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Neptune SO715 passing Sumburgh heading west during the mackerel season Photo: Calum Gray

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INSIDE THE NOVEMBER ISSUE

Page 8-9

Wespas Survey 2021

Pages 10

IFPEA meeting criticises Minister

Pages 23-24

G Smyth Boats deliver two new vessels

Pages 40

Irish fishermen raise their voices

Tough Task Ahead!

Minister McConalogue pledges to “Strengthen Irish Quota” at EU level *By Lorna Siggins*

MINISTER FOR MARINE Charlie McConalogue has said he is “confident” that the fishing industry will receive a fair section of the Brexit Adjustment Reserve (BAR) fund which will bank roll key recommendations in the recently published Seafood Task Force report.

As The Skipper went to press, Mr McConalogue said that the task force report was “under full review” by both him and his officials, and “decisions will be taken in due course”.

Ireland is receiving just over €1 billion of the 5 billion euro Brexit funding overall – the biggest single allocation for any member state, representing just over 20% of the total fund. The Irish fishing industry’s precise share of this has not, as yet, been made public.

However, the European Commission has said that overall some €600 million will be allocated to member states on the basis of the factor linked to fishing, €4.150 billion based on trade, and €250 million under the factor linked to maritime border regions, the Commission has said.

The Commission identified three main qualifying factors – the value of fish caught in the UK exclusive economic zone; the importance of trade with the UK; and the population of maritime border regions with the UK. EU Commissioner for Fisheries Virginijus Sinkevičius recently signalled the precise share-out would be a matter for the government.

On a two-day visit to Ireland in September, he said that flexibility clauses allowed the Irish government to allocate funds to those sectors suffering the most, as in the fishing industry.

The speed with which the task force report was produced was influenced by the BAR fund, which was established by the European Commission to “help counter the adverse economic and social consequences of Brexit in the member states and sectors most affected”.

Speaking to *The Skipper* while on his Common Agricultural Policy road tour late last month, Mr McConalogue said he had been in discussions with Minister for Public Expenditure Michael McGrath in

relation to the BAR fund, and was “confident of good support” for the fishing industry.

“There is a very strong understanding of the Brexit impact, and a very strong commitment to support the sector,” McConalogue said.

The minister said he intended to “reflect very strongly” on the task force report findings and “when I have fully considered it, I will decide how to bring them forward”.

“I acknowledge the work of all the stakeholders, and the chair Aidan Cotter, along with his colleagues Margaret Daly and Micheál Ó Cinnéide.”

He also paid tribute to “the massive time and effort put in” and “the fine wisdom of all stakeholders”.

Task Force Report

Highlights of the report include recommendations on burden sharing, a voluntary tie-up scheme and voluntary decommissioning – both of the latter being within the EU BAR State aid guidelines for the fishery and aquaculture sector.

A €423 million support scheme recommended by the task force breaks down into €66 million for a whitefish decommissioning scheme, €6 million for inshore decommissioning, €3.7 million to remove inactive or off register inshore vessels, and €90 million for processors.

The task force has also costed a series of short term measures, including a €12 million annual tie-up of polyvalent vessels over two years, an €8 million liquidity scheme for the pelagic sector, €12 million in liquidity for the processing sector, €0.60 million in liquidity for scallop vessels and vessels hit by exclusion from the Rockall squid fishery, and a €60 million investment in aquaculture.

It recommends an €80 million spend on small scale public marine infrastructure, €35 million on community-led local development, €10 million on inshore longer term supports, and €2.5 million on inshore marketing.

The whitefish decommissioning scheme would remove 60 whitefish polyvalent and beam trawl vessels with a gross tonnage of 8,000 GT and over 21,000 KW in engine power.

This equates to 26 per cent of the

vessels in number and 29 per cent in terms of engine power and gross tonnage. Removing this amount of capacity would potentially free up about €38 million of quota, it says.

The report notes that the Irish South and West Fish Producers’ Organisation was supportive of decommissioning, but “did not agree to this programme, arguing that price per gross tonnage was not high enough” and that “costs associated with crew payments and costs for scrapping of vessels should be separate premiums”.

The report says decommissioning pelagic vessels would involve a “huge financial undertaking” and would be “difficult to justify from a cost benefit basis”. Instead, it opts for a liquidity scheme for this sector.

Mr McConalogue says that while the task force’s report focuses on the immediate support required for the sector, it also highlights the need for burden sharing among EU coastal states in the wake of Brexit.

Burden Sharing

The task force report lists “burden sharing” at the top of its recommendations, stating that “options to alleviate the high level of losses of quota shares will be pursued on a systematic basis at every available opportunity, including the review of the CFP”.

“These actions will cover internal EU quota distribution and external opportunities such as Coastal States and a new EEA agreement,” it states.

During a Dáil debate on fisheries and coastal communities on June 17th, 2021, Mr McConalogue told deputies he would “take every opportunity, as I have since December (2020), to raise quotas with other member states”.

Mr McConalogue told The Skipper he still intended to fulfil his pledge to “strengthen Irish quota” at EU level.

“In advance of Brexit, we fought a very hard battle, avoided no deal but did lose 15 per cent overall of quota in key species.”

“We are still fighting very hard at EU level, and we have had some minor adjustments with quota swaps” he said, citing marginal gains in blue whiting as an example.

He said Ireland was the only member state to vote against a proposal presented by the European

Commission on September 23rd on an EU mackerel fishery historically used by Denmark only that had taken place in Norwegian waters in recent years.

Mr McConalogue said that Ireland, along with a number of other member states raised queries as to how this proposal could proceed in the absence of an access agreement between the EU and Norway.

He said that since then there have been three meetings at technical level between interested member states and the EU Commission, and council of ministers concluded that there was a need to “assess all elements relevant for the methodology applied for allocation and distribution of the Union’s fishing opportunities for mackerel in these waters in light of historical background of this particular TAC.”

“On the basis of the assessment the Council may adjust the relevant quotas in 2022,” he said.

He also said there was no “late night ambush” as had been suggested in the Danish media, and Ireland was not seeking to take Danish quota.

“Ireland sought clarification regarding the existence of this EU fishery in the absence of an access agreement with Norway for mackerel. We are still waiting for that clarification as recognised in the EU Fisheries Council and Commission statement.”

Task Force Schemes

On the task force’s support schemes, there has already been some criticism of the report’s recommendation that any tie-up funds received by a boat owner are reclaimed and deducted from any future decommissioning money received.

“I set up the task force to give me their best advice to support the sector,” Mr McConalogue commented, when asked about this link between two separate schemes.

“I do take the report’s recommendations very seriously, but I do have to consider them.”

The report also fails to make any specific recommendations in relation to encouraging young entrants into the industry.

“This is a once in a generation challenged caused by Brexit, but there are recommendations to ensure the future of the sector, and the sustainability of the fleet,” Mr McConalogue responded.

“I agree it is very important to support and encourage young fishermen, and I do think that support is critical for the future,” he said.

CFP Review

It is understood the task force was urged to commission an independent study of the amount of fish being taken from Irish waters by the various EU fleets.

It was argued that this was critical in preparing Ireland’s case for the CFP review.

“I do believe we have professionals in the Marine Institute who do very valuable work, but it is important that there is absolute clarity – so I would reflect on that suggestion,” Mr McConalogue said.

On the CFP review, the task force recommends that “all stakeholders come together; throughout 2022, to prepare for and plan a strategy for achieving Ireland’s priorities, including addressing burden sharing”.

It says it “welcomes the minister’s commitment to set up a stakeholder’s forum and is recommending that this be done and is supported by relevant experts within the State services”.

It also recommends that a “substantial effort be made, at ministerial and stakeholders’ level, to apply pressure to have the planned review fully comprehensive, including setting out changes that are required to the CFP Regulation and a pathway for the Commission, which has the right of initiative, to propose the necessary amendments”.

McConalogue denies that the CFP statement seems a little weak, and points to detailed recommendations in the burden sharing section of the report.

“The key thing at EU level is that Brexit is having a left of field impact,” Mr McConalogue said. “But in terms of the CFP review, it has always been a very difficult battle, and that will be a challenge again.”

Comments by EU Commissioner Sinkevičius on the CFP on his recent Irish visit have not given cause for optimism.

The commissioner expressed his sympathy to the Irish fishing industry over the challenges posed by Brexit, but said he was taking a “cautious” approach to the CFP review.

“We’ll do a review, and we will be listening to stakeholders’ concerns, and we’ll look at certain changes, but I cannot promise we will be reopening the CFP,” Mr Sinkevičius said.

“Fishermen have to go through a lot to comply with the rules, and I think it would be unfair to make many changes, so I take a very cautious way here, and only after a review is done and gaps are identified can we take additional action,” the commissioner said.

“It is very useful to have stakeholders’ advice on the CFP,” McConalogue commented.

He pointed out that the task force represented a “serious piece of work” which “nobody demurred from” – as in the stakeholders involved.

However, Mr McConalogue now intends to set up a separate consultative group for the CFP review, rather than building on the momentum and linkages developed during the lifetime of the seafood task force. ●

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The Task Force Debate

Final Report recommendations raises more questions than answers

THE TASKFORCE REPORT, which was established by Ireland's marine minister Charlie McConalogue to examine the implications of the EU/UK Trade & Cooperation Agreement (TCA) for the fishing industry and coastal communities, says the Irish seafood sector is "in the eye of the storm".

It says that the end of the Brexit withdrawal period has brought about the biggest change and disruption in EU-British relations in 50 years, across all aspects of trade and society.

The Irish fleet has lost access to 15% of its annual quota, including stocks of prawn, monkfish, and haddock, while Brexit has also hit Ireland's €80m worth of seafood exports to Britain.

It says Irish seafood imports from Britain, valued at €219 million in 2018, have been disrupted, while vital seafood export routes, primarily the 'land-bridge' via Britain, have been curtailed.

It also says established Irish/British links at scientific and policy levels in EU and ICES have been lost.

Barrister and former Bord Bia chief executive Aidan Cotter was appointed to head up the "seafood sector taskforce" in February 2021, with a remit to seek ways of "mitigating the impacts" of Brexit on coastal communities and the fishing industry.

Margaret Daly, deputy chief executive of Donegal seafood processor Errigal Bay Ltd and Mícheál Ó Cinnéide, former deputy chief executive of the Environmental Protection Agency were appointed to work with him.

Representatives from a total of 17 State departments, agencies, fish producer organisations and coastal groups were invited to participate, and McConalogue set deadlines for an interim and final report. The task force met 14 times and received 72 submissions from its members, and a further 27 through public consultation.

An interim report published in June recommended establishment of a voluntary, temporary cessation scheme running to December 2021 as a first step. The scheme began on October 1st.

The report's recommendations include:

- pursuing "burden sharing options" on "a systematic basis at every available opportunity, including the review of the CFP".
- restructuring and developing the whitefish fleet to "restore and underpin its profitability and medium-term sustainability".
- restructuring and developing the RSW pelagic segment to ensure it remains "dynamic and financially resilient".
- restructuring and developing the inshore sector, where BIM and Bord Bia, working closely with the National Inshore Fisheries Forum, will "prepare a detailed plan" to underpin the "longer term sustainability of a restructured inshore sector".
- developing a processing sector that has "articulated a clear appetite and ambition to invest in adding value to its raw materials, driving new product development, developing new export markets, and addressing sustainability challenges and opportunities".
- promoting a thriving and dynamic Irish aquaculture sector, not limited by quota, which "has the potential to mitigate some of the damage caused by the TCA through providing opportunities in the seafood sector that would otherwise be lost, while creating jobs and economic activity in our coastal communities".
- investing in public marine infrastructure to "provide a longer-term platform for the development of new and diversified economic activity, including initiatives for the seafood sector, locally led development and marine tourism initiatives in our coastal communities".
- promoting community led local development, and retaining people in coastal communities by "allowing them to upskill, retrain and ultimately keep their skills from a lifetime spent in the marine industry is key". This would include providing seed funding for new businesses to keep communities viable in the long term.

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Reaction

Irish Fish was gambled and played with on the Commission and Council Gaming Tables

According to Patrick Murphy, CEO, ISWFPO the Irish South & West Fish Producers attended and partook in the formal work of the Task Force on 14 occasions while often spending long hours in preparing for those meetings and working far into the night on many occasions as they drafted and redrafted Submissions and Papers for the benefit of the Task Force and, they hoped, for the ultimate benefit of Irish Fishing Communities.

He stated: *“We are left feeling both frustrated and disillusioned by the fact that not one of our Submissions or suggestions on how best our Fishing Industry might prepare for an uncertain future was adopted and/or accepted by the Task Force in its Final Report.*

Our disappointment, if not anger, at how this entire process was undertaken is accentuated and all the greater by reason of our being deliberately excluded from attending at or partaking in meetings held to discuss issues directly affecting the Inshore Sector of the Fleet and the interests of Inshore Fishermen many of whom are Members of our Fish Producer Organization”

In the Final Report published, the Task Force recommends that 60 Fishing Boats - amounting to just over One Quarter or 26 % of Irish Whitefish Boats registered in the Polyvalent and Beam Trawl Segments of the Fleet, should be decommissioned – in other words, removed, retired and scrapped from the Irish Fishing Fleet.

The Report of the Task Force goes on to recommend that a “voluntary” Permanent Cessation Scheme should be rolled out by our government to compensate those fishermen whose boats and livelihoods are being extinguished, not just in this generation but forever once again ending a way of life for many in our coastal communities local examples are Baltimore and Schull.

So that readers may gain a little better understanding of just how dramatic are the Cuts being proposed by the Task Force to the

Irish Fishing Fleet and that will soon be imposed upon and felt among Fishing Communities all along our coastline, we should recall that in 2009, a mere 12 years ago, our Fishing Communities benefited from having 280 Whitefish Boats fishing off our coast and competing with other EU Nations’ Fleets in Irish Waters.

That figure is now to be reduced to just over 100 boats so readers will understand that our sovereign Irish Waters are being cleared forever of inconvenient Irish Fishing Boats in preparation for the arrival of hundreds of Foreign Fishing Boats that will be permitted – even encouraged, to happily fish away while making full use of the entire 85% of all Quotas of Fish permitted to be caught in Irish Waters while our remaining Fishing Boats and our remaining Fishing Families will be left to barely survive on the meagre 15% of Fish permitted to be caught by Irish Boats in Irish Waters.

This Report makes a

recommendation on the Terms and Conditions to be applied to the Decommissioning Scheme to be put in place by Government with the intention of removing 60 Fishing Boats from our Irish Fishing Fleet forever and that recommendation contains a reference to the fact that we in the Irish South and West could not agree with the Terms and Conditions proposed by the Task Force nor with the amount of money proposed to be paid per GT (Gross Tonne) to the Irish fishing families that will be forced off our fertile Waters forever.

The Task Force Proposal that an average of only just over One Million Euro be paid in respect of each Boat being decommissioned from our Irish Fleet forever is scandalous and should result in resignations – not pats on the back.

Having led the call for the setting up of a Task Force with local Cork SW Dail Deputy Christopher O Sullivan TD, the Irish South and West FPO is now urgently calling on Minister McConalogue to ensure an expedited payment out of monies from the EU TCA Mitigation Fund that are specifically identified within the Task Force Report in order to meet the Minister’s own Terms of Reference. A system of expedited payment in respect of the One Month Tie-up Scheme must be implemented by our Department of Agriculture Food & the Marine AND Bord Iascaigh Mhara (BIM) as a matter of urgency.

History will never forget that while Dutch, Spanish, French and other Member State Prime Ministers and Ministers for Fisheries were in constant contact with Michel Barnier and his negotiating team throughout last December in anticipation of agreement on Fisheries with the UK, or not, our Irish Government appears to have sat supine in Dublin and made no attempt to protect the interests of Irish Fishing while our Fish were gambled and played with on the Commission and Council Gaming Tables.

“They played and they won. We never played at all.”

ISEFPO

The ISEFPO broadly supports the recommendations contained in the final report of the seafood sector task force.

The temporary cessation scheme is a welcome measure to help the fleet to adapt to the new reality of having less fishing opportunities in the short term. This scheme is now up and running for the last three months of 2021. However we do have an issue with the modalities of the scheme in so far as it appears vessels will not receive payment until after the tie up period when the vessel has gone back to sea. Both crews and owners are not in

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a position to wait for payment due to the financial constraints they have experienced due to Brexit and also the negative effects of Covid 19. Therefore it is imperative that payment for the temporary tie up scheme be made in short order soon after the vessel hands in its license.

While not welcomed by fishermen in general the permanent cessation scheme or decommissioning has become a reality as the impacts of Brexit take hold on the wider industry.

The loss of €43 million in fish quota to the UK in the TCA agreement was a huge blow to the Irish fishing industry. Our top priority in the task force was to achieve some burden sharing within the European Union as Ireland had taken a hit of 25% of the €180 million given to the UK in the closing stages of the agreement on Christmas Eve 2020. We do not accept that the principles of the European Union were upheld in this agreement nor was there any compliance with the ideals of a level playing field. To date no progress has been made in achieving support for equal burden sharing due to the TCA, though the ISEFPO still supports any efforts being made to advance this.

To this end we look forward to Minister McConalogue setting up the national forum of stakeholders to analyse and progress Ireland's case for an improved share in essential quota stocks both pelagic and demersal as recommended by the task force in its final report.

The ISEFPO would advocate that the recommendations of the Seafood Sector Task Force are given the necessary support from Government to ensure they are advanced as soon as possible to allow the sector to rebuild and develop into the vibrant industry an Island Nation like ours should have.

Sinn Féin

Sinn Féin fisheries spokesman Pádraig MacLochlainn has expressed disappointment, claiming it "will not address the fundamental problems in the Irish fishing industry".

