

LEADING JOURNAL OF THE IRISH & UK INDUSTRIES



# The Skipper

1964-2021



DECEMBER 2021 - €3.50/£3.00

# 2022 - BOOM OR BUST?

Can Minister Deliver On Industry Priorities At December Council? *See pages 2-5*



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# The Fair Share Fight!

2021 has been a traumatic and depressing year for the Irish fishing industry. Hit with significant quota losses from the Brexit Trade agreement, followed by two national protests, tie-up schemes and the dark cloud of decommissioning looming, many fishermen feel that we are witnessing the final demise of our catching sector and the decimation of our coastal communities.

Like many years past all eyes now turn to the annual December Fisheries Council meeting

in Brussels where the fate of our industry for 2022 will be decided by our EU partners.

This years outcome will also be determined by the ongoing EU & UK negotiations on shared stocks and the final TAC and quotas can not be finalised till these talks are concluded.

In advance of Minister McConalogue's attendance we asked the Minister and our catching sector representatives what they would like to see achieved on our behalf and which issues required top priority.



## The Minister's Priority

Speaking to The Skipper on the priority issues highlighted to him by industry Minister McConalogue said:

"The December Council has traditionally been an important time for the Irish fishing sector and this year it will be too.

2021 has been a testing and an important year for our seafood and fishing sectors. COVID-19 had an obvious impact on trade but the major impacts came from Brexit and the agreement between the EU and the UK on the eve of 2021. Since then we have pressed the importance of burden sharing to the EU Council and the Commissioner.

I visited all of our National Harbour Centres and many of our smaller piers and harbours this year meeting with many of our fishers, local communities, and fishing representatives. I have heard first hand from them the challenges they face and the priority supports they want from Government. Discussion and political agreement will obviously be the key thrust of the December Council and how those discussions advance will be very much determined by an agreement or not between the EU and the UK before the Council.

Working for stocks important to Irish fishers while also respecting MSY will be a priority for me at Council. With stocks such as cod that are depleted we support taking an approach that keeps the TAC and quota at a low-level to reflect unavoidable by-catches while also supporting improvements to fishing gear and methods to minimise by-catches.

With Brexit, Ireland is now the only Member State claiming The

Hague Preferences. Making sure that these are applied is a key political objective for me.

The Government and I remain committed to doing all we can to help fishers and their families and the coastal communities in which they live and work."



**IFPO**  
Each year all the fishery organisations headed to

**Brussels in December to await the conclusion and final negotiations in the Council Ministers on fishing opportunities in the Atlantic, North Sea, the Mediterranean and Black Sea, and for deep-sea stocks in the following year.**

This has all changed in 2020 with the advent of Brexit. We now have negotiations taking place in November with the UK/EU Commission on over 119 different stocks that we fish in shared waters. We are hopeful that these talks will reach an agreement and conclude as we don't want to see a repeat of last year's situation when talks continued into 2021 and we had temporary 3-month and 7-month quotas.

It makes it very difficult for our administration to achieve changes to ICES proposals for TACS that we do not agree with.

We have huge concerns for the proposals for Haddock in 6b, 7b-k, and 7a, Anglerfish in 6, Hake and Nephrops. There is limited opportunity to bargain with our European partners in

affecting change.

In many ways the December Council will become a non-event and will only be rubber stamping what has already agreed in these bi-lateral and Coastal state negotiations. We are also concerned that the Hague Preferences which helped secure additional quotas for Ireland in key stocks could be eroded going forward as they have never been copper fastened at Industry has demanded.

However, the Irish Fishing Industry fully expects that our Minister will be empowered by the Task Force report to sit down with our European partners and undue the wrongs we suffered a result of the Brexit agreement. Nobody is in any doubt that Ireland has paid an inordinate price when compared to that of our European fishing partners. We fully expect that the burden sharing we sought in the Task Force report will be top of our minister's agenda at this Council.

### IIMRO

**We feel that Article 17, Common**

**Fisheries Policy needs to be upheld and enforced when quota decisions are being made.**

**The article states:**

*"When allocating the fishing opportunities available to them, as referred to in Article 16, Member States shall use transparent and objective criteria including those of an environmental, social and economic nature. The criteria to be used may include, inter alia, the impact of fishing on the environment, the history of compliance, the contribution to the local economy and historic catch levels. Within the*



THE IRISH MARINE RESEARCH ORGANISATION



Traditional Ring netting for herring in Inver bay. Will it survive in 2022? PHOTO PAURIC ROSE

fishing opportunities allocated to them, Member States shall endeavour to provide incentives to fishing vessels deploying selective fishing gear or using fishing techniques with reduced environmental impact, such as reduced energy consumption or habitat damage’.

**As such the following needs to be implemented:**

- A standardised reporting mechanism with relevant indicators to show compliance with Article 17 across all member states should be developed.
- Introduction of adequate tools for measuring the activity of small scale fishers in fisheries will aid visibility of this hugely important sector over a practical time frame.
- Closer oversight on Article 17 implementation eg regular reporting and follow up to ensure accountability and transparency to be prioritised at all levels.
- The use of track record as a metric for fishing opportunity allocation is not fit for purpose as it rewards high volume, low value industrial exploitation of the fishery resource.

**Small Scale Fisheries**

- The implementing provisions adopted shall be adapted to the special characteristics of small-scale fisheries.
- The specific situation of small-scale producers shall be taken into account and acted upon when implementing measures are developed under this plan.

**In addition Paragraph 20, Common Fisheries Policy says:**

“Small offshore islands which are dependent on fishing should, where appropriate, be especially recognised and supported in order to enable them to survive

and prosper.”

**To conclude. We feel that extra quota is also needed for the hook and line mackerel fishing so that all those wishing to benefit from this fishery can have access and an equal opportunity to avail of it. Inshore boats should also have the opportunity to access the picked spurdog fishery, as at the moment we are using our bycatch quota for swaps.**



**KFO**

**The Commission’s proposals regarding fishing opportunities in 2022 are made against a completely different backdrop due to the Brexit TCA**

We urge the Minister and the Commission to plan to ensure that stakeholder engagement and advice is central to all future management and governance structures being developed as the new relationship between the EU and UK takes concrete form. In our view the December Fisheries Council will no longer have the same impact heretofore.

**2022 quota outcomes of particular concern to our members are:**

● **MACKEREL:** Norway and the Faroe islands decided to unilaterally increase their mackerel quotas by 55%. The result of this will be that the ICES 2021 TAC will be overshot by 42%. In light of this, the KFO requests immediate action to stop the massive overfishing of mackerel in the Northeast Atlantic and jeopardizing the sustainable management of the stock. KFO is of a firm view that the management of fishing in →



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international waters should be limited to a maximum of 10% of overall catches.

● **HERRING (6a,7b c):**

Zero catch options have been advised again for this stock due to the inability to split the stock into its two respective components. The good news is the current genetics project, which is completed, is yielding significant results which in future will enable the stock to be split. The benchmark for this stock has started and is due to be completed in February 2022. We are expecting that the genetics project will enable the stock to be split into two respective components.

● **COD in 6a:** ICES issued zero catch advice for cod in division 6a. The management measures taken so far around this stock need to be questioned and evaluated, as they have not resulted in a recovery of the stock. It is important that further work on genetics is carried out to solve this important issue.

● **HADDOCK in 6a:** ICES advice for Haddock in 6a is for a very significant increase of 125%. Haddock in division 6a is assessed as one single stock with the North Sea, with 10% of the TAC being allocated to division 6a. Note that the two areas are considered separately in terms of management. Last year, there was an increase in the TAC but the full scientific advice was not followed due to the North Sea tri-lateral negotiations between the EU, the UK and Norway agreeing a lesser increase for the

North Sea which had a knock-on effect of also a lesser increase in 6a. KFO is requesting that this is not repeated for 2022 and 6a is treated differently to the North Sea if the decision in the tri-lateral negotiations is to again revert to a lower increase than advised.

● **ANGLERFISH in 6:**

The KFO is concerned that the Anglerfish in Area 6 is still a Category 3 ICES assessment which in KFO's view is leading to decreases in the stock. It is imperative that this is moved to Category 1 ICES assessment similar to Anglerfish in Area 7.

● **NORTHERN HAKE:**

The ICES Advice is for 24% reduction. It is difficult to reconcile this reduction with the very high stock size, low fishing mortality and good recruitment. A benchmark is planned for this stock before the end of the year and it is hoped that some of the issues around this stock – the perception and the output from the assessment – can be resolved.

**In conclusion the TCA will have a major effect on TACs and quotas going forward and it is essential that Irish stakeholders and their representatives have input to EU/UK negotiations as they have had to negotiations prior to Brexit.**

**NIFA & NIFO**  
Of particular concern to our members are



**further cuts to the white pollack quotas in both area 6 and 7. We understand previous cuts were on the basis that the stock was data poor as opposed to actually being poor. Cuts in order to allow stocks to recover are one thing but continuous cuts based on a lack of data cannot be justified, we hope the Ministers takes a similar view and defends it robustly.**

Equally of concern are proposed cuts in the hake quota, particularly against the background where Irish gillnetters typically use 120mm mesh gillnets in order to target larger more valuable grades of hake (thus maximising the economic return from that quota). This in comparison to many of their EU counterparts which we understand predominantly use 100mm mesh nets to specifically target smaller grades of Hake.

It's a practise we have brought to the attention of the Minister and have urged him to try and have it addressed at any and every opportunity. From our perspective it's a matter of basic common sense.

We are disappointed with the continued advice for a zero TAC on Spurdog. Reports from members lead us to believe that the advice has fallen well behind the reality on the fishing grounds and we believe that the stock has recovered significant and could at least support a well-managed small scale fished, which would in turn ease pressure on other stocks.

We need the Minister to do everything he can to bring about a situation where the

scientific advice is aligned with the practical experience of the fishermen which should result in the sustainable exploitation of what was once a valuable and traditional fishery for Inshore operators.

**IS&WFPO**

**The fishing sector is one of the hardest hit sectors by the COVID-19 crisis despite the request by Government to keep operating to ensure food security for the citizens of Europe.**



The crash in prices was immediate with huge portions of the fleet tied up in ports. Another blow to our industry is of course the Brexit TCA deal finalised on 24th December 2020.

Together, these two extraordinary events have resulted in a huge reduction in fishing opportunities creating huge uncertainty for fishers and this is a threat for the businesses sustainability of all Irish fishermen. So we in the Irish South and West request the Minister seek the setting of TAC and Quotas for 2022 will be set to allow the sector to regain some confidence and assure sustainable fishing to continue in the EU.

**Issues of concern to us for 2022 are:**

● **HAKE in subareas VI, VII:**

With regard to the stock's characteristics provided in the ICES advice, recruitment is rising for the third consecutive year, fishing mortality is stabilized below FMSY, the spawning stock biomass increased in 2019 and the discards have decreased by over 50% in the year 2019 in comparison to 2016. It is expected that the recruitment values as estimated this year will be underestimated considering the rebound observed in spawning biomass (SSB). These indicators are contrary to the downward revision of the perception of the stock that drives the ICES recommendation.

● **ANGLERFISH:** The advice from ICES to increase the quota for anglerfish is welcome but this increase is due to the increase of Biomass which our fishermen are noticing around our coastline and we believe countries with a massive historic share of this important species who are not catching their allocated Quota should be returning this TAC to the member state with zonal

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attachment for this stock due to its critical importance to the Socio economic importance to the catching sector and the coastal communities from which they operate.

● **HADDOCK In divisions 7.b-k:**

This species highlights the dysfunctionality of the Multi-Annual Plans, with the introduction of increased mesh sizes and the proper management of this fishery through avoidance of areas with small juveniles, the Biomass of this stock continues to grow but the introduction of the precautionary principle of mixed stock advice the lower MSY range is always chosen despite Industries efforts to explain this contradiction. The Irish South and West ask the Minister to seek a larger share of this stock as using the MAP our ratio for Cod to Haddock massively out numbers other member states ability to avoid discards of Cod with this as of yet unknown model of calculation by ICES of their advice for Haddock in the Celtic Sea.

● **NEPHROPS in Area 7:**

The Irish South and West wish to ask the Minister to point out to his fellow Ministers the huge loss of our fishermen as a member state whose proximity to the UK suffered under the TCA agreement and look for permeant swaps for the FU 16 porcupine basin fishery so to give confidence and security to our vessels who have invested heavily in their vessels to maximize a return from this critically important fishery to our fleet.

● **NORTHEAST ATLANTIC MACKEREL:**

Following the unfair burden sharing of the TCA agreement explained it was as a result of our proximity to the UK as orated by the EU Commissioner Virginijus

Sinkevičius, we believe this important species proximity i.e. the spawning grounds to our west coast we should look for the unpaid Danish and Spanish share be allocated to our country and this fish distributed to the polyvalent sector of the fleet.

**IS&EFPO**

**As a result of Brexit and the subsequent**

**TCA agreement Irish Fisheries have endured a most difficult and uncertain year in 2021. The ongoing Covid 19 Crisis is compounding this situation with lower average prices for white fish species and hugely increased costs of all inputs.**

December Council will not have the same function as in previous years as most TACs for shared stocks will be agreed via UK/EU negotiations and it is imperative that these talks produce results as fishermen cannot endure another year of uncertainty where final quotas are not allocated until 31st July as was the case in 2021.

The ISEFPO is committed to following the scientific advice on individual stocks but given the nature of mixed fisheries this can be difficult where allocations under relative stability often are not compatible with the reality of fishing.

**In regard to the fishing opportunities for 2022 some stocks are of particular concern to the IS&EFPO.**

**Celtic Sea**

● **HAKE 6 & 7:** Advice 75,052t

Minus 25% on 2021 TAC Effort is at an all time low, the SSB is high and possibly increasing and the advice for 2021 was increased in year from 98,657T to 102,888T. In our



opinion this stock is in a good condition and these indicators in do not support a reduction of 25% in TAC.

● **HADDOCK 7b - k:**

Advice 15,946t

Although the advice is lower this year, the stock indicators would suggest that an increase in TAC can be justified. The improved technical measures are helping to reduce the discards for this species.

● **SOLE f - g:** Advice 1,320t

Minus 7% on 2021 TAC

Spawning Stock are near highest in time series. The fishing pressure has declined and has been below FMSY since 2017. The SSB is double the level of MSY B trigger and the landings are very stable. The stock indicators are good for this species and we think that the TAC could take an increase but at a very minimum a rollover of last years TAC. As Ireland has only a 3% share in this TAC any reduction could lead to a choke situation.

