely - say talks are stalling because the EU is trying to undermine the UK's newly won autonomy.

While the UK can now set the rules for all vessels fishing in UK waters, the trade agreement reached just before Christmas guarantees EU vessels automatic access and a fixed quota share

until 2026.

Shetland Fishermen's Association executive officer Simon Collins described the process as "very slow and laborious".

The European Commission appears to be unwilling to accept that the UK has left the EU, he said.

"The atmosphere between the UK and EU seems to be difficult, with the EU keen to tie the UK to the CFP [Common Fisheries Policy] management regime and the UK insisting that it has the right to determine the management rules in its own waters," Collins said.

A briefing paper from the National Federation of Fishermen's Organisations (NFFO) concludes: "The outcome of these

talks will provide an indication on whether the UK has broken free of the Common Fisheries Policy (despite continuity on access and minimal change on quota shares) and intends to forge its own path ahead, or whether the UK remains as a satellite within the CFP orbit."

UK negotiators agree that the outcome of the talks - if there will be a conclusion - is vitally important as it would define the nature of the future relationship with the EU.

In previous years, these multilateral talks were usually concluded before the end of the previous year.

With regards to local demands and expectations, Collins said there were three main issues members of the SFA had concerns:

1. "Total Allowable Catch

for North Sea cod, which is a matter for the ongoing UK-EU-Norway trilateral talks. "The scientific advice for this stock makes no allowance for the trends of the past few years in cod distribution and would mean a cut in the TAC, exacerbating what we call a 'choke' situation in our mixed fishery;

2. "Faroese access to UK waters, subject to UK-Faroe talks. We wouldn't want any Faroese access to our waters except in return for significant transfers of quota and
3. "Norwegian access to UK waters, subject to ongoing UK-Norway; our preference would be



Tanker at anchor. Photo Ivan Reid

Seafood industry demands action on tankers lying offshore

The Shetland seafood industry has expressed its disappointment after the local authority decided not to take any immediate action to prevent fully laden tankers from sheltering too close to shore, and instead opted for a "collaborative approach involving the oil industry".

The seafood industry said the council's stance was "unacceptable" as it puts at risk the local environment and the many industries that depend on it.

Earlier in February the three sectors of the local seafood industry - fishing, processing and aquaculture - joined forces to voice their grave concern over a practice by the oil industry that is seen as potentially devastating should an accident occur.

The issue was first raised by former councillor Dr Jonathan Wills in November last year when the Malaysian registered Eagle Bintulu was drifting off the island of Bressay and the Noss Nature Reserve for two full months after loading a cargo of crude at the

Sullom Voe oil terminal on 14 September.

Due to lower prices and lower demand for crude oil as a result of the Covid pandemic, companies owning tankers appear to have reverted to a tactic of using their ships as floating storage vessels until prices recover and the load can be sold at a higher profit.

At the time Shetland Islands Council declined to comment to allegations that it was not following its own policies as these tankers were "loitering" in a "precautionary area" which should only be used to approach the harbours at Sullom Voe and Lerwick.

Ahead of a meeting of the council's harbour board, which is in charge of the oil terminal's harbour operations, the local seafood industry - worth a combined £300 million to the isles - said the council needs to act to have the dangerous practice halted.

Chief executive of Seafood Shetland Ruth Henderson said: "An agreement was drawn up

for the protection of the marine environment - on which the livelihood of so many Shetlanders depends - so it is quite staggering to us that our council chooses to let this threat persist by not enforcing it.

"The consequences of any accident would inevitably be catastrophic for the salmon and mussel producers and the inshore and offshore fisheries which we represent; it would also send out a most damaging message about Shetland itself and its management of our environment."

Simon Collins of the Shetland Fishermen's Association, who had earlier spoken out in support of Dr Wills' concern, said immediate action was required.

"We all know that accidents, by dint of human error, severe weather or other cause, happen. We have therefore asked that assertive action be taken immediately to protect local industry and Shetland's marine environment," Collins said.

Members of the harbour board heard on 10 February that council



Ruth Henderson

convener Malcolm Bell was leading talks with the oil industry and that the issue was expected "to be resolved satisfactorily quite quickly".

Bell said there was a hope that the issue would be resolved before the next meeting of the Sullom Voe Association, which brings together councillors and the oil sector, in mid-March.

"We are already speaking to the people that we need to be speaking to," he said.

"There's no quick fix that the council can apply, I believe."

In response Henderson said it was time to enforce the agreement that has been in place for the last 40 years.

"We were delighted to hear John Smith [the council's head of infrastructure services] state that local agreements should be applied," she said.

"This would clearly include the agreement drawn up with the Sullom Voe partner oil companies which banned laden ships lying close to our shores.

"Why then is our council not enforcing this agreement on behalf of our environment and the many industries which depend on its well-being? We find this lack of action unacceptable and frankly unedifying."



Tankers in close

ORKNEY NEWS *By Craig Taylor*

Seafood Disruption Support Scheme opens – Carmichael reacts

Orkney and Shetland MP, Alistair Carmichael, has reacted to the opening of the Seafood Disruption Support Scheme by the Government, warning that exporters affected by trading disruption would be “disappointed” by the limitations of the scheme.

The Government has come under pressure to compensate seafood businesses after many in the isles and around the UK faced severe losses in January following the UK’s departure from the EU Single Market.

Qualifying businesses affected by disruption are recommended to apply to the scheme.

Mr Carmichael said: “Limited support is better than no support when seafood businesses are suffering and I would encourage all those who have taken losses to submit a claim if they can – and to contact my office if they encounter issues with DEFRA. Even so I suspect that most



businesses will be disappointed by the scheme which appears to have many limitations.

“The fact that only a “proportion” of losses incurred will be paid back is concerning, along with the restrictions on

the type of businesses that can apply. This feels less like an attempt to make good the harm done to seafood exporters and more like a box-ticking exercise. Until there is a meaningful effort from DEFRA

to reset trust and deal with the long-term structural problems they have created, fishermen are going to suspect that they have been fobbed off by a Government that has no more use for them.”

Orkney Shellfish Hatchery sees first lobster hatchings



Orkney Shellfish Hatchery, which forms part of the Cadman Capital Group’s Aquaculture portfolio, has announced the successful hatching of its first run of European clawed lobsters for 2021, a progression that has been achieved almost three months earlier than initially expected.

The hatchery, which is located on the pristine waters of Orkney, Scotland, announced its plans to trial the on-land production of the species in late September of last year, with the expectation that its pilot run would complete around May 2021.

Commenting on the accelerated rate at which the trial has progressed, Dr Nik Sachlikidis, Managing Director of the Cadman Capital Group’s Aquaculture portfolio, said: “Operations at Orkney Shellfish Hatchery continue to amaze us, consistently progressing at a far faster rate than anticipated. Having our lobster broodstock hatch larvae so early in the season allows the hatchery to culture juvenile lobsters from January through to November, an extension of four months when compared to the wild hatching season,

which runs from March to September. This progression means that Orkney Shellfish Hatchery can now consistently produce far greater lobster numbers annually, substantially reducing capital overheads for the hatchery operation and providing much-needed clawed lobster product to restoration projects across Europe.”