"The recommendations contained in this report are an acknowledgement of the failure of the Irish Government to stand up and defend Irish fishermen during the Brexit negotiations and subsequent trade deal with Britain," MacLochlainn said in a statement.

"While temporary cessation and voluntary permanent



PHOTO: MICHAEL GALLAGHER

decommissioning may suit a small number of people involved in the fishing industry, for the vast majority these proposals will be another body blow to an industry that is now fighting for its survival," he said.

"I am failing to see in this document the drive of the department, minister and Irish government to stand up and fight for our industry," MacLochlainn said, describing it as "more of the same I am afraid".

"Where is the commitment to seek full reform of the Common Fisheries Policy? Where is the commitment to seek fair and equal burden sharing and where is the commitment to seek new quota and new opportunities?" MacLochlainn said.

IFPEA

The Taskforce report is industry's response to successive political failures – IFPEA.

The Irish Fish Processors Exporters Association response to the publication of the Seafood Taskforce is while welcoming the majority of the recommendations, its ultimate success will be determined by the Minister and his department officials, whereas industry through their representatives have made their proposals at taskforce level, none of these can be implemented without the support of the Minister of the day.

Taskforces are a political instrument to take difficult decisions away from their political masters – its always been that way and it will always remain that way – so too, it is in this case with the Seafood Taskforce. The failures of the Brexit talks, that lead to the TCA warranted that our political

leaders immediately required a platform to set out, explore and recommend the difficult decisions that were ahead due to their failures.

So, the outcomes of the Taskforce will for the future years be known as the recommendations of the industry, in a hope that the political failures that lead to those decisions of the taskforce having to be taken will be forgotten, or so goes the theory. But, the taskforce was stronger than first envisaged and through that strength some excellent initiatives made their way through the process.

Initiatives such as the liquidity scheme for all processors – based on the French model which is already up and running in that country, in a same vein a major capital investment programme for all fish processors and exporters is also strongly recommended and is budgeted for €90 million. Were these initiatives easily obtained through the taskforce process, no they were not, and at each step of the way the once constant opponent was the Ministers own officials.

It never ceases to shock me, the extent to which some officials will go in order to halt progress in this country, I recall in particular a charge made against myself when I was proposing the much needed capital plan for the industry, a senior official referred to the entire plan and proposal as "rhetoric" – it reflects much more poorly on them than I, but, it is nevertheless an example of how low some will go in order to bulldoze the fishing industry – and we all know there has been too much of that in the past and presently unfortunately is still remains a factor.

The success or otherwise of this taskforce is now solidly back with

the political masters, the taskforce recommendations have the confidence of industry, it reflects through all the various initiatives the ambition of the fishing industry, we may not agree with all the various proposals but in its entirety, it has all the key elements to drive the Irish Fishing industry for the next 15 to 20 years. But, if the taskforce release is anything to go by, I personally would be very worried, the low-key event speaks politically to me that many of these initiatives will not see the light of day.

The Minister urgently needs to get a political grip on his department, he has shown absolutely no political instinct since his arrival on the scene, he has demonstrated zero leadership for the fishing industry, the future will require strong political leadership in order to meet head on the challenges that are presently here and those that are yet to come. The taskforces recommendations so the Minister informed us on the day of its release is now back with his department officials, and he further tells us "that it is a priority", does that in itself instil confidence in me – well, I do even have to reply to that, do I.

Unless, there is a genuine political desire to drive these taskforce recommendations the entire taskforce will only ever amount to 196 pages of print on glossy paper

The future needs to be in the hands of the politicians not their officials – or maybe that is "rhetoric". But, in reality the Seafood Taskforce is now a matter for Charlie and Charlie alone will decide if it is to be implemented and so it should be. ●

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WESPAS ACOUSTIC SURVEY 2021

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THE 2021 WESPAS acoustic survey was carried out on the RV Celtic Explorer over a 6-week period from the start of June covering shelf seas from northern Biscay to north of the Hebrides. The survey provides an opportunity to monitor some key pelagic species including herring, horse mackerel and boarfish during the summer feeding and spawning phases. WESPAS is a multi-disciplinary resource survey, incorporating research programs in collaboration with national third level institutions.

Age stratified stock abundance estimates of boarfish, herring (Malin Shelf and Celtic Sea) and horse mackerel were calculated using acoustic density and biological data from trawl sampling. Stock summaries were submitted to ICES for use within the stock assessment process.

AREA COVERAGE

The survey covered shelf and shelf edge waters from 47°30' N to 58°30' N and extended westward to the Porcupine Bank (Figure 1). Survey effort and geographical coverage is similar to previous surveys, ensuring continuity of the time series. In total, the 2021 survey covered 4,986 nautical miles (nmi) over 57 transects with a total area coverage of over 60,424 nmi².

Survey scientist Ciaran O'Donnell said "this year saw a successful WESPAS survey with 65 fishing trawl and 78 zooplankton stations sampled. Monitoring the abundance, composition and distribution of zooplankton, which is a primary food source for pelagic species provides valuable insight into an important driver of fish abundance and distribution".

MALIN SHELF HERRING

Herring were encountered over much of the Malin Shelf survey area in 2021, similar to 2020. There were good signs of fish in the area to the north and west of Tory Island (south of 56°N) and north of the mouth of Lough Swilly (Figure 2).

Notably, there were good signs of young herring in the Malin Shelf area overall, particularly age 2 winter ring. The 2 and 3 winter ring fish made up approximately 79% of the total number. Maturity analysis of herring samples from the survey indicated that 74% of all herring sampled were mature. By comparison, in 2020, only 48% of herring were mature when samples dominated by younger, 1 winter ring fish. There were also some signs of adult herring south of St. Kilda in 2021, but less so than in recent years in this area.

Overall, there was an increase in the total spawning stock biomass in 2021 compared to 2020 for the area covered by WESPAS. The final SSB estimate for herring in 6a (combined 6aS, 7bc and 6aN) will be compiled when estimates from the survey of 6aN to the north of 58°30'N and west of 4°W carried out by the RV Scotia are available.

The WESPAS survey is conducted during the summer when herring are feeding and the 6aN and 6aS/7bc stocks are mixed. Genetic research is well advanced to develop methods for splitting the overall survey estimate into separate stock

estimates for 6aN and 6aS/7bc. This will be considered at an ICES benchmark for these stocks to be completed in early 2022 and may allow the stocks to be assessed and managed separately in future.

BOARFISH

The distribution of boarfish in 2021 followed a similar pattern to previous years in terms of latitudinal range (Figure 3). However, within this range, the bulk of mature fish were found distributed further north and less so in the Celtic Sea than observed in previous years. The proportion of mature fish was similar to

that observed in 2020 (-2%) for comparable survey effort (+3% area coverage).

Overall, total biomass was 11% higher than in 2020 and this was largely driven by the increased abundance of immature boarfish that dominated catches throughout the Celtic Sea and as far north as 54°N. In total, immature fish represented almost 21% of the total biomass and over 60% of total abundance recorded in 2021.

The total biomass of boarfish from the survey shows a year-on-year increase since 2019 as a result of successively strong year classes and spawning success over this period. The contribution of

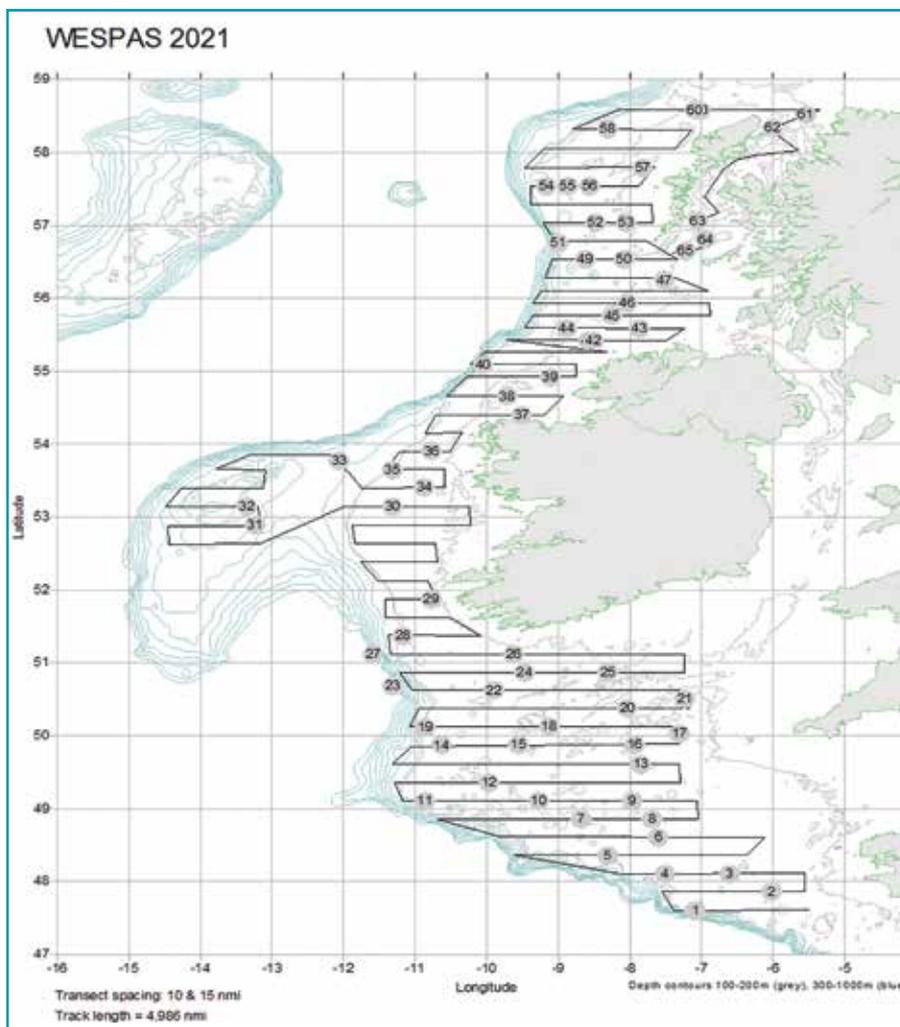


Figure 1. Survey tracks and trawl stations 2021.



The total biomass of boarfish from the survey shows a year-on-year increase since 2019.

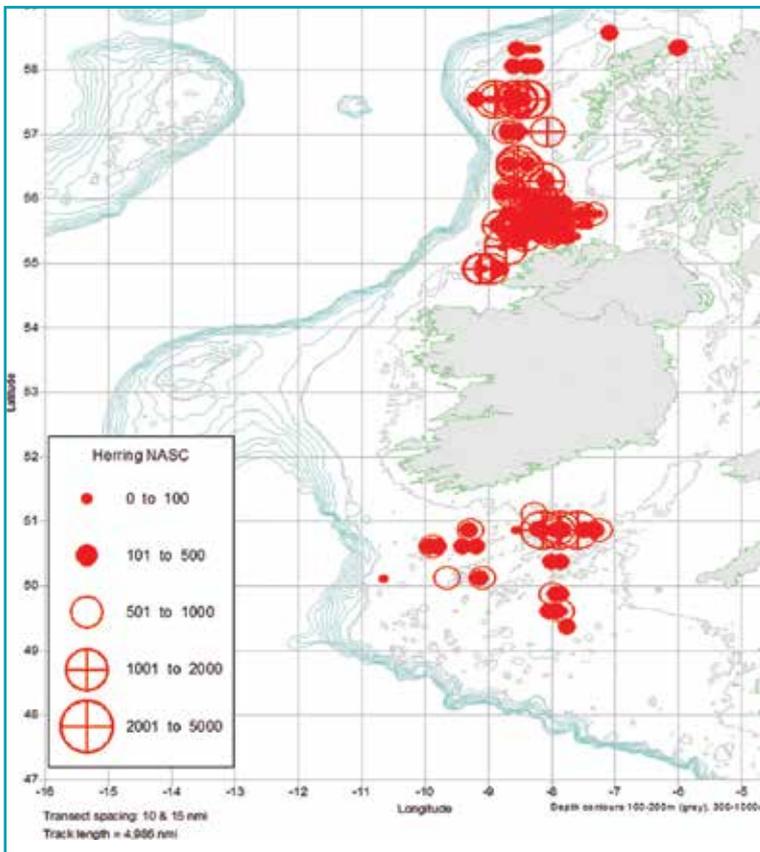


Figure 2. Distribution of herring (Malin Shelf and Celtic Sea stocks).

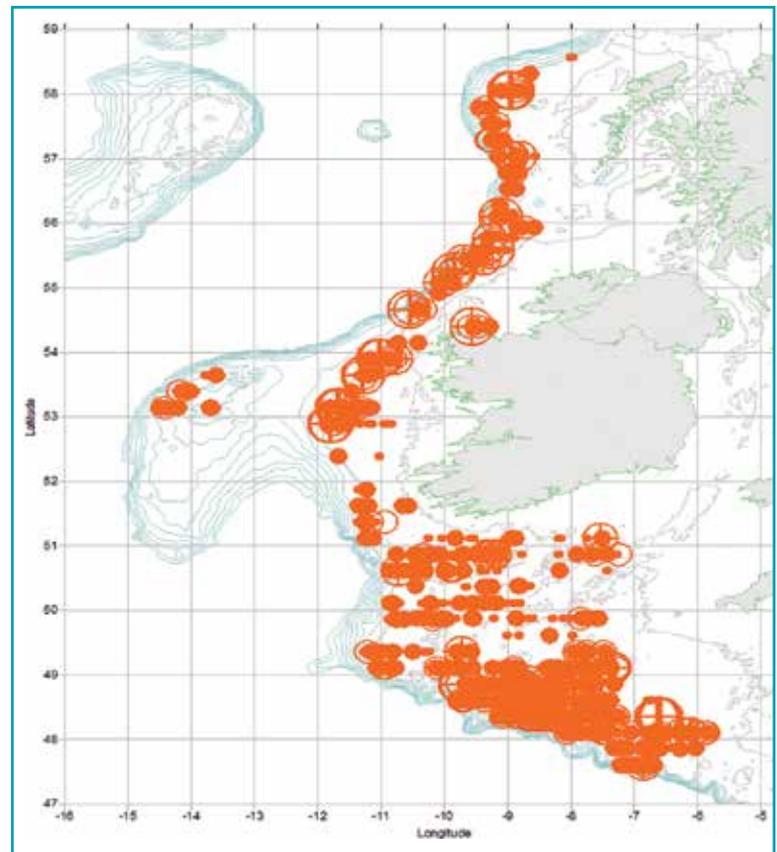


Figure 3. Boarfish distribution.

immature fish to the 2021 survey would indicate a continuation of this trend and the continued growth of this stock as young fish begin to recruit to the spawning stock from age 3-years old.

HORSE MACKEREL

Horse mackerel were observed in low numbers in both the Celtic Sea and along the west coast (Figure 4) with both the number of schools and overall acoustic density lower than observed in 2020.

No large aggregations of horse mackerel were observed over the duration of the survey and of the seven strata surveyed, only two contained horse mackerel. The Celtic Sea stratum contained the largest proportion of biomass (53% of total biomass), followed by the west coast (47%).

The 9-year age class dominated this year’s survey estimate - representing over 25% of the total biomass. Seven-year old fish ranked second (15%) and three-year-old fish were ranked third (4%). In combination, these three age classes represented over 44% of the total biomass observed.

Maturity analysis of horse mackerel samples indicated over 99% of the total biomass was mature with all fish of three years and older were fully mature. Survey estimates of horse mackerel biomass have been declining year-on-year since 2018,

for comparable survey timing and area coverage.

CELTIC SEA HERRING

Aggregations of Celtic Sea herring were observed during the survey in the western and southern feeding grounds around the Pistola and Labadie Banks respectively (Figure 2). Three winter ring fish dominated the total survey estimate, representing 63% of total biomass, four winter ring fish ranked second, contributing 14% of the total biomass and ranked third were the two winter ring fish (13% of biomass). Combined, these three age classes represented over 90% of total survey biomass and over 91% of total abundance.

Maturity analysis of Celtic Sea herring samples indicated over 60% of 2 winter ring fish were mature, rising to 95% for 3 winter ring fish. Overall, 91% of the total stock biomass was considered mature relating to 89% of total stock numbers.

O’Donnell added “the three winter ring fish stand out as a strong year class for this stock after a prolonged period of poor recruitment and are now at full reproductive capacity. Combined with the two and four winter ring fish these three successive age classes have the potential to rebuild the stock given successful spawning and post larval survival”. ●

“The three winter ring fish stand out as a strong year class for this stock after a prolonged period of poor recruitment and are now at full reproductive capacity.”

