



The Skipper

1964-2021



LEADING JOURNAL OF THE IRISH & UK INDUSTRIES MAY 2021 - €3.50/£3.00

NO RIGHT OF WEIGH!

EU deal hammer blow to Irish Fishermen. See Page 6



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New Courageous passing the Bressay light entering Lerwick harbour. Photo: Ivan Reid. See pages 24-27

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INSIDE THE MAY ISSUE

- Pages 4-5
Fisheries Co-existence Plans Needed For Wind Energy Future
- Page 6
SFPA confirms plans for EU changes to weighing
- Pages 24-27
New Courageous for Shetland
- Pages 32-33
Photographer Anne Marie Cronin Picks Her Top 5 Photos

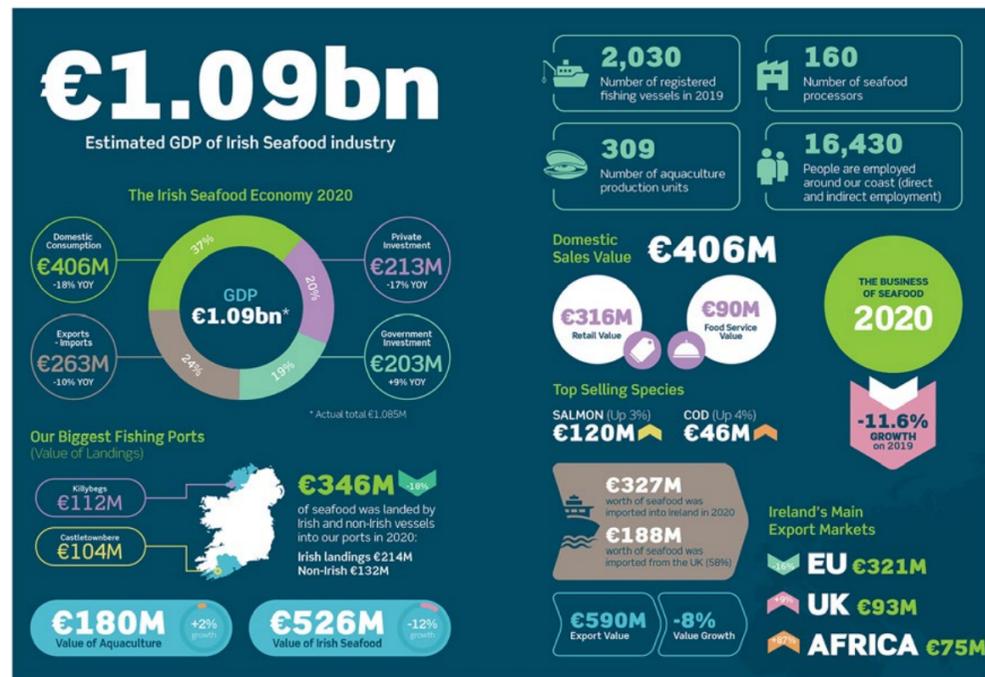
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Bord Iascaigh Mhara publish Annual Business of Seafood Report



Despite the challenges of the global Covid-19 pandemic in 2020, the seafood sector remained resilient and adapted to the significant market disruption it faced, according to an economic assessment of the sector carried out by Bord Iascaigh Mhara (BIM).

The total value of Ireland's seafood economy in 2020 was just under €1.1 billion. As with many other industries and sectors the pandemic has had an impact, and when compared year on year it represents a decrease of 12% (-€142million).

This was driven mainly by the severe disruption in global markets. In addition, the continued uncertainty of the UK's departure from the EU made for challenging trading conditions.

These factors, as well as the effective closure of the foodservice sector for much of 2020, saw a reduction of 18% in domestic consumption. While exports to key markets in Europe and Asia fell, opportunities in other global markets emerged as the value of exports to Africa growing by 87% and by 43% to the Middle East driven by increased exports of mackerel.

Despite the pandemic, and even with reduced demand in the foodservice sector, employment in the seafood sector remained stable in 2020, and there continued to be more than 16,000 people employed directly and indirectly in the seafood industry.

Employment remains high in coastal regions, generating significant socioeconomic value in these areas (16% in Donegal, 7% in Cork, 6% in Galway-Clare and 6% along the coastal region of the east coast).

Launching the report, Minister Charlie McConalogue said; "Undoubtedly 2020 was a challenging year for the seafood sector but yet again the sector displayed its ability to adjust and refocus to the available market opportunities. The Seafood sector maintained a strong and important continuous supply of top quality seafood overcoming the challenges presented by the pandemic."

Speaking about the resilience the industry has demonstrated in the face of adversity BIM, CEO Jim O'Toole said;

"There is no doubt that 2020 was a difficult year for the seafood industry with many markets experiencing reduced demand, directly related to the Covid-19 pandemic. The Irish seafood sector sells a lot of its produce to foodservice markets in Europe and in Asia which experienced lengthy lockdowns significantly impacting sales. The industry showed great agility during the year and looked to alternatives for its products, switching where possible from supplying hospitality to supplying the retail market and online sales."

Looking ahead, there are many reasons to be hopeful and the sector is set to avail of the opportunities that will emerge as markets reopen and we can look forward to some recovery as 2021 progresses, notwithstanding the new challenges introduced by the Trade and Cooperation Agreement with the UK."

Value of seafood industry:
The estimated value of the seafood industry in 2020 was €1.1m, down 18%, mainly due to a fall in sales in foodservice, however this was

somewhat offset by a 6% increase (€18m) in retail sales.

Domestic consumption amounted to €406m, down 18%, exports-imports were valued at €263m, down 10% and private investment was valued at €213, down 17% reflecting the uncertainty in the markets leading to cautious activity from many seafood businesses.

However, there was an increase of 9% on government investment – an increase to €203m.

It's worth noting that overall investment in the sector was €416 million, equivalent to 39% of seafood GDP, a slight increase compared to 2019, underlining the importance of strong public-sector support through times of economic turbulence.

Key Findings
In 2020 we saw a value of €346m landed by Irish vessels into our ports. The biggest fishing ports are Killybegs at €112m and Castletownbere at €104m.

Domestic value and Export value
Domestic sales value: €406m

- €316m retail
- €90m foodservice

Top selling species

- Salmon €120m
- Cod €46m

Exports €590m (-8%).
Main export markets

- EU €321m
- UK €93m
- Africa €75m

Imports €327m

- €188m from UK

The volume of seafood produced

by the Irish seafood sector surpassed 220,000 tonnes with a value of €394m. While less than 20% of this volume was produced by the aquaculture sector it contributed 46% of the total value.

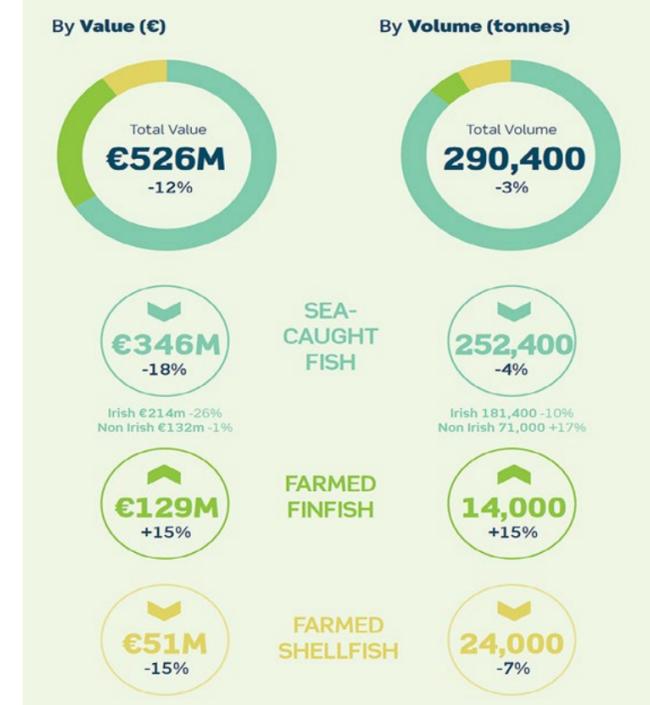
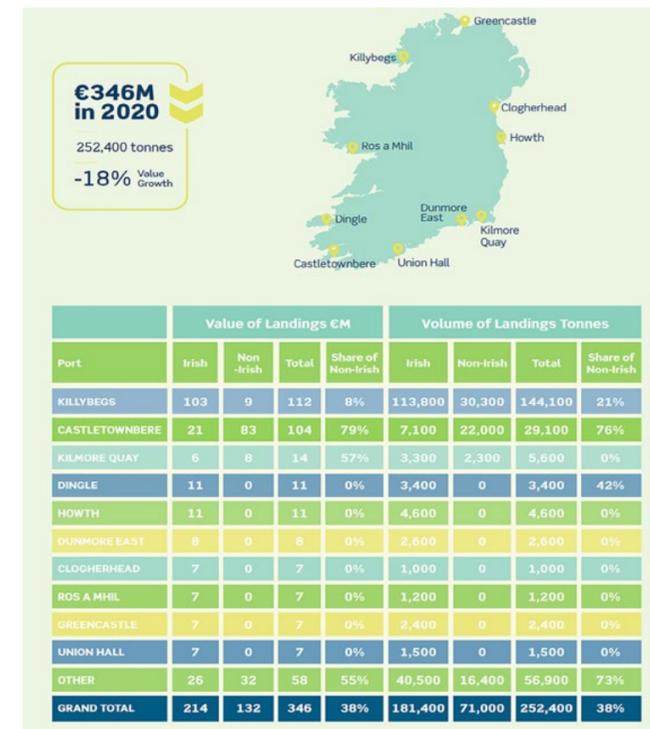
By value:

- Salmon €127m (+13%)
- Irish Rock Oysters €37m (-19%)
- Seabed Cultured Mussels €7m (-15%)
- Rope mussels €6m (-11%)
- Other finfish €2m (+12%)
- Other shellfish €1m (-6%)

By volume:

- Salmon 13,400 (+14%)
- Irish Rock Oysters 9,000 (-14%)
- Seabed Cultured Mussels 4,400 (-11%)
- Rope mussels 10,300 (-1%)
- Other finfish 600 (-1%)
- Other shellfish 300 (-1%)

Landings of Dublin Bay prawn declined by around 40% in volume and value terms after a difficult year in which many of the main international markets for this species were shut down.



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Fisheries Co-existence Plans Needed For Wind Energy Future

By Lorna Siggins

The Government says it is “acutely aware” of communication issues between the fishing industry and offshore renewable energy and intends to establish a “protocol” for same.

The Department of Housing, the lead agency currently for marine planning issues, said late last month that it was still working on draft terms of reference for forming a seafood/offshore renewable energy “working group”.

However, Britain’s National Federation of Fishermen’s Organisations (NFFO) has warned of the need to take early steps to establish a liaison forum between the two sectors, if clashes are to be avoided.

Already, several members of the National Inshore Fishermen’s Association (NIFA) here have had to engage expensive legal advice, claiming that commitments by offshore renewable energy companies in the Irish Sea were renege upon.

NIFA is calling for establishment by the State of guidelines for wind energy

companies dealing with other stakeholders including the fishing sector.

Minister for Environment and Climate Eamon Ryan made no mention of the need for consultation with the fishing industry when he addressed the Wind Energy Ireland annual conference online last month.

Ryan predicted that Ireland may be able to go “further, faster and bigger” in meeting and exceeding targets for emission reduction and renewable energy, and offshore wind would play a large part in this..

While the emissions reduction trajectory represented a “huge challenge, reductions in emissions recorded in 2020 represented a “real achievement”, he said.

Seven offshore energy projects which already have consent would proceed, and auctions would then be held next year for new projects which come under the new marine area consent system, Ryan said.

The new Maritime Area Planning (MAP) Bill – formerly titled the Marine Planning and Development Management Bill – is one of the Government’s “top three” priority pieces of legislation, Ryan said, and it

would provide for a “ steady predictable phased routine process” of licensing and approving offshore wind.

The new national marine planning framework – equivalent to a marine version of the national spatial plan – is also due to be put on a statutory footing shortly, he said.

Ireland could learn from Britain’s model in establishing a liaison group between the fishing industry and the renewable sector, Dale Rodmell of the NFFO told the conference.

“We had 25-30 years working with oil and gas,” Rodmell pointed out, and so the British industry was keen to have the same level of engagement.

The liaison group has developed a “best practice guidance on fisheries liaison”, which includes guidance on disruption settlements and community funds, he said.

A new version of this guide will focus on interactions between fisheries and cables in relation to planning and mitigation, he said.

Rodmell stressed the importance of “managing the relationship” on the ground with coastal communities, through agreed protocols and with

potential community benefit initiatives such as funding for marine research projects.

In Britain’s case, the Department of Trade initially set up the “fishing liaison with offshore wind and wet renewables group”.

It aims to promote co-existence, and take into account needs of different users, he said.

Communication was the focus in the early years, and now the focus is “mainly problem solving”, he said.

Renewable energy licenses need now to have “fisheries co-existence plans” in England, with a similar set up in Scotland to ensure protocols such as notice of works, transit corridors, gear snagging, gear marking, schedules and such like, he said.

“Ultimately, co-existence is best done when done early – as in at the planning stage,” Rodmell said.

He said there should be good marine planning on array layout and turbine spacing, minimising the potential for hazard risks, managing the relationship on the ground through the protocols and potential community benefit initiatives – such as stock enhancement work, and research



Wind energy and fishing need to co-exist

on impact of wind farms on local commercial stocks.

The key thing is to “become more solution focused”, he advised.

“We did a project in 2015 for Crown estate which looked at the eastern Irish Sea,” Rodmell continued.

“What we found when we spoke to fishermen was the various risks, such as potential snagging of trawl gear on cables, risk of collisions,” he said.

“We recognised the need to recommend emphasis on cable burial, provision of protection measures, two lines of orientation for navigation, post installation surveys, cable hazard monitoring etc,” he said.

He noted the British government’s new target of 40GW renewables by 2030, with up to 140 GW of generating capacity by 2050.

He said that the size of turbines has increased, and floating wind with its mooring systems could pose a “severe hindrance” to commercial fisheries.

It will require fisheries sensitivity mapping, insurance in relation to damages relating to cables - as in a framework for managing liabilities - and other measures, he said.

He noted that pair trawling and seine netting are not suitable near some wind farms, due to turbine spacing.

Rodmell said more research is required into basic minimal turbine spacing to allow for

fishing activities, drawing on empirical knowledge from projects in the eastern Irish Sea.

In relation to communication, Rodmell said the key role is the company fisheries liaison officer, along with fishing industry representatives who have specific knowledge of locations where projects are based and are “often from the communities and are trusted and respected”.

Developers often pay for these posts, but it always best to recruit “someone who is trusted”, in consultation with national representative bodies.

He said Britain had a growing network of fishing industry representatives who are particularly skilled in this area.

A senior civil servant warned the conference that the State needs to take a more “holistic” approach to managing offshore renewable to “learn from some of the things that happened onshore”.

Martina Hennessy, who is principal officer with responsibility for offshore energy in Ryan’s department, said that “communication” was key, along with engagement with sectoral groups.

“We can have the best consenting and legislation regime, but we need to get the “buy in” that this is the right thing to do with offshore renewable energy,” she said.

The conference heard that the new agency being established with responsibility

for compliance and enforcement – the Maritime Area Regulatory Authority (MARA) - will take on responsibility for all marine area consents (MACs).

Anne-Marie Clancy, assistant principal officer for offshore energy, said that MARA will also handle licensing of specified marine activities, and compliance and enforcement of MACs.

It will license activities that don’t require an environmental impact assessment, include navigational and maintenance dredging, site investigation works, installation of navigational markers and deposit and removal of substances.

Developers applying for marine area consents through MARA will be assessed financially.