The hatchery is utilising products from its sister company, Ocean On Land Technology, throughout the trial, including the ground-breaking Hatchery-in-a-Box concept - a containerised lobster hatchery system that can house and culture lobster from broodstock through to post-larvae.

More than just a commercial shellfish production facility, Orkney Shellfish Hatchery is committed to the efficient and sustainable practise of cultivating shellfish on land, in order to replenish the UK’s seafood stocks, as well as support the global aquaculture industry.

European clawed lobster is set to be the second species the hatchery will be producing on land in order to support restoration projects across Europe, as it continues to successfully produce and provide runs of premium native oyster spat.

ICELAND NEWS *By Guðjón Einarsson*

Capelin fishing permitted again

Following a total ban on capelin fishing for two consecutive seasons, in early February the Marine and Freshwater Research Institute of Iceland (MFRI) finally had some good news. It recommended a total quota of 127,000 tons for the current season. The advice was based on two surveys conducted in the latter half of January that estimated a spawning stock biomass of 650,000 tons.

Earlier surveys undertaken in December only allowed for a quota of 20,000 tons so this conclusion was a great relief for the fishing companies and fishermen dependent on capelin fishery.

Iceland gets 70,000 tons

Iceland shares the total quota with other nations. Iceland’s lot this time is 70,000 tons (55%), Norway gets 41,800 tons, mainly in exchange for cod quota in the Barents Sea, the Faroe Islands receive 6,400 tons, in line with a bilateral fisheries agreement, and Greenland is entitled to 9,300 tons.

Not much historically

Iceland’s 70,000 tons is certainly not much historically speaking. During the years 1996-2002 the average yearly capelin catches of the Icelandic fleet amounted to almost a million tons. Then the stock started to deteriorate, most likely due to climate change, and reached an all-time low in 2019 and 2020 which led to a moratorium.

As soon as the quotas were issued in early February pelagic vessels from Norway headed for the fishing grounds off the east coast of Iceland. They were obliged to finish their fishing within a certain time frame and in a specific geographical area.

Making the most of the catch

The Icelandic fleet operators and processing plant managers, on the other hand, decided to make the most of a limited quota by waiting for the capelin to migrate clockwise around Iceland all the way to the spawning grounds off the southwest coast. The idea was to catch the capelin



when it was close to spawning so the roe, the most valuable product, could be cut out of the fish and the rest turned into meal and oil. This process usually happens during a short period of time so the weather has to be favourable for fishing. When this article was written it was not clear whether the operation would

succeed according to plan.

100 million Euros

It is estimated that this capelin season in Iceland will render over a 100 million Euros in export value. Japan is the main market where the capelin roe is used in sushi dishes.

No fatalities four years in a row



Mandatory safety training has saved many lives.

No Icelander lost his or her life at sea in 2020. This is the fourth year in a row with no fatalities occurring in the Icelandic fleet and the seventh year since the turn of the century. Accidents at sea reported to the Icelandic Health Insurance have also decreased in recent years, from

204 incidents in 2018 to 153 in 2020.

In Iceland there are around 1,600 registered fishing ships and boats and approximately half of these are open boats. The number of commercial fishermen is about 5,000 but many more go out to sea for recreational fishing or sailing.

A dramatic improvement

Not so long ago it was considered inevitable to lose many fishermen at sea every year. During the period 1977-1997 there were 239 fatalities at sea in Iceland. During the equally long period that followed, i.e. 1998-2018, the number of persons lost at sea were 36 in total.

Mandatory training

The decrease in the number of serious accidents and deaths at sea in recent years is not the least attributed to the work of the Maritime Safety and Survival Training Centre in Iceland, established in 1985. Its courses are mandatory for all seamen. In addition to better training and greater awareness among the fishermen themselves, the ships are now a more secure work place, rescue techniques have improved, there is automatic surveillance of every ship at sea and the weather forecasts are constantly getting more accurate.

All images by: Padhraic Cuthbert

MARY PAUL

Wilde Caught Fish Gets A Boost




Mary Paul

Congratulations to Eamon,
family & crew with your new vessel

MARY PAUL

Tehnomont-Brodogradilište Pula d.o.o. (Shipyard) has a long standing tradition in ship building, ship repairing and metal industry, that lasts from 1905. Headquarter and main facilities are located in Pula, Croatia.

www.tehnomont.hr

A socially distanced and much reduced crowd of family and well-wishers gathered on Howth Pier during February to welcome home the new prawn freezer Mary Paul after her long 2 week delivery trip from Croatia.

Owner/Skipper Eamon Wilde was greeted as he berthed by his Father well known east coast fisherman Ivan Wilde and the new vessel drew many compliments from the many Howth fishermen that lined the pier to see the new arrival. Mary Paul is named in tribute to Eamon's Grandmother Mary and Ivan's Brother Paul.

The Mary Paul is a steel built mono hull with an aluminium superstructure and has been designed as a Prawn and Whitefish Freezer Trawler. Built at the Tehnomont-Brodogradilište D.O.O. (Shipyard) in Pula, Croatia, The Mary Paul is the result of four years planning and design by Eamon & Ivan and sets the standard for a new generation of vessels to work both the shallow waters of the Irish Sea and the deep turbulent Atlantic seas off the west coast of Ireland.

The vessel is powered with a Cummins K38-M main engine, attached to a Heimdal/Nogva propulsion system, consisting of



We wish Eamon, family and crew many years of safe and successful fishing on the new Mary Paul. We are proud to have provided the fish room insulation.



MARY PAUL

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FACT FILE

VESSEL NAME: MARY PAUL
REG NO: D723
HOMEPORT: SKERRIES
SKIPPER: EAMON WILDE
CREW: 6
TARGET SPECIES: PRAWNS / WHITEFISH
LENGTH: 26 M
BEAM: 7,6 M
DRAUGHT: 5,2 M

gearbox type HG 5128F (12,86:1) and a controllable pitch propeller type K600 with a diameter of 2700 mm and four blades. The vessel is fitted with one bow thruster Hydro Armour type 950 powered by a hydraulic motor.

There are two Cummins 6CT8.3-D(M) gensets each with an output of power of 122 kW at 1500 rpm in the engine Room with alternator type Stamford UCM274G1 137 kVA 3x400 V 50 Hz, that are supplying power for on board consumption. Hydraulic power is supplied by 2 x PTO PUMPS HPR210 + 38 and 1 x HPR55 37 kW.

The hydraulic deck equipment consists of three trawl winches, three net winches, one anchor windlass, four Gilson winches and one deck crane all supplied by BOPP.