**Irish Sea**

● **COD 7a:** Advice 74t

**Minus 64% on 2021 TAC**

The TAC must remain the same as 2021 to allow for a by catch in other fisheries and avoid a choke situation.

● **HADDOCK 7a:**

Advice 2,761t

Minus 18% on 2021 TAC

Effort lowest in time series. NIMIK survey not available for 2020 so recent data not available for recruitment. SSB is well above B Trigger. The SSB is good, however catches have been lower due to the small size of fish. New technical measures should allow fish to grow and would suggest that the TAC should be the same as last year.

● **WHITING 7a:** Advice 0t

The stock is low but stable and a by catch quota in line with 2021 is required to keep other fisheries open and avoid choke. Ongoing work in reducing under MCRS whiting in the Nephrops fishery looks promising and may yield good results.

● **NEPHROPS (All Areas)**

We believe that on an average assessment of the Individual Functional Unit advice that the TAC should be a rollover for '22.

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# “Cold Ironing Project” in Killybegs Harbour

Minister Charlie McConalogue visits €1.7m project

**THE MINISTER FOR Agriculture, Food and the Marine, Charlie McConalogue T.D., visited Killybegs recently to view the “Cold Ironing Project” in Killybegs Harbour.**

Cold ironing, a shipping term that first came into use when all ships had coal-fired engines, describes the situation where a ship, tied up at port, no longer needed to continue to feed its fires and its iron engines cooled down, eventually going cold – hence, ‘cold iron’. The days of coal-fired engines may be behind us, but an environmentally friendly cold ironing project is being spearheaded in Killybegs Harbour. This project is aimed at reducing emissions by allowing diesel engines on trawlers, that would normally be running to heat and provide power, to be replaced by clean mains power while in port.

Welcoming the project, the Minister said, “The reality of the impacts of climate change, and particularly for our seas and oceans, is becoming ever more visible. With that comes the need to drive the development of climate actions that deliver a sustainable, competitive and innovative seafood sector. This prototype project delivering cleaner power supply to fishing vessels in port is one such

action.”

The Minister went on to say, “I am delighted to have been able to co-fund this project with the *European Maritime and Fisheries Fund Operational Programme* for 2014-2020. Killybegs Harbour is Ireland’s premier fishing port and as such can be an exceptionally busy port. This project provides plug-in electric facilities so that large trawlers no longer have to run diesel generators while in port. The result is a reduction of 2,000 tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub> emissions per year – equivalent to taking almost 500 cars off the road and improvements in the local environment through reduced noise and air pollution.”

The Department commissioned the “*Cold Ironing Project*” in July 2020 at a cost of €1.7 million. Working closely with the local pelagic fishing industry, the system was designed by *White Young Green Consulting Engineers*, Belfast and constructed by *Tiernan Engineering* from Balinrobe, Co. Mayo. Previously, trawlers in port relied on diesel generators to maintain their power supply. Significant quantities of diesel were needed to operate these generators, making for a noisy and polluted environment along the pier. The introduction of mains power will deliver significant savings of diesel



Fergal Hegarty with Minister McConalogue in Killybegs.



Left: John Campbell Regional Engineer, Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine (DAFM); Minister Charlie McConalogue, TD; Noel Clancy, Chief Engineer, (DAFM).

sets out a roadmap for taking decisive action to halve emissions by 2030 and reach net zero no

and reduce the harbours annual CO<sub>2</sub> emissions by 2,000 tonnes per year, reduce noise pollution, improve air quality and benefit vessel owners through the provision of reliable shore power, while reducing vessel fire risk and maintenance requirements.

This project is aligned the Government’s *Climate Action Plan 2019* and demonstrates an ongoing commitment to delivering measurable emission reductions and sustainable developments across the six Fishery Harbour Centres. The current *Climate Action Plan 2021* builds on this commitment and

later than 2050. This includes actions through which marine-environment mitigation and adaptation actions can be progressed and implemented.

Concluding, the Minister said, “Climate action is actively being embedded in policies, programmes and work streams across my Department and within the agencies under my remit, and progress will continue to be made to implement meaningful climate actions to ensure that our coastal communities and maritime sectors can continue to play their role in contributing to our climate change goals.” ■



**Killybegs Fishermen's**  
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KFO would like to wish everyone a very Merry Christmas & Prosperous New Year

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**NEW TRAWLER:** *Resolute* tied up by Shetland Catch factory, Lerwick.

# Resolute performs well on the Shetland mackerel grounds

Pelagic vessels such as the *Resolute* are actively engaged in scientific research to increase our knowledge of stocks

**IT WAS JUST prior to daybreak and the tension in the wheelhouse of the Fraserburgh-based *Resolute*, BF50, was palpable. The trawler was 18 miles south-east off Sumburgh Head, Shetland, and for the last few hours after departing Lerwick, co-skippers Matty West and Ally West had been tracking shoals of mackerel with their *Furuno FSV-85* electronic fish scanner.**

Illuminated by the gentle glow from the large fish-finding and navigational screens arranged at the front of wheelhouse, the faces of Matty and Ally were a picture of rapt concentration. Pointing his finger at one of the fish finder visuals, Matty says: 'There is a good shoal there, but let's steam on a bit more and see what else we can find.'

What was immediately apparent from the digital shoal signatures was that there is an abundance of mackerel in the seas off Shetland – an encouraging sign the stock is in good health. The shoal that Matty was tracking was around three miles long and 150ft deep.

The screens also highlighted the position of two other fishing vessels a few miles away, who

were involved in a similar search. Matty and Ally, who are cousins, alternate between who is lead skipper for each trip, and this time around Matty (41) is in charge.

"When possible, we prefer to shoot the trawl when it is daylight, as the mackerel tend to shoal closer together during the day, and it is also safer for the crew," he says. "Tracking the fish is always an interesting time and we are continually weighing up our options."

According to Ally (37), the two-skipper arrangement works well. "It's really useful to have someone else to confer with when discussing the tactics for

the day, and to sound out the various options open to us," he says.

## State-of-the-art

■ The 69m *Resolute* is a new state-of-the-art pelagic craft, having been delivered last year by the *Balenciaga Shipyard* in northern Spain. Their previous vessel, also called *Resolute*, was sold to *Interfish/Wiseman Fishing* and has been renamed, *Artemis*. Stability and comfort are two of the hallmarks of the new *Resolute*, which is powered by a propulsion package from *Wartsila*, delivering a top speed of around 16 knots.

As the flickering light of dawn

gradually took hold over the sea, the ten other crew members scrambled down to the lower stern deck to prepare the *Swan Net* trawl for shooting, featuring a 500m net bag and which is spread by *Vonin* trawl doors. The net bag is a new design, which is wider than normal, and which is intended to help improve the quality of the fish by ensuring there is more space for the catch to be held in.

As the trawl was made ready, it was a study in teamwork, the crew going about their tasks quickly, efficiently, and methodically, each one knowing what their colleagues were doing, and working together as if guided by telepathy.

Matty steers the vessel carefully towards the shoal which is swimming in midwater at a depth of around 100m, and with the lowermost part of the shoal about 12m above the seabed. He cuts the speed to 1.5 knots and gives the order to shoot the trawl, the air suddenly fills with a clamouring, metallic clanking noise as the winch rapidly unwinds, the trawl trailing away behind the vessel into a gently heaving sea.

The *Resolute* slowly tows for about 45 minutes – time for the crew to snatch a quick breakfast – before they are back out on deck again as the winch begins to slowly retrieve the net. Once the net bag at the end of the trawl was safely secured by the stern of the vessel, the mackerel were pumped onboard into refrigerated seawater tanks, which keep the catch at minus 1.5 degrees C, ensuring optimum quality. The vessel features nine RSW tanks, with a holding capacity of 2040m<sup>3</sup>. This turned out to be a good 530 tonne haul of mackerel with each fish averaging about 435gms.

Once the net had been pumped clear, the trawl was released back into the sea for one more tow after another mark of fish was detected. Slightly fewer fish were caught this time – around 330 tonnes – and they were marginally smaller compared to the first haul, but Matty and Ally were still well pleased with the morning's work. Everything had gone like clockwork, with a total fishing time of around four hours. The *Resolute* swung around and headed back towards Lerwick to land her catch at the *Shetland Catch* processing factory in Lerwick, owned by *Pelagia*, some



**WORK FORCE:** Shooting the trawl.



**DAWN PATROL:** Joint lead skipper Ally West checks the fish finder.

four hours steaming time away. Matty says the *Resolute* is very economical on fuel, especially when the engine revs are stepped down when in cruising mode to maximise efficiency, and which still delivers an easy 10-11 knots.

### Catch quality

■ The quality of the catch is important, and Matty and Ally were hopeful that this consignment would attract the attention of discerning Japanese buyers. Much of the previous landing the day before had achieved just that, resulting in a higher price for the catch. After landing, the fish are frozen whole and packed in cardboard cartons, ready for shipping to export markets such as Eastern Europe, Japan or West Africa, or for further processing in north-east Scotland, including smoking and canning for UK supermarkets.

When the *Resolute* departed for the fishing grounds, the Norwegian cargo vessel, *Silver Crystal*, was moored alongside *Shetland Catch*, taking frozen mackerel onboard before departing for Lithuania.

As is the case with other

mackerel and herring vessels in the Scottish fleet, the composition of the crew of the *Resolute* is largely a family affair, with many related to one another, and coming from fishing families that can be traced back several generations.

Ally says: "Fishing really is in our blood and there is no job in the world quite like it. The satisfaction of completing a successful trip gives you an unbelievable buzz that is difficult to describe." Matty agrees. "Every trip is different and brings its own different challenges, but I enjoy the job immensely, especially the camaraderie involved when working with such a great crew."

After this landing, the *Resolute* had just enough of its yearly catch quota left to embark upon one final fishing trip from Lerwick, before heading back to its home port of Fraserburgh, where it will tie-up until January. Early in the New Year, the vessel will resume mackerel fishing once more for a few weeks before switching to Atlanto-Scandian herring off Norway, and then moving onto North Sea herring in home waters during the summer.



**DECK HANDS:** The crew is mostly a family affair.

## SUSTAINABLE HARVESTING

**T**HE FUTURE SUSTAINABILITY of the pelagic industry is something close to both skippers' hearts, and they have been watching with concern the recent pelagic fisheries negotiations to allocate TACs and quota shares among coastal states.

The biggest issue upsetting sustainable harvesting of mackerel are the unilateral quotas being set by several northern coastal states. The setting of unilateral quotas for mackerel first began in 2013-14 when Iceland self-awarded itself a unilateral catch allowance without any international coastal states agreement, and without having any historical track record in the mackerel fishery. Over the intervening period, Russia and Greenland have followed suit, and the situation was compounded further when both Norway and the Faroe Islands decided to unilaterally increase their mackerel quotas by 55% for 2021. The end result for 2021 is a 42% overshoot of unilateral TACs (*total allowable catch*) above the ICES recommended advice.

In reality, the catch is likely to be well below this figure, as the countries that have set unilateral TACs have consistently been unable to catch their self-allocation. The behaviour of these northern states contrasts starkly with the UK and EU, who have both maintained their traditional share of the catch within multilateral coastal states agreement and have not embarked upon any unilateral increases. The UK also catches all its mackerel quota in its Exclusive Economic Zone and none in international waters.

To make matters worse, the Faroese have used 14% of their self-allocated mackerel quota to buy whitefish quota from Russia. In other words, their unilateral increase is being used to create 'currency' to buy other quota.

Ally West says: "The current situation of countries setting unilateral quotas is very concerning, and hopefully these nations will see sense, and recognise that their actions are potentially jeopardising the future of the industry."

Scottish vessels such as the *Resolute* are actively engaged in scientific research to increase our knowledge of stocks. In effect, they are using their boats as research platforms where fish are sampled on a regular basis, with catch quantities, the location and the length and weight of the fish all being carefully recorded, the results of which can be used in scientific assessment processes to ensure sustainable catch levels in future years. Such work is spearheaded by Dr Steven Mackinson, a research scientist who is employed by the *Scottish Pelagic Fishermen's Association*.

"We all recognise the importance of sustainable harvesting and the need for the fishery to be well-managed," says Matty West. "The *Resolute* is a new boat and we have invested heavily in it, so it is in our interests to ensure our mackerel and other fish stocks stay healthy, ensuring that our fishing tradition can be passed down to future generations." ■

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# MCIB Report into Galway Tragedy Released

## REPORT RECOMMENDS PFD AND VHF USE ON INSHORE BOATS

**A** N INVESTIGATION into the death of a Galway fisherman who became entangled in gear off Salthill last year has found the weather deteriorated “significantly” after the vessel which he fished with his father left the harbour.

**Tom Oliver** (37), a relative of the Olivers who rescued two paddleboarders in Galway Bay in August 2020, died after he was dragged over the stern of the six-metre fishing vessel *Myia* on November 2nd 2020.

His father **Martin**, who was almost 62, was found dead at home the following morning.

The Marine Casualty Investigation Board (MCIB) report into the incident said that “violent movements” generated by the worsening sea conditions while feeding out shrimp pots may have been a contributory factor.

The use of a mobile phone to generate a distress call, instead of a Mayday call over VHF radio, “added some delay, however short, in the alert of the emergency services”, the report found.

It says the casualty was not wearing a personal flotation device (PFD) or lifejacket while operating on an open deck in hazardous conditions.

“Wearing a suitably specified and fitted PFD would have greatly improved his chances of

survival,” the report states.

The report notes that the crew were very experienced at potting in the Galway Bay area, and had been working on the twin-hulled vessel *FV Myia* for ten years, fishing lobster in summer and shrimp during the winter.

The report says that the weather “deteriorated considerably between the time the vessel left the harbour at midday on November 2nd, 2020, and the time of the incident.

“As seen in the Met Éireann weather report at the time of the incident there were near gale force winds, heavy rainfall, and rough seas,” it says.

“These conditions were extremely challenging for a vessel of this size and construction and would have led to violent movements,” it says.

It notes that there are no manufacturers recommendations on the operational limitations of this type of vessel, and the manufacturing company is no longer in existence.

It says that at approximately 1.30pm, the men were resetting a train of pots when Tom Oliver got entangled in rope attached to the train of pots.

“The weight of the train of pots combined with the forward motion of the vessel quickly



TRAGEDY: Tom Oliver with his father Martin. Photo: Pat Cantwell

**“The weight of the train of pots combined with the forward motion of the vessel quickly pulled Tom overboard and under the water”**

pulled him overboard and under the water,” it says.