Ms Hennessy and Conor McCabe, principal officer with responsibility for marine planning in the Department of Housing, also said there would be a “use it or lose it” approach to marine area consents.

Measures would be taken to ensure there was no “hoarding” of consent areas, they said..

The current public consultation on marine protected areas (MPAs) – which Ireland has set a target for – should not delay the maritime area planning bill, McCabe said in response to questions.

Ireland has set a target of 30% of its maritime area to be designated as MPA status by 2030. The Irish Wildlife Trust has warned that legislation to designate marine areas for

offshore wind projects will be in place long before legislation on MPAs.

Commenting after the Wind Energy Ireland conference, the Department of Housing said it was “acutely aware of the issue of diverse levels and standards of communications between the fisheries and offshore renewable energy industries”.

The department said this issue had “first been raised by members of the fisheries community at a National Marine Planning Framework (NMPF) public consultation meeting in Arklow, Co Wicklow” on February 10th, 2020 – one of a number of such consultation events held in 2019 and early 2020.

“To address these concerns, and to promote constructive engagement and consultation between the fisheries community and the offshore renewable energy (ORE) industry, the department intends to commence the formation of a Seafood/ ORE working group, with the initial aim of agreeing a communications protocol between these two strategically important marine sectors,” it said.

“Consultations on the draft terms of reference are still ongoing between the relevant Government departments and public sector bodies, and are expected to be finalised shortly. The department intends to commence the Seafood/ORE working group before the end of Q2 2021,” it said.

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SFPA confirms plans for EU changes to weighing

EU withdraws weighing derogation as a consequence to pelagic fisheries audit

The Sea-Fisheries Protection Authority (SFPA) confirms that it will hold meetings with the demersal and pelagic fishing industry over the coming weeks to set out the changes required to the weighing of fishery products. This follows confirmation by the European Commission¹ that it is revoking the derogation for the fishing industry to weigh fishery products following transport away from the place of landing with immediate effect. It deemed that the risk of industry's non-compliance with the rules of the common fisheries policy could not be minimised.

The European Commission's decision arises from their audit in Ireland in 2018 aimed at monitoring the implementation of Ireland's controls for Pelagic fisheries. The findings of that audit identified irregularities, including the manipulation of weighing systems in some instances, that were subsequently confirmed by the administrative inquiry conducted by the Sea Fisheries Protection Authority.

Dr Susan Steele, Chair of the SFPA, commented: "We will be contacting producer organisations and industry representatives as well as holding local meetings to ensure that the industry is familiar with the changes that are required."

"The accurate weighing of catches remains the responsibility of industry. The EU's decision, however, will involve changes to weighing practices. We will be working to ensure that industry can introduce these efficiently and in a way that assures compliance with EU regulations.

"This decision is a clear marker of tougher fisheries controls across the EU. The SFPA takes its commitments under the Common Fisheries Policy very seriously. We have been working with the Commission and EU control

partners including EFCA, and with the support of the government, to improve Ireland's compliance assessment capabilities. This has included a significant expansion of the SFPA's detection and inspection resources in recent years, as well as changes to fisheries controls to ensure Ireland has a strong regulatory system," Dr Steele added.

Reaction

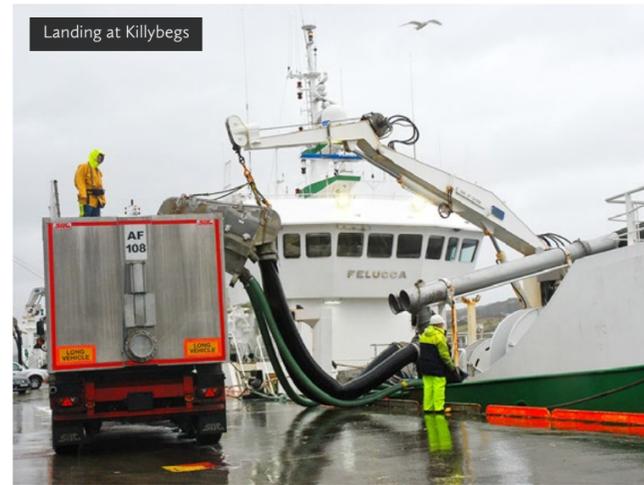
The Chief Executive of the Killybegs Fishermen's Organisation, Seán O'Donoghue has said, both he and his members are completely stunned and extremely annoyed at changes in practices around

weighing catch which have been foisted on the industry with immediate effect from 16th April last, with zero consultation.

"We are simply flabbergasted that this bewildering move which has such a direct and draconian impact on all aspects of Irish fisheries, could be considered without any advance notice. Moreover, we have not been given access to any information to justify this crude action. In fact, we have been explicitly denied access to any reports or correspondence between the Commission, DAFM and the SFPA on this issue."

"This 'bombshell' has the potential to have a massive negative impact on the pelagic, demersal and shellfish sectors and will not be accepted by industry. We are calling on our line Minister and wider Government as well as the SFPA, to immediately put right this ludicrous scenario which they should not have created in the first instance" stated Mr O'Donoghue.

The decision also provoked an angry reaction from CEO of the IS&WFPO, Patrick Murphy who told The Skipper; "The recent communication from the Head of the SFPA Dr Susan Steele, informing our



members in the Irish South and West FPO the European Commission have revoked the approval of the Irish control plan submitted for the weighing of fishery products in accordance with Article 61(1) of Council Regulation (EC) No 1224/2009, sums up perfectly my own belief that when it comes to Ireland's rich fishing waters the European Commission sees Ireland as a colony of days gone by.

Where the populations of larger countries using their power and strength take what they want from the weaker smaller indigenous people devastating their local economies at the same time telling them it's for their own good.

They are assisted in their crucifixion by A Irish Vichy State bound not by Irish law but regulations and directives not drafted by elected governments but unelected bureaucrats signed of in a trilogy of EU Commission, Members States represented by cabinet Ministers their civil servants and last but equally guilty, the Members of the European Parliament.

To explain why I am so outraged is that I am witnessing the blackening and defamation of the good name of the men and women who work in our Industry based on a report no one in the Industry has been given the opportunity to read.

Yet we are contacted by

national media to ask for our reaction and are told this report is in the possession of the media.

We are in the middle of a pandemic where our Industry were told you are an essential Industry and must for the greater good run the gauntlet of 14 days at sea, hundreds of miles from shore and medical assistance if God forbid Covid infects a crew and the risks of loss of life is massively increased.

It is not dangerous enough facing the mountainous seas, working in conditions few would be brave enough to face, touched in their daily lives of by the loss at sea of either family, friends or fellow brave fishermen.

We have been ROBBED of 20% of OUR fish for ever by the people who now cast every single fisherman into the guilty without proven category, where our fleet has been slashed and torn in their numbers in recent decades to make room for our fellow member states fleets.

Yet us with larger quota in pelagic species in our waters, using smaller vessels than our European Fleets, manage to catch our share in half the time resulting in us staying tied to our piers while they seem too not have enough days in the year to catch their quotas"

"SOMETHING SMELLS FISHY ALRIGHT!!"

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Catherine Nee – A force of nature



"Catherine was a very interesting and enjoyable person to be around, and she had many friends from diverse backgrounds and always had time for a chat."

Catherine Nee

On March 30th last, the west of Ireland and the aquaculture community lost a true force of nature when Catherine Nee tragically lost her battle to cancer. Catherine was best known as a tireless businesswoman but above all a loving, passionate woman, friend and mother. Born in Manchester, her love for Connemara began when she holidayed here as a teenager and fell in love with the landscape and her future husband Marty.

Many of you will have met Catherine through her work in aquaculture and her company Marty's Mussels which featured on several tv shows and Fáilte Ireland campaigns and was known far and wide. Catherine and Marty's mussel farm was based on the scenic Killary harbour and they were one of the best-known artisan food producers on the Wild Atlantic Way. Her eloquence displayed her depth of knowledge and passion for all things maritime, she was also a gifted and hardworking

businesswoman.

Catherine's passion extended to community development and she was one of the founding members of the well-known Connemara Mussel Festival in Tully Cross. She and her friend Sean Coyne made the annual 'Moules éclade' (Mussels cooked using pine needles piled on a damp board and then set alight to give a unique smoky flavour) one of the highlights of the festival. Catherine took on many roles during the festival including cooking demonstrations and the well-loved dawn walk.

In 2016 Catherine tragically lost her husband Marty to an accident at Sea, she was left to raise three daughters and run a business on her own. Catherine rose to the challenge, but it wasn't easy and when she and her family were at their lowest point a donation from LAST (Lost At Sea Tragedies) really gave her and her daughters a boost. Catherine went on to become actively involved in raising awareness and funds

for LAST with local photographer and author Stephanie Salmon. As with everything she did she put her heart and soul into it.

One of Catherine's other passions were horses, and she introduced her daughters to horse riding from very young ages and this was something she and her girls continued to share as long as they could. Catherine was a very interesting and enjoyable person to be around, and she had many friends from diverse backgrounds and always had time for a chat. She had a passion for teaching, she helped many students with maths, physics and geography grinds and she hoped one day to return to teaching. These are just some of the many facets of the unique, fun and fascinating woman she was.

Catherine never did anything by halves she had boundless energy and was always full of ideas and plans. She will be sadly missed by all who knew her and they would all agree that she truly was a force of nature.

Patrick McClenaghan - Fishing Pioneer



Patrick McClenaghan was a pioneering fishing skipper, businessman and industry leader who combined vision with a quiet generosity and an innate sense of humour. He was born in Greencastle, Co Donegal on 7th May 1957.

The second youngest of 9 children born to parents Philip and Elizabeth McClenaghan. Patrick left school at 16 years old to fish on the Ard Éireann with his oldest brother John. He then became one of the youngest skipper owners in the country. At the age of 20 years old he bought his brother Jim's 65' trawler the 'Girl Maureen' and re named it 'Foyle Warrior'. At 22 years old Patrick married Maeve Sweeney, a young nurse from Glasgow; they were happily married for almost 40 years before Maeve sadly passed away in April 2018 following a long battle with cancer.

Patrick was easily recognisable on any pier during his career with his 'lucky' fishing jumper of green wool with two yellow hoops around the chest or as he called them, isobars. This tradition started when his sister Eilish knitted a jumper as a gift when he bought his first fishing boat and continued throughout the duration of his career.

Patrick's innovative spirit helped all around him to press on with the development of the fishing industry in Ireland; a founder member of the Foyle Fishermen Co-Op in 1985, he helped the fleet to look for

new ways of improving the presentation of their catch and finding new markets abroad. Patrick was involved in PECC Marine Ltd who developed storage facilities at the Queen Port area in Greencastle harbour. After many successful years with the 'Foyle Warrior' Patrick was one of a number of Irish fishermen, including his nephew Adrain McClenaghan ('Northern Celt'), to progress to build new vessels under the white fish fleet renewal program in the late 1990s. In 2000 the now Foyle Warrior Ltd took delivery of the new 'Foyle Warrior' built in Spain.

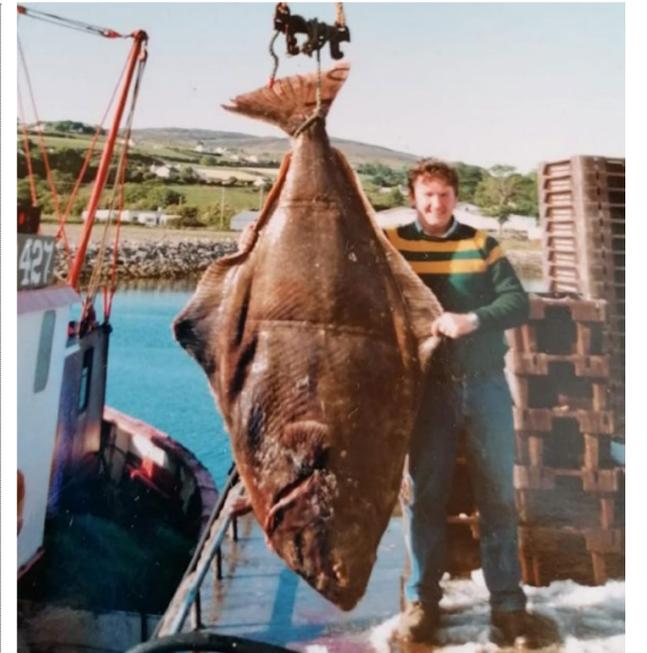
Ever passionate about improvements in harbour facilities Patrick was also a founder member and investor of the Lough Foyle Ferry Co Ltd.

He was always giving back his knowledge to others and one of his last involvements for the industry was to help develop new fishing nets in conjunction with BIM.

Patrick was competitive in everything he was involved in, his mischievous streak and sense of fun shone through and put a smile on the faces of all who knew him. He had many interests outside of his work, he was a keen member of Moville Gun Club and loved his shooting. Regular participant at Greencastle Golf Club he also enjoyed playing bridge or in fact any card game. Nowhere was he happier than participating in the annual fishermen games at the local regatta, rope throwing and net mending followed by a pint of Guinness that night and the banter that ensued.

Patrick loved his large family connection of brothers, sisters, nieces, nephews, grandchildren and extended family and that love was returned by them also.

At the time of his death, because of the Covid restrictions, the family were humbled by the numerous messages of sympathy they received during the family wake held for him at his home



at Shilling Hill, Greencastle; many recalled his many acts of generosity and friendship, his unique storytelling ability, his big smile and irrepresible sense of fun.

Patrick McClenaghan passed away at his home on Easter Monday, 5th April 2021 following a battle with cancer, and is predeceased by his wife Maeve and survived by his daughters Mary,

Joanne, Claire, sons Patrick and Frank, their husband, wife and partners and his 8 grandchildren and extended family.

Patrick's family wish to convey their heartfelt appreciation and gratitude for all who paid their respects and sent condolences following Patrick's death.

Rest in peace.





By Frankie Horne
RNLI Fishing Safety Manager

Fishermen all over the UK and Ireland have an unwritten rule to help each other in times of need or distress. They tend only to call for help from others as a last resort. I am sure this will continue for years to come. However, when a situation is becoming life threatening, or is likely to escalate to life threatening, a call must be made early. As someone who has served in the RNLI as a lifeboat crew/coxswain, I'm sure I speak for all in the rescue services by saying I would rather be there 10 mins early as 10 mins late.

Interestingly, the RNLI analysis data of commercial fishing fatalities between 2008 and 2017 shows that most "Calls for Help" came from phones, rather than VHF/DSC radio or even EPIRB/PLB.

However, not all situations allow for someone to make that essential call for help. For example, if a lone working fisherman were to fall overboard, without a means of calling for help on his person. In this instance, it could be hours before the alarm is raised and a search and rescue operation for the person and vessel gets underway. Such time delays typically increase the search area and often reduces the likelihood of a

successful outcome.

During any search and rescue mission, there is more likely to be a successful outcome if the "call for help" is initiated immediately. The first informant's information is vital for HMCG (UK) and ICG (IRE) to deploy the appropriate SAR assets. i.e. Lifeboats/Helicopters and any other vessels able to assist with the search and rescue.

Location, time, the nature of incident, persons on-board, if the rescue assets have these vital bits of information, it is invaluable to the rescue and can greatly impact the outcome. When they do not, it's then down to a process of elimination to narrow down the possibilities of where and when the incident happened. From my previous experience as a Lifeboat crew/coxswain this can be a long process, and sometimes a best guess scenario.

A Quick Summary of Calling for Help Devices.

Fixed VHF/DSC Radio.

Very High Frequency / Digital Selective Calling - This is the preferred communication to the Coastguard. A DSC distress alert is a recognised emergency signal and it also transmits your position. Send a DSC alert followed by a voice call on VHF Channel 16 communicating the distress message to all vessels

and shore stations in range. This means all are aware of your situation and can respond even before the rescue mission has been initiated.