Pat Maguire Electronics supplied and installed the comprehensive wheelhouse equipment at the yard in Pula and Croatian companies Indi Metal & Sistema provided the boats electrical systems

Mary Paul has been designed to target mainly prawns in the Celtic Sea and further west on the Porcupine Bank. An Intech prawn conveyor system has been fitted to bring the catch from the stern pounds to the main sorting table on the fish deck for washing and sorting before freezing. The fish room has a capacity to carry 13 tonnes of frozen product or 500 boxes of fresh catch.

Mary Paul is rigged with a selection of trawl gear from GK Nets and Jackson Trawls and warp was supplied by Swan Net Gundry, Castletownbere.

Marine Suppliers Howth furnished the vessel with safety equipment and general chandlery and boat insurance is covered by D&D insurance.

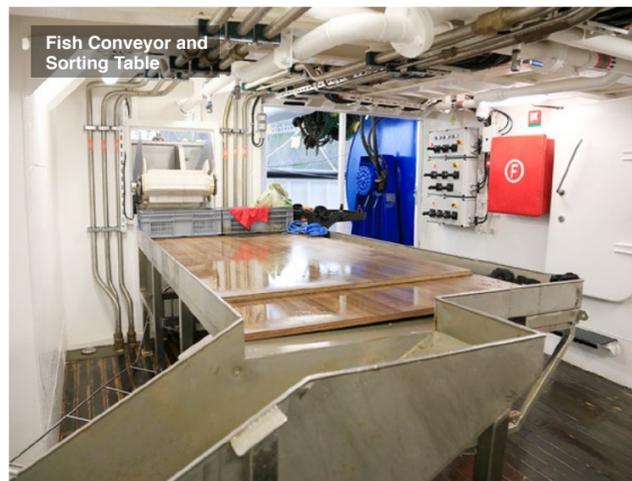
The Skipper would like to wish Eamon, Ivan, Family and Crew every success with the Mary Paul. May you have safe fishing and good hauls for many years to come.



Ivan and Eamon Wilde



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MARINE ELECTRICIAN

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to Eamon,
family & crew on your
new vessel
MARY PAUL



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ELECTRONICS

Galway based Pat Maguire Electronics supplied and installed a complete wheelhouse package to the Mary Paul



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- 1 FURUNO FCV 295 SOUNDER
- 1 KODEN KGP 922 GPS
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Congratulations and Best Wishes to Eamon, family and crew on the "MARY PAUL".

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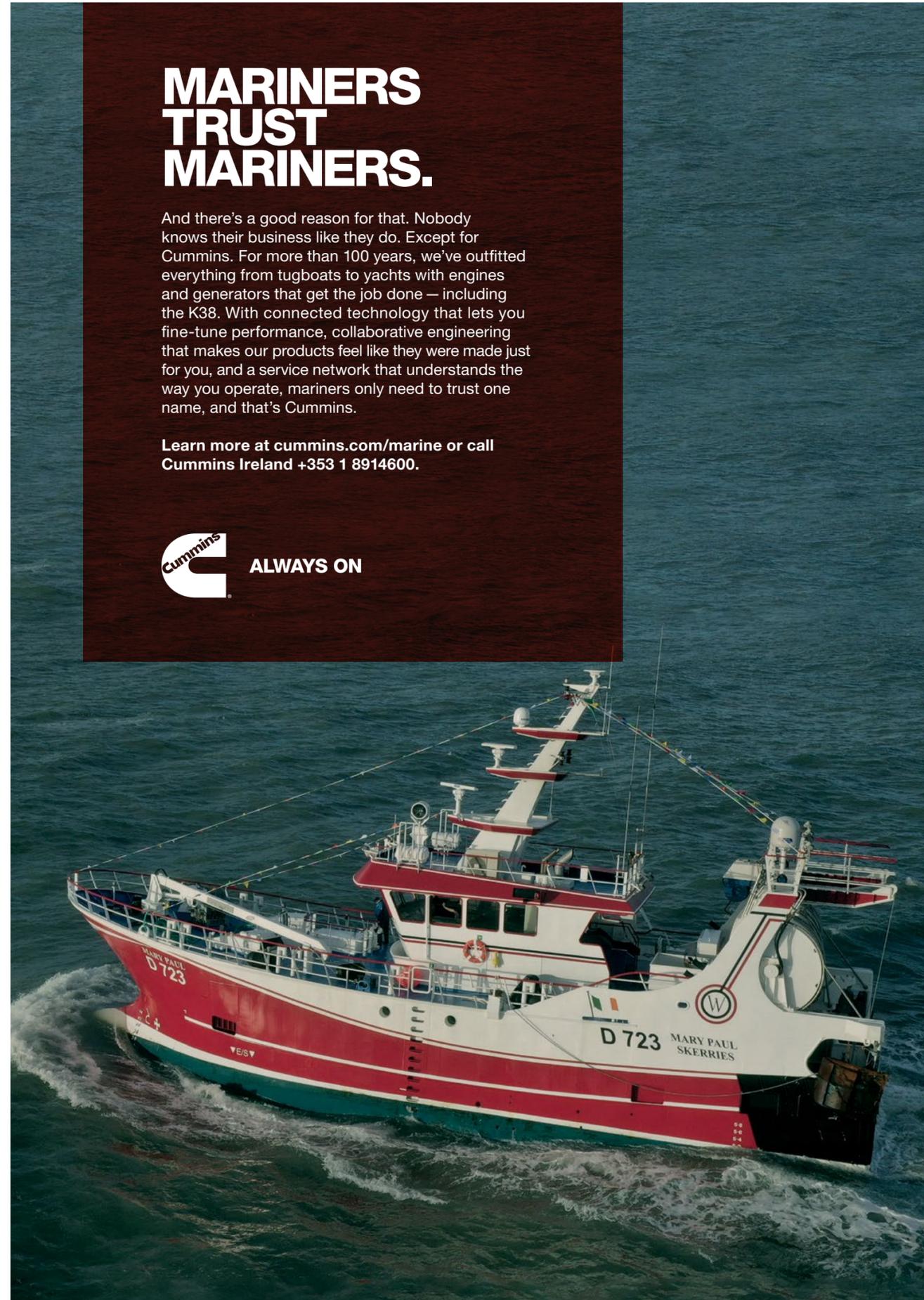
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New RLS PLB from FastFind



widely adopted Kannad Solo and FastFind 220 PLBs, with a new FastFind Return Link PLB, the world's first to include RLS technology.

A new type of personal location beacon (PLB), the FastFind Return Link PLB, utilises unique functionality generated by the Galileo satellite Return Link Service to send a signal back to the beacon confirming the PLB users 406MHz 'distress' alert has been received and their location coordinates are captured. The fishing community have long known the survival impact of dealing with a rescue situation on their own, either as a solo fisherman or as a crew that feels isolated due to lack of communication with the outside world. Knowing that others are aware of your situation can greatly improve your mental strength for the challenges you are facing. Return Links reassurance signal will also reduce the chances of rash decisions taken by those who feel they have nothing to lose, like leaving the life raft or attempting to swim to safety. Knowing that SAR professionals know your situation and location will be an invaluable support.