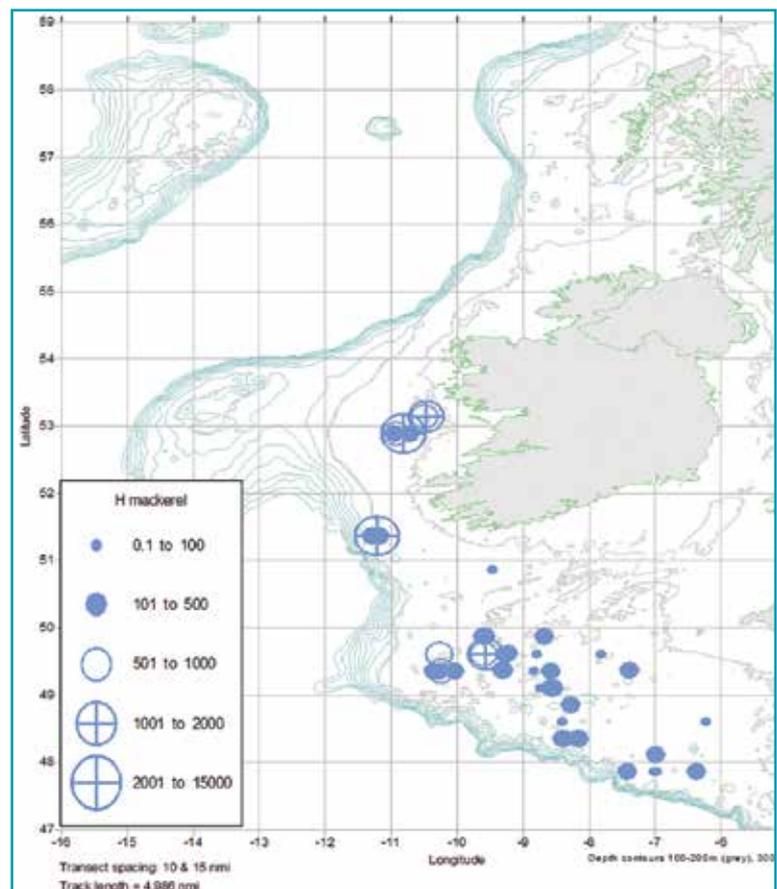


Figure 4. Horse mackerel distribution

IFPEA Meeting Calls For Urgent Action By Government



THE IRISH FISH PROCESSORS & EXPORTERS ASSOCIATION (IFPEA) became the first of the national fisheries representative bodies to hold an in person gathering after the Seafood Task Force released their final report, when they gathered in Dublin on Friday 22nd last.

The meeting was attended by over 60 representatives of various fish processing and exporting companies across the country and was a welcome sight of the strength, unity and resolve of the industry to fight back and challenge the current lack of interest by the Government of the day and the failure on the part of the EU to treat Ireland in a more fair and equal manner as a member state.

This request from the industry is only in line with the commitments given by Michel Barnier and the EU Commission throughout the Brexit talks process when they stated that “no members state would be disproportionately hit”.

Guest speaker at the event was Chief Executive of BIM Jim O’ Toole, who delivered a comprehensive in-depth analysis of the current state of the processing sector, focusing on delivering the change required to meet the challenges of TCA/Brexit. A very constructive discussion took place on the outcomes of the Taskforce, and the need to have a focused Brexit Adjustment Reserve fund that is active and willing to invest in the entire processing sector – be that by way of capital investment or the processing liquidity scheme.

The Taskforce recommendations contain over €102 million of initiatives for the processing sector, this is to be welcomed. The IFPEA expressed their support for the ongoing commitments and efforts of BIM and of Jim O’Toole in particular.

The meeting agreed that the emphasis of any future funding plan must be on the adjusting to the realities of post Brexit/TCA, providing the stimulus necessary for processing to diversify, pursue value add and plan at least in the interim to do much more with less supply of fish.

Whilst the meeting was resolute in asserting that burden sharing still needs to be the priority policy. It was clear that to date no successful dividend has occurred from any proposal undertaken through Burden sharing, and an issue of major concern for all gathered at the meeting was the complete lack of any coherent strategy for burden sharing at either

Government level or within the Department of Marine.

Whereas, Brexit/TCA is a once in a lifetime hit to the Irish economy, it is in reality a reoccurring hit to the Irish Fishing Industry, each year, year on year with accumulative losses of €215.653 million in the period until 2026 alone. That is less quota, less fish to process, reduction in opportunity to the industry for sustaining current markets and developing future potential growth.

Many in the IFPEA believe that the full scale of the impacts of the TCA are not fully realised on our politicians because if it was fully known to them, then surely more would be done by our political leaders to reverse or address the situation. In many ways, upon examining the situation objectively – Ireland’s response to TCA fall out has been weak, lacking focus and clarity of leadership so far.

This is a massive hit to what was an already struggling sector. The IFPEA expressed frustration and anger at the Minister and Government at the lack of any clear strategy to obtain any degree of burden sharing, we are now almost 11 month post TCA, and yet we have failed to see any actual mechanics of how the Government intend to obtain a burden share deal for Ireland, it is worsened by the fact that Commissioner Sinkevicius stated on his recent visit to the country, that no renegotiation of the CFP will take place until post 2026, if at all.

The IFPEA unanimously passed a motion of censure against Minister Charlie Mc Conalogue for the refusing to attend the meeting, having initially accepted the invitation on the 7th of October, only to subsequently withdraw it due to comments made by the IFPEA CEO Mr Brendan Byrne surrounding the failures of successive Governments, Department and the Minister regarding fisheries policy since joining the EEC/EU.

These comments appeared in the UK Times -Irish version on the 14th of October in an article written by journalist Mr Patrick O’Donoghue.

The IFPEA stands united behind its CEO and the positions taken by him on behalf of the Association – and expresses its shock at the position taken by the Minister. The association is extremely frustrated at the lack of any progress on matters relating to fisheries over the past year, but especially since the TCA deal last December. What is required in the industry now, is strong leadership both at political level

nationally and at European and a fundamental reassessment of all aspects of the industry is urgently required, in an attempt to understand, why there has been a litany of failures since our joining the EEC/EU.

In reality the Irish fishing industry should be multiple times the size it presently is, unfortunately it is an industry that is contracting as opposed to expanding at present and that is the crises we face. When we examine other coastal states over the same period, many of the them with only a fraction of the fishing opportunities that surround our island – it is easy to understand, why the Irish Fishing industry is so aggrieved by successive Government failures and EU policy in general.

The outcomes of the Seafood Taskforce may not suit or be welcomed by all sectors of the fishing industry equally, it nevertheless charts a pathway forward for the industry over the next 10 to 15-year cycle. But, the recommendations of the Taskforce are worthless unless there is the genuine commitment and drive at political level to bring them to implementation stage, and this needs to happen sooner rather than later.

The fishing industry can no longer continue on the current trajectory of loss and failure, for too long more of the same has been allowed to continue – now, is the time for this nation to put fishing front and centre. What is required is full engagement with the industry, robust debate that will be both frank and on occasions tough to take but this will lead to solutions that all sides can have confidence in, with a clear marked road map to restore confidence in one of Ireland’s premier natural resources which is the fishing industry.

Absenting oneself, from meeting the industry on the basis of comments made by industry representatives will not convince anyone of the level of commitment on the part of our Minister nor does it demonstrate the degree of leadership necessary at this critical time, in fact it only adds to the current level of lack of confidence in our political leaders in terms of what they really think of the fishing industry.

The IFPEA will continue to represent the processing sector in a strong and clear manner, that may well be on occasions be difficult for politicians to take, but we as an association will continue to articulate the challenges we face as processors on a daily basis.

Real challenges such as the removal of a control plan and the loss of the derogation to weigh after transport of fish, an issue that has crippled the Irish fishing industry across all sectors since last April. The immediate need for industry to have clear sight on the methodology and the proposals of how we as a member state hope to achieve burden sharing for the entire fishing industry.

The time frame for translating the Brexit Adjustment Reserve funding into purposeful and meaningful schemes that does not exclude or unnecessarily dilute their effectiveness for the processing sectors – in dealing directly with the very purpose to which the Brexit Adjustment Reserve was established that clearly was “to adjust to the new realities post TCA/Brexit and to future proof the industry in the years ahead”. ●

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FRI 10-6 SAT 10-4

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T: 00353 (0)74 9548037 | M: 00353 (0)86 8401250

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New Builds Announced To Replace West Cork Pair Trawlers

THE SHEEHEY FAMILY, Baltimore and the Atlantic Dawn Group, Killybegs have announced the building of two new 27mtr RSW pair trawlers. *The Ocean Crest* and *Wavecrest* will replace the current Lovon & Carmona and will mean a major boost for Irish based companies during their construction.

Both vessels have been designed by Ove Kristensen with *Ocean Crest* due for delivery from the Vestværflet yard in Denmark in 2022 and *Wavecrest* being completed by Mooney Boats Ltd, Killybegs in 2023.

SeaQuest Systems have been awarded the contract to supply the complete deck equipment package for the 2 new builds to include the following equipment;

- 2 x 32t Trawl Winches with Grooved Winch Drums
- 2 x 16t Net Drums
- 1 x 4t Net-Sounder Winch
- 15t Out-haul Winch
- 1 x 12t Gilson Winch
- 1 x 2.5t BV certified Anchor Winch
- 2 x 25t Self-Hauling Rope Reels
- Scantrol Auto-Trawl System
- 1 x 1.5t @ 9mtr Knuckle-boom Crane
- 11.5t @ 8mtr Knuckle-boom Crane
- SeaQuest 14in Fish Pump
- SeaQuest Hydraulic & Fish Hose Reels

Complete electronic and navigation packages will be supplied for both vessels by Barry Electronics Ltd and KER are to provide the refrigeration system for the *Wavecrest*.

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.

Certification

STCW Certificate in:

- 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

A new fish plant for Killybegs by John Cunningham

CLEARING WORK is under way to build a new Bio Marine fish plant in Killybegs; the site is being constructed on the industrial road just outside of the town. The much welcomed news will create 100 jobs for the town and wider Donegal. The new roles will include third-level positions as well as factory operative jobs. The company hopes to begin construction of the 5,700 square metre plant in the second half of next year.

The plant will produce speciality protein powders and marine minerals to be sold globally. The vast majority of the company is owned by members of the Killybegs Fishermen's Organisation and the impact of Brexit on the fishing fleet in Killybegs, and then this project is a timely incentive for the town.

SeaQuest

■ 2022 has definitely proven to be an extremely busy one at SeaQuest with 11 new building projects on the factory floor at present for both Aquaculture and the fishing industries. The vessels range from 22mtr right up to 90+mtr. Since the new factory was built the company has been supplying a lot of cranes across the globe and as far as Australia and Vietnam. This has spiked much interest in their winches and other equipment the company supplies. SeaQuest has generated massive attention because it offers to the customers spec. Their current deliveries are not only in Ireland but in the UK, Spain, Turkey, Las Palmas and Denmark.

The company has started shipping for the new *MFV Veronica* at Cemre Marin in Turkey; the third vessel of the Atlantic dawn's to be built at the yard. The manufacturing of the cranes are expected to be completed before the year's end. *MFV Liafford* at Cemre Marin will also get a crane package, their first direct supply on a fishing vessel for Norway.

Sparkling Star and *Eilean Cronie* vessels installations are ongoing at present in Killybegs; both these trawlers are being fitted out by Mooney's boats. SeaQuest have supplied the complete deck equipment and hydraulics package.

Ocean Crest will be fitted out again at Mooney's Gitte Henning, @ Zamakona, some firsts for the company in that package with electric 24in fish pumps, (The Company has designed and built first electric pumps approx 15 years ago for krill fishing in Antarctic) Electric drive hose reels and 40ft net Hauler, also Parkol, they have the complete package for *MFV Challenger* for Chaz Bruce and then also *MFV Green isle*. Later this year the company plan to launch a new 20" fish pump of which are already sold to *MFV Artemis* which is to be delivered from Karstensens in Denmark. Just last week SeaQuest secured contracts for a further four ships for crane packages for *MFV Gollenes*, *Sille Marie*, *Polarbris* and *Stodig*.



Western Viking landing mackerel through the flow scales.

Bluefin Tuna

■ The Bluefin tuna season has proven to be more difficult this season opposed to last. Reports say that the fish are thin on the ground off the south coast and less abundant in the North. Meanwhile the scoreboard is continued to tick until the season closing date 12th November 2021 in Donegal bay. Skipper *Adrian Molloy* managed four fish to the boat from six hook ups in one day. His seasons total is 80 fish tagged. It is doubtful that the Skippers will beat their score from 2020 of 685 caught tagged and released Bluefin tuna. Weather permitting we hope that the Skippers can get out and catch a few more to tag before they fizzle out.

Pelagic Fishing

■ The beginning of October seen the start of the Mackerel fishing, Most boats have not much left of their quota left to catch. The *Western Viking* was the first boat to sail north and they weren't long on the fishing ground until they returned to Killybegs with a good shot of large mackerel. In the following weeks the rest of the Killybegs fleet headed north for the Mackerel. Sizes of the fish were very good ranging from 450gram to 490 grams per fish.

Boar Fish

■ October saw the first boar fish of the season landed in Killybegs by Ronan Ross and Sarah David followed by *Antartic*, *Eilean Cronie* and *Sparkling Star*.

Sprat

■ Sprat fishing been really disappointing this year, the *Little Molly* and *Rachael D* made a few trips to the back of St John's Point but didn't see any sprat.

Finswim Expedition Back On Course



FINSWIM IS BACK on course in an attempt to complete the south west coast before Christmas then northbound along the Wild Atlantic Way to Donegal.

Anrí Ó Domhnaill (Henry O'Donnell) is aiming to attempt a finswim and circumnavigation of the entire coast of Ireland having reached the half way point off the Waterford coast earlier this year raising €43K for charity but unfortunately the event was seriously disrupted and suspended due to the Covid pandemic.

Anrí continued training and planning amid the uncertainty generated by the Covid situation in the hope that the event could resume. The expedition vessel and crew from Tory Island provided support and essential safety cover for Anrí from Donegal

around the coast to the half way point.

This vessel, *Tor Dearg* – Tory Fast Ferry and crew is providing passenger and other services for Tory Island and is not available to the expedition at this time.

In order to revive the expedition, it was necessary to change plans and engage with coastal communities for support in terms of safety boat cover, logistics and operational input.

Type of assistance required southwestwards along the West coast includes boat cover, food, accommodation, financial support to run the expedition and some basic logistics support.

Contact can be made through the website www.finswim2020.com or by email at: finswim2020@gmail.com.

NORTHERN IRELAND NEWS By Dick James

The Fishery: Prawn Fishing Slacks Off

COME OCTOBER in the Irish Sea there is a period when the prawn fishery slacks off. Each year the hopes are that it will not be too bad but each year it gets as bad as it ever was and this year is no exception. So, what to do? Some hope to carry on and hope for an improvement and this is happening now, after an encouraging sign of the Irish fleet working in numbers on the Bay of Dundalk this has now petered out and access to these waters is now restricted anyway.

The Smalls can occasionally be an option, but not this year and the cuttlefish off the south coast of Devon has worked in the past and signs are moderately good there but not enough to tempt mass migration.

The Clyde is usually a safe option but that has had a very disappointing start with even the Portavogie faithful giving up on it so far. The one option open to give some encouragement is the North Sea with the winter fishery

in the Shields area showing signs of promise and tempting the resolute ones to make the trip north about Scotland to try their luck.

However things have changed. In the past the market moved with them and twice weekly lorry transit brought the catch back home in fresh condition to factories otherwise lacking the local landings. Now we have Brexit and a Protocol which seems to have thrown up all kinds of issues.

Fresh transport is no longer an easy option with paperwork and potential delays so the catches still find their way back to the County Down factories but packaged and frozen and at a discount of at least £1 per kilo. The local demand on the UK's east coast is fragile and access to that market gets no better rewards so the option is to put-up and shut -up and hope that the volumes of catch still makes it more viable than the alternatives.

Otherwise an option taken up by the larger fleet units is to move

to the ever more popular Guard ship alternative where longish term contracts in an environment requiring less crew and reduced expenses makes this an attractive option. This has become a significant feature in the Kilkeel fleet which is in danger in turning from a fishing based fleet to one operating in offshore services (or Guard ship). This is now accepted as an adaption by Government to changing circumstances and is a major plank in the future strategy of the planners in proposals for harbour development, particularly in Kilkeel to switch emphasis to "Blue Economy" rather than increased fishing reliance.

Another option for the Nephrops fishers on a seasonal low is to turn to the local King Scallop fishery which opens on the 1st of November. Restricted access to Isle of Man waters limiting Quotas and a general drain on vessels able to enter this fishery partly due to licence limitation seems to have reduced enthusiasm for the seasonal shift

to the Scallops with minimal activity on the quayside rigging gear, changing warps and modifying superstructure to fit out for the changeover.

The Porcupine Nephrops fishery continues with the *Maracestina* now ploughing a lonely set of tows as the *Apollo* has now left to try her luck in the English Channel on the cuttlefish where landing prohibition does not apply and lengthy trip back to Scotland do not become a necessity.

The September fishery, as in every year features significantly on the local Irish Sea Herring fishery. In the month of August the Kilkeel tank boat pair *Stefanie M* and *Havilah* did their usual fishing patterns, fishing by night and landing early mornings into Belfast port for tanker transport back to the three County Down factories in Ardglass and Kilkeel.

This continued into September when their quota availability ran out and a trip to test the availability of Clyde Herring

Kilkeel Harbour Development

Plans for the demolition of unused buildings on the south side of Kilkeel harbour have been recommended for approval by Newry Mourne and Down Council planning authorities. The applicants are DR Maritime Assets Limited who propose the demolition of the three storey building at 34 Kilkeel Harbour to be replaced with a new store and first floor office developments.

Apparently no objections have been made for the proposed new development and given the nature of the business proposed it is assumed that the location chosen is appropriate for the proposed development which at present operates from various other locations around Kilkeel harbour,.

The new premises will bring together at least three of the premises presently used.

DR Maritime Assets claims to be the UK's largest operator of offshore support services combined with engineering facility operating 17 vessels in ownership, either exclusively or as joint owners and chartering another fleet of vessels said to be around 15 but in recent months vessels have been

added.

This now forms a considerable part of the Kilkeel fleet albeit much of the guard ship work at sea is in other parts of the UK (and foreign) waters meaning that the dependence on fishing is much reduced in the port and crew of what were once fishing vessels are now deployed in this new role. To maintain the high standards demanded by the contractors for such services the shipwright and engineering support services embodied in the company maintains a high level of employment within the new services.

This development has been identified in the recently commissioned report on the Seafood Development study done by Fisheries Division's consultant as part of the "Blue Economy" for which Kilkeel Harbour development work is required to upgrade support infrastructure to a level to maintain the growth of this sector. There are two other companies in Kilkeel engaged in this work and the character of Kilkeel as a fishing port could soon be overtaken by the offshore support industry.