EPIRB. Emergency Position Indicating Radio Beacon - This system is to indicate that a vessel has an Emergency and requires assistance. It can be float-free and automatically or manually activated. With worldwide coverage EPIRBs give rescue services a Time, Position and Vessel Identification, the position is regularly updated when activated. It is fitted with a flashing light and transmits a homing signal for Direction Finding fitted vessels. It is most important to make sure this equipment is registered on the EPIRB Registry with the Coastguard.

PLB. (Personal Locator Beacon)

A recognised emergency signal with worldwide coverage. PLBs are manually activated, so the owner should make themselves fully aware of how to use and maintain the PLB. It should be kept on your person and in a position where it is easily accessible to be held out of the water to activate if not already attached to your Lifejacket. PLBs should be registered with HMGG/ICG with the correct details to aid in rescue coordination.

AIS/MOB Automatic Identification System Man Overboard Device. Communicates by electronically exchanging data with AIS Receivers on vessels and base stations. In a man overboard situation this device automatically alerts all AIS Receivers within range which is 5nm or less dependent on antenna height and obstacles. Although not GMDSS approved some vessels with several crew onboard or working 80nm to 100nm offshore (where rescue will be a long time coming) are now using AIS/MOB Devices attached to their PFD'S so they can track a man overboard and effect a rescue themselves where possible.

Pyrotechnics (Flares) These are a visual indicator that assistance is required. Parachute Rocket Flares can be seen for up to 28nm in good visibility. Red Paras, Handheld flares and Buoyant Smoke markers are perfect for calling for help provided someone can see them. For instance, if you are fishing in an area where there is a lot of activity and you lose all your electrics or drifting close to shore any one of these will alert someone to your situation. Please remember that all out of date pyrotechnics (flares) should be disposed of correctly.

Safe Fishing

SeaMonitor begins new marine research project



Deploying the SLOCUM Glider. Photo credit: Ocean Tracking Network

Clew Bay and Achill, Co Mayo will be among the key study areas in SeaMonitor, a unique marine research project which is using innovative marine species tracking technology to better understand and protect vulnerable marine life in our oceans. The project is funded by EU INTERREG VA Programme and led by the Loughs Agency and supported by another eight leading marine research institutions, including the Marine Institute. The innovative technology, called passive acoustic telemetry, relies on underwater tracking stations (acoustic receivers) to monitor the movements of marine animals tagged with acoustic transmitters. This technology will be used to better understand the movement and behaviour of species such as seals, basking shark, skate, cetaceans and salmon. This new technology will be utilised in Clew Bay and Achill, to enable the Marine Institute to monitor juvenile salmon smolts as they make their first journey past Clare Island and on to the Atlantic Ocean. Acoustic receivers will be placed in strategic positions on what has been identified as the salmon

"highway" through Clew Bay. This research will build on previous studies in the area, which indicate a high survival rate of salmon smolts through the Inner Bay and to Clare Island. Studies have also indicated that smolts following ocean currents seem to travel the northern route past Clare Island. As part of the SeaMonitor project, the Marine Institute will be tagging smolts from the Burrishoole catchment over the next two years. Their journey will be monitored through Clew Bay and Achill, onward along the shelf edge, west of Scotland and to the Norwegian feeding grounds from May to June. The salmon smolts will be monitored by the Marine Institute using a Slocum glider, an autonomous remotely operated vehicle. The glider acts as a mobile listening device for the acoustic signals from tagged fish, and has the capability to monitor environmental conditions such as temperature, salinity and current profiles. The range of the remotely operated vehicle and its ability to remain at sea for months at a time, allows the tracking of salmon and other marine species further and for longer periods than ever before.

"Scientists still know very little about the detailed migration routes of Atlantic salmon, within the marine environment," said Dr Ciaran Kelly, Director of Fisheries Ecosystems and Advisory Services at the Marine Institute. "Using new technology to track the migration pathways of Atlantic salmon smolts through Clew Bay, Achill and beyond, will greatly increase our understanding of migration and identify important marine habitats for Atlantic salmon." "The Marine Institute's Newport Research Facility has a long and distinguished record of conducting scientific work on Atlantic salmon. The Marine Institute appreciates the support and assistance from local fishermen in Co Mayo for marine research projects such as SeaMonitor," Dr Kelly added. SeaMonitor project partner, Queen's University Belfast, will also monitor skate and basking shark in Irish waters including Clew Bay and Achill. Using acoustic technology and satellite tagging technology, Queen's University Belfast aims to gain a better understanding of the movement patterns and residency of these fish to develop management plans for these

highly sensitive and vulnerable species. The SeaMonitor project will also deliver Europe's largest telemetric marine array, stretching over 60 kilometres and comprising of over one hundred acoustic listening stations. 'Europe's largest fish counter' is being deployed off the north coast of Ireland and will bridge the gap between Malin and Islay forming an acoustic detection line between Ireland and western Scotland. This technology will allow scientists to monitor the movement of tagged marine animals resident in this area or passing through during annual oceanic migrations. Funding for the SeaMonitor project has been provided by the EU's INTERREG VA Programme (Environment theme), which is managed by the Special EU Programmes Body (SEUPB). Match-funding for this project has been provided by the Department for Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs in Northern Ireland and the Department of Housing, Planning and Local Government in Ireland.

For more information about the project please visit <http://www.loughs-agency.org/seamonitor>



420 x 80mm IM Quads being boarded

New Design Prawn Gear A "Great Success"

Innovation is at the core of the Swan Net Gundry (SNG) net design and manufacturing company, with ongoing new designs benefiting fishermen everywhere.

Last year SNG set about developing new and improved prawn gear with trawls that would be more robust and catch efficient but also as fuel efficient as possible.

The Killybegs' company's trawl design team developed two standardized trawls, designed to suit the entire Irish prawn fleet including the SNG's 420 and 520 x 80mm IM Quad Trawls which are constructed using top quality Polyethylene Compacted Twines which ensure the trawls are robust whilst keeping them as light as possible.

Innovative additions to this design as opposed to traditional prawn gear includes a Foot Belly Sheet designed for better lifting of prawns, Footrope lengths ranging from 16ftm-23ftm and two varying circumferences available in rubber or chain.

Feedback on the range of Quad Rigs coming from vessels operating the current Porcupine Bank fishing season has been extremely positive with SNG customers reporting that the use of these improved trawls are delivering better catch efficiency

and all skippers have reported improved fuel efficiency with some reporting that this efficiency is giving an extra two days fishing on their trip.

SNG also provide full Quad Rig Bridle Systems from 18mm to 26mm combination to cater for any vessel size and, using top quality combination ropes and hardware, SNG can design and produce to suit any vessel size at very competitive prices.

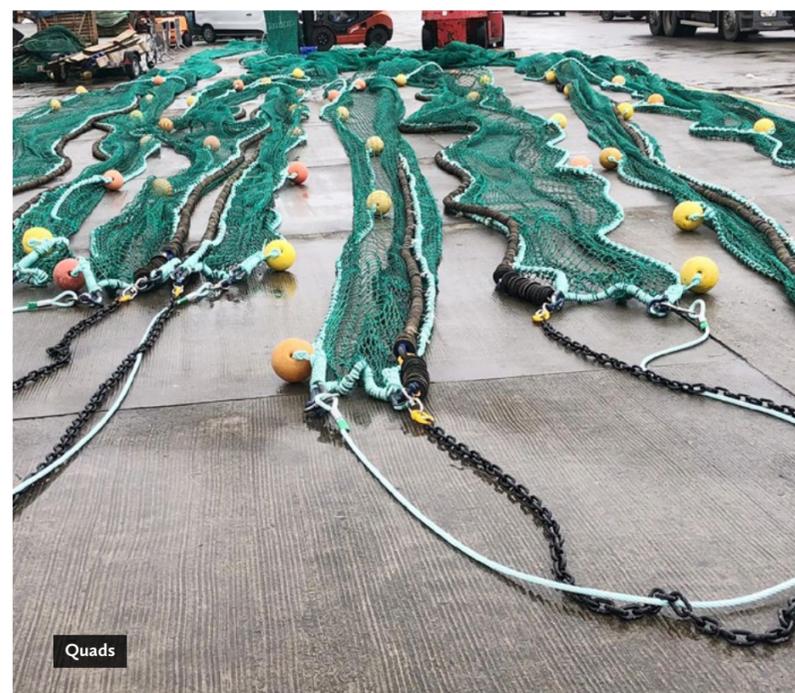
Over decades of work SNG has developed excellent customer relationships and are continually consulting with owners and skippers in getting feedback and creating solutions to their problems where needed.

With a newly refurbished dedicated design room at SNG's Killybegs facility, new models and innovation are to the fore - with an on-site 3D computerized simulation program as well as the construction of scaled model trawls of all of the new designs complimented by the use of off-site flume tank testing, but whilst these are great indicators, the real test is out in the open seas.

SNG'S Castletownbere, Union Hall and Killybegs depots have had a busy start to 2021, constructing prawn trawls and the company welcome all new and existing customer enquiries with fast turn around nationwide delivery guaranteed.



Quad Rigs



Quads

KILLYBEGS ROUNDUP

by John Cunningham

Swan Net-Gundry (SNG) supply "Altaire" with full Pelagic gear package for the 2021 blue whiting season

The Altaire arrived into Killybegs at the end of March to collect their gear from SNG who has extensive experience in the manufacturing of all types of pelagic trawls, codends and rigging solutions. With design innovation and experience at the core of the company, SNG was able to deliver a range of quality gear products to Altaire.

Gear supplied:
SWAN 2355 HELIX SS GUIDER TRAWL (WIDE ASPECT)

This trawl (New design) was build using the Helix self spreading Hydrodynamic Technology which allowed the trawl to reach its maximum spreading potential. Also, the trawls shoot and haul easily. Each panel is colour coded head panel Red/Green and foot panel in yellow.

The trawl tunnel is an 8 panel arrangement which allows for better water flow. More stability, additional strength and increased mesh opening.

The trawl has the Guider Style Design concept which allowed for great herd power, this concept included was introduced to the market

a number of years ago by SNG and has proven very successful in various fisheries. Trawl Horizontal is a spread of 240m vertical opening 137m tunnel reading 11m.

SWAN2355 HELIX SS TRAWL (standard)

This trawl was also built using the Helix self spreading technology, and also has 8 panel tunnel arrangement. It doesn't have the Wide Aspect/ Guider Style Design, but still this trawl has been very successful for SNG. Trawl Horizontal spread 228m vertical opening 137m tunnel reading 11m.

Two SWAN 75 WIDER STYLE WHITING CODEND supplied, these are new designs,

the target catch for the bag is 800T, made with quadruple twisted netting with various meshing sizes on the inner tube and triple braided netting on the outer cover. Rigging solutions 32mm DYNICE DUX Bridles length 135fm 44mm PRIMA OB lifeline.

FV Altaire have now completed their Blue Whiting season 21, the feedback on the performance of the gear supplied by SNG has been positive.

The Blue Whiting fishery located of the West coast of Ireland every year is backed up by a 24/7 repair service by SNG experience technicians who perform their craft with pride and are committed to getting vessels back to sea as quickly as possible.



Altaire boarding SNG Nets in Killybegs

Martin Hernon retires



Martin Hernon mending gear on board the Aine

On behalf of myself John Cunningham and fellow crew members of The Aine, we would like to wish Martin Bon Voyage on this his last trip with us.

Martin was born on Inis Mor in 1952. And at a young in 1967 along with his friend Pauric O'Flatharta (RIP Brassy) they attended a course on Inis Mor for Deckhands which was run by Captain Wholly. His Career began that same year in a Curragh at the age of 15, which continued for two further years before his itchy feet took him to the US for a year in 1969/70.

On his return to Ireland in 1971 he went fishing in Dunmore East

aboard Tom Mulally's Ard Butus. A year later found him in Howth Fishing on board the Metric Peter and Villa De Port Louis for two years before returning to Galway to fish aboard Duchies, Fort Aengus and Ard Cluin.

In 1980 the tide landed him in Killybegs where he joined Des Faherty on The Atlantean where he fished for the next 14 years. A few years was spent on board Teddy O'Shea's boat The Grove at Rockall.

1999 Martin and I joined Joseph Docherty's boat The Aine; we still remain there today where he celebrates his retirement on his 69th birthday.

For this last 13 summers Martin has been Captain of The Moon River out from Carrick on Shannon, ferrying passengers on Daily trips on the River Shannon where I'm sure you will see him for many a years to come.

To conclude I would like to say that in my eyes there is no better Deckhand/ Winch man/Mate sailed out of Killybegs. So from all on board The Aine we wish you the best that life has to offer and good health on you retirement.

Blue whiting fishery

The Blue Whiting fishery has come to an end for another year with most of the boats catching their quota in March. The triplets made good handy fishing off Arran Mor, filling their Tanks in a short span every time. The Aine was one of the last boats to finish landing their load into Skagen from the ST Kilda ground.

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NORTHERN IRELAND NEWS *By Dick James*

THE FISHERY

The Spring fishery is now in full swing with more settled weather but still the uncertainties about access and quota remain making it difficult to plan or predict. The Nephrops fishery has centred in the western half of the Irish Sea in the deeper water for the last of the larger run of prawns destined for the whole langoustine export trade.

In the run up to Easter some 8/10 vessels spent some time over on the eastern side of the Irish Sea off Cumbria. Fishing lasted a few days only but the following week they were back again looking for the spring bonanza which can be a feature on these grounds. Maybe a tad too early as it is usually May when those eastern grounds come good.

There has been little interest in the Clyde as an alternative and the Smalls has been a miss for most

of the year to date. It could be said that things are good enough at home so there is no need to travel. In the North Sea the handful of boats usually found in that area for one reason or another continue to plough on with all reports stating that this year is notably better than last year but still not great. West of Scotland in the Minch area is also quiet but there seems to be a burgeoning prawn fishery on the Porcupine judging by the fleet based on it.

The three registered Northern Irish boats regularly found there are plugging away with the rest and although a quota lift of 25% is reported there at the levels of fishing that can't last that long. Reports are that the Apollo is to make the visit this year after giving it a miss last year which leads to suppose that continental markets are holding up.

On the white fish front

the Haddock fishery off the County Louth coast is getting some attention but the fish size remains small promising better later in the year but as yet receiving small prices. Some effort by individual ships is taking place in the North Channel but again that is attracting little interest from those content to remain at the prawns.

In the south the Unity continues working from Newlyn with the new electronic market apparently helping prices and volumes. There is interest from Dutch and Belgian vessels here and the Trevoise fishery seems well populated this year.

Again one wonders how long the quota can stand it. As a consequence there seems modest interest by the foreign beamers in the north Irish Sea at present although it is still early in the year. The Margaret of Ladram is putting in regular and sizeable landings through

Holyhead though how the new limits for access affects the continental ship is difficult to say as there has only been a recent fishery after years of neglect due to quota limits.

On the Pelagic front the three local boats have been tied up for months now but the odd Irish vessel still puts in the odd landing with the Rachel Jay being the latest to drop off a landing of Blue Whiting.

Inshore it is getting to the Spring slack season with some boats taking the chance to winch out of the water for paint-up and general maintenance. This section of the fleet have just benefited from the Northern Ireland latest Covid grant although in many cases it did not live up to expectation but the recent UK based scheme favoured smaller boats and came as a bonus for that section of the fleet, and much needed too.



Kilkeel Skipper Trevor Annett showing he hasn't lost any skills. Photo Leslie Campbell

2020 Sea -Fish Landing Statistics

The United Kingdom Marine Management Organisation has recently published the preliminary 2020 annual Sea Fisheries statistics which starkly relate the circumstances the industry faced in the year of the Pandemic. Much of it comes as no surprise but it does quantify and verify the difficulties faced by many in 2020 and those which escaped the situation to whatever degree.