February marks the first anniversary of Europe's Galileo satellites unique Return Link Service (RLS) capability becoming operational, and to mark the occasion, Orolia Maritime (better known as McMurdo or Kannad Marine) is now able to supply its long awaited upgrade of their highly successful and

For fishing crews one of the major benefits is the familiarity of the technology, with its look and feel remaining largely unchanged, with the same 3 step activation to prevent false alerts. What has changed is how it interacts with the user. After activation the traditional

PLB displayed a range of flashing lights to confirm dispatch of the 406 MHz signal and confirmation of GPS lock, this now has the addition of a blue flashing light which activates when a confirmation signal is sent back to the PLB, confirming the call for help has been heard and location is known. It is this two-way interaction of the beacon which reassure PLB users, both that it has activated successfully and the search and rescue community are aware of their situation, hence the FastFind's marketing line to 'Look for the blue'. The use of a light confirmation ensures the fisherman is aware of the RLS confirmation, even in low light or harsh water conditions and doesn't require any action from the user – such as removing from its pouch or lifejacket to review which could endanger the user. The choice of colour reflects the blue light associated with the emergency services and the concept of a 'reassurance' signal.

The other major upgrade is the addition of a new carry pouch and life jacket oral tube or webbing clip system that comes with the PLB. It offers a variety of mechanisms to attach or carry the beacon and helps ensure crew members have the unit on them at all times. Finally, the new PLB also has dual GPS and Galileo receivers to greatly improve location accuracy and help accelerate the rescue process.

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#LookForTheBlue

Integrating Scottish Inshore Fisheries Data

By Dr Mark James, Operations Director at the Marine Alliance for Science and Technology for Scotland

In 2020, the Scottish Government launched its Future fisheries: management strategy - 2020 to 2030. The document outlined the importance of Scotland's 1,500 strong inshore fishing sector and the increased need for better data gathering strategies for managing the sector sustainably. Spear heading this call for modernising the inshore fleet's management was the Scottish Inshore Fisheries Integrated Data System (SIFIDS) project funded through EMFF between 2016 and 2020. The project worked with static gear fishers across Scotland to develop prototypic systems and processes suitable for collecting data for fisheries management and marine planning.

To achieve a sustainable fishery, management must understand where fishing effort is taking place, what and how much gear is being used and how much pressure can the shellfish stocks sustain. Industry engagement in this process is critical and the involvement of fishers in co-managing fisheries is increasingly accepted. With these key principles, the SIFIDS project focussed on developing reliable, low-cost systems and tools to collect data directly from Scottish inshore creelers that could be tested by fishers and management.

Where is the fishing taking place?

For Scotland the inshore static gear fleet generally operates within 6 NM of the coast but there is little information on the scale, distribution and intensity of fishing effort. Tracking fishing vessels is not new and systems such as VMS, iVMS and AIS have been used throughout the UK and parts of Europe in different management schemes and trials. Many of these systems have met with objections from the industry. AIS reveals where fishing is taking place to anyone with an appropriate receiver. Older VMS systems are not really appropriate for small scale vessels and report location at frequencies that are not useful for understanding effort in the inshore sector. Some newer iVMS systems can be expensive, are often linked to the provision of data services that may, or may not, fit with what fishers of regulators actually need or want. The development and intended use of many vessel monitoring systems has been driven by compliance and regulation rather than gathering



Mark James - Arbroath Harbour

data that is needed to better manage the fishery. As a result, "monitoring" systems have become associated with "surveillance". Monitoring and understanding vessel track data is so much more than just a tool to keep an eye on who may or may not be breaking the rules.

After 130 trips on a variety of Scottish inshore creelers, SIFIDS researchers found that by combining the trip's GPS track data with observations of when gear was shot and hauled they were able to build a computer model that could accurately predict where fishing was taking place from track data alone. The model can also predict how many creels were deployed and estimate their soak time.

Dr Mark James, Operations Director at the Marine Alliance for Science and Technology for Scotland, and overall coordinator of SIFIDS explained: "Tracking information is vital, particularly when fishers need to defend their right to fish in a location, by providing evidence of where they fish over time. The idea behind SIFIDS is to have an integrated system, which lets us track a vessel by getting accurate times and positions; recording how much gear goes into the water, how long it stays and when it comes out; and ideally to collect other data to feed into stock assessments."

The road transport sector has been tracking millions of vehicles for some time now for a variety of reasons and there is a large and competitive market in tracking devices – some of which could easily be adapted for use in inshore fishing vessels. The SIFIDS team selected a

robust but simple tracker with internal high gain GPS and GSM aerials, data storage and foreword capability. The ignition linked tracker costs less than 100 EURO uses a mobile phone technology to transmit in near real time when it has a mobile signal. Using a multi-network data SIM the annual cost of data transfer is ~30 EURO.

The vessel track data is sent directly and automatically to a secure computer server using readily available free software. Only the fisher and those designated to access the data can see it. SIFIDS also developed a prototypic solar tracker for vessels without power supply.

The data collected is automatically analysed to provide a range of track plots and statistical outputs that fishers and managers can look at on a dedicated web portal.

Pen to paper landing declarations?

Licensed fishing vessels of 10 meters and under in Scotland must be submitted a landings declaration every week. Fishers involved in the SIFIDS project were keen to trail a mobile phone App which was designed by the SIFIDS team to allow the user to record their vessel track using the phones GPS, set up and store on the phone the details they would normally have to input into the landings declaration form and enter the landings information for each trip. With special permission from Marine Scotland, and for the duration of the trial only, those skippers taking part in the trial could use the App to submit their declarations directly to their local Fishery Office. The App also provided a way of skipper recording observations at sea, such as sightings of marine mammals, basking sharks and any unusual catch that might appear in their creels.

The SIFIDS track data from a vessel could be combined with the landings data from the App on the computer server. By analysing this information, the SIFIDS system can automatically generate a range of fishing effort measures for individual vessels or across a specified area or fleet segment.

Can we trust computer models?

Computer models are not the same as direct evidence of where fishing is actually taking place.

For a variety of reasons fishers and managers may need proof. To satisfy this need, SIFIDS produced an On-Board Central Data Collection System (OBCDCS) which connects the vessel's GPS track to data from sensors attached to the hauler, RFID tag sensors designed to be triggered when gear is shot and hauled and an induction sensor on the side of the vessel which is triggered when a creel passes over it. The OBCDCS was successfully tested on a number of vessels.

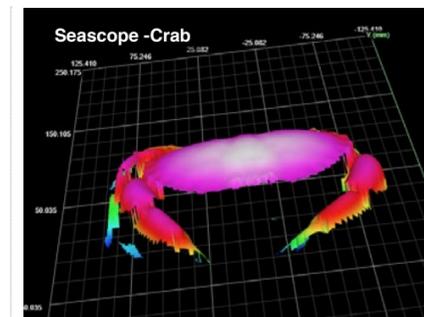
Guy Pascoe from Seascope Fisheries Research acknowledges: "Without the fishermen this project wouldn't have got off the ground, their input and feedback is crucial, especially when trying to develop technology that will work in their environment, on a fishing boat".