MINISTER POOTS ANNOUNCES £1.9 MILLION GRANT SCHEME

■ The Northern Ireland Fisheries Minister Edwin Poots in October announced a new grant aid scheme for fisheries and aquaculture worth £1.9 million to be made available until March 2022 from immediate effect. This grant is time limited by strictures put on it by the UK treasury which funded the program but is to be followed by a five year scheme commencing in April 2022.

The initiative is in part replacement for the previous EU scheme which is now a casualty of the BREXIT deal. The focus of the new scheme will be on sustainability, green growth, blue economy, resilience and adapting to the post Brexit landscape (seascape). Selective fishing gear and practices, port infrastructure developments and investment by fish processors and aquaculture will also be covered.

proved semi successful without being overly rewarding. *The Voyager* having completed the North Sea Herring quota landing into Norway then made way back to Belfast where two landings were made into Belfast for road transport to a factory in Killybegs which under present rules is now apparently kosher. Quota changes deriving from Brexit and interpreted as “new” quota was allocated to dry hold boats to allow them into the fishery.

The Achilles landed into road tanker for onward carriage to Killybegs but fell foul of quota limits and two smaller vessels *Siobhan III* and *Calm Waters* worked on the Douglass Bank aggregation landing into Ardglass. Apparently Bluefin Tuna were encountered on the Douglass Bank but no catches, accidental or otherwise were made to embarrass the quota application (set for scientific purposes or to cover accidental mortalities).

A welcome visitor to Ardglass landing Herring into the local factories was the *Rachel Jay* which discharged 3 times from a scientific herring fishery in the Celtic Sea. Ireland again got involved in the Irish Sea Herring fishery sending a procession of boats mainly from Killybegs which worked an area south-west

of the Isle of Man outside the 12 mile limits working by day and by night on mixed Herring and landing every second or third day. *The Ella* put in three trips landing the first two back in Killybegs and the third into Warrenpoint for road transport back to Killybegs. This was a landing pattern adopted by the other fishery participants with *Oilean An Oir* and *Glor Na Dtonn* followed some days later by *Westbound*, *Ocean Breeze* and *Nausica*.

Warrenpoint has been declared an authorized port of landing under Brexit initiative mainly to facilitate the local bottom grown Mussel fishery but open to all Irish boats.

The local whitefish fishery continued low key with the usual 5 participants carrying on at the Haddock in the mid-Irish Sea and the more mixes fishery in the North Channel. *The Unity* left her Newlyn based for new grounds in the offshore industry south of Ireland well away from domestic squabbles.

On the inshore front the Crab fishery is now into its prime season with the full-timers making the most of it and the part-timers getting ready for season end, winter gales and inshore scallop activity. ●

NIFHA CONSULTATION ON NEW CORPORATE PLAN

■ The Northern Ireland Fishery Harbour Authority (NIFHA) have called for input/suggestions for its new Corporate Plan to follow on from the existing plan which concludes in March 2022. The new plan is proposed to run from April 2022 to March 2026. NIFHA propose to continue high service levels in the three fishery harbours of Ardglass, Kilkeel and Portavogie and wish to develop a list of potential capital works to enhance the current asset base.

NIFHA acknowledge the recommendations of the Seafood Development Report which was adopted earlier this year as a template for the infrastructure needs of the fish industry going forward over a period of several decades and which must be the prime target for major development for the new plan.

The invitation to comment makes reference to the environmental role now taken on by NIFHA with appointment of an Environmental Officer who is now inputting significantly to the present work program and asks for means to improve NIFHA performance in a safer and greener manner.

FURTHER LICENSING RULES FOR CHANNEL FISHERIES

■ The United Kingdom is to extend rules in relation to beam trawling in ICES Area VII from UK only application to apply to all beam trawlers of whatever nationality in the UK zone. The requirement is that vessels fishing in the UK sector of VIIe must notify the UKFMC of intent to enter or leave the area at least no less than 4 hours before transiting and no more than 8 hours. Otherwise the vessel shall enter a UK port for clearance which condition may be applied upon notification of intent. UK waters in Area VIIe around the Channel Islands are not subject to the reporting or entry to port requirement. These rules will form part of the licence conditions authorizing fishing in UK waters and the format for reporting is laid out in the licence. These conditions are part of the UK Sole recovery initiative and now apply to non UK vessels post Brexit.

SEAFISH APPOINT NEW CHAIR FOR NI ADVISORY COMMITTEE

■ **HARRY WICK**, the Northern Ireland Fish Producers Organisation Chief Executive has been appointed as Chair of the Northern Ireland Advisory Committee. Harry was appointed to the Seafish Board earlier this year after a lack of representation for 8 years and has been appointed Chair of the Northern Ireland Committee after the first Board meeting of the newly appointed Board. The appointment is to have immediate effect.

The Seafish Northern Ireland Advisory Committee (SNIAC) has been in existence for some 6 years and its role is to ensure effective delivery of SEAFISH services to the seafood sector in Northern Ireland. The Committee comprises representatives from fishing, aquaculture, distribution/processing and food service/retail and advises on the annual work program for SEAFISH in Northern Ireland in line with the overarching Corporate Plan. SEAFISH see the link between its Board and SNIAC as being important in understanding the issues facing Northern Ireland at a UK level.

The work of SNIAC has previously featured safety at sea issues, environmental impact problems with Marine Conservation Zones, Crab and shellfish management plans as well as fish as food promotional programs. The regional manager is Sally Stewart Moore responsible for implementing the SNIAC work program.

BIM offers professional support and advice to help you understand new Brexit customs requirements.

The support assists seafood companies to identify and action key steps in relation to customs, tariffs and non-EU trade requirements.

➔ Find out more information by visiting BIM's Brexit Hub www.bim.ie/brexit-hub



UK NEWS

The Seafarers' Charity Drives Development of Fishing Safety Management for UK Fishing Fleet

THE SEAFARERS' CHARITY - a leading provider of grants and support to the maritime community - has received

funding for a pilot project to develop safety management onboard fishing vessels to the standard of the Fishing Safety Management (FSM) Code. The new service is called Fishing First Safety Management by SafetyFolder and aims to improve safety in the UK fishing fleet and, at the same time, increase supply chain transparency.

The Seafarers' Charity is coordinating this pilot project which has secured funding support from the Marine Management Organisation (MMO), Fisheries



and Seafood Scheme which has awarded £99,780 and the Trinity House DfT Maritime Safety Fund which has awarded £35,500. An industry steering group has been established and the development of safety management on board fishing vessels is fully supported by the Maritime and Coastguard Agency (MCA), which regulates and certifies UK fishing vessels.

The Seafarers' Charity will take forward a pilot project in the South West of England for up to 50 fishing vessels to receive

professional support to develop their safety management practices, the project will support operators to demonstrate compliance with ILO 188C Work In Fishing Convention by meeting the requirements of the Fishing Safety Management Code (MGN 596F), published by the MCA in 2017.

Robert Greenwood, Director at the SafetyFolder explained how this funding will help improve safety standards within the fishing industry,

'The majority of fishing vessels have begun recording risk assessments and safety activity in the SafetyFolder, but the new Fishing First service will give owners professional, customised support to complete a fully

auditable Safety Management System for their vessel.

Documentation is to the standard of the Fishing Safety Management Code (MGN 596 F) and is designed to avoid duplication and align with the MCA's Surveys and Inspections therefore simplifying compliance with legislation; ILO C 188.'

Adopting a Safety Management System has been a game changer in protecting workers from injury and saving lives in high-risk industries. By adopting an auditable Fishing Safety Management System, operators are documenting all their safety and welfare activity and have peace of mind that they are compliant with regulations. The data can also be produced as evidence of compliance during MCA vessel certification inspections. Reducing risk is especially critical on fishing vessels which remain by far the highest risk industry in the UK with 100 times the risk of death compared to the average UK worker (ref MCA).

Plymouth's seafood industry visited by Royalty

HRH The Princess Royal has visited Plymouth to learn more about its nationally important seafood industry and its pioneering efforts to protect and enhance the marine environment.

The visit included a tour of the city's Fish Market to understand the role it plays in supporting hundreds of livelihoods and supplying businesses across the South West and beyond.

The Princess Royal was also taken by boat across Plymouth Sound, home to the UK's first National Marine Park, where she learned about research into the environmental impacts of the shellfish industry and the habitat preferences of commercially important fish species.

The visit on Monday was arranged by the Fishmongers' Company in conjunction with the Lord Lieutenant of Devon, Plymouth City Council, the University of Plymouth, Plymouth Trawler Agents and Sutton Harbour Group.

During the day, The Princess Royal toured the Fish Market managed by Plymouth Trawler Agents where she met fishers, processors, stallholders and merchants. HRH also heard about the market's electronic auction system, and took part in a mock

Left: HRH The Princess Royal meets city leaders and officials from the fishing community.



Scanmar is looking for a result- and business-oriented **Sales Manager** for Scanmar Ltd

About Scanmar

Scanmar is the pioneer among manufacturers of catch control systems. Our business idea is to offer products for the fishing fleet and marine research vessels that individually and combined contribute to financial gain in the short and long term. The utility value will be increased efficiency during the fishing operation, savings in fuel consumption, reduced wear and tear on the equipment and minimal service and maintenance costs.

Our sensors and bridge systems are recognized for their advanced technology and high quality, and we are constantly working to improve our products by listening to our customers and users. Since the start in 1980, we have invested more than GBP 40 million in developing robust, reliable and innovative products.

The overall purpose of the role

We are looking for a passionate **SALES MANAGER** that will enjoy a dynamic and versatile work environment at a successful market-leading corporation.

Scanmar Ltd, situated in Peterhead harbour, is supplying, installing, and servicing a wide range of electronics to the whitefish and pelagic sectors throughout the UK and Ireland. As Sales Manager, you will also manage Scanmar Ltd. By liaising with external agencies and internal departments. You will be responsible for the growth and development of the UK Region.

Main responsibility:

- Execute successful business plans
- Build and maintain strong relationships with the customers and the vendors
- Develop market according to focused areas and budgets
- Achieve growth as a result of conscious choices and high-quality standards
- Maintain knowledge about products and technology as well as business opportunities
- Enable partners to be successful in finding & offering the best solutions for their needs
- Initiating marketing campaigns to find new leads
- Provide timely and accurate reports to management and manage CRM system pipeline reporting

Your Profile:

- We expect you to have a technical understanding, to be efficient and sales/result oriented.
- Experience with solution selling and partner sales.
- Excellent communication and interpersonal skills – both oral and written – with an evident ability to convey potentially complex information in a manner that is appropriate for the audience.
- Knowledge of the fishing sector.

- Excellent understanding of the local market.
- Ability to work to tight deadlines, remain calm under pressure and work overtime when needed.

Mobility requirements:

Some travel may be required within the region.

What we offer you:

- A constant stream of new things to learn.
- A varied and exciting position with good development opportunities in a company with a strong brand and market position.
- A value-driven company with an inclusive and autonomous culture.
- You will have good training opportunities, challenging work tasks and take part in a good working environment.
- Collaborative environment with our office in Norway.
- We have a solid pension scheme, good insurance terms and competitive terms in general.

Read more about Scanmar and our products at <http://Scanmar.no>. Do you want to join our exciting journey? Apply for the position with us.

We look forward to hearing from you!

If you have any questions regarding the position, please contact :

CEO Bendek Maartmann-Moe

Tel: +47 954 64 537

email: bmm@scanmar.no



SCANMAR

There has been widespread support across the industry to develop the new audit structure for implementation of this safety management system. The Maritime and Coastguard Agency (MCA), which regulates and certifies UK fishing vessels, is fully supportive of the use of Safety Management Systems to improve safety onboard fishing vessels and the industry support being given to this project.

'The development of Safety Management Systems and ensuring that data contained within them is a good match with the regulatory requirements, are important contributions to safety. This will lead to more operators

having a good quality system in place for the safe management of operations on board their fishing vessels.'

The Fishing First Safety Management by SafetyFolder will launch as a pilot service in South West England with widespread industry backing and Steering Group membership including: The Maritime & Coastguard Agency, Seafish, The Seafarers' Charity, Morrisons, Whitby Seafoods, National Federation of Fishermen's Organisations, Scottish Fishermen's Federation, Welsh Fishermen's Association and independent fishing representatives. ●

"The new Fishing First service will give owners professional, customised support to complete a fully auditable Safety Management System for their vessel."

auction to see how each morning's catch is not only landed but also sold.

The Princess Royal also met officials from Devon-based firm Tecmarine and learned about its efforts, supported by the Fishmongers' Company, to use remote electronic monitoring to tackle issues caused by lost fishing equipment, also known as ghost gear.

In the afternoon, The Princess Royal visited the University's Marine Station where she heard about its world-leading marine research and pioneering industry partnerships.

HRH then joined researchers and students on board RV Falcon Spirit and was told about ongoing work to assess the impact of the UK's largest mussel farm, owned by Offshore Shellfish Ltd, on the Lyme Bay Marine Protected Area. That work has been supported by the Fishmongers' Company.

Researchers also explained how cutting edge underwater video and acoustic technology is being used to monitor the National Marine Park and fish habitats right across the English Channel.

Andrew Wallace, Fisheries

Director of The Fishmongers' Company, said: "It was a pleasure to join HRH The Princess Royal, Court Member and past Prime Warden of the Fishmongers' Company, in Plymouth to learn more about the valuable contributions the local fishing fleet and seafood trade make to the region's economy and surrounding communities. This was followed by a fascinating afternoon exploring the University of Plymouth's marine research which, supported by the Company, is improving our understanding of how local mussel farms are boosting the health of our marine ecosystems."

Cllr Nick Kelly, Leader of Plymouth City Council, added: "The fisheries industry and marine innovation are crucial to Plymouth's local economy. It was beneficial to learn more about the people, their expertise and the challenges they face to continue to make their living in these specialist roles. Plymouth holds a rich history and world-class expertise in both fishing and marine technology. I am very proud that we were able to show that to HRH The Princess Royal." ●



SCOTLAND NEWS

Clyde's fish stocks start to recover

THE CLOSURE OF THE Clyde fishery has led to the recovery of marine species – but not the same species as lived there before, according to a report.

Published in the journal *Current Biology*, the paper found the marine ecosystem of west Scotland's Clyde Sea shows signs of recovery after a reduction in fishing pressure, but with sprat now the dominant species instead of herring.

Scientists say it is an example of how simply reducing fishing does not necessarily mean commercial fish stocks will return to their same pre-exploitation levels, and that restorative actions may have unintended consequences.

The paper's authors describe the Firth of Clyde as "one of the most anthropogenically impacted marine environments in the world". For hundreds of years, it was famed for its abundance of herring. But an intense fishing industry from the mid-19th century depleted fish stocks and was eventually closed. Since 2008, langoustine (*Nephrops norvegicus*) has been the main commercial catch.

Without any of the pressures of commercial fishing, researchers found that the biomass of pelagic forage fish – such as herring and

sprat, prey for predators including marine mammals and larger fish – is now four times greater than it was in the 1980s. But where herring was the dominant species then, now it is sprat.

The paper's lead author, Dr Joshua Lawrence, said: "We've seen no recovery in the herring stock, as one would normally hope for following a reduction in fishing pressure. Instead, we have seen a huge increase in the biomass of sprat in the area."

It is possible that sprat populations increased due to the lack of competition from herring, to the point where herring could not recover even when the fishing stopped. The authors suggest possible other factors may include warming seas, or the fact that herring need undisturbed gravel beds to spawn, whereas sprat do not.

Meanwhile, those fish that have been less well protected – such as demersal fish, or groundfish, such as cod and haddock – have not seen the same increase in biomass as the pelagic species. Prof Anthony Gallagher, who chairs the Clyde Marine Planning Partnership, said: "These are still heavily caught as bycatch in the nephrops fishery and almost entirely discarded at sea."



Inshore prawn trawlers at Troon Harbour Photo Niall Duffy

Another instance of a fishing moratorium that led to the recovery of an unexpected species is North Atlantic cod. Generally, stocks have not recovered despite fishing closures – but on the Georges Bank, off the north-east US, an attempted cod recovery led to a (very lucrative) 14-fold increase in scallop biomass.

Moreover, in Europe, reduced fishing pressure designed to rebuild hake stocks led to a massive increase in the species, which expanded into the North Sea, where they had been mostly absent for 50 years. This change may affect the future of mixed demersal fisheries, which have low quotas for hake.

Lawrence said: "Sometimes management interventions can have unexpected consequences, most likely due to unforeseen ecosystem interactions and processes. These can be hard to predict, and may vary greatly from one system, or even species, to another."

Because reducing fishing pressure is not always successful, the most important thing, Lawrence said, was "ensuring stocks do not become overexploited in the first place".

There is no sprat fishery around the Clyde, but the authors suggest a more sustainable industry may be ecotourism, specifically whale watching.

Prof Joshua Abbott, an environmental economist at Arizona State University, said that while ecotourism was a viable option, the income opportunities and employment may not match those offered by fishing, and he pointed to the seasonal nature of ecotourism as a possible restriction.

If sustainable fishing could operate alongside tourism, he added, no-take zones would help avoid conflict between the two industries. "Those considering alternative economic futures in a region need to consider these complex realities," he said. ●

PROJECT SEES FISHERMEN REMOVE DEBRIS FROM THE OCEAN

A PROJECT TO help remove harmful litter in our seas and raise awareness of its environmental impact is set for expansion after receiving almost £180,000 of funding from the Marine Fund Scotland.

The Fishing for Litter scheme is part of an international movement to support removal of marine litter from fishing areas, and raise awareness of the damage done by marine litter with the fishing industry, local communities and school children.

The project also works to encourage improvement of waste management practices within the fishing industry.

First launched in Scotland in 2005, the scheme has grown to include 20 harbours, with more than 280 fishing vessels collecting 1,844 tonnes of marine litter.