Certain sections of the UK fleet had a good year in 2020! The Pelagic sector saw Mackerel landings rise by £11 million to £87 million and Herring up by £1 million to £18.8 million. Northern Ireland benefited with a 52% rise in tonnage landings giving a 23% rise in value to £4.2 million. In contrast shellfish landings into Northern Ireland suffered a 7% fall in tonnage and a 25% fall in value to £15.4 million. Much of this was in Nephrops which is the mainstay species for the Northern Ireland fleet but Brown Crab also dropped in tonnage and value terms. The fall in Northern Ireland values was, however, not as great as it was in either Scotland or England which showed the resilience of the sector in meeting market conditions. Demersal landings took the biggest hit in Northern Ireland with tonnage falling by 50% and values 47%. This again reflected the market conditions with the domestic market in

Northern Ireland being relatively weak.

Landings by port also reflected the resilience of various sectors. Belfast accounted for virtually all of the local boats landings of pelagic species with a value of £4.2 million of Mackerel and Herring up 22% on the previous year reflecting quota availability. Ardglass also returned an increase in landing values up 9% in value and 600 tonnes in tonnage bucking the trend as this was mainly Nephrops based and in contrast to the general trend in the Nephrops sector in the rest of the United Kingdom. This returned Ardglass to the top of the landings league in Northern Ireland as Kilkeel in contrast saw landings value drop 44% to £5.89 million from a reduced tonnage of 3,400 tonnes down from 4,956 tonnes the previous year.

Demersal landing would feature in this but again Nephrops is the major species in Kilkeel too. Portavogie appears to be suffering a long term decline as landed tonnage dropped to 2077 tonnes, the lowest in the last 5 years with landed value also at record lows at £3.6 million in 2020 compared with £5.54 million in 2019 and £6.65 million in 2016. Again Nephrops is the main species in Portavogie the fleet here has shrunk not so much in numbers but in a trend to smaller under 10 meter boats.

Grants

There has never been a year like it! Grants were once a thing you had to make a thorough applications for, support them with all types of documentation, suffer the terms and conditions and when it came to claims the mechanism was again tortuous and if there was anything wrong then the whole lot was returned to you to try again. More often than not it was a process which needed a specialist to find the way through the process, accountants or PO's were the facilitating bodies and then after the whole process had been gone through and the grant paid if things changed (like the boat was sold) then the grant needed to be paid back unless circumstances could be proved that the work done was eligible for

transfer.

This past 12 months has seen a multitude of grants on offer to cover not just improvements to boat or business but also the effects of Covid and more latterly Brexit on owners, crew and markets. In many of the schemes accountants were needed to prove earnings, costs and predicted losses but the grants available multiplied and in most cases were secured. Indeed grant was the difference between going out of business and hanging on in there. Still the process was often long and tortuous and in all probability gave those processing the application and claims quite a severe headache also. But at least they got paid for it!

Recently I was perusing accounts for a Company of which I am chair and

noted in the income side of the accounts was a grant entry. I thought this strange as the business had never previously qualified for grant but on enquiry was told it was furlough payments for staff on temporary lay off due to Covid which thankfully lasted a few months only and is now history but the look of the accounts was well enhanced by that contribution!

The Northern Ireland fleet have benefited in 2020 by two sets of Covid grants payable to boat owners and two also for qualifying crew including skippers the latest Northern Ireland payout for the inshore fleet being made just before Easter (due Christmas last) but more recently a grant became available through Westminster and the MMO

based in Newcastle (Tyne and Wear) for Brexit Compensation. For the Boats this was based on overall vessel length and on averaged fixed costs which were set on Seafish Documentation from 2018 and which varied from £2400 for an under 6 meter vessel to £10,000 for an over 10 meter vessel with swift and simple application by e-mail and the money in the Bank the day following receipt of application.

Add to this the interest/charge free bounce back loan of £50,000 and in the past 12 months there has been a significant grant-fest bonanza without having to spend any of "own" money. Obviously the bill is paid in a different currency which is of Covid and poor Brexit denomination.

Post Brexit Quota Uplift Determination

After concluding the redistribution of fish quote as part of the Brexit trade deal between the UK and the EU the United Kingdom has now resolved the distribution of the uplift gains between the four devolved administrations each of which has its own responsibility for the management of their own fishery and quota attached to it. The deal was fraught with dispute and is applicable for one year only and each administration has its own preferred methodology for redistributing and managing that quota uplift although the core UK quota allocation will be allocated via the FQA mechanism.

There have been calls from various groups for preferential allocation of the additional quota to address perceived unfair disparity on previous allocations.

Wales has held out on that theme and in departure from the overall agreement has secured underpinned extra allocation. Most of this is adjacent to the

Irish Sea which reflects the geography of Wales and the predominant structure of the Welsh fleet of smaller vessels. Notably Wales has secured a minimum of 55 tonnes of Skate/Ray, 36 tonnes Vllfg Sole, 32 tonnes Vllfg Plaice 50 tonnes V11 anglers, 50 tonnes Mackerel and 20 tonnes of Irish Sea Herring.

Otherwise the UK opted for division of the additional quota post Brexit on the basis of 90% according to the uptake catch record with a reference period of 2015/19 and 10% bases on zonal attachment (backyard) allocation favoured by the Scots in the Brexit debate.

Overall the percentages were agreed on this basis and whereas percentages are OK they also relate to the actual uplift so tonnages which are the important thing are subject to that also. It is possible to work out the possibilities here by taking the 2020 allocations applying the uplift to those stocks and estimating what that

would result in tonnage per stock.

If you take the final uplift as the 2025 figure and assuming overall TACS remain relatively consistent then the Northern Ireland position shows a significant uplift of around 1300 tonnes for Area V11 Nephrops giving an anticipated NI quota of @9000 tonnes, then an additional 1800 tonnes of Irish Sea Herring lifts the NI quota to something in the order of 8000 tonnes before looking at more modest uplifts of 57 tonnes V11 Anglers, 36 tonnes Vlla Cod, 1300 tonnes North Sea Herring, 173 tonnes Celtic Sea Haddock, 235 tonnes Irish Sea Haddock, 45 tonnes Irish Sea Sole, 138 tonnes Irish Sea Whiting. Around 2800 tonnes of extra Western Mackerel should also accrue to the Northern Ireland fleet and it is worth noting that the zonal attachment criteria did not apply to Mackerel or Blue Whiting presumably because it is a widespread stock (in everybody's backyard) nor the

Norway, Faroe or Greenland stocks because they are in nobodies backyard!

Now the debate moves to a different arena. How are the individual administrations going to allocate these windfalls to the catchers? The Scots apparently favour a system based on recent catch track record with an element set aside for small inshore boats, the English and Welsh have already indicated a preference for central administration with an option to sell (or lease) but the Northern Irish have yet to decide but seemingly favour an allocation based on FQA's which in Northern Ireland have escaped the criticism of equability presumably due to the way the system has operated in Northern Ireland previously where the PO's are reasonably inclusive.

That then leaves several questions. What happens next year and subsequent years? When will the EU resolve TAC allocations that we can get on with the fishery in 2021?

Annual health check for the Atlantic on the Ocean Climate Survey

Scientists from the Marine Institute, Maynooth University and the National University of Ireland Galway were recently aboard the RV Celtic Explorer, for a 14-day scientific survey studying the shelf and deep water off the west coast of Ireland. This Marine Institute's annual ocean climate survey has been running since 2006 and facilitates long-term physical and biogeochemical observations of the deep water environment in the South Rockall Trough.

The Rockall Trough is an important region that provides a pathway for the transport of heat and salt from the North East Atlantic to the Nordic Seas, where waters are subjected to phenomena such as deep convective mixing that creates cold dense water. Water exchange and interactions in the Rockall Trough play a fundamental part in the overall thermohaline circulation in the North East Atlantic; as large volumes of warm water pass through the Rockall Channel, before flowing into the Nordic Seas with a return of cold dense bottom water outflow spilling into the region. Changes in the region's water properties, such as temperature and salinity, vary on inter-annual and decadal time scales.

Chief Scientist on the research survey, Dr Caroline Cusack of the Marine Institute said, "Scientific data collected on this survey allows the assessment of inter-annual variability of physical and biogeochemical conditions that impact shelf and deep waters. This variability can have a range of impacts on ocean ecosystems, ocean circulation and weather patterns. The survey contributes to activities of the International Council for the Exploration of the Sea and provides support to the Convention for the protection of the marine environment of the North East Atlantic (OSPAR Convention), the Marine Strategy Framework Directive focused on protecting ocean health, and climate change assessments."

This year, Maynooth University scientists from the A4 project (Aigéin, Aeráid, agus athrú Atlantáigh = Oceans, Climate, and Atlantic Change) joined the survey to work with the Marine Institute oceanographic and climate services team. The A4 project, supported by Marine Institute funding, studies how changes in the Atlantic



Scientists profile the full water column and collect measurements of temperature, salinity and oxygen. Photo: Tomasz Szumski

impact Ireland and north western Europe through changes in ocean circulation and sea level and is developing predictive capacity for these regions. Recent research by the A4 project found that the Gulf Stream System, also known as the Atlantic Meridional Overturning Circulation (AMOC), is at its weakest in over a millennium.

Scientists from the National University of Ireland, Galway were also on-board the RV Celtic Explorer working with Marine Institute chemists to collect supporting chemistry information. The NUI Galway scientists are currently working on the Marine Institute funded VOCAB project (Ocean Acidification and Biogeochemistry: Variability and Vulnerability) to enhance knowledge on the vulnerability of selected marine ecosystems in Irish waters to ocean acidification. NUI Galway scientists also collected samples relevant to the JPI Climate and JPI Oceans CE2COAST project which aims to downscale global climate models to regional and local scales to provide information on the impacts of climate change tailored to local needs.

Mick Gillooly, Director of Ocean Climate and Information Services at the Marine Institute said, "Collaborative oceanographic research is very important to help inform Ireland's response to climate change and underlines the importance of researching marine impacts of climate change, which could have a significant societal

impact on Ireland. The Marine Institute's annual climate survey, with scientific experts from collaborating research groups, enables us to generate a long-term time series of key oceanographic data to further increase our knowledge about our changing ocean climate."

This year, 51 stations were occupied with 301 depths sampled. At each station, scientists profile the full water column and collect measurements of temperature, salinity and oxygen. Water samples are collected at targeted depths and analysed on board to determine the salinity, dissolved oxygen, inorganic nutrients and carbon content (DIC/TA). The RV Celtic Explorer's advanced underway data acquisition system gathers information on temperature, salinity, fluorescence, and pCO₂ in surface waters. This year, the Marine Institute also had a laboratory on board equipped with state-of-the-art analysers, enabling near real-time reporting of nutrients, oxygen and salinity.

The annual ocean climate survey, supports a number of Marine Institute ocean observation programmes. The Irish Marine Data Buoy Observation Network, managed by the Marine Institute in collaboration with Met Éireann, is a network of five offshore weather observing marine buoys around Ireland. The M6 Data Buoy, located hundreds of kilometres to the west of Ireland in the South Rockall Trough, was a station sampled during this scientific survey.

A Marine Institute glider, an underwater autonomous vehicle, with scientific experts from collaborating research groups, enables us to generate a long-term time series of key oceanographic data on conductivity, temperature, depth, fluorescence, turbidity and dissolved oxygen. Since its deployment, the glider has travelled more than 350 kilometres collecting additional oceanographic data for the scientists involved.

Scientists also deployed two Argo Floats, which measure temperature, salinity and depth with one Argo Float also taking measurements of the water oxygen content. Argo Floats are autonomous instruments that remain at sea for a period of three to five years which provide high quality temperature and salinity depth profiles while ascending and descending to and from the surface from a depth of 2,000 metres, as it drifts through the ocean. There are currently about 4,000 Argo Floats in the world's oceans. As part of Ireland's participation in the Euro-Argo ERIC Programme, the Marine Institute deploys three Argo Floats each year. The track and data from current Irish Argo Floats can be viewed at www.digitalocean.ie

The annual ocean climate survey, the A4 project and VOCAB (Ocean Acidification and Biogeochemistry: variability, trends and vulnerability) are supported by the Marine Institute under the Marine Research Programme funded by the Irish Government.



SCOTLAND NEWS

SSA Criticise UK & Scottish Governments For Funding Failures

The Scottish Seafood Association has launched an angry attack on the UK and Scottish governments for letting the seafood processing sector down in its "hour of greatest need".

SSA chief executive Jimmy Buchan said seafood processing businesses welcomed the financial support from Westminster and Holyrood for Covid-19 and Brexit.

But he highlighted that payouts under the £23 million Brexit scheme are only for 50% of losses. It also excludes larger businesses and those exporters which decide not to ship smaller consignments of seafood because cost exceeds value.

"The truth is that while the financial support that has been forthcoming has been gratefully received, its partial nature means that businesses are being left in great difficulties in their hour of greatest need.

"There have been a lot of promises relating to smoothing the export path post-Brexit, but very few of them have been delivered."

Mr Buchan further rounded on the UK Government for failing to spell out how its £100m funding scheme, promised as the Brexit agreement was signed in late December, would work and which businesses stand to benefit.

"This funding package now looks like a convenient headline designed to appease the sector. When will they start taking bids, who will be eligible, when will payouts be made? We need to know but we are greeted with silence on this at every turn."

Mr Buchan also criticised the Scottish Government for not using devolved powers and funds to help industry.

"They have a £14 million fund from the Treasury, which they have known about for some time, yet there are no guidelines and application process in place. We know only that all projects must be for SMEs and completed by 31st March 2022 – far too tight a timetable for major works.

"It is time for both governments to step up to the plate and back up their promises with meaningful action.

"This sector is the backbone of

many rural Scottish communities and a source of jobs as well as world-class seafood. If we don't support these businesses and jobs they will be lost to other regions and other countries and they won't come back."

Management measures prohibiting a number of marine activities such as fishing, diving and construction within the site will initially last for a period of 12 months and will come into force on 17 March 2021.

If, after this time permanent protection is found to be necessary, then proposals will undergo a full stakeholder engagement process, public consultation and impact assessments.

Minister for Rural Affairs and the Natural Environment Ben Macpherson said:

"The flapper skate, which was once abundant in our seas, is now only found in the northern area of the North Sea and off Scotland's north-west coast.

"The designation of this new Marine Protected Area will allow further information to be gathered to inform permanent proposals and will safeguard an area of vital importance to this critically endangered species. This will support conservation efforts to help it recover back to a healthy status in Scottish waters."

This is the second urgent Marine Protected Area (MPA) to be created using powers within the Marine (Scotland) Act 2010, the first being the Loch Carron urgent MPA created to protect flame shell beds in 2017. The Loch Carron MPA was made permanent in 2019.

Scotland's Marine Protected Area (MPA) network covers in excess of 37% of our sea area, exceeding the proposed new global target of 30% coverage by 2030.

Each site in the network is managed to achieve its conservation objectives and work is underway to develop fisheries management proposals for a number of the sites.

These areas not only protect the flapper skate but a wide variety of species and habitats including other iconic species like the minke whale, basking sharks and Risso's dolphins.

Latest Home and Dry Campaign Launched



'Home and Dry' - the campaign sharing vital messages about safety at sea – is reminding those working on Scottish fishing vessels to take three simple steps to reduce the risk of death from falling overboard.

Over the recent winter, seven fishermen tragically lost their lives whilst working on fishing vessels, devastating fishing communities around the UK. Six of those fatal incidents saw fishermen ending up in the water.

Falling overboard is a major cause of death in the fishing industry. 85% of deaths involve people ending up in the water and 42% of all deaths are recorded as man overboard incidents.

"Don't wait for an accident to happen to brush up on safety management," says John Clarke, a Scottish vessel owner and skipper who was pulled overboard by a rope in 2013.