Stock assessment data – could industry help?

The final piece of the puzzle, how much pressure can the stocks take? This is hard to pin down as many of Scotland's crab and lobster stock are "data deficient" because collecting measurements and running assessments is expensive, time-consuming, and usually undertaken by small teams of researchers. After reviewing various stock assessment approaches, the SIFIDS team concluded that industry could, through the setting up of a small "reference fleet", with appropriate training, play a role in collecting data for stock assessment purposes.

Combining advances in imaging technology with artificial intelligence (AI) the SIFIDS team developed an Automated, Species, Size and Sex Identification system (AS3ID). The prototypic device contains a small conveyor belt which passes a lobster or crab for example, under a scanner which captures a 3D image of the animal and determines if it is a crab or lobster, calculates sub-millimetre measurements used to predicting the animals sex and provides data needed to feed into stock assessment models. All of this from a specialised prototypic device that is portable and can operate at sea on a sub-10 m vessel! The Seafood Innovation Fund is now supporting further development to create a fully operational AS3ID system.

SIFIDS was also challenged with trying to find ways of identifying scallop grounds without the use of speculative dredge sampling. Trials with sonar-based technologies had limited success but a simple low cost drop down camera was developed which could be deployed from an under 10m vessel to take images of the seabed which could, in principle, be used to see if scallops are present. However, after the SIFIDS project finished the members of the SIFIDS



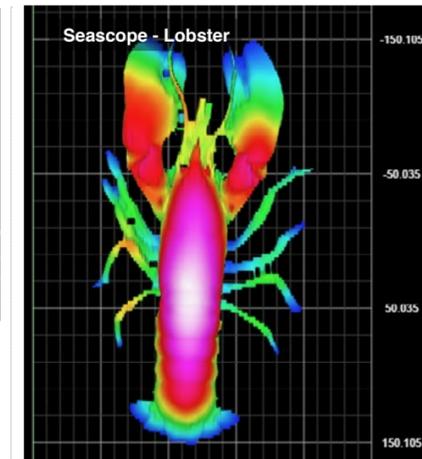
team from the University of St Andrews, SAMS and the University of Bern, joined forces and developed a very promising AI method to automatically identify and count scallops from seabed images. The method will be further tested on a larger scale once Covid restrictions permit.

The big picture

Collecting data for management is critical to understand the impact of the inshore fleet but understanding its social and economic importance is vital for seeing the big picture. With data from 2018, SIFIDS researchers used a Sustainable Livelihood Analysis approach to find that the inshore sector employed a total 3,086 in Scotland (2,374 people directly employed in fishing and 712 additional jobs generated through inshore fishing). In the same year the direct income to inshore fishers was £63.7m, with an additional £38.2m to other sectors, a total of £101.9m in Scotland. Local communities are often only impacted by their industries local income from landings. If the landings are processed elsewhere then the industries economic impacts on inshore fishing is spread further to areas such as Bellshill, Larkhill and Glasgow. Indeed, supporting the growth of on-site processing in deprived fishing port areas could be an important consideration for policy makers, through provenance is key.

Scottish and Peruvian fisheries lead the way

Since November 2020, 40 vessels involved in the 2-year Outer Hebrides Inshore Fisheries pilot have been fitted with the SIFIDS developed tracker system. Each fisher with an installed tracker is provided with a log-in to a webpage allowing them to access their own track data. Those involved in the trial will also be invited to test the updated SIFIDS App to their record



catch and landings data. Marine Scotland will also use the trial as an opportunity to familiarise themselves with the system.

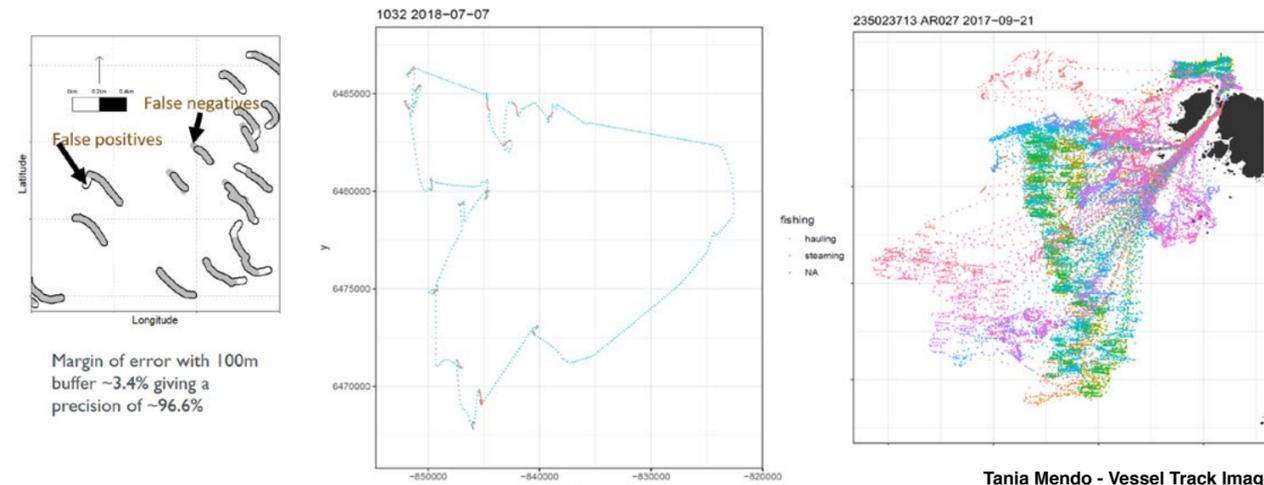
By using low-cost and readily available technology, the SIFIDS project's systems and processes has significant potential to improve the sustainability of small scale fisheries globally. Using the low-cost approaches developed in Scotland by the SIFIDS team, the University of St Andrews are now working with artisanal fishers in Peru to improve basic data collection and to help reduce bycatch and discarding.

It's all down to the fishermen

Mark James was keen to point out that: "From the outset, SIFIDS was a real team effort involving members of the Marine Alliance for Science and Technology for Scotland (MASTS) community such as the University of St Andrews, SAMS and the North Atlantic Fisheries College. Our partners Seascope Fisheries Research, Imani Development, SAMS Research Services Limited were pivotal to the success of the project. Particular praise is due to the project Facilitators – Kyla Orr, Ali McKnight and Kathryn Logan who maintained the project's close link to the industry throughout. The incredibly positive attitude from the Marine Scotland staff involved was also critical". Most of all, Mark was keen to pay tribute to the hundreds of fishers who had engaged with the project, inviting researchers onto their vessels, allowing equipment to be fitted and trialled, providing feedback and advice on how the project could be adapted to deliver outputs useful to the industry.