The voluntary project has set ambitious targets for the coming year of landing at

least 150 tonnes of marine litter, recruit at least another 30 member fishing vessels and add a minimum of three participating ports.

The funding will be used to cover waste collection and disposal, staff costs and education materials.

Announcing the funding at Eyemouth harbour, one of the 20 Fishing for Litter ports, Cabinet Secretary for Rural Affairs Mairi Gougeon said: "Marine litter is a global challenge and we are working nationally and internationally to address it.

"This funding demonstrates our commitment to reducing plastic pollution as part of a suite of wider measures which includes action on single-use plastic products.

"It also acknowledges the continued success of KIMO's Fishing for Litter

project and the role of our fishing industry in helping remove debris from our seas to support environmental and economic sustainability.

"We are clear that climate change and biodiversity loss are the greatest long term challenges we are facing.

"We have prioritised actions in our Programme for Government to tackle marine litter and we are taking important steps to ensure the amount of litter entering the marine environment is minimised to bring ecological, economic and social benefits.

"As global leaders gathered in Glasgow for COP26, we will seize the opportunity to share learning, demonstrate our shared ambition and drive forward essential change through genuine global partnership."

Scottish pelagic sector 'deeply disappointed' over Young's statement

THE SCOTTISH PELAGIC SUSTAINABILITY GROUP (SPSG) says it is 'deeply disappointed' at a statement issued by Young's via the North Atlantic Pelagic Advocacy Group (NAPA) over the ongoing Coastal States shared-stock management negotiations for mackerel, Atlanto-Scandian herring and blue whiting for 2022.

In their statement, Young's said: "Young's is the UK's largest seafood processor, with a global supply chain, encompassing over 40 wild capture and aquaculture species. In light of this, we recognise the diverse interests of all stakeholders in the fishing and aquaculture industries. We engage openly in dialogue with all parties, including fishermen, fish farmers, governments, trade associations, non-governmental organisations (NGOs) and food retailers. We will strive to ensure that our policies, values and behaviour regarding responsible fish procurement are leading and shaping opinion – and to pursue a vigorous and positive agenda for change rather than being merely passive or responsive to criticism or challenge."

"As a business that has both direct and indirect involvement in North East Atlantic pelagic species through Young's Brand and private own-label retailer products, we see the North Atlantic Pelagic Advocacy (NAPA) Group as a fundamental tool in driving change in these fisheries. Young's considers that the unilateral setting of quotas is an unacceptable

"This compares starkly with some of the northern countries who have set huge quotas, aren't fishing all their quota and are doing so unregulated in international waters"

threat to shared-stock fisheries and that the coastal states involved in these fisheries should support securing an agreement on total allowable catches in line with ICES advice and strive for a long-term science-based management agreement. We aim to support this process by working pre-competitively with NAPA members to add our voice to public advocacy as well as directly writing to coastal state delegations and emphasising our position."

"Should the NAPA process result in a failure to reach the agreed FIP action plan aims, we will review our sourcing decision and take actions that we deem to be appropriate at the time – the decisions that we make will be further guided by the Sustainable Seafood Coalition Codes of Conduct on Environmentally Responsible Fish and Seafood Sourcing and Environmental Claims. Whilst we are fully committed to playing a role in finding a solution to the management challenges of NE Atlantic pelagic fisheries, the unfortunate consequence of this situation remaining unresolved and total catches continuing to be in excess of the ICES advice, is that Young's would cease sourcing from these fisheries."

Ian Gatt, chairman of the SPSG said: "In this statement, Young's appear to be making no differential on sourcing from those countries doing the right thing, such as the UK, who continue to fish sustainably and within historic shares and all fished within our own waters. This compares starkly with some of the northern countries who have set huge quotas, aren't fishing all their quota and are doing so unregulated in international waters. Given this background of disparity, SPSG is deeply disappointed by the Young's statement, and we urge that the company, along with other seafood suppliers who may shortly be deciding upon their sourcing policies, give due recognition to those nations who are fishing responsibly."



Scanmar is looking for an Engineer for Scanmar Ltd

About Scanmar

Scanmar is the pioneer among manufacturers of catch control systems. Our business idea is to offer products for the fishing fleet and marine research vessels that individually and combined contribute to financial gain in the short and long term. The utility value will be increased efficiency during the fishing operation, savings in fuel consumption, reduced wear and tear on the equipment and minimal service and maintenance costs.

Our sensors and bridge systems are recognized for their advanced technology and high quality, and we are constantly working to improve our products by listening to our customers and users. Since the start in 1980, we have invested more than GBP 40 million in developing robust, reliable and innovative products.

The overall purpose of the role

We are looking for a passionate **ENGINEER** that will enjoy a dynamic and versatile work environment at a successful market-leading corporation.

Scanmar Ltd, situated in Peterhead harbour, is supplying, installing, and servicing a wide range of electronics to the whitefish and pelagic sectors throughout the UK and Ireland. As Engineer, you will undertake several tasks in the preparation of equipment for sale or rental, including equipment interfacing, maintenance, servicing and re-certification, all of which will be required to meet project deadlines.

Main responsibility:

- Testing/interfacing and fault finding of electronic equipment. Calibration of equipment to manufacturers tolerances & specifications as per Scanmars procedures.
- Electronic repairs, including minor PCB work and cable re-terminations.
- The testing of both ni-cad and lithium-ion battery cells.
- Creation of accurate calibration/ test documents.
- Correct and organized documenting of calibration certificates and test sheets.
- Point of liaison between suppliers, manufacturers and customers as required.
- Shipping to customers and manufacturers.
- Onshore and offshore field-based equipment support to customers as required.
- Maintenance of calibration facilities to maintain the best possible standards and in line with ISO9001.
- Monitor lab test/reference equipment calibration requirements and organize re-certification with minimal lab downtime.
- Willingness to undertake other duties as required.
- Attend fishing exhibitions with the Sales Manager on an annual basis and be confident in the presentation, sales, and marketing of all products within Scanmar's portfolio.

Your Profile:

- Master's degree in electrical engineering or another relevant subject. Bachelor might also be considered.
- NC/HNC or equivalent in a

relevant area; Electronics, Electrical Engineering, or Engineering Systems.

- Experience in PCB investigation, soldering, crimping, mechanical assembly.
- Experience working within the Fishing sector both onshore and offshore.
- Solid experience of Microsoft Office suite; Word, Excel, PowerPoint, and Outlook.
- Experience in the selling of catch control and other fishing related products.
- Ability to work to tight deadlines, remain calm under pressure and work overtime when needed.

Mobility requirements:

Some travel may be required within the region

What we offer you:

- A constant stream of new things to learn.
- A varied and exciting position with good development opportunities in a company with a strong brand and market position.
- You will have good training opportunities, challenging work tasks and take part in a good working environment.
- We have a solid pension scheme, good insurance terms and competitive terms in general.
- An open, supportive, and collaborative work environment.

Read more about Scanmar and our products at

<http://www.scanmar.no>.

Do you want to join our exciting journey? Apply for the position with us.

We look forward to hearing from you!

If you have any questions regarding the position, please contact :

CEO Bendek Maartmann-Moe

Tel: +47 954 64 537

email: bmm@scanmar.no



SCANMAR



Conservation key for proper fisheries management

A SCOTLAND BASED conservation charity has called for a root and branch reform of fisheries management to ensure a sustainable future for fishing both environmentally and economically.

Over recent months Scottish fishing leaders have accused environmental pressure groups, including Open Seas, of “peddling nonsense” when warning that North Sea cod was an endangered species.

Earlier in October, the chairman of the *Shetland Fishermen's Association* (SFA) James Anderson warned politicians that some local fishermen would go out of business if the ICES recommendation of cutting next year's cod quota by just over 10 per cent was accepted.

The SFA said that even an increase of 30 per cent in the cod quota would allow the North Sea stock to grow by 24 per cent.

But Nick Underdown of Open Seas said that despite the observations of fishermen who report they have never seen so many cod on the fishing grounds, there were fewer spawning cod in the North Sea than ever before.

A reduction in fishing effort combined with proper conservation measures implemented by the Scottish Government would in the long term not only help a



George Anderson's boat Golden Rose at Symbister Pier.

“vulnerable” species but also fishermen and their livelihoods, he said.

“We are definitely not challenging the direct and valuable observations of fishermen who may have seen good numbers of cod on local fishing grounds. Fish move about and local abundances can happen based on temperature or feeding behaviour,” he said.

“Scientific assessment provides

an estimate of abundance, and it is currently estimated that there are fewer spawning cod in the North Sea than ever before - 37,912 tonnes of cod, compared to more than 200,000 tonnes in the 1970s and a more recent peak of 85,860 tonnes in 2016 when the measures taken to prevent overfishing were starting to work.

“This is definitely a cause for serious concern and it's worrying

that remedial measures were dropped and the fishery has gone back into decline.”

He continued by saying that conservation measures were good for fishing as they would help recover fish populations and improve the living fishermen could make from growing fish stocks.

For this to happen though fisheries management in Scotland and the UK requires a major overhaul to overcome the “artificial and unhealthy divide” between conservation and fisheries policy, Underdown said.

Open Seas would like the following conservation measures to be introduced: -

- End overfishing by no longer setting fishing quota in excess of sustainable limits;
- end discarding unwanted fish at sea (hidden overfishing);
- protect and recover habitats such as inshore areas which are vital for juvenile fish to feed and mature;
- overhaul fisheries management by promoting and incentivising sustainability and benefits for coastal communities.

As such, he said, Open Seas is opposed to the creation of an ‘independent panel’ to access ICES (*International Council for the Exploration of the Sea*) as called for by fishing leaders.

“We are generally opposed to calls to create an independent panel because we fear the panel's independence could likely be compromised, especially if it is being lobbied into existence by

Fish in a box scheme to deliver 'catch of the day' to front door



Catch-of-the-Day-Fish-subscription-box

■ People in Shetland can now receive fresh fish direct to their door as part of a new subscription service. Local company Thule Ventus is offering the service on a weekly or monthly basis, or as a one-off. The *Catch of the Day* boxes contain a variety of fresh Shetland seafood from local partner company Blyd 'O' It, alongside some of Thule Ventus' own salt fish products.

The boxes contain fish landed on the same day to ensure that it is in peak condition. The fish sold has all been caught off the coast of Shetland by local fishing boats. It is something of a fresh take on vans which used to travel around Shetland to sell fish.

Thule Ventus managing director David Polson said: “In Shetland, we often take the quality of our fish for granted and forget that premium quality fish is not always accessible to everyone in the UK.

“In fact, much of the islands' fish is shipped to customers overseas. I believe that people closer to home should be able to easily access Shetland fish, and so the subscription box was borne. Now anyone can access quality fish, delivered direct to their homes.

Catch of the Day subscription boxes are available to purchase from the Thule Ventus website – <https://thuleventus.co.uk/>

commercial interests,” Underdown said.

“Perhaps more importantly, we don’t know what the panel hopes to actually do if not redo work already done by ICES or commission research that stalls the implementation of ICES advice - neither of which would be helpful for anyone but the largest quota-owning businesses.

“The independence and transparency of a scientific advice is critical. Unfortunately, there are many examples of non-transparent decision-making by government in sea fisheries.

“Transparency, accessibility and independence are fundamental aspects of all environmental decision-making and founded in law under the Aarhus Convention.”

Meanwhile, SFA chairman Anderson said there is far more cod on the grounds than in the late 1990s when the cod quota was 10 times the size it is now.

“The irony of the situation surely can’t be lost on our own governments, when they enter into the negotiations that will take place based on the ICES advice,” he added.

“The choice is clear – a successful fleet or one that is emasculated because of utterly misguided decision making.”

Underdown added: “We would like to see a booming, well-regulated cod fishery in Shetland and around the rest of Scotland.

“Open Seas is a Scottish charity, and we contend that fisheries management in Scotland needs root and branch reform, because it is clearly not operating sustainably, neither in environmental nor in economic terms.” ●

Freight operators furious at government inaction on capacity crisis

THE SCOTTISH GOVERNMENT is offering “no relief” to the “crisis” of freight capacity on ferries to and from Shetland, local seafood and haulage industries have claimed.

Shetland’s Stewart Building Transport Group responded to a letter from Scottish transport minister Graeme Dey, who also recently met industry representatives, to urge the government to act sooner rather than later.

It comes amid regular delays in goods being shipped from Lerwick at pinch points in the freight season – which comes at a big cost to the local economy, and in particular the seafood industry. In his letter to the transport group the minister confirmed that any new vessels commissioned by the government will not be operational until 2026. The government is looking at bringing in two new freight ships to replace the existing Helliard and Hildasay, with a ‘freighter plus’ model – which offers more passenger capacity – being considered.

The group said in response: “You should understand that Shetland and the business community here which relies on freight transport must have a solution to the crisis here and now rather than in five years.”

The minister also indicated that government agency Transport Scotland would be introducing a pilot scheme to encourage hauliers to make use of weekend sailing.

This initiative, which he described as “a solution to the current shortfall in freight capacity”, was seen by the group as having “little or no merit”.

It said customers would be resistant to taking deliveries over weekends, with producers and hauliers being forced to incur the costs of adjusting their operations to a seven-day week – this at a time when labour shortages and other pressures are well documented.

The group added that the minister’s central argument for the general lack of action rests on the statistic that all goods are shipped

“across the week” – that all goods eventually get transported.

The group respond that while “shipping ‘across the week’ may satisfy some public sector servants and statisticians, it does nothing in the real commercial world where, as you ought to know, businesses survive by providing a reliable service to their customers”.

It comes on the back of the Scottish Government’s announcement that it is investing £9 million in a ferry from Norway for the Craignure-Oban service.

The transport group’s response continued: “We would strongly urge that all options, including purchase, must be considered for the North Isles as well as the West Coast routes, given the dire circumstances we face.

“We ask of the government and of Transport Scotland that you listen to us, that you work with us, and that we are given the proper infrastructure such that we can continue to build the economy of Shetland, together with delivering significant input to the wider Scottish economy.”

A Transport Scotland spokesperson said in response: “The minister for transport recently met with the Stewart Building Group to hear from them directly on the challenges that industries are facing.

“Whilst acknowledging that the planned development of the two new freight vessels would address the issue in the longer term, the minister also assured that work was underway to explore potential shorter term actions that could alleviate some pressures on the busiest sailings.

“The minister was clear about the importance of supporting commercial freight traffic for the economic wellbeing of key rural industries and our island communities. He also reiterated that CMAL [Caledonian Maritime Assets] continues to look for opportunities for suitable second hand tonnage that could be added to the West Coast or Northern Isles fleets.”

Funding awarded to project to map out greener future for isles’ maritime industry

■ **A NEW £500,000 PROJECT to support the transition to zero-carbon fuels for Shetland’s maritime industry has received support from the UK Government.**

The NEPTUNE project will develop a “desk-based decision modelling and support system tool” that will help to analyse, scope and develop plans for supporting the transition.

NEPTUNE is being led by the University of Strathclyde in partnership with Shetland Islands Council, Ricardo UK and Babcock International, and it aligns with the existing ORION clean energy project.

The first phase of the project will involve gathering data on the types of

marine vessels operating from Shetland and their unique characteristics to create accurate ‘digital twin models’ – or virtual representations – of them and their supporting onshore infrastructure.

Researchers will then determine which zero-carbon technologies the different vessels could switch to and input the twin models into a digital dashboard which will monitor the flow of renewable fuels from ‘well to wake’.

The Shetland maritime industry’s ‘well to wake’ carbon dioxide emissions currently totals around 300,000 tonnes per year - more than the Sullom Voe Terminal and the Shetland Gas Plant together.

Strathclyde’s professor Evangelos Boulougouris said: “The Shetland Islands has a unique maritime ecosystem and requires significant investment to reach net-zero status.

“The modelling for this project needs to be highly-accurate to capture the requirements for a large and diverse fleet of vessels and their unique operating characteristics, and this will be a particularly innovative aspect to this project.

“The model will help to reduce the cost of planning and implementing a zero-carbon energy system for Shetland and could be used for other islands or ports too.”



ICELAND NEWS *By Guðjón Einarsson*

Scientists have recommended a total allowable catch of 904,000 tons.



Capelin's remarkable recovery

THE CAPELIN is back in full force. Only a short time ago fishing for Capelin in Icelandic waters was banned for two seasons in a row (2019 and 2020) due to the poor state of the stock. Now scientists have recommended a total allowable catch of 904,000 tons for the next season that starts in January. That would be the highest Capelin quota issued in Iceland in 20 years.

Not entirely unexpected

The news that the 2022 Capelin season would be good was not entirely unexpected since a preliminary assessment of the stock one year ago indicated a very positive recruitment. Based on that information the Marine and Freshwater Research Institute of Iceland estimated at that time that the TAC for 2022 could possibly be around 400,000 tons. However, following a research cruise this autumn the Institute estimated the size of the spawning stock to be much larger than before, allowing a quota of 904,000 tons. Another reassessment of the stock will take place at the start of next season in January and could possibly lead to a further increase of the quota.

Capelin and climate change

As has been repeatedly reported in this column, the poor state of the Icelandic Capelin stock in recent years has been a matter of serious concern. The shrinking of the stock has been blamed on climate change. The Capelin is a cold-water species and with warmer temperature the fish has retreated further north in summer and not returned in winter in the same abundance as before. The sudden improved recruitment of the stock at this time is a puzzle. It has been speculated that an unusually wide distribution of cold sea water north of Iceland last summer could have had positive effects, but no one really knows.

Capelin stock are back in full.