The Galway RNLI lifeboat operations manager was contacted by mobile phone, and he requested activation of pagers for an immediate launch of the inshore lifeboat.

It arrived quickly on the scene, and the crew found the casualty caught in ropes and unconscious in the water.

The lifeboat crew got the casualty onboard and immediately began cardiopulmonary resuscitation. It requested an ambulance, which met it at the lifeboat station. Tom Oliver was brought to Galway University Hospital where he was pronounced dead.

The lifeboat then launched again to escort the fishing vessel *Myia* back to the harbour.

The report says a Mayday call over VHF radio would have

been picked up immediately by Valentia Coast Guard, leading to immediate activation of the lifeboat crew pagers. It says that activation of a personal locator beacon would also have triggered an instant distress call.

The MCIB recommends that the Minister for Transport should issue marine notices reminding fishers of the obligation to wear a PFD while working on open decks, and of the dangers associated with snagging in gear while setting trains of pots.

It also recommends the minister issue marine notices to encourage use of VHF radio for distress calls, and to point out the limitations of mobile phones for this purpose, and to advise fishers to know the limitations of vessels and to be aware always of weather forecasts before going to sea. ■

## New Principal Appointed to National Fisheries College of Ireland, Greencastle



**BORD IASCAIGH MHARA** (BIM), Ireland's Seafood Development Agency is delighted to announce the appointment of **Mr. Garvan Meehan** as Principal of the National Fisheries College of Ireland in Greencastle, Co. Donegal. Garvan brings a wealth of experience both at sea and onshore to the post. A qualified Chief Engineer with a BEng in Naval Architecture, he has held posts as Chief Engineer at sea and as a Marine Technical Superintendent ashore.

He was also previously a marine engineering skills

instructor with BIM. This position will play a key role in the further development and enhancement of the college curriculum and the services it offers to the seafood sector, as well as overseeing capital investment projects within the college. Garvan also has a strong personal family link to the facility. The building was built by a local builder and furniture maker, who was also Garvan's maternal Grandfather.

In fact, a lot of the furniture is original, and Garvan believes that his 'new' principal desk was one of those supplied by his grandfather, so it seems fitting that he is now at the helm!

*We wish Garvan every success in his new role and look forward to working with him.* ■

# Skipper 2022 EXPO DATES



YOUR INDUSTRY  
YOUR SHOWS



## UL SPORT, Limerick 25-26th March, 2022



### SHOW OPENING HOURS

Friday: 10am-6pm Saturday: 10am-4pm

## P&J Live, Aberdeen 13-14th May, 2022



### SHOW OPENING HOURS

Friday: 10am-6pm Saturday: 10am-4pm



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**Web:** www.theskipper.ie

[www.theskipper.ie/events](http://www.theskipper.ie/events)



# Ocean Data Collection Goes Robotic

## International scientists showcase new advanced technology at Galway's SmartBay Observatory

**L**AST MONTH, an international team of scientists demonstrated an advanced underwater technology for ocean observation at the SmartBay Observatory in Galway Bay.

The French company **SEABER**, demonstrated the YUCO micro-AUV, a micro Autonomous Underwater Vehicle, which is an unmanned, untethered vehicle that collects oceanographic data in coastal environments. This data is important for monitoring our marine environment and changing ocean climate.

The SmartBay Observatory



SEABER YUCO micro-AUV was showcased at the SmartBay Observatory.

is one of Ireland's national marine scientific research facilities, providing national and international researchers with the infrastructure to validate new marine sensors and instruments in real sea conditions.

■ **Alan Berry**, Manager of Marine Research Infrastructures at the Marine Institute said,

*"The SmartBay Observatory is used to validate new sensor technologies, such as SEABER's innovative and affordable micro AUV system. New marine sensor technologies increase the accessibility and availability of data for organisations monitoring our oceans and in turn contributes globally to our*

*deeper understanding of the oceans."*

SEABER were successful through the EU JERICO-RI European Infrastructure JERICO-S3 Access Programme to utilise the SmartBay Observatory in Galway Bay. Over the coming months, the SmartBay Observatory will facilitate a further four international science projects demonstrating novel and improved sensor technologies on this unique Irish research infrastructure towards the common goal of improving data collection for marine and climate observations.

■ **Luc Simon**, Global Business Development Manager at

SEABER said,

*"We were honoured and thrilled to be selected for the JERICO-RI European Infrastructure JERICO-S3 access programme. We were delighted to work with the Marine Institute and SmartBay team to showcase our YUCO micro-AUV system."*

The SmartBay Observatory, established in 2015, is an important contribution by Ireland to the growing global network of real-time underwater observatories giving us new insights into the ocean.

■ **Michael Gillooly**, Interim CEO at the Marine Institute said,

*"By facilitating advanced ocean monitoring technologies, the SmartBay Observatory helps to take concepts and prototypes from laboratories into the sea. New marine monitoring technologies and sensors generate more data than we have ever had before, improving our ocean observation capabilities and increasing our ocean knowledge."* ■

**For more information visit:**

**www.smartbay.ie**

**@SmartBaySite on Twitter**

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## Deckhand Foundation Programme Certificate



Learn essential skills from experienced trainers which include **Basic Net Mending, Rope Work, Stability, Chartwork, Care of the Catch, Sustainability, Food Safety and Marine Engine Operations.**

An introduction to these skills will allow you successfully start your career as a deckhand in the fishing industry. A range of sector certificates will also be obtained during the course if successfully completed.

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- Personal Survival Techniques
- Elementary First Aid
- Personal Safety and Social Responsibilities
- Fire Prevention and Fire Fighting
- Issued with a BIM Safety Card
- GMDSS Short Range Radio Certificate issued by the Department of Transport

### Course Dates

Six-week programme running from Monday 17 January 2022 - Friday 25 February 2022

### Venue

BIM National Fisheries College of Ireland, Greencastle, Co. Donegal.

### Further Information and booking

#### Contact

Maria McCarron, College Administrator,

T +353 (0) 749 381068

E maria.mccarron@bim.ie

# ATLANTIC MARINE SUPPLIES – Safety at Sea

**A**TLANTIC MARINE have been at the forefront of marine safety in Ireland for the past 40 years and their life rafts specifically designed for the inshore sector meet the regulations for vessels which come under the Code of Practice regulations.

The life rafts are manufactured by *Survitec* in Belfast, the world leader in marine safety. Many inshore vessels have already put the new and compact life raft onboard, with this brand new fleet of life rafts being rolled out continuously. *Atlantic Marine* is Ireland's leading life raft service station and its core business is the hire, supply, service and recertification of a diverse range of lifesaving equipment. They are a government approved, life raft service station for the



**LIFE SAVER:** Atlantic Marine are Ireland's leading life raft service station.

impressive *Survitec Group* brand portfolio, which includes: *RFD*, *Dunlop-Beaufort*, *DSB* and *Lifeguard*, as well as *Survitec Zodiac* life rafts and rescue boats.

At their premises in Killybegs, *Atlantic Marine* has a large 8000sq.ft. purpose built service station where they service life rafts from 4 persons to 150 persons catering for passenger ferries, tourism vessels, fishing vessels, offshore vessels and leisure vessels.

They also supply and service a large range of inflatable lifejackets and immersion suits which are required by the marine industry. The company specialises in the supply of all lifesaving equipment, including Distress Rockets, Flares, Smoke Signals, Man Overboards, Lifebuoys, Life throwing appliances, Lifejackets and Hydrostatic Release Units.

■ FOR MORE INFORMATION: [www.atlanticmarine.ie](http://www.atlanticmarine.ie)

## Pelagic Fleet Finish Out The Year

■ With all the fleet having their Mackerel quota caught for 2021, vessels have turned their attention to Boar fish and Scad.

The Boar fish is in abundance this year with large marks reported and boats had no problem catching their quota in just a few hauls. So far the Scad have been pretty scarce on the grounds but they normally show up better at the beginning of December.

This year the Sprat has been non-existent, which has been a big disappointment for the smaller inshore fleet.

Normally the Fleet make a decent fishing by October and November.

A decent mark of Herring has been reported in Lough Swilly with the boats having no problem catching their small quotas.



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# Fishery has come to a standstill

## Reduced activity at NI fishing ports

**have never known it so bad! The County Down fishery is dormant, despite all efforts the bottom trawl fishery has come to a standstill.**

There is little enough to be found on the regular pitches with prawns in particular hard to come by. The more distant grounds such as the Clyde, Smalls and Minch are only a little better and not worth the expense of going to. Add to that the increasingly high cost of fuel, difficulties with crew and the indifferent market there is little or no activity at the base ports. The foreign crew are taking an early break for Christmas so there is little chance of an upturn before the year end.

The only area of activity for the prawns is in the North Sea based at North Shields and adjacent ports and although there is a bulk to be had prices are disappointing (*of which more later*) and the usual difficulties and costs of working so far from home makes the effort here marginal though better than the alternatives in the Irish Sea. A large part of the County Down fleets are therefore based in

the North Sea with little benefit for shore based industry at home. An option for the Kilkeel fleet has appeared in the form of guard-ship duty with a concentration in the mid North Sea off Grimsby. A lifeline for those fit for it but in the longer term this does not bode well for the future of a fishery as guard ships quickly lose their fishing capability with reduced crew, no gear turnover and in some cases disposal of licences.

**The Porcupine continues to pay off for those few fit to reach it and with winter now with us that can be no fun either.**

The Scallop season opened (as ever) on the 11 November but there was no great enthusiasm or rush to go to it with a 700kg quota imposed in Isle of Man waters and uncertainty over the market. Small volumes landed helped the fresh market situation but some boats were complaining that they had difficulty making the daily quota although others were fishing short days apparently with quota caught! The fishery this year is well spread with activity on the Irish shores and in Liverpool Bay outwith the Manx limits and

clear of limits on access and quota.

There has been local activity on the whitefish front with the usual punters working the Haddock and North Channel pitches and the odd prawner trying his luck as a scare option to try to return a pound. Guard work has also impacted this fleet as it is representative of the larger, more able type of boat fit to spend 14 days plus at sea in remote locations. Notably the *Unity* left the Newlyn based fishery for guard-ship options as did the rest of that fleet.

The fun and games last month was undoubtedly in the pelagic sector. The local tank boats finished up at the Mackerel in far northern waters then tied up with quota taken on the *Voyager* in Skagen and the *Havilah/ Stefanie M* in Belfast. However there has been a good showing of Herring off the Mourne shore this year and the local skiff fishery with bottom set gill nets had some good nights.

## IRISH SEA HERRING

Activity-by Irish boats has been notable this year with the ports of **Warrenpoint and Lisahally** benefiting from surprise activity. A fleet of boats fished Irish Sea Herring to the south and west of the Isle of Man (just outside the limits) and landed on a 2/3 day basis into Warrenpoint for onward road transport to Killybegs. Initially some boats tried landing

direct to the Killybegs facility but later went for the Warrenpoint option. Other vessels fishing to the south of Ireland landed into Warrenpoint for road transport to Killybegs bypassing alternative landing options whilst on passage. In the meantime Lisahally on Lough Foyle was being used to discharge both Mackerel and Horse Mackerel for onward road transport to the County Down factories and to Killybegs with some of those boats later putting to sea for Killybegs to change gear or lay-up. Later there was activity off the Bay of Dundalk on Sprat which was landed at various other points whilst one pair found a fishery off Strangford Mouth buoy landing into Warrenpoint for consignment to Killybegs. This pair were so close inshore they experienced problems with creel settings and later Scallop men. All very entertaining and a contrast to the otherwise lack of action from the local fleet.

Meanwhile the **Lough Foyle wild oyster fishery** has started with a warning issued to Northern Ireland boats participating in the fishery that they are now subject to the **North-East Atlantic Federation Convention (NEAFC) Port State Control** following Brexit and need to register with that body and for every landing into the only port open to them on Lough Foyle, Greencastle, with 4 hours in advance, written notice of landing on a PSCI form and may only commence landing when they are in receipt of a landing authorization with confirmation of legitimacy.

Other requirements and obligation; apply. Presumably Northern Irish vessels in this fishery are allowed to discharge into Northern Irish ports without NEAFC approval and then transport the catch where-ever they wish within Ireland North or South?

Meanwhile the **Irish Sea-Fisheries Protection Authority** has announced submission of its revised control plan to the EU for approval following consultation with the industry with most of the responses coming from the Pelagic sector. Inshore the potters cleared the grounds for the local Scallop fishery without too much friction and the Brown Crab men were solicited with offers to engage in research sampling to occupy their boring periods. ■



Prawn processing at Kilkeel Seafoods.

# Financial Times on NI Fishing

■ The August newspaper of the **Financial Times of London** recently covered the aspect of business german to the Northern Irish fishery and the BREXIT protocol. It quoted **Daniel Whittle**, the MD of Whitby Seafoods owner of the Scampi processing plant in Kilkeel (*Kilkeel Seafoods*) saying that difficulties he faced obtaining raw product for processing in Kilkeel, mainly from Scotland, was leaving him to consider re-locating the Kilkeel factory to mainland UK.



**Mr Harry Wick**, (left) CEO of the **Northern Ireland Fish Producers Organisation** representing fishing vessel owners in all 3 Northern Ireland fishing ports is quoted as saying that this could lead to the demise of the Northern Irish fishing fleet as it as present stood.



**Mr Alan McCulla**, (bottom left) CEO of the **Anglo-North Irish Fish Producers Organisation** and its fish trading arm *Sea Source* was quoted as saying the impact on his fish sales would be catastrophic as the reliance he had on the UK fish market was total.

Meanwhile the Northern Ireland prawn fleet fishing in the North Sea and landing into North Shields are facing the reality of this situation. In previous years the catch would be landed fresh on ice into a lorry for direct transport to the County Down factories for same day delivery at no cost to the boats. Now the prawn tails are landed to an intermediary who takes them off the boat sorts, freezes, holds and packages them for transport back to the same County Down factories with EU requisite paperwork at a cost which can come to between £1 and £1.3 per kilo.

The whole prawns can go through local (to North Shields) factories but the markets developed by the fleet in both Northern Ireland and Ireland would be subject to the same factors so there is a price divergence there also. Apparently raw product going in the other direction is not subject to the same level of difficulty (if any). Fish imports from the UK mainland to Northern Ireland have already given the fish distribution and retail trade problems over the year with one major transporter reporting delays and handling costs impacting on business.