"It's not until I was in hospital, attached to a bed and having to sit through countless operations that it dawned on me that I was lucky to survive. It was at that moment that I decided I would do everything I could to ensure what happened to me never happened to one of my crew."

Over the last 10 years (2011 to 2020), the Marine Accident

Investigation Branch (MAIB), reported 60 fatalities from UK fishing vessels and 51 of those ended up in water. 25 deaths were recorded as man overboard incidents. The highest number of fatalities is on vessels under 15 metres.

The Fishing Industry Safety Group (FISG) has launched its latest Home and Dry campaign focused on prevention of man overboard incidents.

To help reduce deaths at sea from falling overboard, the campaign is reminding those who work on fishing vessels to take three simple steps:

Complete a written risk assessment and review regularly
Practise Man Overboard drills regularly

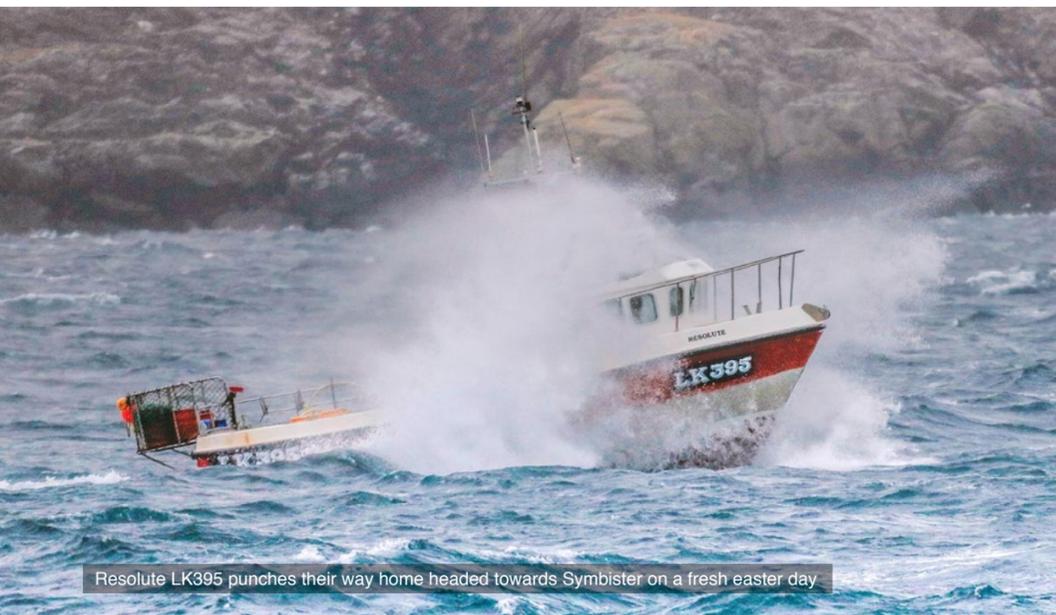
Always wear a Personal Flotation Device (PFD) on deck for if the worst happens

The campaign's dedicated safety website offers helpful resources from a range of organisations, to help those working on fishing vessels to stay safe. It includes videos on how to do a risk assessment, advice on ManOverboard drills and training and how to wear a PFD properly.

The campaign website is www.homeanddry.uk

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

Frustration As Pesorsa Dos Returns To Local Fishing Grounds



Resolute LK395 punches their way home headed towards Symbister on a fresh easter day

Local fishermen are up in arms again after the German registered gill-netter Pesorsa Dos re-appeared in the waters to the west of Shetland.

Last year, the Spanish owned vessel was at the centre of a huge controversy after the crew of the Alison Kay (LK57) posted a video that appeared to be showing how the gill netter tried to foul the propeller of the local whitefish trawler.

At the time UK authorities such as Marine Scotland and the Maritime and Coastguard Agency (MCA) said they were unable to investigate the incident, which took place in EU waters 30 miles off Shetland. The German authorities eventually decided there was no case to answer.

However, some weeks later the same vessel was detained by the Irish authorities for allegedly infringing EU fisheries regulations and escorted to Killybegs.

Following Brexit and the “hugely disappointing” trade deal, the UK has become an independent coastal state, but EU vessels continue to have full access to UK waters until 2026.

The Spanish fleet are

covering hundreds of square miles with their gill nets making it impossible for the local fleet to fish their home grounds.

Chief officer of the Shetland Fishermen’s Association Simon Collins said return of the Pesorsa Dos was a stark reminder that she had never been prosecuted for last year’s incident.

“She is fishing out there legally, and if she would be inspected and everything is fine, then we would not have a leg to stand on,” he said.

However, in an attempt to physically separate gill-netters from local whitefish trawlers Marine Scotland has been talking to the industry to find ways for both fisheries to co-exist.

If implemented this would push the gill netters further out into deeper water and would also set rules on the size of nets that can be used and for how long these can be kept in the water.

Marine Scotland would then be able to control and enforce these new regulations. Collins said: “That’s not our members’ proposal; they just want to get rid of them.

“The general question is

“We will introduce revised management rules in relation to the operation of gill net and long line fisheries in our waters to better facilitate close working between static and mobile sectors. These measures will be set out in our future catching policy,” the spokesman said

Fishermen have privately written directly to the head of Marine Scotland seeking an explanation why the agency’s fisheries patrol vessels appear to avoid inspecting foreign vessels.

Their case has also been taken up by the isles’ parliamentarians who have vowed to make representations in Edinburgh and Whitehall.

MP Alistair Carmichael said: “This should come as no surprise to anyone. Last year they were caught on film deliberately trying to foul the propeller of the Shetland white fish trawler Alison Kay.

“Despite that neither Scottish nor UK enforcement authorities have even tried to prosecute them. Of course they will carry on fishing in these waters in these circumstances. Why wouldn’t they?

“Gill net trawling is an unsustainable practice and needs to be stopped. Until it is, we need to protect our fleet against the pirates that carry it out.”



Pesorsa Dos trying to foul the Alison Kays prop last June

Shetland Whale And Dolphin Spotters Wanted For Project

Wildlife charity Whale and Dolphin Conservation (WDC) is calling for volunteers from across Shetland and Orkney to help spot and protect whales and dolphins by signing up as volunteers to a citizen science project.

The charity has received a grant from the National Lottery heritage fund to expand its Shorewatch programme to the Northern Isles.

They are looking for volunteers to undertake training to identify the whales and dolphins that can regularly be seen from the shoreline and to carry out regular 10-minute watches at designated

sites to scientifically record the mammals’ movement.

WDC policy officer Emma Steel said no previous experience is necessary to sign up as expert training as well as equipment will be provided.

“It is vital to understand which areas might be key habitat for whales and dolphins,” she said.

“We basically need to have eyes on the sea around the entire Scottish coastline; this is why community participation is so important to the long-term management of marine species and their homes.”

In addition to learning how to identify the 18 different species of whales and dolphins that

can be seen from the shores of the Northern Isles, volunteers have the opportunity to learn how to recognise and report any disturbance, and will also learn how best to raise awareness of the threats whales and dolphins face in Scotland today.

The call for volunteers coincides with an incident off Brae last week where a boat is alleged to have disturbed a pod of orcas. Police are investigating.

Shorewatch volunteer Holly Peek, based in Orkney, said: “Shorewatch is a great opportunity to get actively involved in protecting whales and dolphins.”

Anyone interested in



Shetland Shorewatch volunteer Holly Peek

joining the WDC Shorewatch programme can contact them via e-mail: northernisles@shorewatch.org

Fresh Reminder Made Over Marine Litter

A local man has stressed the importance of tackling the issue of marine litter after coming to the rescue of an injured seal which had netting wrapped around its neck.

Vincent Tonner said he could immediately tell something was not right with the seal when he came across the mammal while walking on coastline in Sandwick in late March.

Upon close inspection the gill netting had cut “at least an inch or two” into the seal’s neck – but Tonner managed to cut it free and allowed the animal back into the sea.

The deep gash was not a pretty sight, but Tonner believed the netting had mostly just cut through fat.

“I could tell immediately it had something wrong with it as it saw me and wasn’t particularly fast in trying to escape like seals normally do,” he said.

“I could see it had something dragging along with it as it

moved towards the sea.”

“I knew if it got in the sea there was no way I would get another chance to help it so I ran and grabbed hold of the net just in time, of course it immediately turned and tried to bite me but I managed to roll it onto its back with my foot.

“I could see there was a gill net around its neck and that it had cut in very deep.”

He said the only way he could get close enough to its neck to cut the net without getting bitten was to gently hold back its head with one of my feet.

“I managed to get the net cut off and then I had to get in really close to open the wound up a little and make sure I had got all of it,” Tonner said.

“It appeared to have cut through mostly fat and no further which was lucky. I then rolled it upright again.

“Seals are a lot like dogs and I have always had dogs – their body language is very similar so I could kind of read what it

was trying to do and avoid being bitten.

“Once I got it upright again, I held on to it for a moment and I could feel it was still strong and agile so I knew it had a chance of recovery.”

With no phone signal to call anyone, he decided to let the seal go, with the marine animal quickly making off for the sea.

“It swam away really well and surfaced again some distance away. I sat there for a bit and it came back really close and just sat and looked at me from the water – it was pretty cool. I think in the salty water it will heal up and be okay.”

Marine pollution and litter are nothing new for Shetland’s shores, but the close encounter with the troubled seal has brought the issue back into focus.

Tonner said it is something he feels strongly about.

“I spend a lot of time wandering around banks and beaches in the more remote areas of Shetland and it’s a huge

problem,” he said.

“I quite often end up dragging piles of nets back with me from my walks to dispose of them properly.

“The Voar Redd Up is a fantastic thing and there are lots of Shetlanders who clear up beaches on an ongoing basis, but it still doesn’t keep up with the sheer quantity of waste that ends up on our shores.

“If you ask the local fishermen, they will tell you some worrying figures for the amount of foreign gill nets being used around Shetland at any given time.”

In recent years Shetland News has reported on frustration among local fishermen on the amount of discarded gear they come across when operating in the waters around the isles.

They said they constantly haul up stripped back gill nets and large quantities of long lines, bundled up and allegedly thrown overboard by European fishing vessels.

‘Exceptional’ Regional Marine Plan Set To Become First In Scotland

A regional marine plan guiding the management of Shetland’s coastal waters and set to become the first of its type in Scotland has won the backing of local councillors.

The plan says it will “build on Shetland’s existing track record of effective and sustainable marine management” and also

“ensure the marine waters around Shetland continue to be clean, healthy, safe and productive”.

The plan has been drafted under Scottish Government requirements by the Shetland Islands Marine Planning Partnership, which brings together the council and the

NAFC Marine Centre.

Coastal zone management team leader Simon Pallant said that the plan should inform decision making in areas like works licences, marine applications and leasing in industries such as aquaculture, fishing and renewables.

The draft plan got an airing

during a series of council meetings in April ahead of being submitted to the government for approval.

When adopted it will become the first of 11 regional marine plans in Scotland, and will replace the current Shetland marine spatial plan which acts a guidance for local development.



UK NEWS

CFPO issues statement of policies and aims covering 2021-2026



The Cornish Fish Producers' Organisation (CFPO) has responded to the 5.5 year 'adjustment period' within the Trade & Cooperation Agreement (TCA) by issuing a forward-looking statement of policies and aims covering 2021-2026. The statement, issued to members and MPs last week, sets in stone the overarching priorities of the PO in supporting and protecting the interests of its members, marketing Cornish seafood, and building a strong future for the fishing industry. It also details 2021-specific goals: responding to key events and policy developments anticipated within the year.

Each year, from now through to the end of the TCA fisheries adjustment period, the PO has committed to issuing a further statement: holding both itself to account, and providing a clear road map against which CFPO Chief Executive, Paul Trebilcock, will hold decision-makers and politicians to account:

"It's been a tough start to the year, but at the CFPO we wanted to take in the lay of the land, consider what the TCA and the Fisheries Act both mean for our members - on the water, in real terms - and deliver a positive, proactive plan to make sure we are continually working to strengthen fishing communities across Cornwall. Whether this is through innovative marketing of our sustainable catch, building local apprenticeship schemes, or committing to being on-top of legislative and policy development - we wanted to set

out our goals publicly, invite discussion with members, and show Defra, politicians and others how we'll be building up to the end of the adjustment period in 2026. We didn't get what we wanted from the TCA, but we can still build new opportunities for the seafood sector in Cornwall".

PREFACE

A new Fisheries Act and Trade and Cooperation Agreement (TCA) are in place.

An opportunity now exists to step away from the justified frustration at the outcome of the TCA, and to approach the policy and political sphere – and our members – with a concrete, five-year plan to build, and showcase, the resilience and proactive approach of the fishing industry.

As the CFPO, our day-to-day operation in responding the members needs won't change. But now alongside this, we must ensure that our position ahead of the 2026 expiration date of the current agreement, as it pertains to fisheries, reflects our core value of a positive, sustainable, profitable and diverse fishing industry that is at the very heart of coastal communities.

This statement of our policies and aims will be subject to formal yearly updates. In a clear Action Plan, it will set out how the CFPO intends to respond to the development of fisheries management under the Fisheries Act, how it will identify opportunities under the marginal quota uplift secured under the TCA, how it will overcome the barriers and challenges that the Trade Agreement has left in place, or created, and how the PO will continue to support and promote sustainable Cornish fish, and our fishing businesses, in new ways.

The next five years is a crucial period for UK fishing. Many of the actions included here are inherent to how the CFPO operates, and will continue to operate well beyond 2026. Drawn together in this way, and with yearly

updates, this statement simply and clearly sets out how we will hold ourselves and government actors to account during this initial period of the TCA for fisheries. Actions will adapt and evolve in line with policy and PO priorities.

ACTION PLAN: GUIDING PRINCIPLES

Our guiding principles will remain the same across the next five years. The CFPO will commit to:

- Fully interpreting and understanding legislative, policy and trade developments that affect members' interests – and supply relevant and accessible information, or digests, in a timely manner. In all actions, be conscious of implications as related to the terms of the Trade Agreement.
- Any and all actions possible to support better fisheries management: that respects and protects the diversity of the Cornish fleet, from small to large vessels, mobile and static gear, and individual-owned through to corporate fishing businesses.
- Working to continually improve marketing and prominence of Cornish fish and shellfish, and looking for new ways to do this. Raising awareness of the diverse range and sustainable provenance of the fish and shellfish landed by our members, to stimulate demand and consumption. Respecting and maintaining the PO's strong roots in our diverse inshore fishing fleets and communities, ensuring these remain core to the ethos and operation of the CFPO.
- Supporting access to fishing opportunities: always emphasising the importance of fishing and related businesses to our local communities.
- Supporting data collection and active involvement in science to inform how our

fisheries are managed.

- Continuing to voice the views of our membership to policy-makers, the media, political figures and others, never shying away from highlighting where specific actions or promises were broken, but also working to forge new relationships and generate a pathway to the deal that the industry deserves in 2026.

ACTION AGENDA: YEAR ONE – 2021

2021 is a key year: the industry must respond to the deal, continue to respond to the impacts of the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, and work to 'shade in the detail' of the framework Fisheries Act to ensure that industry voices are central to the development of specific management tools across the country, through genuine co-management.

In 2021, the CFPO will:

- **Fully digest and interpret the implications of the Trade Agreement for our membership** – and communicate this clearly, both internally – to members – and externally, across all of our communications channels.
- **Identify the best way forward under the Trade Agreement** – finding ways to maximise value wherever possible.
- Monitor the establishment of the 'Specialised Fisheries Committee' provided for within the Agreement, and understand how best to engage in this important new stakeholder forum.
- **Remain on the front-foot with key consultations run by Government in the areas of quota distribution and economic link conditions** – follow-up CFPO submissions with advocacy, coordinating with national bodies, such as the National Federation of Fishermen's Organisations, where appropriate to ensure that

policy outcomes linked to the consultations reflect the needs of the industry under the new Trade Agreement.