A shared stock

Iceland shares the Capelin stock with its neighbouring countries. Iceland's lot of the quota is 80%, Greenland's 15% and Norway's 5%. Due to current fisheries agreements between the nations regarding fishing in each other's jurisdictions, the potential total Capelin quota of 904,000 tons will be divided as follows: Iceland will get 662,000 tons, Greenland 136,000 tons and Norway 76,000 tons, - and the Faroe Island will receive 30,000 tons in accordance with a bilateral agreement with Iceland.

Great news

The prospect of a huge Capelin season is, needless to say, great

news for the fishing industry and the Icelandic economy as a whole. The Capelin is, under normal circumstances, one of the country's most important species. It is estimated that 662,000 tons of Capelin will generate the equivalent of up to 470 million Euros in export revenue if all goes well. In addition, the Capelin is the most important source of food for cod, Iceland's most valuable species.

Making the most of the quota

As always it will be a demanding task for fleet operators and plant managers to make the most of the Capelin quota. The most valuable products are, on one hand, frozen Capelin with the roe inside, and on the other hand, the roe cut out of the fish and frozen separately. The latter process can only take place during a short period of time when the Capelin is close to spawning in February and it must coincide with favourable weather for fishing. Good weather in Iceland in February is obviously not a given. Apart from the frozen products the Capelin catch is used for meal and oil production.

The scientists did not only bring excellent news for the coming season, they also foresee good prospects for the 2023 Capelin season. ●



New boats from G Smyth

Kilkeel Harbour was a hive of activity recently as G Smyth Boats has a double launch of new Maxus catamarans for UK customers

The 14mtr and 12mtr Catamarans *Olivienna* and *Lily James* were built during covid lockdown and easing of restrictions enabled their new owners to meet up in Kilkeel to collect both vessels on the same day.

Lily Jane was put into the mould in June 2020 and began its fitout in January 2021 with *Olivienna* moulded in November 2020 and began its fitout in March 2021.

Both vessels were launched into Kilkeel Harbour in September and later that month, the duo made their way together through the

Caledonian canal to the homeports of North Shields and Blyth.

Lily James

Being the first 14m Catamaran to be both built and fitted out by G Smyth Boats, Gerry and the yard team worked with new owners Peter & Dennis Clark to maximise the deck layout for trawling. The result is a vessel that has been finished to a very high standard.

- Watermota supplied the Lily James with Doosan Infracore L136TI 169KW@2200rpm main engines with a Beta Marine

generator 6/2 6.5kVA fitted as an Auxillary.

- Trawl equipment supplied by MacGregor (GBR) Ltd included winches, net drums and a gilsen winch

- Echomaster Marine were proud to have supplied, installed, and commissioned the complete electronics package on board the 'Lily James'.

- A dual screen OLEX package operates as the vessels main chartplotter. As well as operating as a navigational chart plotter, the OLEX systems true strength lies in its cutting edge, real-time seafloor

mapping function. This advanced system allows you to create a highly detailed, three-dimensional map of the seabed, using hardness and depth data supplied directly from the Hondex HE-7300-Di echosounder and Simrad Combi-C transducer. OLEX plots each depth reading from the Hondex using the coordinates supplied by the Simrad HS60 GPS Compass, automatically adjusting for local tidal variations, to generate an interactive seabed mapping database of everywhere the vessel has been, allowing Peter to locate new fishing grounds during every trip. An AMEC B600 AIS transponder is also interfaced to the OLEX so that AIS targets will appear as triangular boat symbols or MMSI numbers, further improving navigational awareness.

- Simrad's A2004 autopilot package complete with HS60 GPS compass, IS42 rudder indicator and FU80 'Follow-up' steering lever provides safe and reliable autopilot control. The large aluminium rotary control dial enables quick, but precise steering adjustments, while dedicated keys offer instant access to steering modes, a custom-configurable Work mode, and automated turn patterns. All built-in controls are designed for ease of use with wet or gloved hands, in commercial settings such as fishing vessels and workboats.

- The Simrad R2009 dedicated radar package combines a 9" portrait display with Simrad's market leading HALO20+ pulse compression radar, which features dual range operation, MARPA tracking, AIS tracking and the pioneering VelocityTrack doppler technology allowing real-time tracking of moving targets to assist in collision avoidance.



57-59, The Harbour, Kilkeel,
Co. Down, N.Ireland, BT34 4AX

Email: info@gsmythboats.com

Web: www.gsmythboats.com

Tel: 0044 (0)28 417 61010

Mobile: 0044 (0)771 1452763

LILY JAMES



Congratulations to Peter & Dennis Clark with your new vessel Lily James

OLIVIENNA



Congratulations to Chris & David Armstrong with your new vessel Olivienna



- A comprehensive 19" CCTV package included the installation of High Definition HIK vision cameras in both engine rooms, the after side of the mast, the after gantry and the port and starboard aft handrails. The installation locations provide the Skipper with vessel security and ensure that all crew members can be located and viewed for vessel safety purposes.

- The package was completed with two Simrad RS20S DSC VHF's with built in GPS, a CETC VEP-8 GPS EPIRB and Fusion RA60 Marine stereo and speaker package.

Olivienna

Being a previous customer of G Smyth Boats, Gerry Smyth was keen to complete this 12mtr Maxus Catamaran for owners Chris and David Armstrong. The G Smyth team worked closely with Chris to customise the vessel to his fishing style.

- Powered by Cummins QSL9 290 24v HX engine coupled with Twin disc gearboxes driving clemens 34x36 4 blade hyperform propellers, Olivienna is rigged for potting using a Seaquest pump supplying a Hydroslave 17/19" hauler supplied by KK Hydraulics.

- Having previously supplied the electronics package for Chris and David's last new vessel the Endurance, SIRM UK were pleased to be asked to supply the comprehensive electronics package for the Olivienna.

- Automatic steering is supplied by the Navitron NT921 Autopilot package linked to a Hypro

constant running pump with internal and external steering controls and interfaced to the JRC JLR-21 GPS Compass for heading and a Simrad Precision 9 Compass as a back up. A Maxsea Chartplotting system and Olex 3D seabed mapping system provide navigation with AIS, and ground discrimination connected to a Hondex HE7300DI Echosounder. A wind sensor provides wind speed and direction on the Olex system.

- A Koden MDC-5004F black box radar system is connected to one of a suite of Neovo LCD

monitors, and is fitted with ARPA tracking to both plotters. VHF communications are provided by Icom and Sailor VHF's, and an 8 camera CCTV system gives the skipper complete coverage of deck and engine rooms. The entertainment system is a Fusion bluetooth stereo system.

Gerry Smyth said: "It was a pleasure to complete the builds for both Peter & Dennis and Chris & David."



Gerry Smyth with new owners.



Entering the Caledonian canal.



- Both vessels were supplied and fitted with electrical systems by Ashley Maginnis Electrics and KTS rigged safety equipment on Olivienna and Lily James. Kilkeel Fuels filled the tanks for the long steam home.

- Speaking to The Skipper, Gerry Smyth said: "It was a pleasure to complete the builds for both Peter & Dennis and Chris & David. All here at G Smyth Boats wish them well with their new vessels and hope they have safe and prosperous fishing for the future."



L-R: InterTradeIreland Innovation Boost graduate, Eamonn McAteer, John Cormack, Barry Electronics Project Supervisor and NWRC Electronic Engineering Technical Consultant, Cathal Ferry.

NEW SHIPPING CONTROL INTERFACE

Barry Electronics develops unique shipping control interface with help of NWRC and InterTradeIreland

Barry Electronics has significantly increased its product offering to the market by reducing the amount of user interfaces required to operate the system and control any of the ships computer based systems using a trackball. We're also able to sell the solution to existing and new customers." ●

KILLYBEGS-BASED marine-electronics company Barry Electronics has developed an intelligent and user-friendly control interface for use on board ships/vessels that will allow crew members on the bridge to quickly and easily access and control monitors with the use of a single trackball mouse.

This was made possible by support from North West Regional College's (NWRC) Business Support Centre (BSC) and InterTradeIreland's Innovation Boost programme.

The cross-border collaboration project between Barry Electronics, InterTradeIreland Innovation Boost graduate, Eamonn McAteer, NWRC Electronic Engineering Technical Consultant, Cathal Ferry saw the development of an intelligent and user-friendly control interface for use on ships and vessels.

Dr Fergal Tuffy, Technology Innovation Manager at the NWRC's Business Support Centre said: "The Fusion project has been a great success for all parties involved. When we first spoke to John and the team at Barry Electronics and heard of their ambitious plans we engaged with Niall O'Somachain, one of InterTradeIreland's Innovation Boost advisors, who covers the

North West of Ireland and we got the go ahead to begin an application for the Innovation Boost programme.

"After assisting Barry Electronics to write a successful Fusion project application, we recruited a high-calibre graduate to join the Barry Electronics team and deliver the project with the support of NWRC Technical Consultant, Cathal Ferry.

Now 18 months later, the project has been completed and the business has gained a competitive advantage by developing new control systems that will generate additional sales and allow them to continue to grow their business.

For us in the NWRC it is great for us to link up with SMEs to put our academic knowledge and skills to use on real world industry projects and be able to take this knowledge back into the classroom, thus enhancing the research and teaching that we are doing. It has been great to see the success of this project and the continued growth of Barry Electronics and we wish them well for the future."

John Cormack, Barry Electronics Project Supervisor, added: "Through the InterTradeIreland Fusion programme and with the support of North West Regional College,



Commissioners of
IRISH LIGHTS | Navigation
and Maritime
Services

Vacancy for Navigation Advisory Services Officer (Shore-based) Specified Purpose Contract

IRISH LIGHTS is recruiting for a *Navigation Advisory Services Officer* on a specified purpose contract. This is an exciting opportunity for an experienced mariner with sea-going and/or shore based experience. The role will report to the Navigation Services Manager and will work closely with the Local Aids to Navigation Lead and other members of the eNavigation and Maritime Services Team.

This contract will allow the successful candidate to gain an insight into the operation of a modern General Lighthouse Authority. They will develop their existing experience in stakeholder management, customer support, navigation risk assessments and commercial contracts and have the opportunity to build upon their professional network in wider industries.

Applicants must be Officer of the Watch (Deck) STCW 95 or fishing or naval equivalent qualified. A degree level qualification in a relevant field is desirable.

For more information about the role and the requirements, please visit our website – <https://irishlights.ie/who-we-are/vacancies/navigation-advisory-services-officer.aspx>

The closing date for applications is **Friday, 12 November 2021**.

Please apply by sending a CV and cover letter to:

Gemma Gregan at recruit@irishlights.ie. Please view Irish Lights Job Applicant Privacy Notice on our Vacancies page.



NEW SENSOR SYSTEM FROM KER

Above: Left to right: Derek McBrearty, Sales Manager at KER Group pictured with InterTrade Ireland Innovation Boost graduate, Durgesh Birhade, and NWRC Electronics & ICT Technical Consultant, Cathal Ferry.

KER Group develops new innovative sensor system with help from NWRC and cross-border InterTradeIreland programme

Killybegs Electrical Refrigeration Services (KER) Group have developed a new product in the area of marine based monitoring and control of critical systems and infrastructure with help from North West Regional College (NWRC) Business Support Centre (BSC) and InterTradeIreland's Innovation Boost programme.

The cross-border collaborative project between the KER Group, IntertradeIreland Innovation Boost graduate, Durgesh Birhade, and NWRC Electronics & ICT Technical Consultant, Cathal Ferry, saw the implementation of a new sensor based system using a Programmable Logic Controller (PLC) to monitor and control critical events and development of a new Human Machine Interface (HMI) screen front end and user interface.

Cathal Ferry, Electronics & ICT Technical Consultant at NWRC's BSC said: "The completion of this project has been a great success for all parties involved. We first met with Eugene and John Byrne at KER and discussed their plans for the project, and engaged with Niall O'Somachain, an advisor

for InterTradeIreland's Innovation Boost Programme, who covers the North West of Ireland. After this we received the green light to proceed with the application process of the Innovation Boost Programme.

"We were delighted to receive the news that our joint application was successful, and that the project was approved. We were then able to recruit an excellent graduate to join KER's team of highly skilled engineers and now that the project has been completed, the company have gained a significant advantage in the marine engineering sector by developing a state-of-the-art automation control system that allows boat operators and crews to view critical data from various systems on a ship, in an easy and intuitive manner. The system has already been installed on a

vessel and feedback from the boat operator has been very positive.

"This system will allow KER to lead the way in marine automation in the future. The involvement of the NWRC in this project has yielded many advantages for us as a college, as it allowed us to gain an understanding of cutting-edge, real world projects in marine engineering. The projects many challenges allowed us to put our expertise to good use and our involvement has greatly benefitted our academic staff and courses as the knowledge gained has enhanced our curriculum offerings, research capabilities, and teaching. It has been rewarding to see the successful conclusion of this project and the continued growth of KER, and we wish them every success in the future."

Eugene McBrearty, Managing

The company have gained a significant advantage in the marine engineering sector by developing a state-of-the-art automation control system that allows boat operators and crews to view critical data from various systems on a ship

Director at KER Group added: "Our participation in the InterTradeIreland Innovation Boost programme along with the support of the North West Regional College has been instrumental in KER realising our ambitions of developing our new platform. The support we received has allowed us to recruit a highly skilled graduate in Durgesh Birhade, who has been able to bring the project to fruition with the support of our engineering staff, the NWRC and InterTradeIreland. We are now in a position where we have a clear advantage in the market with our new product offering, and we have already installed the system on board a vessel and we have also had significant interest from potential customers. The system will deliver flexibility to our customers through our ability to install it on board new boat builds and also retrofit existing boats." ●





Figure 1. Giant Red Shrimp captured by the MFV Hannah J on the Porcupine Bank (11.10.2021).

Figure 2. Below: Giant Red Shrimp captured by the MFV Emerald Dawn on the Porcupine Bank during 2006.

GIANT RED SHRIMP

(*Aristaeomorpha foliacea*) on the Porcupine Bank

BY DECLAN QUIGLEY

On 11 October 2021, the MFV Hannah J (S483) [Skipper: Michael Gallagher] captured a Giant Red Shrimp (*Aristaeomorpha foliacea*) measuring c. 175 mm total length (from tip of rostrum to end of expanded telson) while demersal trawling for Norway Lobsters (*Nephrops norvegicus*) at a depth of 596 m on the Porcupine Bank, off the west coast of Ireland (Fig. 1).

There are only seven previous reports of *A. foliacea* from Irish waters. On 19 April 1973, two specimen was taken at a depth of 820 m by the RV Cirolana (MAFF, Lowestoft) SW of Tory Island, Co Donegal. Another specimen measuring 244 mm TL, by the MFV Ar Vag II (GV730721) [Skipper: Philip Nedelec, Port-l'Abbe, Brittany, NW France], at a depth of c.1000 m S Porcupine Basin on 29 May 1994, and another, measuring c. 260 mm TL, by the MFV Shannon (C445) [Skipper: Michael J. Flannery, Dingle] at a depth of 200-300 m W of Slyne Head, Co Galway during September 1994.

A specimen was found on the pier at Burtonport, Co Donegal during May 2002. During October-November 2005, The MFV Emerald Dawn (SO958) [Skipper: Michael Flannery, Dingle] captured 125 kg at a depth of 1000 m on the Porcupine Bank, and a

further 25 kg from the same area during May-June 2006 (Fig. 2).

The last recorded specimen was captured on 5 June 2014 by the MFV Virtuous (DA80) [Skipper: Declan Clinton, Clogherhead] at a depth of 520 m on the Porcupine Bank.

The Giant Red Shrimp has a widespread, albeit disjunct global distribution. In the Eastern Atlantic it is primarily found off NW Africa (Morocco) and the Mediterranean, and in the Western Atlantic from Massachusetts (USA) southwards to the Caribbean, usually at depths of 250-1300 m on muddy bottoms. Only isolated specimens have been recorded from European Atlantic waters northwards of SW Portugal. The northernmost record was taken at a depth of 1080 m NW of St Kilda (Scotland; 58.1213oN, 9.8978oW) during September 1996. Another specimen was taken at a depth of 1158-1174 m in the Rockall Trough (c.57oN, 12oW) during November 1997. Some of the largest known specimens, measuring up to c.260 mm TL, have been recorded from the Porcupine Bank.

A. foliacea is a high-value culinary species but landings are relatively small even within the Mediterranean where it is only found in restricted areas. Since 1950, annual recorded European (Mediterranean) landings have fluctuated widely from zero to 3000 tonnes (Fig. 3). During 2019,



Italy accounted for 96% of total European landings (2367 tonnes).

During the mid-2000s *A. foliacea* was occasionally recorded from the Porcupine Basin in areas associated with cold water coral communities (*Lophelia pertusa* and *Antipathes* sp.) However, since then, growing concerns about the ecological damage caused by deep-water trawling and other commercial activities to biologically sensitive cold water coral reefs eventually led to the adoption and implementation of various European Community

and international protection measures, including the prohibition of demersal fishing in several designated deep-water cold coral areas in Irish EEZ waters and other areas of the NE Atlantic. It is likely that these restrictions will limit any potential for the commercial exploitation of *A. foliacea* in Irish waters.

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

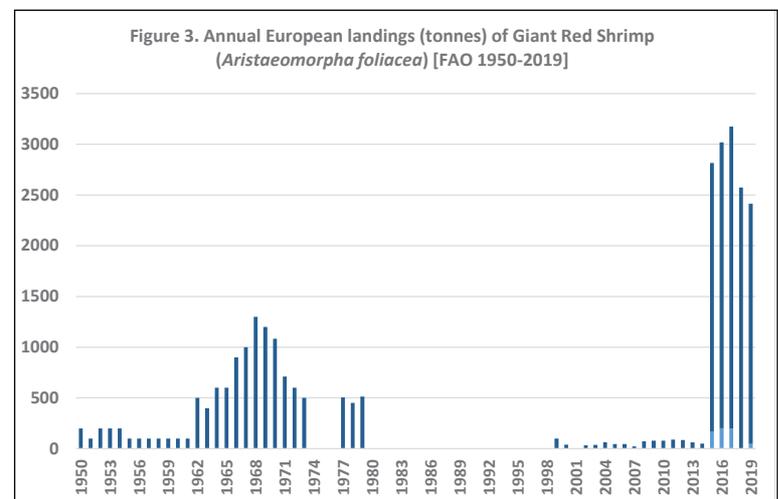


Figure 3. Annual European landings (tonnes) of Giant Red Shrimp.