Mark James - Shrimp Trawling - Peru



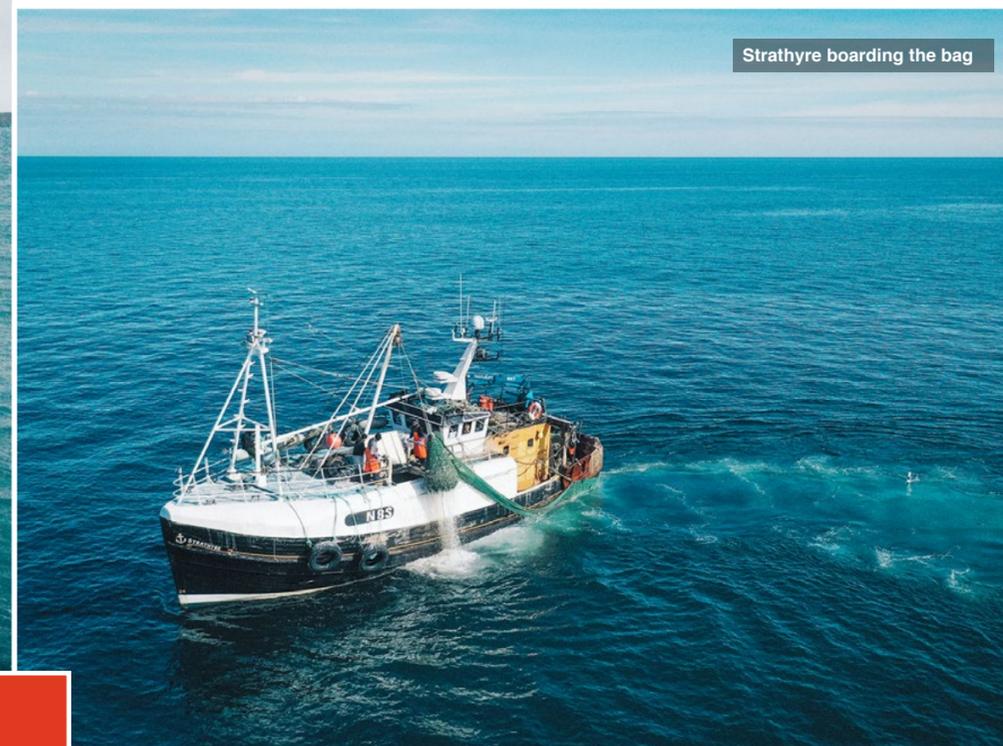
Tania Mendo - Vessel Track Images



Castletownbere based Sarah David

Some of our top fishing photographers pick their top 5 photos

ROSS MULHALL



Strathyre boarding the bag



Name: Ross Mulhall
Location: Ardglass
Camera: Canon 6D MK II
Favourite lens: 70-200 mm
Workplace: Freelance Photographer/Videographer. Camera crew in the film industry.
Instagram/Facebook/YouTube: RossBoatPhotos
Website: RossMulhallPhotography.com
Top Tips and Messages: Be ready for every moment, have your camera gear sitting ready to go! Batteries, memory cards, lenses, snacks! Do it because you enjoy it, don't be discouraged by anyone, social media or not having the camera you'd like, Have Fun!



Night tow on board Strathyre



Rachel Jay leaving Ardglass



The Strathyre crew shooting the net

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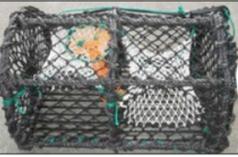
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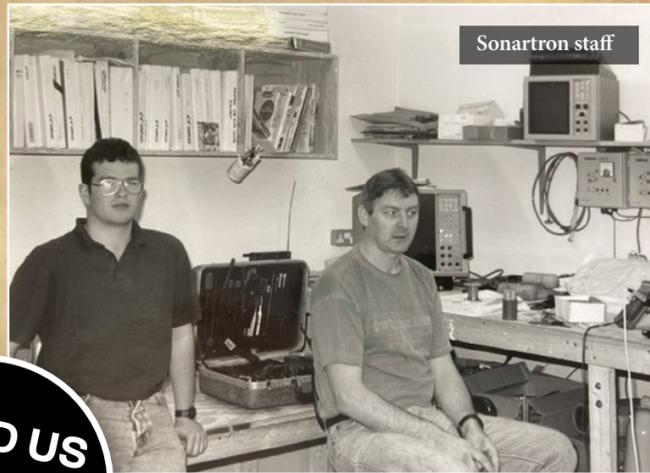
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Dingle fleet blessing



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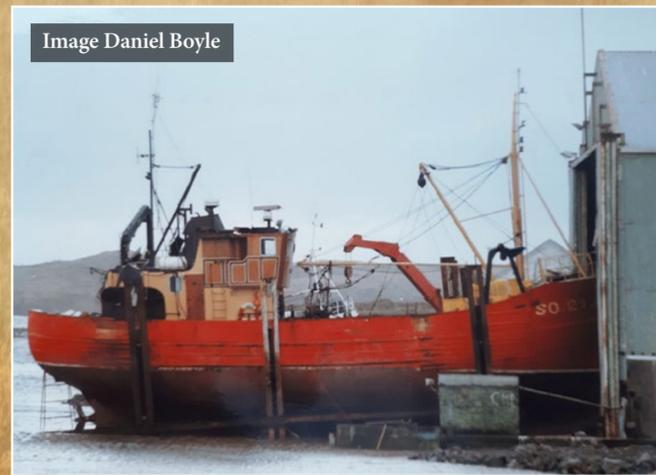


Image Daniel Boyle



Vessels entering Kilrush harbour

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The Archives - MAY 1964

KILMORE Quay Co-op CRAFTSMEN-MADE NETS AND GEAR. FISH

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JOURNAL OF THE FISHING INDUSTRY

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ROCKALL RIGHTS IN DANGER

U.N. may take over area

JUST WHEN Irish skippers are becoming interested in working on blue whiting, a move may be made to abolish Irish rights over valuable grounds at Rockall.

This arises because Ireland, Britain, Iceland and the Faroes have not made an agreement which the United Nations can accept as to responsibility for the area.

At the moment, Britain lays claim to the 500-foot high rock by having planted a flag there 16 years ago. Ireland's claim on Rockall is that it is nearer to Ireland. Iceland's 200-mile limit takes in part of the Hatton Bank upon which Rockall sits. The Faroes also has a fishing interest there.

Now Iceland has warned Ireland and the other two that the United Nations may well throw open the area to all nations, which would mean overpowering competition for Irish boats proposing to fish there for blue whiting.

Also, Iceland appears to have a mineral interest in the area, arguing that Ireland has found oil off the south-east coast, and the Faroes have possibilities of finding oil inshore. This point is being put forward as a case for Iceland's claim.

Iceland's Ambassador to the U.N., Hans G. Andersen, has visited Dublin, Copenhagen and London to urge the Governments to speed up an agreement between themselves which the U.N. would accept.