## Fisheries/Science Grants

■ A team from the London based **DEFRA** (*Department, Environment and Rural Affairs*) visited Northern Ireland with a representative tasked to explain the workings of the £100 million grant scheme promised as part of the BREXIT compensation scheme for fisheries and solicit applications for the scheme with port visits to inter-react with fishermen. It transpired that the only element of the scheme that was “up and running” was the fisheries and science innovation scheme budgeted for around 25% of the overall £100 million and that further tranches of the scheme were to follow (*about 1 year after the initial*) announcement).

However, the Fisheries/Science scheme was for grants of 100% but the prime beneficiary was the Science sector and applications were anticipated from laboratories and research institutes rather than specific fishery businesses. Some input from *Aquaculture* was anticipated for testing and disease related issues.



## NEPHROPS DATA FOR 2022 QUOTA SETTING

■ **ICES** (International Council for Exploration of the Sea) have released the latest set of advice on the state of Nephrops stocks in ICES area VII upon which the eventual Total Allowable Catch and from there National quota will be assessed.

Of the 7 major functional units used in the assessment 5 show a decline in the biomass of Nephrops which could lead to a decrease in eventual quota whilst 2 show a rise which should lead to an increase. As the data from all the functional unit is amalgamated to give an overall picture the end result would logically... lead to a modest TAC conclusion of minus 5%. This is, of course, subject to decision of the EU’s Council of Ministers which following BREXIT and realignment of quotas could lead to an unexpected conclusion. The two functional Units showing increased Biomass were *Jones Bank* and *Irish Sea West* both significantly within UK limits with *Irish Sea East*, *Arran, Celtic Sea, Smalls* and *Porcupine* showing decreases.



## LYNN GILMORE SEAFISH APPOINTMENT



■ **Dr Lynn Gilmore** has been appointed *Director of Communications and Engagement* with **SEAFISH**, the UK’s Seafood support authority. Lynn is to be responsible for Marketing, Communications, Regional and Horizon Scanning functions as a new member of the Seafish Executive team and will play a role in the Organisation’s new strategic review.

Lynn started working for Seafish in 2009 originally as the Seafish Northern Ireland Manager responsible for all of Seafish operations in Northern Ireland and is well known within the Northern Irish industry .

During this time Lynn wrote a regular column for the *Skipper* mainly highlighting the Seafish work program in the province. In 2019, Lynn was promoted to the head of International Trade and Regions (West) responsible for developing the Seafish regional teams in the west of the UK and developing

the portfolio of International Trade promotional activity. Lynn takes up her new role on 11 November but continues in her old post until a replacement is appointed. Lynn is also a Board Member of the Northern Ireland Fishery Harbour Authority.



## Marine Coastguard Agency Vessel Inspections

■ In the month of October the **Marine Coastguard Agency (MCA)** commenced a pattern of vessel inspections focusing (though not exclusively) on migrant workers in the fishing fleet and the terms and conditions under which they were employed. Such inspections had previously taken place on the mainland UK and had resulted in detention in some cases mainly over the paperwork requirements. Some issues were encountered in Northern Ireland although much of the fleet was port-bound at the time gave few problems unlike those Northern Irish boats working from mainland ports where paperwork kept at home and with unmanned boats with local crew on rest at home difficulties did occur.



Maritime and Coastguard Agency



# New Chairman for NFFO

## Thames Estuary fisherman to take the helm

**L**ONG-STANDING member of the NFFO's Executive Committee and vice-chairman of its South-East Committee, **PAUL GILSON**, has been elected as the next Chairman of the National Federation of Fishermen's Organisation.

The NFFO Chairman is appointed for two years before usually being elevated to the president's role.

Cornish fisherman, *Andrew Pascoe* will continue as president and will chair the NFFO annual general meeting.

Paul comes from a family that has fished the Thames estuary and southern North Sea for over 200 years. Over his time in the fishing industry he has owned and fished seven trawlers and currently has one more vessel under construction. With 30 years as a lifeboatman, and senior helmsman for 20 years, he has received numerous awards, including one from the royal humane society. He has also been chairman of Leigh and Southend Fisherman's Association for many years.

In accepting his new position Paul said, "I would especially like to thank Tony Delahunty and Andrew Pascoe who have been acting as co-chairs following the regrettable departure

of former chairman Andrew Locker, who was obliged to seek employment outside the industry. It is comforting to know that I can turn to them for guidance at any time.

Although I have my roots in the inshore sector, like others in the NFFO, I appreciate the importance of a diverse and profitable fleet in the UK, embracing all sizes of vessel and sustainable methods of fishing."

Paul was amongst the first to flag up the ecological changes observed in the Thames Estuary that have led to a dramatic drop in the catches of some customary commercial species like sole and the rise of other non-commercial species – giving rise to an industry crisis in the area.

Paul will take up his duties at the first meeting of the NFFO Executive following the AGM which will be attended by the Secretary of State, *George Eustice*.

*NFFO Chief Executive, Barrie Deas, welcoming the appointment said,*

"One of the strengths of the NFFO is the pool of diverse talent around our table that we can draw on to support our work. Paul recognises this and has personally made



**NEW CHAIRMAN: PAUL GILSON**



**NEW DEPUTY CHIEF: MIKE COHEN**

an enormous contribution as Vice-Chairman of the NFFO's South-East Committee. I have no doubt that he will make a similar contribution as chair of our Executive Committee. Given the pressures facing our industry, this is a very demanding time to lead the national federation but as well as his direct fishing experience, Paul brings with him a wealth of knowledge based on his time as local councillor and chairman of his local town council. His time spent as vice-chairman of the Kent and Essex Sea Fishery Committee will also provide valuable experience."

**T**HE NFFO ALSO announced the appointment of its former Chairman, **MIKE COHEN**, as the Federation's Deputy Chief Executive replacing **Dale Rodmell**.

*Chief Executive, Barrie Deas, announcing the appointment said,*

"Mike is very well known in the fishing industry as former Chief Executive of the

Holderness Fishing Industry Group and as the NFFO's Chairman during 2016-18. His return to the frontline in fishing politics will be widely welcomed given his legal and scientific background and wealth of practical experience in the industry."

"Dale Rodmell has built a solid reputation for a careful analytical approach to representing our membership. In particular, he has done exceptionally valuable work in the area of environmental protection, spatial pressures and in building our regional committees. Our best wishes go with him. He will remain however, at the heart of the Federation's work as CEO of the East of England Fish Producers Organisation, and member of the Executive Committee"

Mike will take up his new role at the beginning of January. ■



## Zamakona To Build A New Midwater Pelagic Trawler For UK

**THE NEW TRAWLER will be built entirely at the facilities of Zamakona in Bilbao, based on a design from Skipsteknisk (Alesund, Norway).**

This will be the second vessel designed by *Skipsteknisk* for **Fiskebas Fishing Co Ltd** following the present M/V ANTARCTIC II, (right) and the first occasion for one of the ST designs to be built at Zamakona Yards. With accommodation for up to 14 persons, high focus has been given to efficiency in water circulation within the cargo tanks. Reliability of the complete trawling and fish handling systems has been also considered as crucial. Fiskebas Fishing Company Limited is located in Shetland, UK and is part of the Fishing Industry since 1986 when the crew started fishing.

**Zamakona Yards Group** has facilities in Santurtzi (Vizcaya), Pasajes (Guipúzcoa) and Las Palmas de Gran Canaria (Canary Islands), with more than 41 years of experience building and repairing all types of vessels.





# Bright Future for FIFT

## New Trustee industry experts appointed

**S** EVEN NEW industry experts have been appointed to the Fishing into the Future (FITF) Board of Trustees, expanding the geographical reach of the Trusteeship and enriching the expertise available to guide its charitable activities.

As of October 2021, seven new Trustees have joined the FITF Board of Trustees, creating renewed momentum and new perspectives to guide future projects.

The new trustees include:

- **David Anderson**, CEO of the Aberdeen Fish Producers Organisation Ltd.;
- Orkney based **Hannah Fennell**, Head of Orkney Fisheries Association and Researcher;
- **Trevor Jones**, fisherman, fish farmer and expert in fishing safety based out of North Wales;
- Northern Irish fisherman **Jimmy Kelly**, based out of Portavogie;
- Norfolk-based vessel owner **Ashley Mullenger**, better known on social media as the "the Female Fisherman";
- **Mike Park**, CEO of the Scottish White Fish Producer Organisation; and
- **Neil Witney**, owner and skipper of *About Time NN8* based out of Newhaven in East Sussex.

**Emma Plotnek, FITF Executive Director said:**

"We are already supported by a wealth of experienced, forward-thinking people and by growing our Trusteeship it shows people in the industry believe in our core values and potential as a charity. We are injecting new ideas and energy into the charity and are striving to ensure we represent the different scales and geographies within the industry, as well as include more women and young voices."

The new Trustees are currently getting involved in ongoing work to develop community learning resources that will support the transition towards co-management and more collaborative science, as

well as preparing the launch of a new website "the Fishing Porthole" that will provide a one-stop-shop for learning, sharing & working together.

Newly inducted Trustee, **Ashley Mullenger**, expressed her delight at the appointment saying:

*"It's both an honour and a responsibility to be inducted onto the board of Trustees, despite being relatively fresh in my career as a fisherman, it's clear how important it is to understand the science that drives our management policies, whilst also engaging the fishing community in our various upcoming projects, which will help us to play a clear role in the future of the industry".* ■



**THE FEMALE FISHERMAN:** New Trustee Ashley Mullenger.



**MAN OVERBOARD**  
Book your safety training event.

## More Man Overboard Awareness Training Dates

**FUNDED EVENTS IN environmental training pools across the UK aim to highlight the dangers of falling overboard fishing vessels.**

A programme of training courses has restarted to make fishermen more aware of the perils of man overboard incidents. Falling overboard is the biggest single cause of workplace fatalities in the fishing industry. In 2021, ten fishermen have tragically lost their lives at sea. Six of these were recorded as man overboard fatalities by the *Marine Accident Investigation Branch*. **The Fishing Industry Safety Group** has secured £200,000 to help prevent man overboard incidents. This is being used to fund delivery of in-water awareness events to explain how to avoid going over the side and what can be done to improve the chances of survival. Man overboard Awareness events are run by **Seafish** and the **RNLI** at environmental training pools across the UK. Anyone working on a commercial fishing vessel is encouraged to book up to attend the events, which are fully funded. Spaces are limited so early sign up is recommended.

These are strenuous, physical events, which are not for the faint-hearted. You should be in good physical condition to take part. Participants will be in the pool to experience a realistic man overboard experience under controlled conditions.

■ Booking and details at <https://www.homeanddry.uk/>

**seafish**  
Kingfisher  
Information Service

## UK Fishing Gear Restrictions

### Kingfisher launches new interactive mapping service

**With this free service fishers can:**

- View all UK fishing gear restrictions in one place for the first time
- Download and share restriction information via WhatsApp, social media and email
- View restriction zones on their plotters

Visit the website now:



[www.kingfisherrestrictions.org](http://www.kingfisherrestrictions.org)



# Skipper highlights lifesaving ability of PFD and Safety Equipment

**“I tell the guys to wear your harness and PFD, it will save your life one day”**

**O**ne ‘rogue wave’ and a fisherman, without a safety harness and PFD (Personal Flotation Device), would have been washed overboard off the Scottish coast never to be seen – alive – again.

Or that is what fishing vessel owner **John Clark** believes, after watching a recent incident unfold on the CCTV footage from *Reliance III*.

The Fraserburgh-based fisherman is a keen safety advocate for the fishing industry and has released the video online to demonstrate how important safety equipment is onboard.

The video can be viewed at <https://maritimecoastguard.blogspot.com/2021/10/fishing-vessel-owner-releases-shocking.html>

“The incident shows why safety measures are lifesavers, fishing is a dangerous profession however careful you are – you are miles away at sea, often on your own, if something goes wrong, it’s going to be bad,” he said.

“There’s sometimes a bit of reluctance and crews can say things like ‘it’s because of you saying this that I have more



**PFD READY:** The crew of *Reliance III* wearing PFDs and connected to the vessel by a safety harness.

costs and regulations to follow’, but that is the point: Look at how many fishermen don’t come home, the safety equipment and regulations are what bring those fishermen home.

“We’ve had a number of losses in this area in the last year, it’s a big problem around here.

“Fishing is the most dangerous job in the world, but it doesn’t have to be, people can be stubborn about spending the money on the safety gear, but considering what it does, that view doesn’t make sense to me. You can’t put a price on a person’s life.

“The sad reality is that the message is not always getting through, and it really needs to, that’s why I published this video

– I hope to help get the message through.

“The last thing I ever want to have to do is knock on a family’s door and have to be the person that gives them the worst news of their life, their loved one isn’t coming home.”

He said his crew were pulling up their nets, approximately 50 nautical miles off Scrabster, north Scotland, on Wednesday night in stormy conditions when the colossal wave completely engulfed the 20m twin-rig trawler.

When the water subsided enough to see what is left behind, it becomes clear the force of it had swept crewman John off his feet and into the heavy swell.

But rather than watching

a tragedy unfold, John is not at the mercy of the wave; he is able to stay close to the central pole before eventually standing up. Other than looking understandably confused and drenched through, he is fine.

“That’s why safety is so important,” his boss John said.

“I tell the guys to ‘wear your harness and PFD, it will save your life one day’, this is exactly why I tell them that. If he hadn’t been wearing them, we would not be having this nice conversation today.

“The safety measures I have on board my vessel are there to save lives but the key thing is that he used them.”

John Clark, has fully embraced safety measures in the fishing industry, having experienced a scary moment in 2013. The 49-year-old said he found himself in a man overboard incident and realised how easily it can happen.

“I was dragged over the side of my own vessel when we were a long way from the coast and I was very, very lucky,” he explained. “My arm got twisted in a rope and so I stayed connected to the boat. It did some damage, but it kept me alive.”

“It’s very fair to say that if I hadn’t been attached, I wouldn’t be here now. It made me realise how dangerous fishing can be, and it made me very safety conscious.