XANTHOCHROMIC HOMELYN RAY

(*Raja montagui*) captured in the Central Irish Sea

BY DECLAN QUIGLEY

During early October 2021, the *MFV Eblana* (D397) [Skipper: Brendan Lynch] captured an abnormally orange-coloured xanthochromic mature male Spotted or Homelyn Ray (*Raja montagui*) measuring 50 cm total length (TL), 31.5 cm disc width (DW), and weighing 831 g, while demersal trawling at a depth of 99 m in an area known as “The Peaks” in the Central Irish Sea off Co Wicklow (ICES VIIa, 35E4; 53.0333oN, 5.5347oW). This unusually tabby-coloured ray was retrieved by crewman Andrew Nealon while sorting through the catch (Figs. 1).

Homelyn Rays are normally warm brown in colour, with numerous black spots which do not reach the margin of the disc; the black spots sometimes coalesce to form a faint ocellus on each of the wings (Fig. 2).

Xanthochromism (abnormal red-orange-yellow colouration) is generally considered to be caused by a genetic mutation and has frequently been shown to be a heritable trait in several species of tropical aquarium fish.

Apart from its unusual colouration, the current xanthochromic specimen was morphologically and meristically identical to normally coloured Homelyn Rays. Externally, there were no overt signs of either physical damage or disease. Indeed, its condition factor ($K=0.681$) was close to the average K value (0.685) recorded for normally coloured conspecifics of similar dimensions in NW European waters, which suggests that its aberrant colouration had not compromised either its growth or survival.

The *Eblana* has previously recorded two xanthochromic Homelyn Rays in the Central Irish Sea, the first during March 2010 (Fig. 3), and the second during August 2012 (Fig. 4), and an albino-xanthochromic specimen with abnormally coloured yellow eyes during August 2017 (Figs. 5-6). It is interesting to note that

the *Eblana* also captured an albino-xanthochromic Blonde Ray (*R. brachyura*) in the Central Irish Sea during August 2017.

Xanthochromism has only been reported in four other species of Bathoidea (skates and rays) worldwide: Cuckoo Ray (*Leucoraja naevus*) [Arcachon, Bay of Biscay, 1887], Shagreen Ray (*L. fullonica*) [Iceland, 2010], Blonde Ray (Guernsey, 2011), and Common Stingray (*Dasyatis pastinaca*) [Solent, Hampshire, UK, 2014].

Due to their relatively small size, Homelyn Rays are of minor commercial importance in NW European waters, and only the largest specimens are landed. The species primarily occurs at depths <200 m, and attains a maximum TL and weight of 105 cm and c.4 kg. Male and female Homelyn Rays reach sexual maturity at a minimum TL of 40 cm and 49 cm respectively.

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

Figure 3. Xanthochromic and normally coloured Homelyn Ray (March 2010).

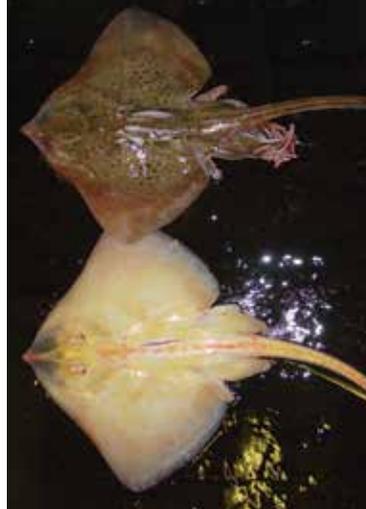


Figure 1. Xanthochromic Homelyn Ray captured by the *MFV Eblana* in the Central Irish Sea (October 2021).



Figure 2. Normally coloured Homelyn Ray from the Central Irish Sea (29.04.2018).jpg



Figure 4. Xanthochromic Homelyn Ray (29.08.2012).



Figure 5. Albino xanthochromic Homelyn Ray (16.08.2017).

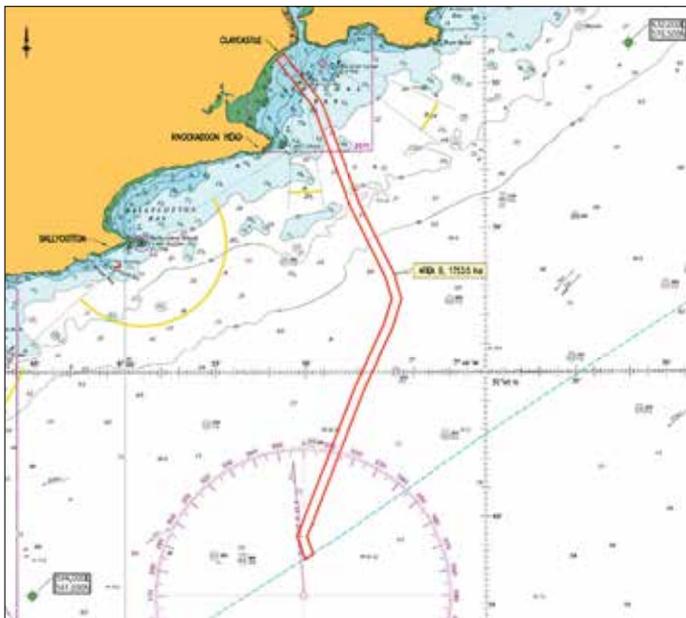
Figure 6. Albino xanthochromic Homelyn Ray exhibiting abnormal yellow eye colour (August 2017).



PUBLIC NOTICE OF APPLICATION FOR A FORESHORE CONSENT

Foreshore Application on behalf of EirGrid plc Installation of the EirGrid Celtic Interconnector Electricity Cable

Notice is hereby given pursuant to Section 19A of the Foreshore Act 1933 (as amended), that the EirGrid plc, The Oval, 160 Shelbourne Road, Ballsbridge, Dublin 4, Do4 FW28 has applied for consent under the Foreshore Acts to occupy an area of foreshore to enable the installation and operation of a submarine High Voltage Direct Current (HVDC) electricity cable, the Celtic Interconnector. The Celtic Interconnector is a proposed electrical link, consisting primarily of a subsea cable, which will enable the movement of electricity between Ireland and France and will be the first direct energy link between the two countries, running from the south coast of Ireland to the north-west coast of France.



Geographic Coordinates:

Route Branch	AC	Longitude DMS (WGS84)	Latitude DMS (WGS84)	Easting in m (Irish National Grid)	Northing in m (Irish National Grid)
Claycastle Beach	0	7° 51' 36.39" W	51° 56' 03.31" N	209671.4	75741.6
Claycastle Beach	1	7° 49' 24.58" W	51° 54' 18.38" N	212198.5	72503.7
Claycastle Beach	2	7° 47' 35.35" W	51° 51' 13.38" N	214303.1	66791.2
Claycastle Beach	3	7° 47' 15.86" W	51° 50' 44.01" N	214678.8	65884.7
Claycastle Beach	4	7° 45' 19.96" W	51° 48' 19.05" N	216912.4	61411.0
Claycastle Beach	5	7° 44' 59.99" W	51° 47' 34.78" N	2172899.9	60044.1
Claycastle Beach	6	7° 45' 28.99" W	51° 46' 38.41" N	216749.7	58299.8
Claycastle Beach	7	7° 47' .77" W	51° 44' 38.59" N	215001.1	54591.1
Claycastle Beach	8	7° 50' 16.80" W	51° 39' 21.59" N	211261.8	44783.8
Claycastle Beach	9	7° 49' 55.76" W	51° 38' 40.30" N	211668.2	43508.7

An Environmental Impact Assessment Report (EIAR) has been prepared in respect of this proposal.

The foreshore application, EIAR, associated documents, all relevant maps, site plans and drawings, are available for inspection, between 11 October 2021 and 6 December 2021, free of charge at:

- **Cork County Council Planning Office**, Ground Floor, County Hall, Carrigrohane Road, Cork. Opening Hours: 9.00am – 4.00pm, Monday-Friday. Telephone: (021) 427689. Open to the public by appointment only. Book an appointment: <https://www.corkcoco.ie/en/planning>
- **Waterford County Council Planning Department**, 1st Floor, Menapia Building, The Mall, Waterford, X91 PK15. Monday to Friday, 9.30am to 1.00pm and 2.00pm to 4.00pm. The public office is open by appointment only to members of the public who wish to inspect a current planning application but who cannot examine it on our website due to their lack of internet access. If you wish to request an appointment to inspect a current application for planning permission which you are unable to view on our website please telephone 0761-102020 from 9.30am -1.00pm or 2.30pm -4.00pm.
- **Youghal Garda Station**, O'Briens Place, Youghal, P36 DV79, Co. Cork. Opening Hours: Monday to Friday: 10.00am – 6.00pm, Saturday and Sunday: 12.00pm – 3.00pm. Telephone: (024) 92200
- **Youghal Library**, Rivergate Shopping Mall, North Main Street, Youghal, Co. Cork, P36 FF99. Opening Hours: Tuesday to Saturday, 10.00am – 1.00pm & 2.00pm - 5.30pm (Closed 1.00pm - 2.00 pm). Closed Mondays and Saturdays of Bank Holiday weekends. Tel: (024) 93459

A hard copy of the Environmental Impact Assessment Report may be purchased from the applicant. A Non Technical Summary may be obtained free of charge.

CDs/USB Memory Sticks that include the Environmental Impact Assessment Report, maps, site plans and drawings, and a copy of the foreshore application are available free of charge from the applicant at the address stated above or by emailing celticinterconnector@eirgrid.com

The application may also be viewed on the following dedicated website: www.celticinterconnectorforeshorelicence.ie and on the Department's website: <https://www.gov.ie/en/foreshore-notice/7bfb1-eirgrid-celtic-interconnector-electricity-cable/#>

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

Under Section 19C of the Foreshore Act, the Minister will consult with France and the UK regarding this application.

Submissions, comments in relation to the proposal may be made in writing within 8 weeks from the publication of this notice to the Minister for Housing, Local Government and Heritage at Foreshore Unit, Department for Housing, Local Government and Heritage, Newtown Road, Wexford, Co. Wexford or by e-mail to foreshore@housing.gov.ie (Quoting Ref: FS006916). The closing date for the receipt of written submissions, comments or questions is therefore 5:30pm on 06/12/2021.

Within 8 weeks from the publication of this notice, a copy of the application, the Environmental Impact Assessment Report and any other relevant report or information (including copies of any submissions, comments, or questions received by the appropriate Minister) may be inspected free of charge at the Foreshore Unit, Department for Housing, Local Government and Heritage, Newtown Road, Wexford, Co. Wexford during the hours 10.00am to 1.00pm and 2.00pm to 5.00pm Monday to Friday (appointments only). All of this material, including submissions from the public, will also be published on the website of the Department for Housing, Local Government and Heritage at: <https://www.gov.ie/en/foreshore-notice/7bfb1-eirgrid-celtic-interconnector-electricity-cable/#>

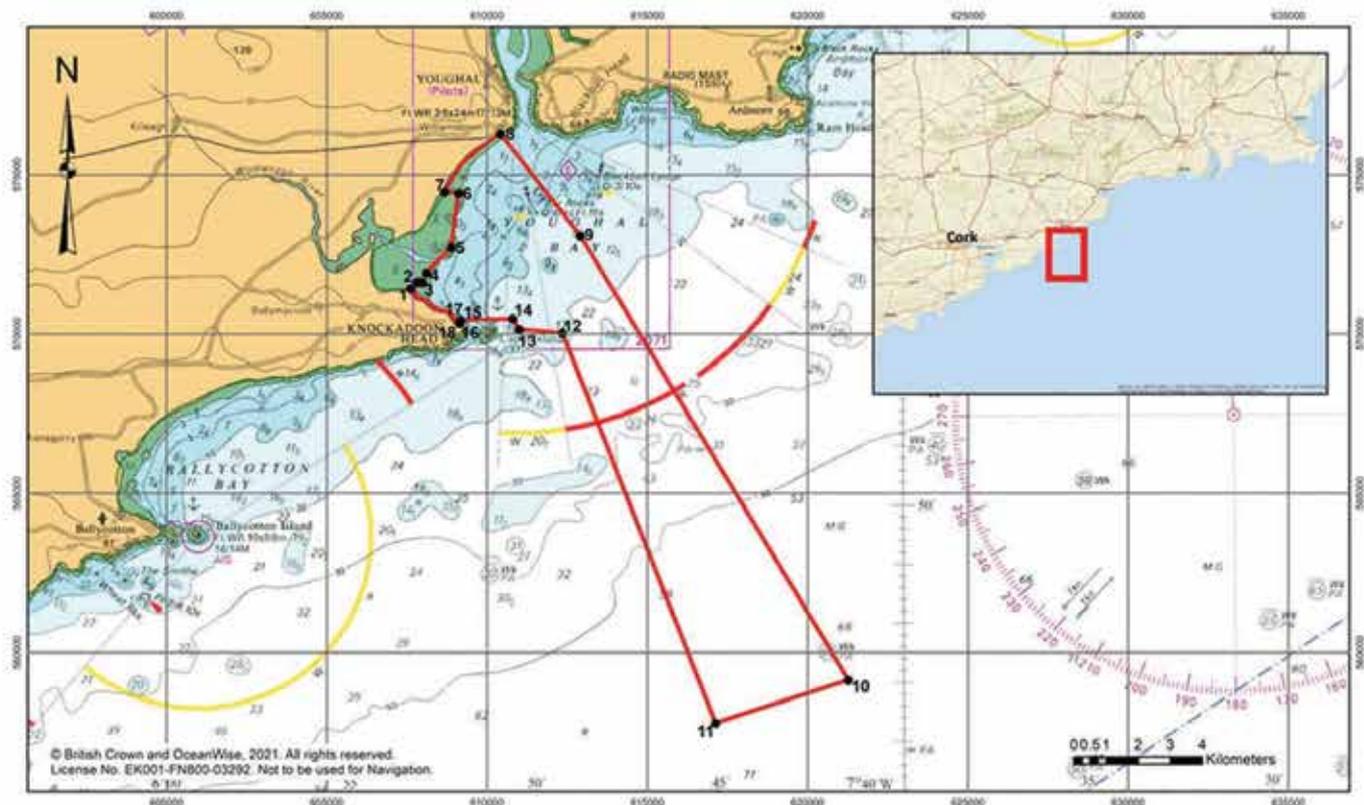
Dated this day of 08/10/2021

Mr Des Cox,
EirGrid plc,
The Oval,
160 Shelbourne Road,
Ballsbridge, Dublin 4, Do4 FW28.

PUBLIC NOTICE: APPLICATION FOR A FORESHORE LICENCE

Notice is hereby given pursuant to Section 19 of the Foreshore Act, 1933 that Inis Ealga Marine Energy Park Ltd. has applied to the Minister of Housing, Local Government and Heritage for a Foreshore licence under Section 3 of the said Act.

This application is for site investigation works required to inform the engineering and design of a potential export cable route connecting a potential offshore wind farm, Inis Ealga Marine Energy Park, to shore. The objective of the site investigations is to gather sufficient geophysical, geotechnical, environmental, archaeological and ecological information to develop a potential export cable route within the Foreshore Licence Application Area. The Foreshore Licence Application Area is shown on the map below.



Co-ordinates for the Foreshore Licence Application Area are provided in the following table:

Point	Eastings (ITM)	Northings (ITM)
1	607609.9917	571429.3109
2	607806.7101	571630.3894
3	607975.3148	571634.8914
4	608101.8725	571932.0939
5	608875.9496	572723.3278
6	609104.2749	574428.9533
7	608670.5255	574466.8446
8	610410.7057	576294.9408
9	612900.6604	573090.2845
10	621265.6057	559144.8915
11	617126.4485	557792.7594
12	612346.9119	570037.237
13	611002.6259	570154.3742
14	610798.4496	570479.2057
15	609169.4822	570448.3496
16	609160.1092	570419.5591
17	609142.816	570374.3191
18	609132.634	570349.7278

A copy of the application, and the relevant documents, maps, plans, and drawings, are available for inspection, between 21st October 2021 and 19th November 2021, free of charge at:

- Cork County Council, Municipal District Office, Youghal: Mall House, Youghal Lands, Youghal, Co. Cork. 9am-4.30pm Monday to Friday.
- Cork County Council, Municipal District Office, Midleton: Youghal Rd., Park South, Midleton, Co. Cork. 9am-1pm and 2pm-5pm Monday to Friday.
- Anglesea Street Garda Station, Ballintemple, Cork City. Open 24-hours.
- Midleton Garda Station, Oliver Plunkett Place, Midleton, Co. Cork. Open 24-hours.
- Youghal Garda Station, O'Brien's Place, Youghal, Co. Cork. Open 10am – 1pm daily.

The documentation is available on the Department's website <https://www.gov.ie/en/foreshore-notice/8bd37-inis-ealga-marine-energy-park-iemep-site-investigations-off-county-cork/>

Any person who wishes to make an objection to, or a representation in respect of the grant of the licence sought as part of this public consultation should do so in writing, giving reasons, between 21st October 2021 and 19th November 2021 (quoting ref: FS007404) to the Minister for Housing, Local Government and Heritage, Foreshore Section, Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage, Newtown Road, Wexford, Co. Wexford or foreshoreore@housing.gov.ie. The closing date for submissions is close of business (17.30) on 19th November 2021.