The Irish Government has not consulted fishing interests on the matter, even though it is clear that, to judge by the numbers of Scandinavian and other blue whiting vessels calling at Killybegs, this is a fishery which will particularly interest Ireland should the market for mackerel fall off.

Draft men seek talks with I.F.O.

THE Irish Estuaries Salmon Net Fishermen's Association said last month that it was willing to meet the I.F.O. to discuss the plight of the hereditary estuarine fishermen whose livelihood was being destroyed by over exploitation at sea.

The secretary, Patrick Peril, said he was awaiting a reply from Frank Doyle of the I.F.O. to set a date for the meeting. "We see the I.F.O. as having a major role to play in this coming salmon season, and we want them to exert their authority on their members to prevent them breaking the salmon conservation laws, thereby avoiding possible bloodshed by doing so," Mr. Peril said.

"We think he should advise his members, who at this stage do not seem to realise that there is a ban on fishing for salmon with monofilament net, that in the event of the ban being enforced, they will have no means of catching salmon unless they have their legal nets prepared."

NAVY SHIP PAYS BACK ITS COST IN FINES

THE WORLD'S only profit-making navy has been hard at work over the last few weeks. At the heart of the action has

£7,000 PAID FOR A SINGLE TUNA



The largest of these tuna, laid out last month in Choshi fishing port, Japan, were sold for over £7,000 each at auction. The reason why such spectacular prices are paid - around £10 per lb - is part of the unique fresh fish structure of the Japanese market. This is explained in an illustrated article by the Editor, Arthur Reynolds, which begins on page 9 of this issue, following an extensive tour he made last month of ports and markets in that country. Japanese fishermen prefer if at all possible to use passive methods of catching fish rather than costly trawling, he found.

Spaniards may get the push

THE GOVERNMENT is trying to have Spanish trawlers kept outside a 50-mile limit until the terms of Spain and Portugal's accession to the E.E.C. have been agreed.

This was stated by Mr. Barry, Minister for Foreign Affairs, in Luxembourg last month, during E.E.C. talks with delegations from Portugal and Spain.

The question of fishing arrangements is regarded as the most difficult aspect of the entire negotiations. Once Spain gets in, the E.E.C.'s fishing fleet is automatically doubled, but the stocks of fish is not.

The French are particularly sensitive on the terms of entry, but the West Germans are believed to be indifferent to the fishing aspects of the negotiations.

Prawn ports kept busy

The "prawn" ports of Clogherhead, Balbriggan and Skerries maintained fairly steady incomes for the latter part of the winter as export demand for the shellfish continued. At Skerries, 2,493 boxes of whole prawns were landed in March at around IRE15 per box, while Clogherhead had 1,000 of whole prawns and 1,560 of tails.

Some Clogherhead trawlers are planning to go to the Porcupine in the summer for the jumbos, if the weather allows.

Sales of high-quality Norwegian frozen peeled prawns to the U.K. market climbed by nearly a third last year compared with 1982 to reach 6,604 tonnes.

N.I. appointment

THE Department of Agriculture, Northern Ireland, has announced the appointment of John William Anderson as a Senior Member of the Foyle Fisheries Commission in place of Dr R. W. McQuiston.

J. S. Allister is the Junior Member representing the Government of Northern Ireland.

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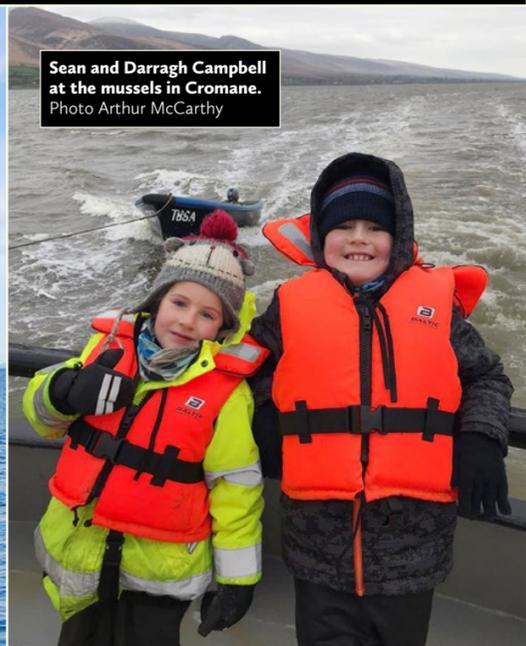
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Atlantic Fisher. Photo Jamie Granville



Sean and Darragh Campbell at the mussels in Cromane. Photo Arthur McCarthy

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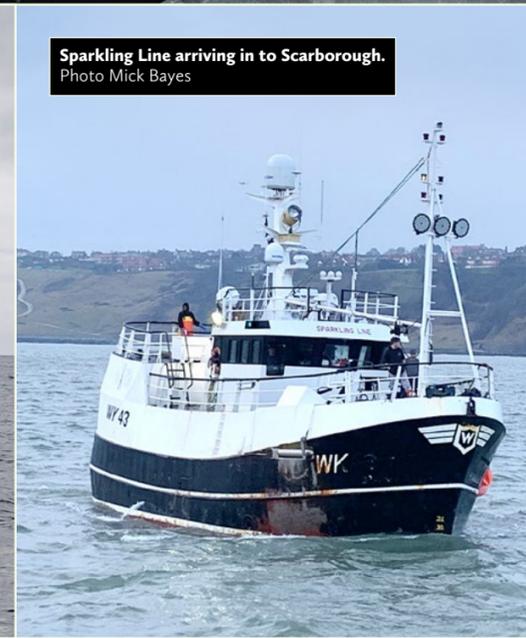
Westbound heads ashore with a shot of Herring. Photo John Cunningham



Blacksod Pier. Photo Monika Regeciová



Fastnet Fisher passing the Skelligs. Photo Jamie Granville



Sparkling Line arriving in to Scarborough. Photo Mick Bayes

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ACROSS

- 1 Make a mistake (4,2)
- 4 Unwrinkled (6)
- 8 Move aimlessly (5)
- 9 Fighting man (7)
- 10 Beseech (7)
- 11 Fisherman's basket (5)
- 12 Non-stop (9)
- 17 Borders (5)
- 19 Female singing voice (7)
- 21 Coached (7)
- 22 Combine (5)
- 23 Stinging plant (6)
- 24 Withstand (6)

DOWN

- 1 Happening without warning (6)
- 2 Crackbrained (7)
- 3 Loosen (5)
- 5 Reclaim (anag) (7)
- 6 Yellowish-green colour (5)
- 7 Scarcely (6)
- 9 Seen (9)
- 13 Armoury (7)
- 14 Language of East Africa (7)
- 15 Substance used for setting jams and jellies (6)
- 16 Point in time (6)
- 18 Hard work (5)
- 20 Dried plum (5)