“My guy just learned the same valuable lesson that I did almost 10 years ago, if he wasn’t attached to the boat, we would probably be having a very different, and difficult, conversation. He told me he knows the harness is why he wasn’t washed off the deck.” ■

## Marine Scotland backs NEAFC 2022 plans

**T**he annual meeting of the **North-East Atlantic Fisheries Commission (NEAFC)** took place 9-12 November, with parties agreeing a number of proposals which aim to ensure the conservation and optimum utilisation of fishery resources in the NEAFC Regulatory Area. The annual meeting was advised and informed by a number of Permanent Committees, which include *Monitoring and Compliance (PECMAC)* and *Management and Science (PECMAS)*. Key outcomes of the annual meeting included a rollover of the existing closure of the Rockall haddock box, a measure which protects juvenile haddock in the area. This closure has been in place for a number of years, and the UK worked together with the EU to propose a rollover of the measure into 2022, which was agreed by consensus. Measures were also adopted for mackerel, blue whiting

and Atlanto-Scandian herring (ASH) in the NEAFC Regulatory Area (international waters) in 2022, mirroring the outcomes of the Coastal States consultations which took place last month and allowing Contracting Parties to fish in the NEAFC regulatory area.

A zero catch limit for Irminger Sea redfish in 2022 was also adopted, in line with advice from the *International Council for the Exploration of the Sea (ICES)*.

Parties also agreed to adopt a number of control and enforcement measures in the Regulatory Area, as recommended by the control sub-group (PECMAC), and Cooperating Non-Contracting Party (CNCP) status was renewed for 2022 for Canada, the Bahamas, and Panama. Other measures adopted included an update to the list of fish stocks for which NEAFC requests and pays for advice from ICES.



## SPSG produces Fact Sheet on NE Atlantic mackerel

**T**he Scottish Pelagic Sustainability Group (SPSG) has produced a *Fact Sheet* outlining the current UK position on the north-east Atlantic mackerel fishery and total allowable catches (TACs) and quota shares.

With the northern European coastal states of Iceland, the Faroes, Greenland, Russia and Norway having all set unilateral quotas outwith any international agreement, the current north-east Atlantic catch level is above the *International Council Exploration of the Sea (ICES)* advice.

"The behaviour of these northern states contrasts starkly with the UK who has maintained their traditional share of the catch within multilateral coastal states agreement and has not embarked upon any unilateral increases," says Ian Gatt, chairman of SPSG.

Among the points highlighted in the SPSG 'Mackerel Fact Sheet' is that the Faroese have used 14% of their self-allocated mackerel quota to buy whitefish quota from Russia. In other words, their unilateral increase is being used to create 'currency' to buy other quota.

### Other key points in the Fact Sheet include:

- The UK has maintained its traditional share of the catch based on a long-standing historical participation in the fishery.
- All mackerel caught is in the UK exclusive economic zone

and not international waters.

- The UK has not set a unilateral TAC for mackerel. UK fishers are committed to conservation and sustainable catching, and are engaged in a range of scientific work, including self-sampling programmes under the auspices of science/ industry partnerships. The aim of these initiatives is to gain greater understanding of the North East Atlantic mackerel stock, which can be used in ICES stock assessments and TAC recommendations.

### With regards to the current situation on total allowable catches and quota shares, SPSG is calling for:

- A 10% cap on mackerel catches set in international waters.
- Catching opportunity to be based on zonal attachment and the availability of mackerel stocks in each coastal state's EEZ, and on long-term historical record, and set within ICES recommendations.
- The cessation of the setting of unilateral quotas outwith international agreement.
- A pledge from seafood suppliers that they will continue to source UK mackerel, given that the UK fishing fleet is catching mackerel responsibly and is committed to the sustainability of the fishery.

■ The Mackerel Fact Sheet can be viewed at: <https://tinyurl.com/feu32dd5>

## Grant boost for young fishermen

**N**EW ENTRANTS to fishing have been able to apply for Scottish Government funding towards the purchase of a second hand fishing vessel.

To coincide with **World Fisheries Day** three young fishermen have each benefitted from a £50,000 grant from the £14 million Marine Fund Scotland to help buy fishing boats.



**YOUNG DAD:** Daniel Watson of Integrity Shellfish with his newborn daughter.

Part of a drive to encourage new entrants under the age of 40 into the industry, the 'new entrants scheme' enables young fishermen to apply for up to 75% of the cost of buying a second-hand vessel of up to 16 metre or up to 50% of the cost of a vessel from 16-24 metre. All awards are capped at a maximum award of £100,000 to ensure affordability.

One of the young fishermen is **Daniel Watson**, 26, of *Integrity Shellfish*. He has been fishing for three and a half years and used the grant to purchase his own vessel. Daniel fishes for brown crab, velvet crab, prawns and lobster from Ullapool and sells his catch in Mallaig.

*Commenting on the grant Daniel said:*

"I am grateful for the support from the Scottish Government, which has helped me take the next step with my business and expand our fishing operation in Scotland. Without this funding, I quite simply would not have a boat of this size to support our aspirations. The week it arrived was particularly special as it was also the week my daughter was born. I'd like to thank my amazing partner Katie for her support and while our new-born is not quite ready to join the crew yet, who knows what the future holds!"

**T**he other awards were made to **John Anderson**, 26, and **Steven Mair**, 32, who both purchased a third share in a 18m trawler, with the other third purchased by LHD fishing agents in Shetland. The 'Sharyn Louise' boat fishes from Lerwick.

John Anderson said: "Without the grant from *Marine Fund Scotland*, I simply would not have been able to raise enough money to purchase my share in *Sharyn Louise LK250*. The grant has allowed me to secure my job and achieve my ambition of owning and skippering a whitefish boat. Now that I have managed to overcome the financial difficulties of getting into the industry, I look forward to making a career out of fishing which will allow me to bring up my family here in Shetland."

*Rural Affairs Secretary Mairi Gougeon welcomed the awarding of the grants:*

"It's fantastic to see this funding helping to attract young talent to a sector which has struggled in the past due to perceived lack of career progression opportunities.

These new entrants are crucial to boosting the resilience of the industry which supports jobs in some of our most rural communities. By supporting up and coming fishermen to become a skipper or to own their boat I hope it will help inspire young people to enter and progress through the fishing industry. This is an important part of our *Fisheries Management Strategy*, which includes actions to promote fishing as an attractive and safe career of choice." ■



# Enterprise II in Rescue Mission

Skipper full of praise for those involved in fishing boat rescue

**T**HE CREW of a fishing vessel which started taking on water to the west of Shetland at the end of October has thanked all those involved in the lengthy rescue.

The 26-metre Banff registered *Enterprise II* (BF1) which had six crew on board, suffered engine failure 60 miles west of Shetland in force eight winds on evening of 21 October.

The coastguard helicopter provided a pump to the stricken vessel, while the Aith Lifeboat gave cover when it was taken under tow by another fishing boat the following morning.

The *Enterprise II* was safely towed into Scalloway – with the Aith crew then calling time on their 20-hour shift, arriving back at their base at 3am on Saturday.

*Enterprise II* skipper James Lovie said he wanted to thank the coastguard, lifeboat and fishing vessel *Aalskere* for their help. He said it was the oil industry support



**ENGINE FAILURE:** Enterprise II under tow by Aalskere.

**“HM Coastguard helicopter crew did an awesome job when they delivered a pump to Enterprise II when the vessel lost power”**

vessel *Grampian Dynamic* which first took his call for help.

Lovie was then able to get in touch with his wife to try to contact fellow fishermen for a tow – before all power was lost.

He said it was too rough to establish a tow at the time, while later on water started entering the fish room.

“We had to pump the boat out four times with the

diesel pump lowered by the helicopter, before we reached Scalloway,” Lovie said.

Thankfully the winds had died down and eased throughout Friday.

“HM Coastguard helicopter crew did an awesome job when they delivered a pump to Enterprise II when the vessel lost power and started taking water,” the skipper said.

“I take my hat off to you guys – thank you very, very much, also to the guys on the Aith lifeboat, thank you very, very much for your long stint, standing by, and supplying us with more torch power.

“Also not forgetting the skipper/owner and crew of the fishing boat *Aalskere*, who finally got us under tow and safely returning us to port, where they welcomed us to come aboard for a hot meal and charge our phones.

“We appreciate greatly all those who were involved and helped get us back to shore.”

## Fish landings up in 2020 despite pandemic

**S**HETLAND'S prominent position in the UK fishing industry has been reaffirmed with the publication of the latest fish landing figures for 2020.

Published by **Shetland UHI**, the Shetland Fisheries Statistics 2020 reveal that just over 54,000 tonnes of fish and shellfish worth some £72 million were landed in the isles.

That represents an increase in weight from 2019 but a fall in value.

The report compiled by *Dr Ian Napier* provides a detailed breakdown of fish and shellfish landings in Shetland, and by Shetland fishing boats during 2020.

The report shows that although the weight of pelagic fish (mackerel) landed

in Shetland increased by more than one third last year that was partly offset by a substantial fall in landings of whitefish such as cod, saithe and hake.

The decrease in whitefish landings is believed to be primarily a result of the 50 per cent cut in the cod quota in 2020 which affected boats' ability to catch not just cod but a range of other species too.

The quantity of shellfish landed in Shetland increased slightly in 2020 but their value was substantially less, probably due to the impact of the Covid pandemic.

Shetland fishing boats landed about 94,000 tonnes of fish during the year (everywhere) with a value of £105 million.

Again, more fish and shellfish were

landed in the islands than in any other port in the UK, except Peterhead, with more fish landed in Shetland than in all of England and Wales.

Lerwick, Scalloway and Cullivoe were all in the top 15 UK ports for whitefish landings in 2020.

Overall, the fishing industry appears to have escaped the worst of the economic impacts of the Covid pandemic, the report suggests, with the biggest probable impact on the prices of shellfish.

■ The full report is available on the Shetland UHI website at <https://www.shetland.uhi.ac.uk/research/statistics/reports/fisheries/>



**COURAGEOUS:** The new build landing the catch to the Lerwick fish market.

## Scottish Greens call for sustainable fisheries management

**THE NEWLY elected Green MSP for the Highlands and Island Ariane Burgess (right) has called on the Scottish Government to invest more in sustainable fisheries management.**



And she moved to assure communities in the Highlands and Islands that her party understood the vital role of fishing in rural and island communities. She said arrangements proposed by the government were not adequate to tackle the problems of overfishing, the crisis in our inshore environments, and the inequity of how quotas are currently distributed.

"Today I'm calling for the Scottish Government to deliver Fisheries for the Future," she said.

"Across the Highlands and Islands we have communities which are dependent on a thriving fishing industry that will be endangered if we don't put an end to unsustainable fishing practices.

"Fishing is part of the fabric of Scottish life as well as one of our most valuable exports and this may be our last opportunity to ensure a just transition to sustainable fishing." ■

# SPFA and Shetland UHI agree strategic partnership

### Pelagic vessels to collect scientific data

**THE SCOTTISH Pelagic Fishermen's Association (SPFA) and Shetland UHI have signed a memorandum of understanding (MoU) for a strategic partnership agreement that will continue and ultimately enhance co-operation between the fishing industry and scientists.**

The agreement will build upon the strong relationship previously forged between SPFA and NAFC Marine Centre. The fisheries college became part of the newly formed Shetland UHI college in August this year.

Covering the next five years, the MoU outlines how the two organisations will work together to maximise the benefits on the collection and analysis of scientific data on pelagic stocks, and the development of pelagic science research.

SPFA chief scientific officer Dr Steven Mackinson said the agreement further

underlines the commitment of the Scottish pelagic sector to embrace science and ensure a sustainable future for the industry.

"The MoU provides a way to demonstrate our commitment to building a strong working

relationship between the pelagic industry and an established science institute, by clarifying why and how we intend to collaborate," he said.

"It is also an outward demonstration to government science and academic institutes of the commitment from the pelagic industry to professional scientific collaboration."

Joint head of marine science & technology of Shetland UHI Dr Chevonne Angus added: "Working in partnership with industry was central to the fisheries research activities that were undertaken at NAFC Marine Centre and this ethos continues under Shetland UHI".

## OCEAN KINETICS SALVAGE FISHING BOAT

■ **A WOODEN Norwegian fishing boat which sunk at a Shetland marina has been salvaged from the seabed. The 30ft vessel Hope, which was brought to Shetland in 1998, was successfully refloated with the help of divers from Ocean Kinetics.**

**They were sent to the Aith marina earlier in November to attach lifting bags to allow the 13 tonne boat to reach the surface.**

**A spokesperson for the marine engineering firm said the boat had fallen several feet into mud on the seabed, meaning visibility was poor and making the operation a challenge. When the boat was taken out of the water, she was pumped dry and attached to a crane for lifting out of the water.**



**HOPE FLOATS:** The vessel was refloated using airbags.



# History of expectation and disappointment

## WHY THE ICELAND SHELLFISH INDUSTRY COLLAPSED

**SHELLFISH WAS UTILIZED** in Iceland for centuries, mostly as bait and only rarely for human consumption when people were desperately hungry. In recent years shellfish became, at a certain point in time, an important part of the Icelandic fishing industry. High hopes were tied to the species, but for of number of reasons those hopes were dashed.

### SCALLOP STOCK COLLAPSES

■ Scallop is the most valuable shell found off the Icelandic coast. Fishing began in 1969 and took for the most part place in Breidafjörður on the West coast. The scallop catch grew to a maximum of 17,000 tons in 1985. The town of Stykkishólmur became the main place of landing and processing, and the scallop was an important source of income to this small fishing community.



**INFECTION:** Scallop fishing in Iceland collapsed due to a parasite infection and has yet to recover.

Around the turn of the century the scallop stock started to deteriorate due to an infection by an apicomplexan parasite, and the stock eventually collapsed. Now twenty years later, the stock has yet to recover.

No scallop fishing has been conducted in Breidafjörður since 2003, with the exception of experimental fishing between 2014 and 2019. The Marine and Fresh Water Research Institute of Iceland proposes a total catch of less than 100 tons in the fishing year 2021/2022.

### MUSSEL FISHING AND FARMING

■ Mussel fishing and farming in Iceland has for various reasons faced difficulties ever since the first real experiments were conducted in 1988. At its peak, there were between 10 and 20 mussel farms in the country. Their number rapidly decreased as the years went by, but three companies remained in operation until they recently gave up as well. Annual production in normal market conditions was around 100 tons, whereof well over half consisted of wild catches, and the rest were mussels farmed from scratch on lines.

### QUAHOG FACED MARKET DIFFICULTIES

■ The experimental fishing of ocean quahog (*latin: Arctica islandica*) in Iceland for human consumption began in the town Sudureyri in the West Fjords in 1987. The catch that first year exceeded 1,000 tons. In 1988, 4,700 tons were caught.