- Work to secure **equitable access** to quota opportunities for all working fishermen.
- **Continue to track all other aspects of the development and implementation of Fisheries Act-relevant policies** – including through ongoing liaison with DEFRA and MPs, sharing the CFPO position on national fisheries management proactively wherever possible.
- We will be a voice for **co-management** of UK fisheries, engaging proactively with the development of Fisheries Management Plans.
- We will work to ensure **sustainable management of non-TAC species.**
- **Continue to find ways to**

promote Cornish seafood in a range of modern, dynamic ways – through the Seafood Cornwall initiative delivering in-person and online engagement, recipe and product development, and securing additional funding to continue this work well into the future.

- Explore avenues for Seafood Cornwall to engage with **high-profile local and national events**, such as the G7 meeting – being hosted in Cornwall in June 2021.
- Ensure promotion and increasing demand of domestically caught and landed seafood at a national level is a priority for Government and DEFRA.
- Identify actions to **protect existing export markets and develop new markets, at home and abroad.**
- **Continue to be a national leader in promoting**

fishing careers – through our dedicated Cornish fishing apprenticeship scheme.

- Build on the recently established CFPO Youth Board to ensure the voice of the next generation of fishermen have a platform through which to share their ambitions, concerns and ideas.
- **Engage with Cornwall Council** – building on engagement in 2020, to highlight the value of the fishing industry to Cornwall and its coastal communities, and advocate for greater recognition and understanding of this from the Council, including the development of a Cornwall-specific fishing strategy for the seafood industry (along the whole supply chain) in Cornwall.
- **Keep holding political figures, managers and others to account**

– making sure we get answers to members' questions, and advocating for the Cornish fishing industry through ongoing dialogue with the authorities.

- Including through our Fathom podcast, where we will respond rapidly to new episode content to any developments, of any kind, that affect fishing in Cornwall.
- **Always have its doors open to members** – any question or concern, the team will be available to support you.



New App To Gather Data On Accidental

Clean Catch UK launched an innovative new app, developed with and for the fishing industry.

The app, supported by Defra and developed by Cefas and AST, is designed to be easy to use alongside fishing as usual activities, enabling crews to record vital information about their catch, including bycatch (the unintended capture or entanglement of non-target species in fishing gear) whilst at sea. The Clean Catch UK programme is a UK-wide network of organisations invested in the monitoring and reduction of accidental wildlife bycatch, working at the national, regional and – in this case – local level with members of the fishing industry, scientists, policy makers, and conservation organisations.

App users can record accidental bycatch of sensitive marine species such as dolphins and porpoises, seals, seabirds, sharks, skates and rays. This data collected by fishermen will contribute to an ongoing Clean Catch UK study to learn more about wildlife bycatch in South-West England fisheries, including where and when bycatch occurs, and which sensitive species are most susceptible. This data

will also help Clean Catch UK researchers assess the efficacy of mitigation measures to reduce accidental bycatch, and the programme has ambitions for the app to be used across several regional studies.

Stuart Hetherington, a Senior Marine Biologist at Cefas and Lead for the Clean Catch UK Programme, explained the importance of designing and executing research studies in partnership with fishermen. "Accidental capture of sensitive species of marine wildlife is an important issue to address, and the Clean Catch UK team works closely with the fishing industry to find solutions. Fishing crews themselves are best-placed to collect data on bycatch – they are on the water and know their catch and bycatch better than anyone. By working in partnership with skippers, we're ensuring the new Clean Catch UK app is easy to use, to streamline data collection without disrupting or adding undue burden to usual fishing activities."

The data collected by fishing crews using the app will contribute to Clean Catch UK's study on wildlife bycatch in South-West UK fisheries, and the research team are also keen for the app to be developed and used



in research further afield. The current study looks at wildlife bycatch in South-west fisheries, as well as the efficacy of various mitigation measures in reducing this bycatch. Skippers in the Clean Catch UK Local Focus Group, who helped to develop the app, are using it to collect data in a common dolphin and harbour porpoise bycatch reduction study. They're also providing vital feedback to ensure that the app is fit-for-purpose and easy to use whilst fishing as usual.

Victoria Bendall, Marine Scientist for Cefas and Co-Lead for Clean Catch UK, is keen for more fishing crews to use the app as part of this study. "The data already being collected by Cornish fishermen using the app is vital to understanding patterns of bycatch of sensitive marine species. Knowing more about these patterns, we can

work closely with our dedicated skippers to determine the best ways to help reduce accidental wildlife bycatch," she said. The Clean Catch UK programme hopes the new app will make it easier for more vessels to take part in this study. "More crews using the app means a more detailed picture about how to reduce bycatch across UK fisheries. We're keen to work with more vessels and would love to hear from anyone interested in getting involved."

Any fishing crews interested in finding out more about the app, or taking part in a Clean Catch UK study, can contact Stuart and Victoria at secretariat@cleancatchuk.com

More information on the broader, collaborative work of the Clean Catch UK programme is on the new website www.cleancatchuk.com.



UK NEWS EXTRA

New Financial Support For Fishing Families

A revolutionary new initiative funded by The Seafarers' Charity will provide access to a range of affordable financial services for fishing families. The Fishing Without a Safety Net research commissioned by the Charity demonstrated that new interventions were needed to create a better financial safety net for fishing families. The first significant solution emerging from the research findings sees Commsave Credit Union open its services to the UK fishing community on 15 April 2021.

Commsave Credit Union has been operating for nearly 30 years and has helped its 30,621 members to save over £86m. In January, the existing members agreed to support the UK's fishing community by extending the Credit Union's affordable financial services to all fishers, fish processors and fishmongers throughout the UK – in effect supporting the entire 'catch to plate' fishing community. Regulatory approval has been obtained and the Credit Union is now open to workers throughout the fishing industry.

The Seafarers' Charity has awarded a grant to the Credit Union to support the development of the Credit Union's new services for the fishing industry. They have worked closely to understand and respond to the financial needs of fishing communities. In addition to savings and loans accounts which are available to all members, the Credit Union has created financial products designed to suit the financial needs of fishers. These include:

- A Stormy Reserve Fund – a savings account in which money can be set aside and accessed immediately at times when unable to earn an income from fishing.
- A HMRC Budget & Bill Payment account – this savings account enables regular amounts to be set aside to pay



Commsave offers safe savings and affordable loan services to fishers all over the UK

Visit commsave.co.uk/fish to find out more!

the annual tax and National Insurance bill. At the end of the financial year the Credit Union can transfer the amount saved to HMRC.

- A special loan scheme to support access to government grants that require an up-front capital contribution.

The Credit Union pays a competitive annual dividend on members' savings and, for the current financial year, expects the return on members' savings to be 1.5%. They also provide a free Bereavement Fund for all members. On death (from any cause) this Fund writes off any outstanding debt to the Credit Union. In addition, the Bereavement Fund can make a payment to a nominated beneficiary ranging from £500 to £5,000, dependent on the average savings balance of the member over the 12 months prior to death. For those who do not have life assurance, this will provide a welcome and free benefit with an expediated payment at the time it is most needed, as the payment is not subject to probate.

Catherine Spencer, CEO, The Seafarers' Charity,

said, 'Our partnership with Commsave Credit Union demonstrates our new approach to tackling need at source and preventing potential problems. Our research demonstrated that fishers experience a high incidence of priority debt problems which can have unfortunate consequences if left unpaid. This includes outstanding debts for tax and national insurance payments which have longer-term consequences when trying to access welfare benefits or a state pension, as well as impacting the ability to obtain a mortgage or a car loan. A lack of holiday pay and difficulty obtaining financial products providing protection for sickness, critical injury, and life assurance have also been identified within the research as areas of concern.'

'In addition, some fishers find it difficult to establish and contribute to a personal pension plan, missing out on the tax efficiency and tax relief attached to this type of long-term saving. Government grants requiring an upfront financial contribution also created a barrier for those who did not have spare capital available and struggled to access a bank loan. We think this partnership is revolutionary and will provide a safety net and create financial resilience which will enable more fishing families to thrive.'

The fishing industry has faced unprecedented challenges with COVID-19 impacting sales to domestic and overseas hospitality, followed swiftly by the need to adjust to new export regulations arising from our trading relationship with Europe post Brexit. The Seafarers' Charity's research 'Fishing Without a Safety Net' revealed the precarious nature of reliance on a fishing income. It highlighted how economic necessity drives fishers out to sea even when seas are at their most dangerous. And that many fishing families lack a financial safety net to fall back on when the weather, illness or repairs prevent them from going to sea.

The Seafarers' Charity (King George's Fund for Seafarers) was previously known as Seafarers UK, it changed its name on 15 March 2021. **Further information about Commsave Credit Union is available at www.commsave.co.uk/fish**



ICELAND NEWS By Gudjón Einarsson

Two brand new pelagic vessels



Börkur NK will be delivered soon.



Vilhelm Thorsteinsson EA arrives.

In early April, Vilhelm Thorsteinsson EA 11, a new pelagic vessel built for fishing company Samherji, arrived for the first time in Akureyri in North Iceland. The ship is 89 meters long and 16.6 meters wide. The carrying capacity is well over three thousand tons in thirteen tanks where the catch will be cooled down. The price tag is 5.5 billion Icelandic Kronas, the equivalent of 36 million Euros.

A sister ship

Another Icelandic fishing company, Síldarvinnslan in East Iceland, which is partly owned by Samherji, is expecting Vilhelm's sister ship, Börkur NK, to arrive

in its hometown Neskaupstaður sometime soon. Both vessels were designed and built by the Karstensen's shipyard in Skagen, Denmark.

Two main engines

The vessels are naturally equipped with all the latest technology for fishing and handling catches. "A vessel like this, which has both a trawl and a seine, has a variable use of engine power, so we have two main engines in the ship. On the home voyage we only used one of them and in those conditions the ship uses much less fuel," says Kristjan Vilhelmsson, Samherji's managing director of ship operations.

Engine output 9,000 hp

In a trial tour of Börkur NK the two main engines were tested. With all tanks filled with seawater the ship's maximum speed turned out to be 15.5 miles per hour when running only one engine but 18.8 miles using both. The combined output of the two engines is 9,000 hp which is enormous. For example, it only took one minute and eight seconds to accelerate from 5 miles per hour to 15 miles per hour.

Each of the ships has cabins for fifteen people as well as a sickbay. They are very spacious and include a dining room and two lounges. On board there are fitness facilities and a sauna.

The largest fiberglass boat

The company Trefjar in Iceland has recently launched the largest fiberglass boat ever built in the country. The boat called Hulda GK is 29.5 gross tons, 11.99 meters long and 6.7 meters wide. As the measurements indicate the boat is designed to fit strict legal requirements on the size of small boats.

How many tubs?

Some would possibly say that Hulda GK is not the prettiest of boats but here practicality is the main goal. As the photo shows Hulda

GK is rather tall for a small boat. Boatbuilder Högni Bergthórsson explains why: "One of the first things you ask yourself when you start designing such a boat is how many fish tubs can you fit into the hold? In this case the number is 54 in total (460 litres each) on three levels."

Privacy

Another thing that makes this boat special compared with other boats of similar size is that there are four cabins for the crew, each with two berths. Two crews operate the boat, four people



Hulda GK, a fiberglass boat built in Iceland.

on each trip. This means that every person has his or her own private berth. That is considered a great privilege. Hulda GK is a long liner

with a Mustad autoline system with over 20,000 hooks. Its home port is Sandgerdi in South West Iceland.

Courageous steaming in passing the Bressay light entering Lerwick harbour for a quick drop off before heading to the crews home port Symbister

Images by Ivan Reid



COURAGEOUS

Shetland renewal programme continues as Courageous joins local fleet

By Shetland News & Niall Duffy

A Shetland fishing partnership has just taken delivery of the brand new Courageous (LK470) and is in the process of getting ready for the first fishing trip with the 28 metre whitefish trawler.

Skipper Ian Shearer and his partners Christopher Irvine, James Johnson and Malcolm Reid sailed

into their home port of Symbister after crossing the North Sea from Hvide Sande in Denmark where the vessel was built.

The new vessel replaces the previous Courageous, formally known as the Guardian Angell, which they had bought from Yell in 2015.

The move enabled the young fishing partnership – four men were aged between 17 and 25 at the time - to get a foothold in the local

industry. The fifth shareholder in the company is local fishing agent LHD.

Skipper Shearer said that after fishing with the previous Courageous for a number of years they realised that getting a better and bigger boat “would be a good option for us”.

Shearer, who won the Fishing News young skipper of the year accolade in 2016, said the new Courageous “was a lot more

advanced” and would make life at sea safer and, hopefully, also more profitable.

Courageous was designed in house and built by the Vestværflet yard. The hull was built in Gdansk, Poland and completed in Hvide Sande.

Propulsion of Courageous is by a Mitsubishi S12R main engine driving a Heimdal K-600 variable pitch 4 blade propeller in a high-efficiency nozzle through a

FACT FILE

VESSEL NAME: COURAGEOUS
REG NO: LK470
HOMEPORT: SYMBISTER
SKIPPER: IAN SHEARER
CREW: 6
TARGET SPECIES: PRAWNS / WHITEFISH
LENGTH: 28M
BEAM: 8.7M
DRAUGHT: 6.6M

Heimdal HG5114 2PTOCR 11.43:1 reduction gearbox with 2 PTO,s for hydraulic pumps. A Hundested SFT 5, 250 HP hydraulic driven bowthruster is also fitted.

Twin Mitsubishi 6D24, 195 KVA, 3 x 400 V, 50 Hz auxiliary engines provide electrical power and a Mitsubishi 40 KVA harbour genset is also fitted.

The vessel is laid out as a single rig trawler with the catch bagged and landed at the stern before being conveyed to a automated fish handling/sorting system supplied by VCU which includes a KM-Fish gutting machine and pack at sea system

The 1,200 box capacity refrigerated fish room was installed by Lemvig Maskin & Køleteknik and twin 3 ton a day ice makers keep the catch at optimal freshness.

Congratulations on the latest addition to the local fleet came from Brian Isbister, the chief



Crew left to right: James Johnson (Skipper), Ian Shearer (2nd Skipper), Malcolm Reid (Engineer), Davy Shearer and Christopher Irvine

executive of the Shetland Fish Producers' Organisation.

The Shetland PO was instrumental in helping the young men getting access to the all important quota when they started out in 2015.

Isbister said buying a boat and acquiring the necessary quota was as “enormous task” in financial terms and beyond the financial capability of most aspiring young fishermen.

In Shetland however, both the PO as well as Shetland Islands Council have over the years invested millions in fishing quota, held communally, and rented to the fleet to manage fishing entitlements.



Agnes Shearer does the honours naming the ship - Skipper Ian Shearer's Grandmother at the crews homeport Whalsay



Birdseye view

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 - WASSP F31 160 MULTIBEAM SOUNDER
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- MONITORS**
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 - 2X NEOVO QX-32
 - 5X NEOVO QX-43

"In the Shetland context we are fortunate that we have facilitating infrastructure to enable this type of thing to happen, and do recognise that in some other parts of Scotland it has come to a stage where it is beyond the reach of young men," Isbister said.

"That is something that we got to try avoid happening here – so we always be sure that there is that opportunity."

Isbister said the catching sector had enjoyed a number of good years and the fact that Shearer and his partners were prepared to invest into a new vessel demonstrated the confident mood the industry was in.

This follows the opening of

two new state of the art fish markets in Scalloway and in Lerwick and favourable prices paid for fish landed at either of the local markets.

But margins have become a lot tighter lately at a time many in the industry had expected things to become much better.

With Brexit done, the industry first had to cope with export delays at the UK borders, the UK's delegation at fisheries talks had to learn how to act as an independent coastal state, and finally the TAC (Total Allowable Catch) for cod was reduced by 10 per cent for this year - a cut that is particularly painful for the local fleet.