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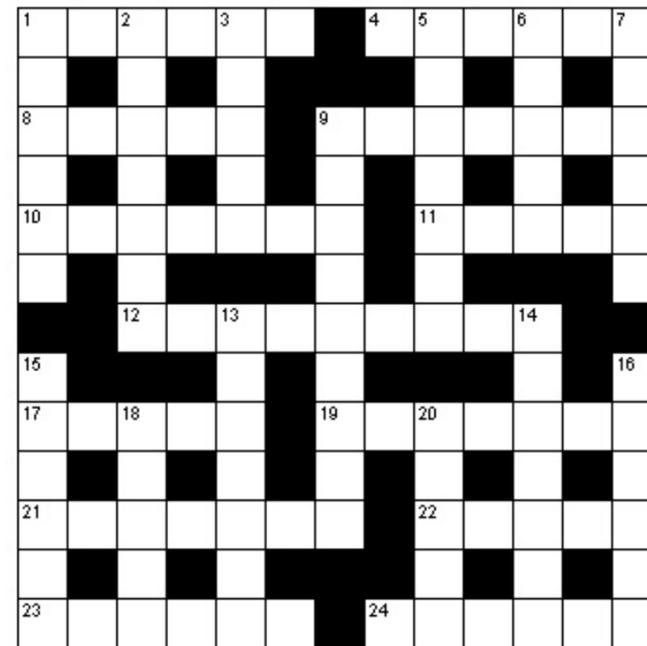
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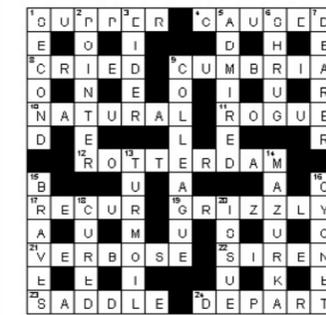
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IIMRO welcomes recognition as a Fisheries PO



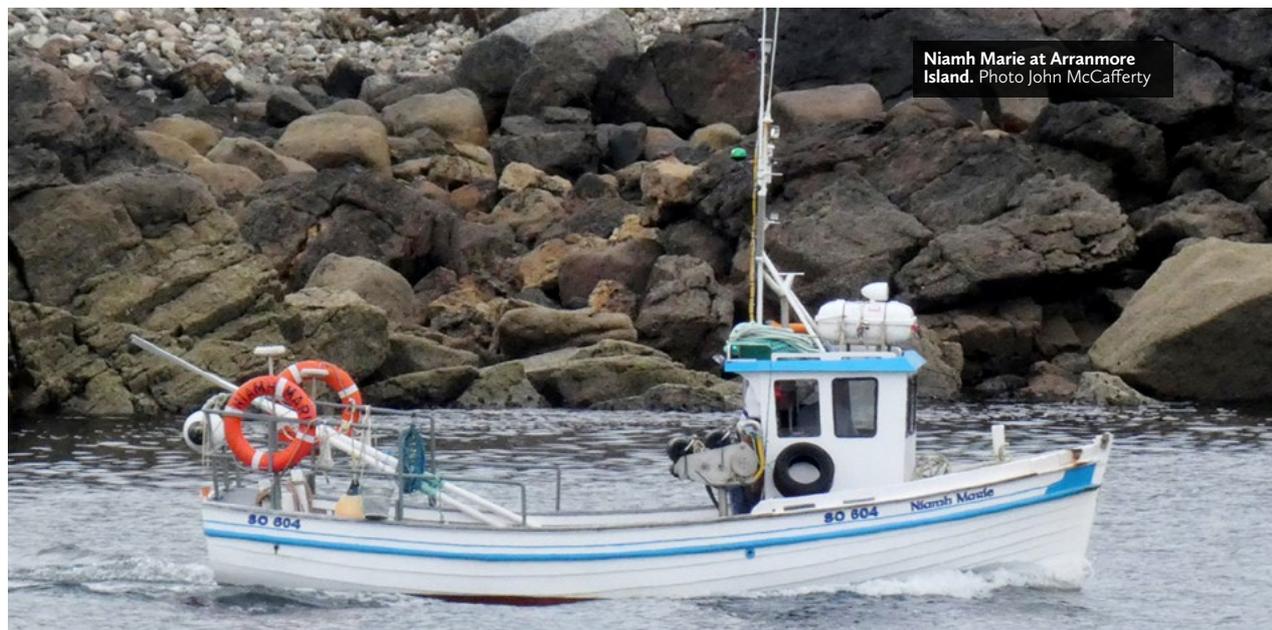
The Irish Islands Marine Resource Organisation has recently been recognised as a producer organisation (PO) under the EU common organisation of the markets regulation.

This will allow them to further represent fishers across the Irish islands in Donegal, Mayo, Galway and Cork, at both EU level and nationally to help address the many issues facing the sector.

Jerry Early, Chairman of IIMRO welcomed the recognition of the Islands Coop as a fisheries producer organisation by Minister for Agriculture, Food and the Marine Charlie McConologue TD.

“We would like to thank Minister McConologue and acknowledge his efforts to get Ireland’s first inshore fishery organisation approved.

We look forward to working with the Minister and his officials to make sure that the importance of small scale vessels are recognised when fishery policy is made and



Niamh Marie at Arranmore Island. Photo John McCafferty

delivered.”

“It is encouraging to see that the Minister recognises the needs of island fishers and as the first inshore PO, we intend to work closely with the Department, and others, to rebuild our island based small-scale fishing industry.”

“Fishing is at the heart of Island and coastal communities and

IIMRO plan to reconstruct the sector and ensure that the fishery resource is protected into the future.”

“Work on the formation of a producer organisation for IIMRO began following the publication of the 2014 cross-party Joint Oireachtas report on Promoting Sustainable Rural Coastal and Island Communities. It has taken a lot of work and commitment to achieve this goal and credit goes to IIMRO members for their perseverance and focus.”

“We look forward to meeting with the Department in the near future to start the process of developing a production and marketing plan of a scale suitable for our members, market and communities. The marketing of seafood caught on the islands will enhance island economies, greatly improve the tourism offerings available and help stabilise markets for the fishers.”

“Working with our members, a PO will help us rebuild small-scale seasonal fishing on the islands after the severe impacts of Brexit and Covid 19 recently as well as the many other challenges fishers have faced in the past. It will help us to deal with upcoming regulatory changes in fisheries and other marine activities and it

enables IIMRO to promote island communities through sustainable fishing for current and future generations, both men and women.”

“We would like to thank all those who helped us in our efforts over the years both here at home and abroad.”

Announcing the recognition of the IIMRO as a Producer Organisation, Minister McConologue said,

“In our Programme for Government, we committed to supporting 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.

In 2020, my Department put in place new Recognition Criteria to be satisfied by producer groups seeking recognition as an EU Producer Organisation and these were designed in particular to make it easier for inshore fishermen to achieve recognition. I am very pleased to now approve the first inshore fisheries Producer Organisation, which focuses on our offshore islands, and I anticipate that further inshore Producer Organisations may soon follow.”

SNÁMH CHÓSTA
na h-ÉIREANN

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