Scientists confirmed that there was plenty of ocean quahog around Iceland and great expectations were attached to this new industry. Processors at the town Thorshöfn in North East Iceland ordered a new specially built ship from China for the fishery, which arrived in 2001. Between 2001 and 2008 its yearly catch ranged from 450 to 14,400 tons.

In the autumn of 2008 fishing and processing of ocean quahog were discontinued due to market difficulties.



## CAUGHT ALIVE 507 YEARS OLD!

■ **THE OCEAN QUAHOG** is a remarkable creature. The longest-living being ever found in the entire animal kingdom is an ocean quahog caught near the island Grimsey, north of Iceland, in the summer of 2006. Shells caught there were age assessed by counting their annual growth rings. Most rings were found in one quahog caught alive, which turned out to be 507 years old. She was named Hafrún.

Researching this shell and 28 other quahog shells from Icelandic waters has revealed that their chemical composition provides significant information on the condition of the sea off the northern coast of Iceland from year to year for more than a thousand years back. This is based on a so-called shell calendar



Hafrún from Grimsey island, the oldest living creature in the animal kingdom.

that includes an important foundation for research into global warming.

The queen of ocean quahogs is undeniably Hafrún from Grimsey. As previously noted she was caught when 507 years had passed since her hatching in 1499. Columbus had sailed to the Western Hemisphere just a few years before Hafrún was at the larva stage of development. ■



**SIMPLY BLUE:** Captain Brian FitzGerald of Simply Blue, with David Hyde and Mark O'Reilly of Fishery Liaisons Ltd.

# Our Offshore Renewable Energy Opportunity

## IS OUR FISHING INDUSTRY READY?

**O**N FRIDAY 4th March 2022 the National Maritime College of Ireland (NMCI) will host a Conference/Webinar on Our Offshore Renewable Energy Opportunity – Is Ireland Ready? – (Maritime Qualifications and Certification).

The purpose of this Conference/Webinar is to explore the preparedness of Ireland's maritime and supply chain workforce to exploit the opportunities that will arise surrounding offshore renewable energy (ORE) developments and to further understand what is to be expected as Ireland pursues and meets its climate action targets. It specifically seeks to discuss the qualifications and certification regime for Ireland's fishing industry to ensure that it is fit for the dual purpose of keeping fishermen fishing while simultaneously ensuring that our coastal community's mariners and infrastructure are best placed to benefit from this developing maritime industry.

Ireland has set itself ambitious climate change targets that include 5GW of offshore wind by 2030 rising to 30 GW by 2050. By any measure, these

are extraordinary targets that will likely transform Ireland's maritime industry and coastal communities and carry with them previously unseen economic opportunities and maritime jobs surrounding for example: survey; assembly; installation; integration; operation; maintenance; supply chain; route to market and port operations. However, and somewhat surprisingly for an island nation, Ireland has relatively few mariners as a proportion of population\* and will therefore be challenged in its ability to exploit such new opportunities. In this context it is timely to review our current arrangements, to ensure that Ireland can harness the experience, expertise, and capability of Ireland's maritime community to contribute to these maritime opportunities as they unfold.

As things stand, the opportunity for Ireland's fishermen and their vessels to work with the offshore energy sector is constrained by the regulatory regime. Fishing vessels operate under discrete regulation and differing qualifications for contrasting

operations. Therefore, it is timely for Ireland to review the various extant regulations to ensure that its mariners are placed at the best possible advantage to deliver Ireland's maritime needs. To do otherwise risks the unnecessary importation of skills and infrastructure from abroad.

## THE SUBJECTS

The Conference/Webinar on 4th March seeks to explore this subject under the following headings:

- **Ireland's accelerating Offshore Renewable Energy sector** - *What's happening now, what's coming?*
- **Offshore Renewables and Ireland's Fishing Industry and Coastal Communities** - *What might the future hold?*
- **Seafarer Qualifications and Vessel Certification in Ireland** - *The situation today and mapping out future directions.*
- **Is Ireland Ready?** *What does success look like in 2030?*

**T**o understand and appreciate the seascape that will be impacted by Ireland's pursuit of its climate action targets, it is important that the Conference/Webinar provides detail around what is currently happening in these early stages of development which will lead to offshore wind farms being in the seas around Ireland. Absent the physical presence of offshore wind farms beyond those on the Arklow Bank, it is difficult to appreciate the nature of these developments and how their presence may alter how Ireland considers its ocean wealth.

The stakeholders most directly affected by these developments are Ireland's fishing industry and associated coastal communities. It is well-known that this industry and these communities are struggling as they face increasing challenges and fears for their future. As such, it is very important that an appreciation of what the future

holds in terms of both scale and opportunities is discussed.

Perhaps most specifically, in asking whether Ireland is ready to put its best team on the field, it is important to discuss Ireland's qualification and certification regime towards optimizing its preparedness for the opportunities ahead. The maritime experience, expertise, and capability that Ireland possesses within its' fishing community is second to none as these offshore renewable energy developments coincide with areas where they possess the greatest experience. Nobody knows the sea and seabed in these areas better than the fishermen that work there. Therefore, it would be a lost opportunity if such experience was unnecessarily constrained from working with this new industry and contributing in a meaningful way towards climate action, co-existence, and a sustainable future for all.

**F**inally, it is important to identify a pathway towards this sustainable future. Although Ireland's initial targets of 5GW of offshore wind by 2030 appears as the nearest horizon, many preparations need to be put in place now to both guarantee the achievement of this target and to swiftly develop towards the 2050 target of 30GW of offshore wind. Therefore, seeking to describe what success would look like just beyond the initial 2030 target would potentially be an eye-opening and important and exercise.

It is hoped that this Conference/Webinar, will be informative, helpful, and most importantly, awaken Ireland's mariners to an exciting and co-existent future that sees a thriving and growing Irish fishing industry working in harmony with Ireland meeting its climate action targets. If Ireland is to truly harness its ocean wealth, attract investment, enable a vibrant fishing industry, and be ready to exploit these opportunities, we need our best team 'on the sea'. ■

\*Our ocean economy supported 1% of the total workforce. The equivalent figures in neighbouring countries are UK 2.2%, Norway 6%, Netherlands 2.2% and Portugal 3.3% - *Harnessing Our Ocean Wealth.*

## AMBITIOUS II – DA62

**Homeport:** Clogherhead  
**Owners:** David and Niall Kirwan, Clogherhead, Co Louth, Ireland.  
**Designer:** Ove Kristensen, Vestværfet ApS, Hvide Sande, Denmark.  
**Boatyard:** Parkol Marine, Whitby and Teesside.  
**Length overall:** 26.7m  
**Length reg:** 23.05m  
**Beam:** 7.8m  
**Draft:** 5.0m  
**Accommodation:** 1 skipper's cabin and 2 x 4-berth crew cabins.

AMBITIOUS II ON GEAR TRIALS IN DONEGAL BAY.  
PHOTO: DAMIAN MCCALLAIG



# Ambitious II for Clogherhead Duo

Parkol Marine Engineering in Whitby have completed their first newbuild for Ireland

PHOTOS: JOHN SMITH, DAMIAN MCCALLAIG & CERi OAKES



**T**HE MULTI-RIG PRAWN freezer trawler *Ambitious II* was built at Parkol Marine Engineering for brothers David and Niall Kirwan of Clogherhead. She was lifted into the river Tees on July 8th and moved to Parkols Whitby yard for final fit out, leaving there on September 8th to head to Killybegs to enable, EK Marine to complete the final fit out and commissioning of the winches, net drums and hydraulic systems.

*Ambitious II* was designed by Ove Kristensen at Vestværfet ApS of Hvide Sande in Denmark. Ambitious II is the brothers second new build in 6 years, built to replace another French built vessel, *Virtuous* which has been sold to make way for the new vessel.

Vestværfet ApS designed the new vessel to include improvements over the previous new built vessel *Audacious* suggested by the owners. These included 2 more frames in the vessel to



**FOREDECK WITH EK MARINE LANDING DERRICK.**

increase the length by one metre, taking it from 25.6m up to 26.7m. The beam has also been increased by 300mm taking it up to 7.8metres. The hull has a moulded depth of 4.51metre, a draft of 5.0 metres and a Gross tonnage of 248 tonnes.

The steel hulled vessel is of round bilge construction with a bulbous bow and transom stern. The steel extends up to the shelterdeck level with the wheelhouse being of aluminium. The shelterdeck extends almost right aft to the transom, leaving an open aft deck to shoot and haul the gear from. The wheelhouse is situated approximately mid-way between the stem and stern.

The vessel was built to Bureau Veritas/MSO specification and features an extensive deck machinery, refrigeration and engine room package supplied by a number of well-known Irish companies, including *EK Marine, Pat Maguire, A J Conaghan* and *Padmos*, with whom David and Niall Kirwan had previously well-established working relationships.

*DCI Stainless* custom built and fitted an extensive fish handling and washing system and *Atlantic Marine & Swan Net-Gundry* supplied the safety equipment.

The vessel has been insured with *D&D*



**STERN FISH POUND.**

*Insurance* and will use Clogherhead as its home port. The *Ambitious II* will target prawns and whitefish to be sold directly by David Kirwan to well-established customers in Europe. This personal level of service, which also includes an in-house transport system, ensures that the Kirwan's are in constant contact with their clients at all times and are therefore able to offer a bespoke service in line with their customers exact requirements.

David and Niall would like to thank everyone who made this project possible. →

## Pat Maguire Marine Electronics Ltd

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and crew  
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“Ove for design, Parkol for the build, which at times was not easy with Brexit and Covid disrupting the staff and supply lines. Patricia McDonnell in Bank of Ireland, Paul Russell, D&D Insurance, EK Marine, AJ Conaghan, Padmos, Pat Maguire, Swan Net Gundry’s, DCI Stainless, Gerry Smyth, David & Cian at Flynn O’Driscoll., BV and MSO surveyors.

Our staff and crews for their hard work and most importantly our wives and families for sticking with us through this build. Finally anyone else who we have not named but who has helped us over the years, Thank You.”

■ The Skipper would like to wish David and Niall, crew and family every success and good fishing with the *Ambitious II*.



**THE CREW OF THE AMBITIOUS II.**



“With the small quotas Irish boats have to work to, especially after the disaster of the unfair loss of even more of our quotas due to Ireland having to take a larger burden share of the reallocation of fish quota after Brexit, the huge loss of Rockall and boats being ring-fenced out of certain species, we felt we needed to be in a position to catch our quota in a more efficient and cost-effective manner, hence less fuel, and fewer CO2 emissions.”

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## EK Marine Package

Continuing their increased relationship with both the Kirwan family and the Parkol Yard, Killybegs based EK Marine supplied the full hydraulic machinery package on *Ambitious II* consisting of:

- 3 x EKM trawl winches 16 ton with 800 fathoms of 20mm wire
- 2 x EKM 16 ton double netdrums with capacity of 5 cubic meters
- 2 x EKM 16 ton single netdrums with capacity of 4 cubic meters
- 1 x EKM landing crane 1.5 ton @ 8 meters reach
- 1 x EKM powerblock crane tons @ 7.5 meters reach
- 1 x EKM 7.5 ton gilsen winch with capacity of 100 meter of 30mm rope
- 1 x EKM 2 ton dragging winch capacity with 40 meters of 16mm rope
- 1 x EKM 500kg Electric elevator winch
- 1 x EKM hydraulic operated 125kw generator
- 1 x dual station control panel with wire counting on each station

The trawl winches are controlled by a complete Scantrol trawl system with 2 control stations with wire counting, auto haul / shoot and a remote monitoring of system from the home office.



**EK MARINE MAIN WINCH.**

The main hydraulic system is the most up to date load sensing system consisting of top brand Parker pumps, Wavoil controls, Wavoil joystick, Denison, integrated valves all powered by the 335kw Mitsubishi engine.



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*Congratulations to David, Niall and crew with your new vessel "Ambitious II". We wish you safe and successful fishing.*



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"This build was a double-first for Parkol: our first export to the Republic of Ireland and the first vessel built with Danish Naval Architects Vestværfet Aps. Although she was built during a very challenging time for the industry and Parkol with the impacts of global pandemic and Brexit, *Ambitious II* is a credit to our dedicated workforce."

**Sally Atkinson, Parkol**



MITSUBISHI MAIN ENGINE.



AUXILLARY ENGINE.

## Padmos Mitsubishi Engines

**P**ADMOS OF KILMORE QUAY supplied the four Mitsubishi engines on Ambitious II. The Mitsubishi S6R2-T2MPTAW3M main propulsion engine is coupled to a Reintjes WGF 773, 12.490:1 reduction gearbox to turn an impressive 3000mm-diameter five bladed fixed pitch propeller in a high efficiency nozzle. This combination results in a maximum propeller speed of 108rpm, and typically around 80rpm when towing with the main engine running at 1000rpm.

A Stamford 140 kVA shaft generator is hydraulically driven by the auto trawl pump which is mounted on the front end of the main engine. This optimises the vessel's electrical needs when steaming and reduces fuel consumption by eliminating the need to run any of the auxiliary engines.

A Mitsubishi S6B3-T2MPTAW-20 auxiliary engine (335kW @ 1500rpm) mounted on a steel

frame atop the starboard fuel tank powers the deck machinery hydraulics through a Technodrive gearbox that drives three Parker PV240 load-sensing hydraulic pumps. The Technodrive gearbox is fitted with an air flex coupling between engine and gearbox, which allows the crew to operate the clutch from the wheelhouse trawl console.

A back-up hydraulic gear retrieval system is provided by a 45kW 50Hz electric motor, driving a Parker PV 063 load-sensing pump and is supplemented by the auto trawl pump. This system is used while landing the catch and working on the gear, so there is no need to run the main hydraulic system.

The main electrical power auxiliary engine on Ambitious II is a Mitsubishi 6D16-T (128kW @ 1500rpm) driving a Stamford 140 kVA. Also fitted with a wheelhouse start/stop panel.

## The Fish Room

The freezer and refrigerated fish holds on Ambitious II are fitted with customised chilling systems, supplied and installed by A J Conaghan Refrigeration Ltd.

■ A Geneglace F30M ice making machine from A J Conaghan Ltd can make up to 1 tonne per day using fresh water from a 23,000 litre tank in the bulbous bow, feeding the ice directly in to a storage locker in the fish room below. his self-contained blast freezing compartment.