Fish Hold



Skipper Ian Shearer takes her alongside for the first time

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H. Williamson & Sons Ltd are delighted to have been chosen for the supply of the electronics package to the COURAGEOUS. We wish Ian & crew successful fishing in the years to come.



Main Skipper, Ian Shearer (L) and 2nd Skipper, Malcolm Reid (R)



Looking aft over the trawl deck from the wheelhouse



Wheelhouse the aft control panel overlooking the aft deck

MACHINERY



A View of the trawl deck

- MACHINERY:**
 - MAIN ENGINE: MITSUBISHI S12R, 749 KW AT 1600 RPM.
 - GEARBOX: HEIMDAL HG5114 2PTOCR WITH 2 PTO FOR HYDRAULIC PUMPS. REDUCTION 11:43:1
 - PROPELLER: HEIMDAL K-600 VARIABLE PITCH 4 BLADE PROPELLER, DIAMETER 2780 MM IN HIGH EFFICIENT NOZZLE.
 - ENGINE CONTROLE SYSTEM: LYGAA WITH 3 CONTROLE STATIONS
 - 2 PCS. MITSUBISHI 6D24, 195 KVA, 3 X 400 V, 50 HZ.
 - 1 PCS. MITSUBISHI HARBOUR GENSET, 40 KVA
 - 2 PCS. AZCUE FIRE / DECKWASH PUMPS
 - 4 PCS. XYLEM / FLYGT SUBMERSIBLE PUMPS
- HYDRAULIC - DECK MACHINERY:**
 - ALL HYDRAULICS AND DECK MACHINERY ARE DELIVERED BY THYBORON SKIBS & MOTOR
 - 2 X TRAWL WINCHES WITH CAPACITY OF 850 FATHOM Ø 24 MM WIRE. 21 TONS EACH.
 - 2 X DOUBLE SWEEPLINE WINCHES. 4 X 15 TONS
 - 2 X BAGGING DRUMS. 2 X 10 TONS
 - 1 X COD END WINCH.
 - 1 X GILSON WINCH
 - 2 X AUX. WINCHES
 - 1 X TMP 900 K MARINE UNLOADING CRANE
 - GANTRY WITH MOVING BLOCKS
 - SCANTROL AUTOTRAWL SYSTEM
- THRUSTER:**
 - 1 PCS. HUNDESTED SFT 5, 250 HP HYDRAULIC DRIVEN BOWTHRUSTER
- STEERING GEAR:**
 - SCAN-STEERING MT - 1600 WITH 2 EL-HYDRAULIC PUMP UNITS



One of the main Generators



First onboard to complete the old wives tale of having a pregnant woman passing the gangway first Faye Goodlad from Whalsay walks the gangway

Lighting The Way for Bycatch Avoidance

The fishing vessel Virtuous FR253 has begun a 12 month bycatch avoidance trial, in collaboration with Associated Seafoods Ltd (ASL), Marks & Spencer (M&S), Young's Seafood and the fishing technology company SNTech.

The project will assess the impact of the Pisces LED light on the unwanted bycatch in the NE Scottish mixed demersal fishery.

It is anticipated that the project will yield important advancements in precision fishing and contribute to the sustainability accreditation of the demersal fisheries including Nephrops. Currently, Nephrops are undergoing a Fishery Improvement Project (FIP) towards MSC certification leading to greater sustainability and profitability for the fishery.

Even with their vast knowledge, skill and modern technologies, fishermen often have little control over their catch composition. This is about to change thanks to SNTech's user-friendly artificial light device, Pisces. Using configurable LED lights, Pisces acts as an exit sign and guides unwanted catch fish out of the net or even prevents the fish entering the net in the first place. Increasing the net selectivity allows fishermen to reduce their bycatch - an outcome that every fisherman wants and a hurdle to MSC certification.

From April 2021 to April 2022, Skipper Sandy West and his crew on The Virtuous will be deploying Pisces lights with the guidance of SNTech in various positions and under pre-defined configurations to reduce the vessels bycatch and increase its overall operational



Virtuous

performance.

The changes will be monitored by the crew and analysed by SNTech scientists. By undertaking this project, with the advocacy and support of ASL, M&S, Young's and SNTech, The Virtuous is hopeful in finding new and better ways of fishing and sharing its findings for the betterment of all vessels in the NE Scottish mixed demersal fishery.

In the NE Scottish mixed demersal fishery, boats like The Virtuous catch a mixture of species including Nephrops (scampi) and whitefish (e.g., cod, haddock). Although whitefish make up to 62% of the catch of the demersal mixed fishery, Nephrops are the most valuable stock accounting for up to 30% of the value of landings in 2018.

Gaining MSC certification would give those working in the NE Scottish Mixed Demersal Fishery access to new and secure current markets. Additionally, greater sustainability and precision fishing will bring long-term biological, economic and social sustainability to the fishery.

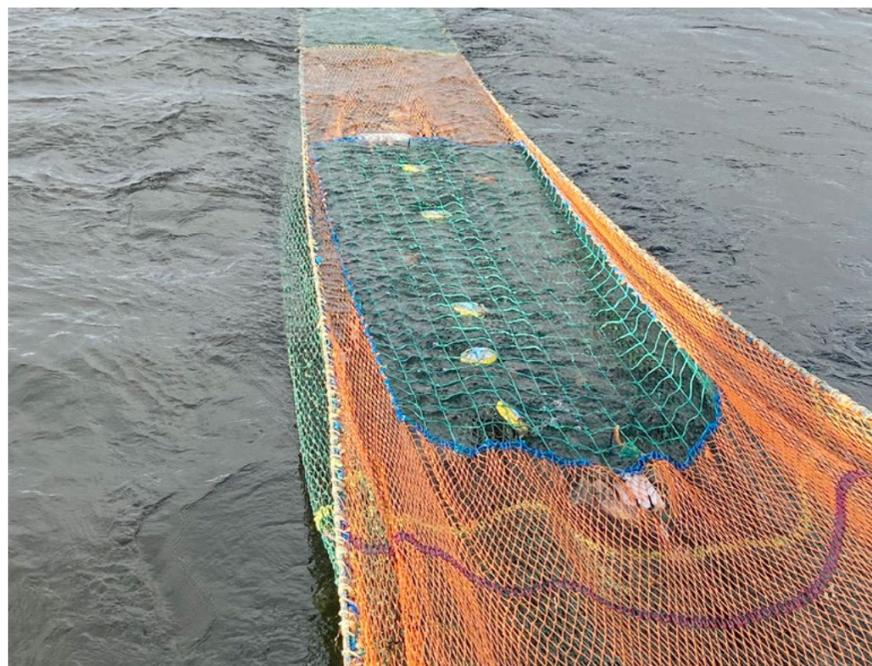
The NE Scotland Mixed Demersal Fishery has undergone significant change over the past 20 years. Fishers have taken numerous economically and socially painful steps to address the decline of the fish stock. Whilst the stocks have generally recovered, more needs to be done. However, the fishing fleet finds itself in a precarious position where all available tools are deployed. New fit for purpose technologies, such as Pisces, give fishermen like Sandy another option and a new angle of attack in their battle to reduce and remove bycatch.

Pisces can be retrofitted on the fishing net and configured using a wireless remote control. With support from SNTech experts, Pisces can be rapidly deployed and left to operate for a full fishing trip without any further intervention by the crew - fit and forget.

Due to the seasonality of the NE Scottish mixed demersal fishery, The Virtuous and its crew must be ready to respond to sudden changes that occur on the fishing ground. Market forces also play a role in creating these fluctuations. If Pisces can help The Virtuous catch its target species more efficiently, whilst avoiding wasteful bycatch, Sandy and his crew will be hooked.

"We have no desire to be out at sea all day every day, if we can fish more precisely everybody is a winner. The crew's job on deck becomes easier, the boat becomes more profitable as we will need to input less resources to catch the fish. The environment benefits from less CO2 being emitted, everybody stands to gain if we can fish more precisely."

Sandy went on to add: "this next year will be a real adventure for us, but it will not be without its risks. What if we scare away all the fish? We are taking a big risk here, but we believe it is worth it and having the support of SNTech and our customers, ASL, M&S and Youngs, makes a big difference." A spokesperson from M&S went on to say, "Marks and Spenser are proud to support innovative technology to reduce unwanted bycatch in UK fisheries." They emphasised, "It's important that we show leadership on this issue and this project is an excellent example of this. We are working closely with our fishermen and suppliers to find workable solutions."



Online shellfish portal a first for the industry!

Sligo-based Seafood Traders Triskell Seafood Ltd have announced this month that their new Online Shellfish Sales Portal is live. They are inviting growers across the country to get in touch and get involved!

The portal allows overseas customers to view photos taken by the growers. Details given for each batch include bay of origin, quantity available, grades of shellfish and availability dates. It's a very visual tool, allowing interested customers to search by image or category. And it isn't just limited to one species; currently Triskell are advertising batches of Pacific oysters, "spéciales", flat oysters, winkles and scallops. But this is just the start, with the new system Triskell can easily expand the selection to include any type of seafood that Irish growers have to sell. With 1 click, the buyer can express an interest and Triskell Seafood organise the rest.

Triskell Seafood have been in business for over 20 years trading live shellfish across Europe. With a French Director it is not surprising that they have a sizeable customer base in France where the market for Irish oysters is particularly strong. Director Marie-Aude Danguy explains the concept behind the new website; "We wanted an opportunity to showcase the range and quality of Irish oysters available to buy in Ireland and with a static website that wasn't possible. We developed a 'portal' to allow us to quickly upload batches of shellfish online which our customers abroad can view and easily express an interest in." The customer portal, which is the first of its kind for the industry, can be viewed at www.triskellseafood.ie. It is aimed squarely at the export market and is written in French for that reason, although customers from other countries can use a built-in translation tool to read it in any language.

Marie-Aude again on why the innovative idea is so important for her clients. "Most of our customers work to the rhythm of the tides, not the clock and our portal allows them to view which seafood batches are available at a time that suits them. It's also been optimised for mobile users which is important as our research shows that more than half our



customer view our main site on their mobile devices." The customer portal was primarily conceived to present batches of oysters, in which the company specialise. However, following interest from growers the listings have already expanded to include winkles, clams and scallops and they see that range expanding further over time. From one farm to the next, and from one bay to the next, we know the quality of products can vary hugely and the online catalogue is an effective way to give a fast visual of the broad selection available.

So how can an Irish grower get involved and get their shellfish batch online? Any growers interested in having their product listed free of charge should contact the team at Triskell Seafood at info@triskellseafood.com with full details and photos of what they have to sell. That information will be uploaded to the portal for you and marketed abroad on your behalf and all you have to do is update Triskell as your available stock changes. It's that easy!

They look forward to hearing from you soon.

For more information and to follow the other activities of the company, check out their regular website www.triskellseafood.com



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PUBLIC NOTICE OF FURTHER INFORMATION FURNISHED CONTAINING SIGNIFICANT ADDITIONAL DATA IN RELATION TO THE EFFECTS ON THE ENVIRONMENT



Greenlink Interconnector Limited

Notice is hereby given pursuant to Section 19B of the Foreshore Act 1933 (as amended), that Greenlink Interconnector Limited, 70 Sir John Rogerson's Quay, Dublin 2, D02R296 (previously of c/o Mason Hayes and Curran, South Bank House, Barrow Street, Dublin 4) has to the Minister of Housing, Local Government and Heritage furnished further information that contains significant additional data in relation to the effects on the environment in respect of the proposed foreshore licence application for the purpose of an Interconnector between EirGrid's Great Island substation in County Wexford (Ireland) and the National Grid's Pembroke substation in Pembrokeshire (Wales).

The following map shows the location of the proposed work.



The co-ordinates of the proposed works are set out in the table below:

ID	WGS 1984 Latitude (°)	WGS 1984 Longitude (°)	ITM Eastings (m)	ITM Northings (m)
1	51° 54' 32.960" N	6° 38' 24.536" W	693562	573876
2	52° 01' 48.220" N	6° 43' 54.361" W	687024	587211
3	52° 01' 53.017" N	6° 44' 39.189" W	686167	587345
4	52° 03' 39.469" N	6° 46' 45.167" W	683711	590593
5	52° 08' 50.021" N	6° 47' 07.332" W	683128	600182
6	52° 10' 02.678" N	6° 48' 16.186" W	681782	602406
7	52° 10' 22.757" N	6° 48' 22.507" W	681652	603024
8	52° 10' 49.568" N	6° 48' 11.146" W	681854	603856
9	52° 10' 57.889" N	6° 48' 17.953" W	681720	604111
10	52° 11' 02.379" N	6° 48' 34.325" W	681407	604245
11	52° 10' 51.304" N	6° 49' 06.304" W	680805	603893
12	52° 10' 43.517" N	6° 49' 49.035" W	679997	603639
13	52° 10' 35.141" N	6° 49' 48.661" W	680009	603380
14	52° 10' 36.575" N	6° 48' 56.009" W	681008	603441
15	52° 09' 55.573" N	6° 48' 40.210" W	681329	602179
16	52° 08' 37.458" N	6° 47' 29.378" W	682715	599787
17	52° 03' 33.747" N	6° 47' 09.716" W	683246	590409
18	52° 01' 38.341" N	6° 44' 50.249" W	685964	586888
19	52° 01' 34.452" N	6° 44' 08.154" W	686768	586781
20	51° 54' 34.090" N	6° 38' 54.129" W	692996	573900

A copy of the additional material, is available for inspection for the next 30 calendar days, between 06 April 2021 and 06 May 2021, free of charge at:

- **Wexford County Council Planning Office**, Carricklawn, Wexford, Y35 WY93. Appointment necessary due to Covid19 restrictions, please email siobhan.doyle@wexfordcoco.ie to arrange. Opening hours are: 9.00 a.m. to 1.00 p.m. and 2.00 p.m. to 4.00 p.m. Monday to Friday (Bank Holidays and Public Holidays excepted).
- **Waterford Garda Station**, Patrick St, Waterford, X91 A076. No appointment necessary. Open 24hrs. For additional information call +353 51 305300.
- **New Ross Garda Station**, Marshmeadows, New Ross, Co. Wexford. Appointment necessary due to Covid19 restrictions, please call +353 51 426030 and ask for Sergeant Richie Daly. Open 24hrs.

In light of National Level 5 Covid-19 restrictions Regulations published under the Health Act 1947 (Statutory Instrument No. 448 of 2020) have identified planning-related activity within the schedule of what is considered to be 'essential services' in order to ensure the continued and safe operation of all aspects of the statutory planning system. The Regulations permit a person to attend the offices of a planning authority or An Bord Pleanála to engage in a statutory planning process. There is no specified restriction on the distance that persons engaging in a statutory planning process, may travel. A hard copy of the additional information may be requested from the applicant at the address stated above or by emailing energy.water.bst@intertek.com.

The additional information may also be viewed on the following dedicated website <https://www.greenlink.ie/foreshorelicenceconsultation2> and is available on the Department's website at: <https://www.gov.ie/en/foreshore-notice/a6150-greenlink-interconnector-wexford/?referrer=http://www.gov.ie/en/publication/9ed2f-greenlink-interconnector-wexford/>

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

Section 19C of the Foreshore Act does not apply to this application.

Submissions or observations regarding, the effects on the environment related to the further information can be made in writing, giving reasons, between 06 April 2021 and 06 May 2021 (quoting ref: FS007050) to the Minister for Housing, Local Government and Heritage at Foreshore Section, Department for Housing, Local Government and Heritage, Newtown Road, Wexford, Co. Wexford or by e-mail to foreshore@housing.gov.ie. **The closing date for the receipt of submissions is therefore 17:30 on 06/05/2021.**

All objections and representations received will be forwarded to the applicant for comment prior to any decision being made in the matter. Material upon which the Minister shall determine this application may be published on the Department's website. In this regard the Department wishes to draw attention to its policy on defamatory material that may be contained in submissions it receives, which may be found at: <http://www.housing.gov.ie/planning/foreshore/public-participation-foreshore-consent-process>

Dated this day of 06/04/2021.