■ The blast freezer equipment consists of a purpose-built 29KW evaporator served by three 3-phase 400-volt, 50Hz fans incorporating copper coils, epoxy-coated fins and stainless steel casings. Served by a Bitzer seawater cooled condensing unit and Bitzer Ecoline compressor, this blast freezing system is designed to freeze 1080 kg of prawns down to -33 degrees centigrade in 4 hours.

■ There is a minimum depth of 300mm closed-cell foam insulation on all areas of the freezer and refrigerated fish rooms, together with the blast freezer room, on Ambitious II. As with all the Kirwans boats the fish holds were fibre glassed by Gerry Smyth from Kilkeel.



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REFRIGERATED FISH ROOM.

## The Electronics Package

**P**AT MAGUIRE MARINE ELECTRONICS LTD supplied, installed and commissioned the extensive array of electronic equipment, information from which is displayed on flat screens flush-mounted in the main forward console.

- Details of the trawler's location are processed by **Koden KGP300 GPS** and **Koden KGP 915** wheel-marked receivers. Positioning data received is interfaced to two **Sodena plotting systems** supporting a combination of tidal data, CMAP charts, AIS and ARPA tracking. Also fitted is an **Olex plotter** with 3D mapping system.
- Both the **Koden MDC 7912p** and **2041A radars** are interfaced to a **Koden KAT 330 Class A AIS transceiver** and, with ARPA, provide tracking both within the radars themselves as well as the plotting systems.
- **Steering and navigation** is supported with a Simrad AP70 digital autopilot, Koden KGP satellite compass, a backup **Simrad HS60 gps** and a ships watch alarm. This alarm is also linked into the vessels main alarm system, which will alert the crew if not reset.
- **Bottom-sounding and fish detection duties** onboard Ambitious II are handled by 1 Koden CVS – FX2 BB sounder 25 – 210Khz 3Khz and a One Furuno FCV295 dual frequency (50 / 200Khz and 28 / 75Khz colour echosounders in conjunction with an Olex 3D bottom mapping plotter.
- **Communications** includes Icom GM800 MF/HF GMDSS, Icom GM600 vhf, IcomM423 vhf, 2 x Icom handheld GMDSS VHF's and a Furuno NX 300 Navtex.
- **Gear monitoring** is a Marport system with pitch and roll fitted. All the working areas on the vessel are covered with a 10 camera colour CCTV system with two four-way split screens in the wheelhouse.



THE SKIPPER'S HELM.



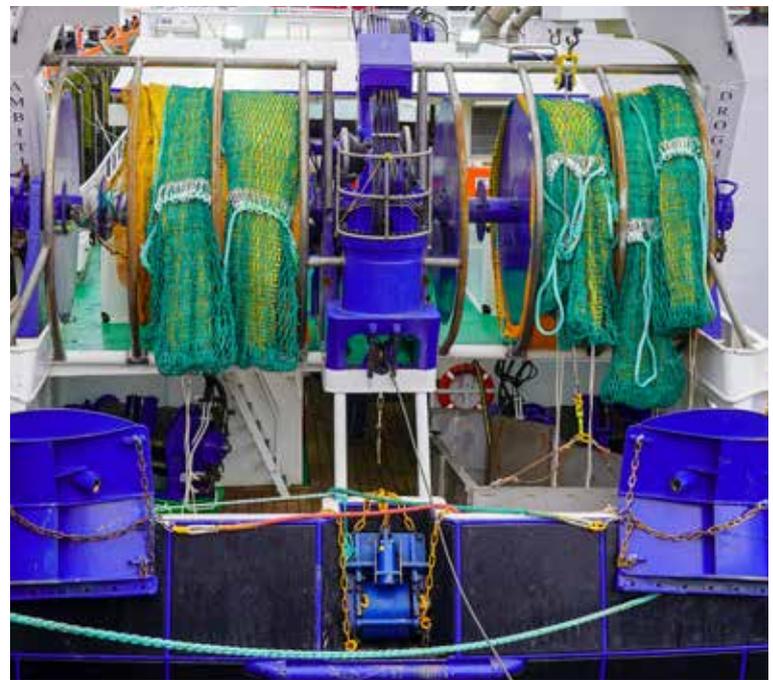
## Irish South & East Fish Producers Organisation

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## Trawl Gear

The trawl gear package for **Ambitious II** was supplied by **Swan Net-Gundry** in Killybegs, for whom David acts as there east coast agent

- Full set of 23ftm (Rubbered) Quad Rig Trawls, complete with Quad Rig Bridle system
- Full set of 23ftm (Clean) Quad Rig Trawls, complete with Quad Rig Bridle system
- 3 x 700ftm of 20mm warp
- 72" Type 11 Thyboron Trawl Doors
- Overbraided Dyneema for Deck Cranes
- Net Drum Legs and spares

Swan Net-Gundry also supplied all the spare sweeps, bridles and general chandlery for the vessel.

# Juvenile Red Mullet

(*Mullus surmuletus*) captured in Dingle Bay, Co Kerry

**O**N 12 OCTOBER 2021, the MFV *Genesis* (G793) (Skipper: Jason Hand, Dingle) discovered six live juvenile Red Mullet (*Mullus surmuletus*) measuring c.75-85 mm total length (TL) in his shrimp pots in Dingle Bay, Co Kerry (Fig. 1).

Red Mullet were first listed as a species occurring in Irish waters during 1774. However, its presence was not confirmed until 1849 when William Andrews obtained specimens from Ventry Harbour and Brandon Bay (Dingle Peninsula). Although Red Mullet were rarely reported up until the late 1950s, adult-size specimens have been recorded with increasing frequency since the early 1960s, particularly from the south-west coast, but juveniles have rarely been reported.

Juvenile Red Mullet have previously been recorded from Dingle Bay. The first, measuring 103 mm TL was captured during January 1972. Three more juveniles measuring 65-70 mm TL were obtained by the late Michael Long during October 1976 9.6 km S of Dingle Harbour.

Juvenile Red Mullet have also been recorded from a number of other areas around the Irish coast. During 1916, a juvenile was taken at a depth of 16 m off Courtmacsherry, Co Cork. During late September 1976, the MFV *Sealgair* captured 19 juveniles measuring c.120 mm and weighing c.10 g while trawling off Courtown, Co Wexford. A single specimen measuring 56 mm TL was taken in a seine net in Lough Hyne, Co Cork during August 1979. Seven juveniles measuring 115-140 mm TL were found impinged on the intake screens of Great Island Power Station in the Waterford Estuary during May-June 2004. Nigel Toves captured a single specimen measuring 170 mm in a shrimp pot off Sherkin Island, Co Cork during September 2015. More recently, eight juveniles measuring 54-80 mm

TL were taken during a demersal trawl survey on the Burford Bank, Dublin Bay in September 2018 (Fig. 2).

Male and female Red Mullet reach sexual maturity at 165 mm and 180 mm TL respectively. Although eggs and larvae have not been recorded from Irish waters to date, mature females, measuring 300-360 mm, and weighing 322-552 g were taken off the SW coast during July 1986. Red Mullet are known to spawn during the summer months in the English Channel where the species supports a valuable targeted fishery. The pelagic eggs and newly hatched



Figure 2. Juvenile Red Mullet from the Burford Bank (Dublin Bay, September 2018).



Figure 1. Juvenile Red Mullet (*Mullus surmuletus*) captured in Dingle Bay (12.10.2021).

larvae drift passively with the prevailing currents before the juveniles (measuring 30-40 mm TL) settle on the bottom in relatively shallow inshore waters, usually by August. Since the mid-1990s, this warm-water Lusitanian species has invaded the North Sea via the English Channel; a phenomenon that may be related to on-going climatic warming.

Since 1974, and particularly over the last two decades, there has been a significant increase in Red Mullet landings from NW European waters, particularly from the English Channel and southern North Sea (Fig. 3). During 2019, a total of 2903 tonnes was landed mainly by Dutch (68%), UK (22%) and Belgian (9%) vessels, while Irish vessels only accounted for 0.4% (13 tonnes). Over 90%

of Irish commercial landings are currently taken off the SE, S and SW coasts (ICES VIIg & VIIj). However, if the current increasing trend in sea water temperatures in the NE Atlantic continues, it is likely that Red Mullet may become more abundant in Irish waters in the future, and the current juveniles may represent the vanguard of an on-going active northward migration.

Red Mullet are currently of minor importance as an angling species in Ireland. Indeed, since 2004, only 11 specimens 400 g have been recorded by the Irish Specimen Fish Committee (ISFC), 9 of which were taken off the SE coast (Kilmore Quay, 7; Dunmore East, 1; and Ballycotton, 1). The current Irish rod & line record weighing 820 g and measuring 39.0 cm TL was captured by Sue Tait off Kilmore Quay, Co Wexford during September 2010.

An even larger specimen weighing 964 g and measuring 39.0 cm, was captured during January 1963 by a commercial fishing vessel west of the New Ground, Dingle Bay. The current UK rod & line record weighing 1.786 kg was captured during 1996 in Longy Bay, Alderney, Channel Islands. ■

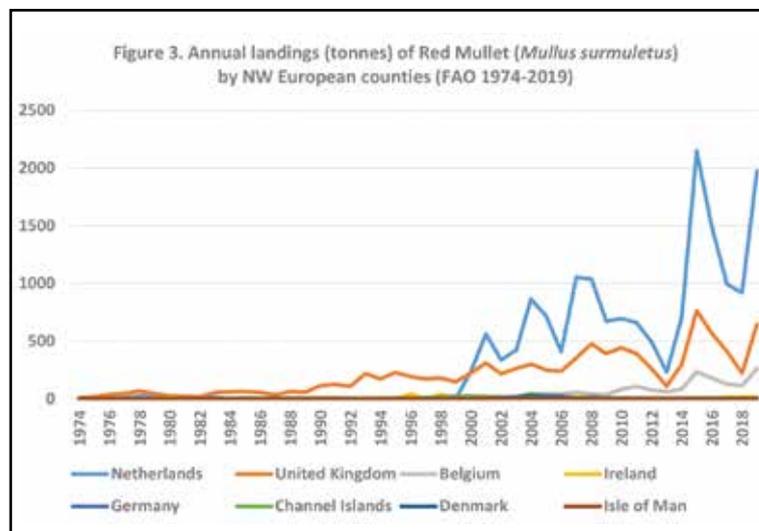


Figure 3. Annual landings (tonnes) of Red Mullet (*Mullus surmuletus*) by NW European counties (FAO 1974-2019)

## GET IN TOUCH

■ Declan is always interested in receiving reports about unusual and rarely recorded species in Irish waters. (declanquigley2021@gmail.com; WhatsApp: 087-6458485).



Figure 1. Brown Crab (*Cancer pagurus*) with deformed claw (dorsal view)

# Achtung Braune Krabbe

## “Bruchdriefachbildungen”

Brown Crab (*Cancer pagurus*) with deformed claw captured off Lambay Island, Co Dublin (Irish Sea)

**O**N 19 OCTOBER 2021, the MFV *Atlantic Freedom* (S78) [Skippers: Peter Lynch & David Healy], captured a female Brown Crab (*Cancer pagurus*) with a deformed claw while potting at a depth of 24 m in the Irish Sea off Lambay Island (53.5367oN, 5.9728oW), Co Dublin (Fig. 1). The carapace width (CW) and length (CL) and weight of this unusual crab was 182 mm, 108 mm and 823 g respectively.

The right claw (cheliped or first pereiopod) had two accessory outgrowths on the lower margin of the fixed finger (or propodus). The lower and larger accessory outgrowth exhibited a distinct ‘puncture mark’ near its base which appeared to have been secondarily infected by ‘Black Spot Disease’ (Fig. 3). The fixed finger on the propodus was foreshortened and laterally displaced to the extent that it was not opposable with the upper moveable finger (or dactylopodus).

Although at least 7250 species of extant Brachyuran



Figure 3. Deformed claw on Brown Crab (*Cancer pagurus*)

crabs have been described worldwide, claw deformities have only been recorded in 27 species to date (0.4%), most frequently in commercially exploited and well-studied species e.g. Brown Crab (*C. pagurus*), Blue Crab (*Callinectes sapidus*), Green Crab (*Carcinus maenas*), Florida Stone Crab (*Menippe mercenaria*), Dungeness Crab (*Metacarcinus magister*), Yellow Rock Crab (*Metacarcinus anthonyi*), Velvet Swimming Crab (*Necora puber*), Blue Swimming Crab (*Portunus pelagicus*), Threespot Swimming Crab (*Portunus sanguinolentus*), and Snow Crab (*Chionoecetes opilio*).

However, the incidence of

claw deformities was very low amongst specific populations e.g. Green Crab (*C. maenas*) [0.3%], Northern Lemon Rock Crab (*Cancer johngarthi*) [0.004%], and Mangrove Crab (*Ucides occidentalis*) [0.00016%].

Although most of the crab species exhibiting deformed claws have been reported from relatively shallow inshore waters (depths <200m), abnormal claws have also been reported in a few deep-water species, particularly off Japan e.g. Japanese Golden Crab (*Chaceon granulatus*), Red Snow Crab (*Chionoecetes japonicas*), and Snow Crab (*C. opilio*). During 2002-03, the MFV *Lady Beatrice* (BX-757) [Skipper: Siegfried y Liliana Sehemel, Pontevedra, Galicia, NW Spain] collected specimens of Deep-Sea Red Crab (*Chaceon affinis*) exhibiting a bazaar range of claw deformities while potting at depths of 700-1000m at various locations off the NW and W coast of Ireland, including the Rockall Trough (ICES VIb, 40 D4-D5), Porcupine Bank (ICES VIIc, 35-36 D5, 37 D6), and W of Achill (ICES VIIIb, 37 D8) (See Fig. 5).

Several potential causative factors have been proposed to explain the development of malformed claws and other external appendages, including injuries, parasitic diseases, viral infections, genetic mutations, exposure to contaminants and extreme environmental conditions. However, it is now generally accepted that in most cases the likely cause is an interruption in the healing of an injury-related wound which, for a time, causes the two sides of the wound to heal independently. In some specimens, it is possible to see a scar at the base of the

outgrowth which could well be the site of the original wound (see Fig 3). During laboratory experiments, abnormal lateral outgrowths have been induced (by deliberate injury) in several species of crustaceans e.g. American Lobster (*Homarus americanus*), Red Swamp Crayfish (*Procambarus clarkii*), and Hermit Crab.