Greenlink Interconnector Limited, 70 Sir John Rogerson's Quay, Dublin 2, D02R296 (previously of c/o Mason Hayes and Curran, South Bank House, Barrow Street, Dublin 4)

Rolling Stones rumble southwards: Northern Stone Crabs Lithodes maja in Irish waters

By Declan Quigley

During March 2021, the MFV 'Eblana' (D379) (Skipper: Brendan Lynch, Howth, Co Dublin) captured three Northern Stone Crabs (*Lithodes maja*) while demersal trawling at a depth of 86 m in the Celtic Sea (c.510N), SE of the Kinsale Gas Field, Co Cork (Fig. 1).

The specimens which were donated to the Natural History Museum in Dublin, included two females and one male (Fig. 2) with the following carapace lengths (69, 65 and 62 mm), carapace widths (61, 58 and 58 mm), and weights (132, 128 and 126 g) respectively.

During May 2015, the Eblana captured another female specimen of *L. maja* measuring 95 mm (CL) and 80 mm (CW) while demersal trawling at a depth of 102 m close to the same area: North West Bank (c.500N) [Fig. 3]. The latter specimen, which was donated to the Natural History Museum in Dublin, represents the southernmost authenticated record of *L. maja* from the NE Atlantic.

Northern Stone Crabs have rarely been recorded from Irish waters. Indeed, prior to the mid-1960s there was only one authenticated record; on 29 June 1901, the partly digested remains of a specimen was discovered in the stomach of an unidentified fish captured at a depth of 182 m on the Porcupine Bank (53.40N, 13.60W). Since then, only 24 specimens have been recorded southwards of

latitude 550N, the vast majority off the SW coast (Co Kerry).

The Northern Stone Crab is an amphiboreal cold-water species ranging from Spitzbergen (800N) to the south of Ireland (c.500N) in the NE Atlantic, and from SE Greenland southwards to Maryland, USA (Baltimore Canyon; 380N, 740W) in the NW Atlantic.

Although *L. maja* has occasionally been reported from depths of only 4 m, the species is usually found on mud, muddy sand and gravel substrates at depths of 65-790 m, well beyond the normal depth range and habitats exploited by traditional inshore crustacean pot fisheries.

It is possible that *L. maja* may be more abundant and widely distributed in Irish waters than the current paucity of records would suggest. Although it's apparent rarity southwards of latitude 550N may simply reflect limited recording effort in suitable habitats, the use of inappropriate survey methods, the species cryptic behaviour and/or non-commercial interest, it may also reflect a genuinely low abundance, and/or patchy distribution.

Exploratory pot surveys of *L. maja* stocks off Newfoundland and Labrador, Canada (NW Atlantic) at depths of 200-400 m and bottom temperatures of 2-70C concluded that although the species was widely distributed across a variety of bottom types and produced good yields of very acceptable crab meat, the species was not abundant enough to sustain viable commercial fisheries. In excess of 80% of the catch was



Figure 1. Northern Stone Crabs (*Lithodes maja*) captured by the MFV Eblana in the Celtic Sea (March 2021)



Figure 2. Female Northern Stone Crab (*Lithodes maja*) - note asymmetrical abdominal plates

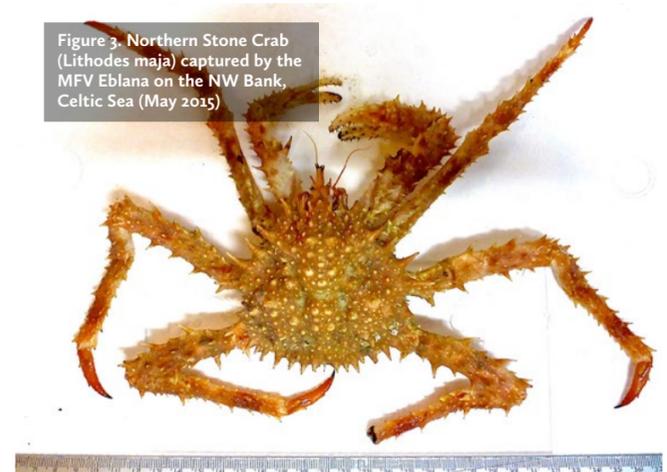


Figure 3. Northern Stone Crab (*Lithodes maja*) captured by the MFV Eblana on the NW Bank, Celtic Sea (May 2015)

comprised of hard shell male crabs with an average CW of 97 mm. The largest and smallest male crabs that were sampled had a CW of 122 mm and 66 mm respectively. The largest females had a CW of 77 mm and ranged from 64 to 94 mm. Males

and females reached sexual maturity at a CW of around 98 mm and 65 mm respectively. **Declan is always interested in receiving reports about unusual species captured in Irish waters (declanquigley2021@gmail.com 087-6458485).**



Menhaden passing Bere Island.

Some of our top fishing photographers pick their top 5 photos

Anne Marie Cronin



A snow moon rising over the boats in Castletownbere



Name: Anne Marie Cronin
Location: Castletownbere
Workplace: Anne Marie Cronin Photography
Camera: Canon 7Dii
Favourite lens: Canon 70-200
Instagram: anne_marie_cronin
Website: www.annemarietroninphotography.ie
Top Tips and Messages:
 Getting up and out early is worth the effort as the morning light is clearer and will reward you with better colours in the final photograph



Gannet keeps watch



Margaret Mary heading out



Hanna Mary battling her way through Dursey Sound

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

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



MAY WINNER: DAN BATES
MARY J OFF THE WATERFORD COAST AS THE SUN SETS

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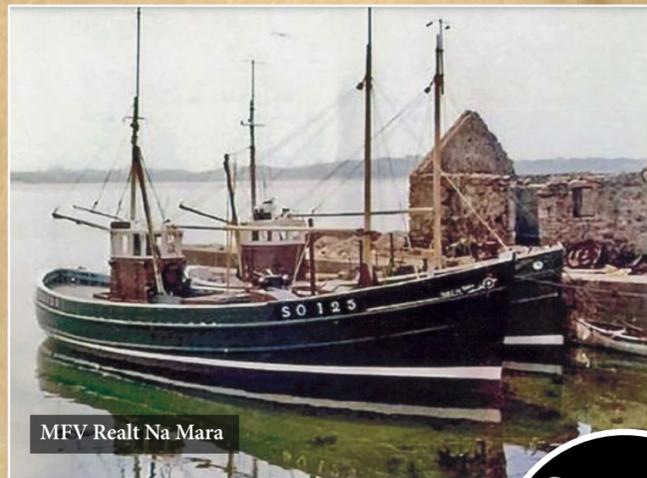
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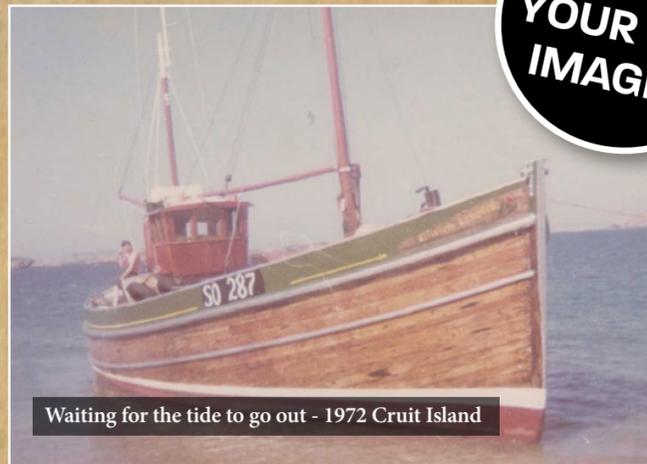
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The Archives - MAY 1984

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

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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 Hutton 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 ship has been fined 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 IR£15 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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St Colby anchored at Carrickfin Co Donegal. Photo: Sheila Gallagher

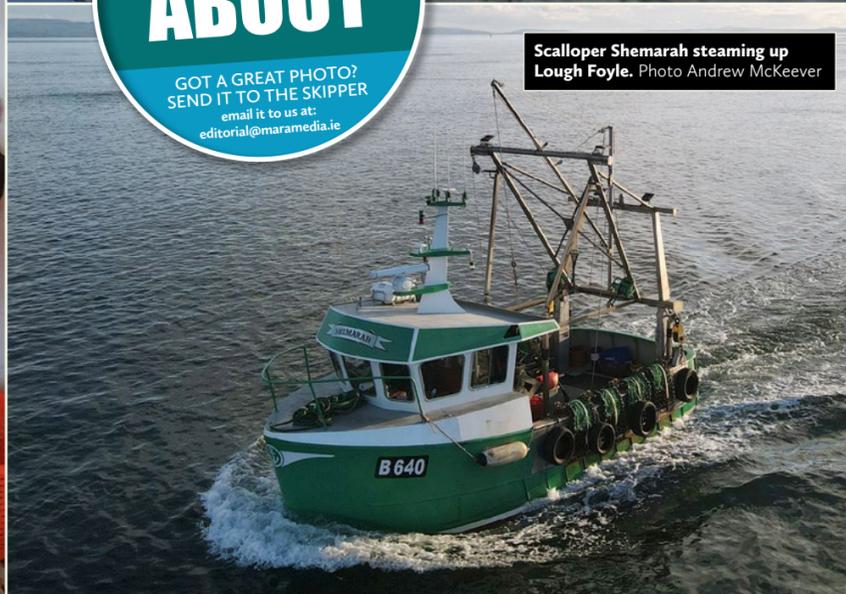


Bláth na hÓige on her mooring after a days fishing around Inishere Island. Photo: Patrick O'Donnell



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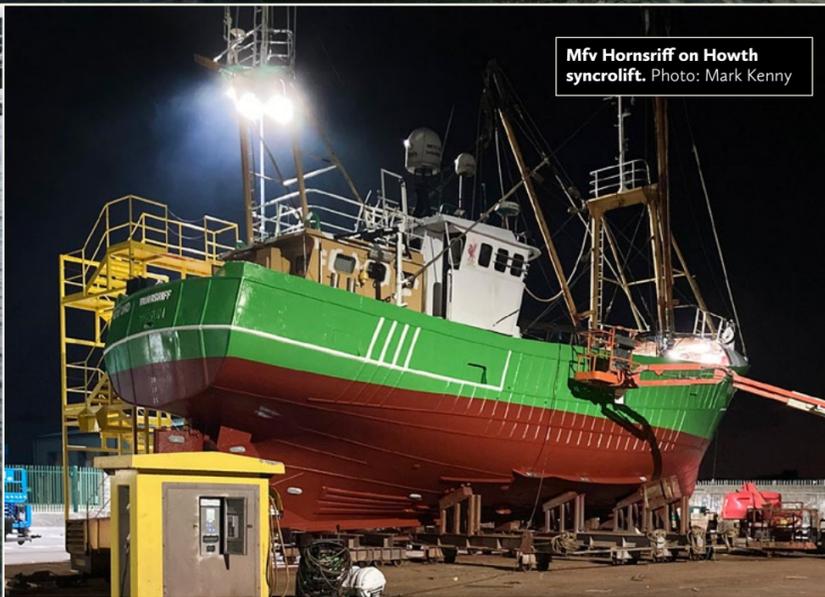
Scallop Shemarah steaming up Lough Foyle. Photo Andrew McKeever



Joshua O'Brien on Maarten Luther with 3 lb Golden Haddock caught east of the trench. Photo by Murtagh O'Murachu



Mfv Hornsrieff on Howth syncrolift. Photo: Mark Kenny



Northern Celt at Greencastle. Photo Andrew McKeever



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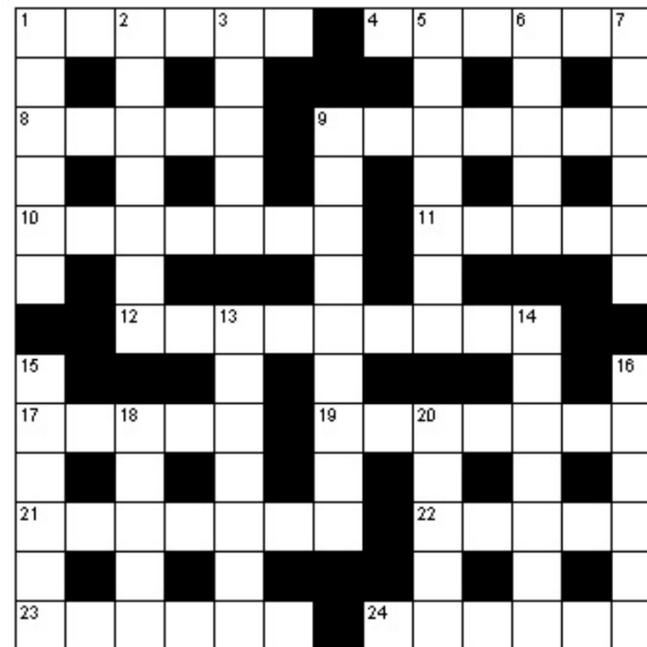
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- 8 Tedium (5)
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- 10 Capable of being dissolved (7)
- 11 Come in (5)
- 12 Country of Central America (9)
- 17 More mature (5)
- 19 Conflagration (7)
- 21 Advantage (7)
- 22 First appearance (5)
- 23 At a leisurely pace (6)
- 24 Vanquished (6)

DOWN

- 1 Mark made by folding (6)
- 2 Wool fat (7)
- 3 Ascend (5)
- 5 Savings (4,3)
- 6 Resided (5)
- 7 Bear, tolerate (6)
- 9 Chewing gum flavour (9)
- 13 Cautious (7)
- 14 Circus performer (7)
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Fishers and fish farmers being invited to take part in BIM Safety at Sea survey



Bord Iascaigh Mhara (BIM) has commissioned independent research agency, Red C to undertake a survey on its behalf to better understand behaviour and attitudes towards safety at sea among fishers and fish farmers in Ireland. The state agency for the development of the seafood industry is interested to learn more from fishers and aquaculture producers who routinely work at sea.

The online survey takes approximately 10 – 12 minutes to complete and will be emailed to each respondent upon sign up.

Survey results will be anonymised.

If you are a fisher or fish farmer and would like to take part in the survey, please contact BIM at seafoodskills@bim.ie or on 01 214 4100 and we will send you a link to the survey.

European Fisheries Control Agency appoints Dr Susan Steele as new Executive Director

The Administrative Board of the EFCA, European Fisheries Control Agency, has appointed Dr Susan Steele as Executive Director. Dr Susan Steele from Ireland has a solid background in fisheries management and control. She has been Executive Chair and CEO of the Sea Fisheries Protection Authority of Ireland since 2013. Before that, she was Head of Innovation at the Seafood Development Centre from 2009 to 2013 and Head of Aquaculture and Business Training in Ireland's Seafood Development Board from 2006 to 2009. She holds a PhD from the National University of Ireland, an MBA, a Masters in Education (M.Ed) and a Bachelor in Marine Biology.

The Agency is governed by an Administrative Board, made up of one representative per Member State and six representatives of the Commission. The Administrative Board nominates the Executive Director for a period of five years.



The vacancy notice for the new director was published on 14 July 2020, following a pre-selection by the European Commission, a final short list of candidates adopted by the College of Commissioners was presented to the EFCA Administrative Board. The Board has interviewed the candidates and appointed today the new Executive Director among the candidates.

Under the supervision of the Administrative Board, the Executive Director is responsible for the management of the agency and the execution of the Agency's operational activities.

NEW CREW



Kevin Downey with his new crew, granddaughters Emma, Katie and Amy.

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