Claws are commonly used as weapons during agnostic and mating interactions and/or to halt attacks by predators. Thus, injuries (subsequently producing malformations) appear to occur with a greater frequency in claws than in other body appendages such as maxillipeds, walking legs, telson, thoracic sternites, rostrum and carapace.

A claw deformity was observed in a fossilized hermit crab (*Schobertella simonsenietlangi*) dating from the early Jurassic (183-191 million years ago) in southern Germany, which suggests that environmental contaminants were unlikely to have been a causative factor.

It has been suggested that deformed claws are most likely a maladaptive feature adversely affecting a crab’s ability to feed and/or avoid predation, resulting in significantly lower survival rates compared with normal conspecifics – a hypothesis that may explain the low incidence of the abnormality. However, the deformed claw in current Brown Crab did not appear to have adversely affected its ability to survive to maturity and attain a body weight (823 g) comparable with normal conspecifics (825 g) of equal CW (182 mm). ■



Figure 5. Deformed claws in Deep-Sea Red Crab (*Chaceon affinis*).



Skipper Shane Murphy and crewman Mike MacCarthy on the Aurora Borealis.

# MICHAEL McSWEENEY

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ABOVE: Pat Deasy, skipper of the 'Aine Christina' and his sons with a WW2 propeller recovered 15m off the Irish coast.

LEFT: Fishmonger Paul O'Connell with a 10ft 160 kilo swordfish from Union Hall.



Trawlers gather at Roche's Point for the 2021 protest in Cork Harbour.

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# Monthly Competition

IN ASSOCIATION WITH



Send in your best fishing related photo and you could win a Sotra Fleece by Guy Cotten plus the chance to win overnight accommodation at the Irish Skipper Expo 2022.

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



PHOTO OF THE MONTH

**DECEMBER WINNER:**  
**Paul Dirrane**

*Carmarose fishing for Scad off the West Coast of Donegal.*

### THE MONTHLY PRIZE

The winner will receive a Sotra Fleece by



**Skipper**

PLEASE NOTE: The Skipper reserves the right to use your images for future use and possible publication.

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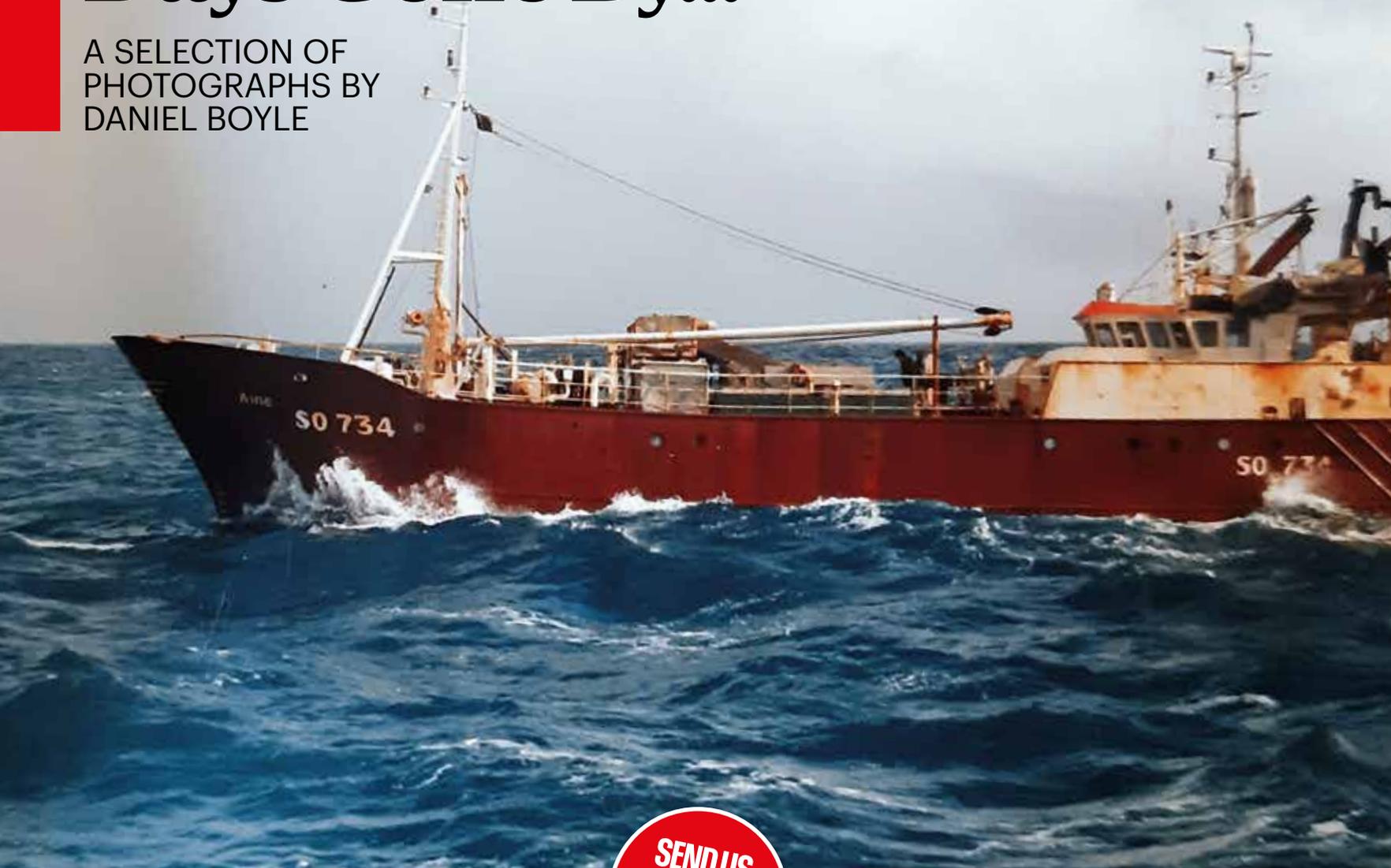
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No. 95. December, 1971. SIXPENCE (Inc. Tax)

### Built in Killybegs for Skerries fleet

The new Skerries trawler, Kenure, which was delivered to Tom Ferguson last month. This 70-foot vessel, powered by a 438 h.p. Baudouin is the largest vessel in the Co. Dublin port's fleet (see also page 5).

### E.E.C. MAY POSTPONE FISHERY POLICY

#### More proposals scrapped

THE E.E.C. appears to be moving slowly towards the Irish line that the fisheries policy should be left until the four applicants have joined in with the Six.

This emerges from the 21 hour session in Brussels on November 29 and 30 when new proposals were put up and rejected by the applicants. These proposals were, in fact, an improvement on previous offers. They were:

- That there would be a transition period of ten years during which member states could maintain a six-mile limit.
- That this six-mile limit would be extended to 12 miles for special areas including the north-west coast of Ireland.
- That a 12-mile limit, also for ten years, would apply for fishing for salmon and shellfish only for special areas including the entire Irish coastline.

That before the end of the ten years the commission would examine the economic and social development of coastal areas in member states and also the state of fish stocks, and would report to the Council of Ministers.

If it seemed likely that ending the concessions would cause adverse trends in areas where the coastal population was totally dependent on fishing the council would suggest economic or social measures to rectify the situation.

The Irish, British, Danes and Norwegians all lodged objections, and Norway even threatened to withdraw her application for membership if she was not granted permanent exception from the access rule.

Norway has a very strong bargaining point in that she holds a strategic position in European defence.

### VALUE OF FISH EXPORTS SHOOT UP 85%

THE fishing industry has topped the charts for achievements in exports. For the eight months ended last August, the increase in value of fish exports was 85%.

Most of the increase was accounted for by an increase of £600,000 in the value of herring exports. For the first time, herring is now worth more to the country than salmon.

There have been increased landings and exports in all categories of shellfish during the period, with total exports up by 31% to £1,188,000. Landings of queen scallops, a new fishery, brought in a good deal of the extra shellfish revenue.

**VALUE ADDED**

Much of the increased revenue has been earned through added value on the raw material brought about by the establishment of fish processing facilities at the major ports. B.I.M.'s Market Development Division has helped in finding new markets for these products.

Total fish exports for the period amounted to £4,000,000, compared to £2,600,000 for the first eight months of last year. All figures quoted above were issued by the Department.

### PATROL SOUGHT ON HERRING GROUNDS

The Minister for Defence, Mr. Cronin, has told Dr. Paddy Delap, T.D., that it would not be practicable to locate a naval vessel on the Tory Island herring grounds for the remainder of the herring season.

Dr. Delap had made representations to the Minister on behalf of Burtonport fishermen. The Minister said in his reply: "The area will, however, be patrolled as frequently as possible, having regard to the resources available to the Naval Service for fishery protection duties and the fishery protection requirements around the coast."

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## From The Skipper Archives

### December 1971

**MAIN HEADLINES:**

- Value of Fish Shoots Exports Up 85%
- New Killybegs built 70ft Skerries Trawler, Kenure, delivered to Tom Ferguson.
- E.E.C. may postpone Fishery Policy.
- Navy vessel NOT to Patrol Tory Island Herring grounds.

Reaper entering Scarborough.  
Photo: Beverly Senturk

**OUT & ABOUT**

GOT A GREAT PHOTO?  
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email it to us at:  
editorial@maramedia.ie



Cathal Power on the Mermaid gets new headgear. Photo: Tommy Power.



Niall Flannery of the Barnacle II with a Box Crab caught off the Blasket islands.



(Above). Murtagh O'Murachu with a 3 kilo hen lobster caught north of trench by the Maarten Luther.  
Photo: Paul Roche



(Left). Jens Bach and John Cunningham 40 years apart.

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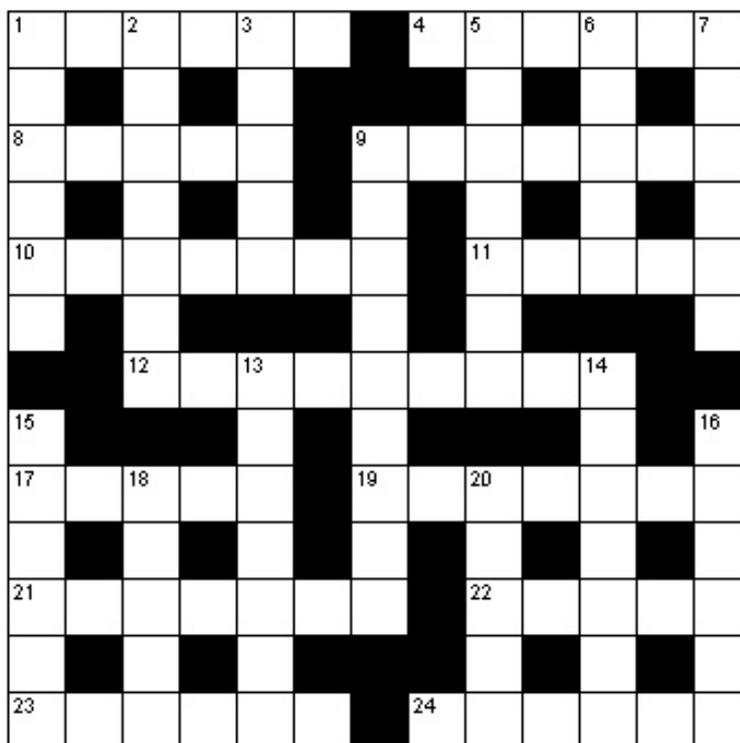
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**ACROSS**

- 1 Licit (6)
- 4 Burrowing animal (6)
- 8 Attempted (5)
- 9 Gruesome (7)
- 10 Clothing (7)
- 11 Force out (5)
- 12 Devoted (9)
- 17 Term of respect in India (5)
- 19 Generous (7)
- 21 Easily perceived or understood (7)
- 22 Bring up (5)
- 23 Overindulgence (6)
- 24 Instructed (6)

**DOWN**

- 1 Deadly (6)
- 2 Lashed (7)
- 3 Below (5)
- 5 Very old (7)
- 6 Holy Writ (5)
- 7 Pact (6)
- 9 Small particles (9)
- 13 Doubtful (7)
- 14 Beloved (7)
- 15 Onto dry land (6)
- 16 Customer (6)
- 18 Mayhem (5)
- 20 Asian country (5)



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# Ireland's new Marine Research Vessel makes its first splash

New build on schedule for summer 2022 completion

**T**HE HULL OF Ireland's new state-of-the-art marine research vessel, *RV Tom Crean*, was launched at Astilleros Armon shipyard in Vigo, Spain.

The launch of the hull is a significant milestone in the build process, with the vessel on schedule to be completed in summer 2022. The build of the *RV Tom Crean* received funding of €25 million from the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine, as approved by the Government of Ireland.

**His Excellency Frank Smyth**, Ambassador of Ireland to Spain and Andorra, joined Marine Institute Chairman **Dr John Killeen** and Interim CEO **Michael Gillooly** to view the hull of the 52.8 metre vessel glide into the water.

Michael Gillooly, Interim CEO of the Marine Institute said, "It is remarkable to see the launch of the hull of the *RV Tom Crean* today, which marks an important stage in the construction of this modern, multipurpose vessel. It will carry out a wide range of marine research activities including expanded fisheries surveys, seabed mapping and marine spatial planning, climate change related research,



RV Tom Crean on the water in Vigo, Spain.

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[marine.ie](http://marine.ie)

 Foras na Mara  
Marine Institute

environmental monitoring, deep water surveys, and support increased research in the Atlantic Ocean. The *RV Tom Crean* will enable the Marine Institute to continue to lead and support vital scientific surveys that contribute to Ireland's position as a leader in marine science."

The *RV Tom Crean*, which will replace the 31 metre *RV Celtic Voyager*, will provide a year round service, enabling 300 operational days at sea each year, and up to 3,000 scientist days of research per year. The new research vessel will be a silent vessel, capable of operating throughout the Irish Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ). The *RV Tom Crean* will be able to go to sea for at least 21 days at a time and is designed to operate in harsh sea conditions.

Based in Galway, the vessel will be used by the Marine Institute, other state agencies and universities to undertake

multidisciplinary surveys. It will also maintain and deploy weather buoys, observational infrastructure and our Remotely Operated Vehicle (ROV) *Holland I*.

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

Spanish shipyard Astilleros Armon Vigo S.A. were awarded the contract to build Ireland's new state-of-the-art marine research vessel in 2019, following the completion of the design by Norwegian ship design consultants *Skipsteknisk AS*. The construction of the new national research vessel continues on schedule and on budget in 2021. ■

SAVE THE DATE!



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