All objections and representations received will be forwarded to the applicant for comment prior to any decision being made in the matter. Material upon which the Minister shall determine this application may be published on the Department's website. In this regard the Department wishes to draw attention to its policy on defamatory material that may be contained in submissions it receives, which may be found at:

<http://www.housing.gov.ie/planning/foreshore/public-participation-foreshore-consent-process>

Dated this 20th October 2021

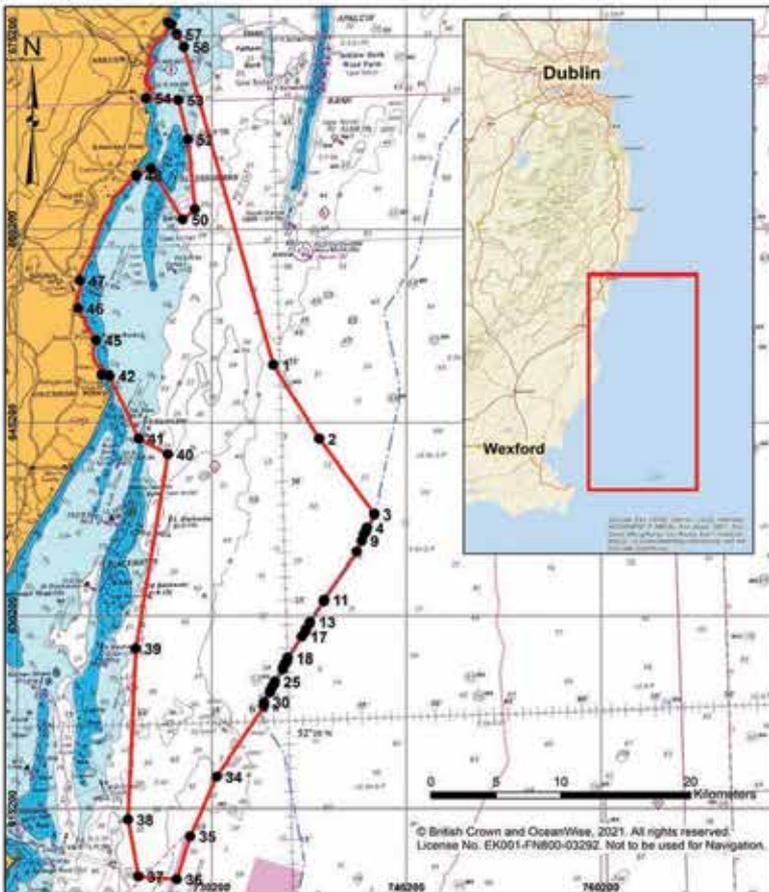
PUBLIC NOTICE: APPLICATION FOR A FORESHORE LICENCE

Notice is hereby given pursuant to Section 19 of the Foreshore Act, 1933 that Shelmalere Offshore Wind Farm Ltd has applied to the Minister of Housing, Local Government and Heritage for a Foreshore licence under Section 3 of the said Act

This application is for site investigation works required to inform the engineering and design of a potential offshore wind farm, Shelmalere Offshore Wind Farm, and associated export cable route. The objective of the site investigations is to gather sufficient geophysical, geotechnical, environmental, archaeological and ecological information to inform development of a potential offshore wind farm and export cable route within the Foreshore Licence Application Area.

The Foreshore Licence Application Area is shown on the map below:

Co-ordinates for the Foreshore Licence Application Area are provided in the following table:



Point	Eastings (ITM)	Northings (ITM)	Point	Eastings (ITM)	Northings (ITM)
1	734952.84	649623.16	30	734236.12	623450.92
2	738486.89	643912.66	31	734236.08	623450.87
3	742733.85	638053.89	32	734236.07	623450.85
4	742149.94	637012.08	33	734229.04	623203.29
5	742090.39	636732.97	34	730574.88	617673.32
6	742090.13	636731.73	35	728542.14	613038.92
7	742089.30	636730.53	36	727509.37	609719.30
8	741932.13	636501.66	37	724550.20	609934.78
9	741754.57	635983.22	38	723743.10	614371.93
10	741377.36	635141.07	39	724340.06	627605.35
11	738866.88	631398.02	40	726823.62	642684.91
12	738838.42	631264.64	41	724579.85	643931.47
13	737774.07	629718.47	42	722334.12	648796.43
14	737743.02	629572.96	43	721736.35	648889.29
15	737457.97	629126.43	44	721736.40	648889.92
16	737419.15	628944.48	45	721296.38	651564.10
17	737148.75	628551.67	46	719905.22	654017.01
18	736045.29	626879.70	47	720053.13	656215.46
19	736044.96	626879.22	48	724405.85	664363.26
20	736044.94	626879.12	49	725521.38	664865.63
21	735997.77	626658.02	50	727970.81	660907.00
22	735804.84	626377.77	51	728907.65	661704.32
23	735704.04	626173.37	52	728364.78	667166.96
24	735673.45	626030.00	53	727621.03	670206.60
25	735063.27	625064.46	54	725136.32	670358.00
26	735022.27	624872.26	55	726829.77	676204.52
27	734867.18	624646.96	56	727074.45	676032.34
28	734739.44	624403.82	57	727498.52	675303.56
29	734698.46	624211.71	58	728057.13	674343.60

A copy of the application, and the relevant documents, maps, plans, and drawings, are available for inspection, between 2nd November and 1st December 2021, free of charge at:

- Wexford County Council, County Hall, Carricklawn, Wexford, Y35WY93. Open 9am–1pm and 2pm–5pm Mon to Fri
- Arklow Municipal District Council, Castle Park, Arklow, Co. Wicklow, Y14FX63. Open 9am–4pm Mon to Fri
- Wexford Garda Station, Mulgannon, Wexford, Y14H392. Open 24/7
- Courtown Harbour Garda Station, Ballinray Lower, Courtown Harbour, Co. Wexford, Y25P239. Open 10am-1pm Mon to Fri and 10am-1pm Sat and Sun
- Rosslare Garda Station, Station Road, Rosslare, Wexford, Y35AY79 Open 10am-6pm Mon to Sun

The documentation is available on the Department's website

<https://www.gov.ie/en/foreshore-notice/a43ef-shelmalere-offshore-wind-farm-site-investigations-off-counties-wexford-and-wicklow/>

Any person who wishes to make an objection to, or a representation in respect of the grant of the licence sought as part of this public consultation should do so in writing, giving reasons, between 2nd November and 1st December 2021 (quoting ref: FS007261) to the Minister for Housing, Local Government and Heritage, Foreshore Section, Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage, Newtown Road, Wexford, Co. Wexford or foreshoreORE@housing.gov.ie. The closing date for submissions is close of business (17.30) on 1st December 2021.

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

Dated this 21st October 2021



Jason Adams (skipper) and crew, Will Adams, Peter White and Gary Cornelius

JOHN COLE

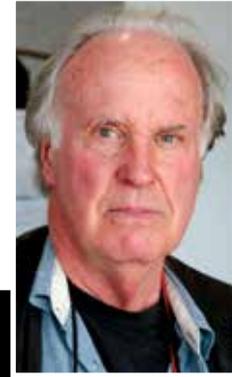
Some of our top fishing photographers pick their favourite 5 images



Mark and Jamie Ball, 2017



Robert Ball, 2018



JOHNCOLE PROFILE

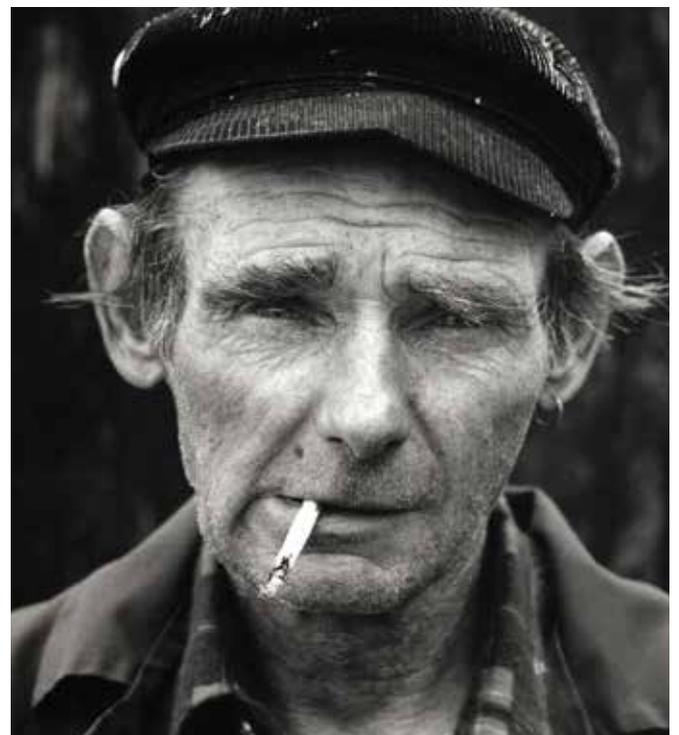
Professional photographer John Cole first came down to Hastings from London in 1991 to take a few photographs of the fishing community. Cole fell in love with Hastings, and a one-day visit turned into a two-year labour of love. Several years later he moved to Hastings and continued with his project, working closely with the Hastings Fishermen's Protection Society. Cole's book, *Generations: Hastings Fishing Families* is a photographic record from the 1990's to the present of the men and women of the Hastings fishing community, Britain's oldest, and Europe's largest, beach-launched fishing fleet.

Generations: Hastings Fishing Families is available at:
<https://www.unicornpublishing.org/page/detail/Generations/?K=9781913491901>

Website: <https://johncole.co.uk>
Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/johncolephotography/>



Paul and Will Joy, 1992



Henry Adams, boy ashore, 1991

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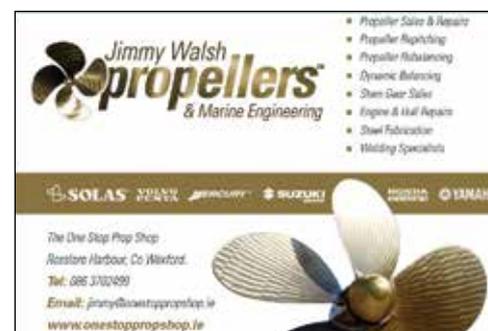
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PHOTO OF THE MONTH

IN ASSOCIATION WITH



MONTHLY COMPETITION

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



NOVEMBER WINNER:
COLETTE McLOUGHLIN

Alan (Natch) McLoughlin heading out on his boat at sunrise.

THE MONTHLY PRIZE

The winner will receive a Sotra Fleece by



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Skipper



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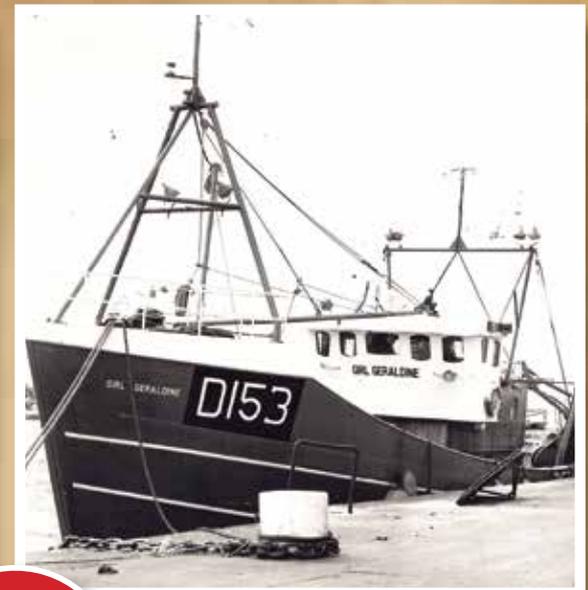
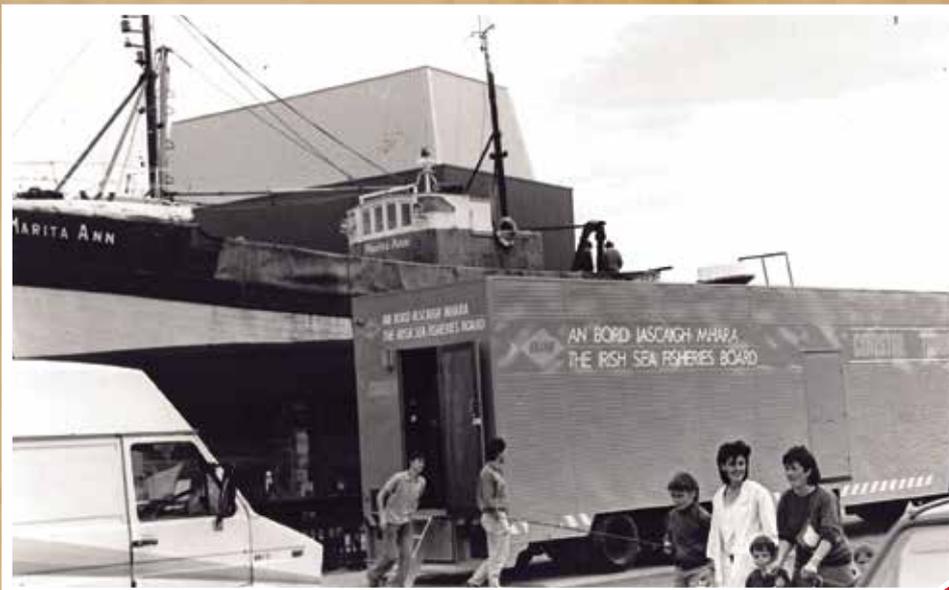
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The Archives - January 1975

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BIG PRICES HOLD WELL AT DUNMORE

THIS was the scene at Dunmore East last month when a good deal of the fleet was in after a night which yielded a total of 1,000 crans, which went as high as £27 a cran. On the syncrolift can be seen Christy Plunkett's Tyrrell-built trawler, Brian O's, which suffered severe damage to its deadwood at the stern when the Skerries boat ran onto rocks at Baginbun.

It was a month of foul weather, scarce fish and high prices, reaching, on the last day, a landing of 2,500 crans which made £25 a cran. This was one of the highest prices ever paid for this volume of herring. As usual, much of the herring was shipped to Holland, and on the right of the picture can be seen a trawler being unloaded directly into a juggernaut trailer for delivery to the Netherlands.

POWER NEEDED

The nature of the catches proved beyond doubt this season that plenty of power is necessary to succeed. Even experienced Dunmore skippers who are lacking in horsepower found it was more profitable to pull out and return to their home ports to get the benefit of high cod and whitefish prices.

The irregular behaviour of the fish was attributed by one skipper to the fact that the water temperature is a few degrees lower this season than average, but other skippers said the herring were just not there.

However, in the first few days of January the situation improved. In three days 9,000 crans were brought in, which made £175,000, a high price for such a quantity.



Herring trawlers from several ports landing at Dunmore East last month.

GOVT. DECISION TO CUT FISHING INDUSTRY FUNDS BRINGS PROTEST

A WAVE of protests followed the publication last month of the Book of Estimates for State expenditure in 1975, which showed that Fisheries is to be cut by 5%. Taking into consideration the inflationary trend, this amounts to a 25% cut in State funds for fisheries development.

The reduction will be felt by fishermen in several ways. It means that fewer boats will be built in Irish yards because less money has been made available for boat loans.

Fishermen with their names "in the pipeline" may find that the dates for laying their keels will be postponed. Boatyards have been told by B.I.M. not to begin work on any vessel without written approval for grants and loans.

The various services which B.I.M. provides of direct benefit to fishermen and the industry in general such as promotion of fish sales both at home and abroad will be cut also. At times when a particular kind of fish is plentiful, B.I.M. inten-

sified this campaign to step up demand. That service too will be curtailed.

SURVEYS AT SEA

Surveys of fishing grounds and shellfish beds, usually carried out by chartered local boats under B.I.M. supervision, is also expected to be curtailed for lack of funds.

On top of the general inflation, wage increases due to B.I.M. staffs in 1975 will further absorb the value of the allocation.

A particularly startling situation arises in harbour expenditure. In the nine months from April to December, 1974, £940,000 was allocated to main fishery harbour works, but in the 12 months of 1975 only £600,000 is to be spent.

Taking inflation into consideration, this means a very severe cut in actual construction work.

LOAN LEVEL UP

Ironically, more boats may be built for Irish fishermen in foreign yards, because a Bill was passed in the Dail last month authorising B.I.M. to increase its overseas borrowing limit for boat purchase from £5 million to £15 million.

It was during the debate on this Bill—taken quite separately from the Book of Estimates—that T.D.s criticised the cut back in State investment in fish-

ing. On the whole, they showed a sound knowledge of the industry's achievements and problems (several of their speeches are reported on pages 10 and 11 inside).

Other protests came from the Dublin newspapers, which published leaders in support of the industry (see page 11), the Irish Fishermen's Organisation and the Irish Federation of Marine Industries (see page 3). All called for a Supplementary Estimate to enable the fishing industry to step up its pace of growth in 1975.

LANDINGS UP 20% IN VALUE

Inflation has not yet advanced beyond the pace of fish-price increases. The value of sea fish landings for the eight months—January to August inclusive—increased by 20% over the corresponding period in 1973—£5,075,000 as against £4,218,000—an increase of over £857,000.

Landings of demersal fish went from 14,485,000 kilograms to 15,108,000 kgs—an increase of 723,000 kgs, while the value increased by £165,000 or 8.7% to £1,850,000.

Total value of pelagic fish rose by 55% or £790,000 to £2,146,500. Although the volume dropped by 3,751,000 kgs to 24,309,000 kgs, Herring landings increased in value by £811,000—from £1,182,000 in 1973 to £1,993,000.

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Mary Catherine leaving Kilmore Quay Photo: Sean O'Flaherty



Mickey Hennessey of Realt Na Mara with a 9 pound lobster.



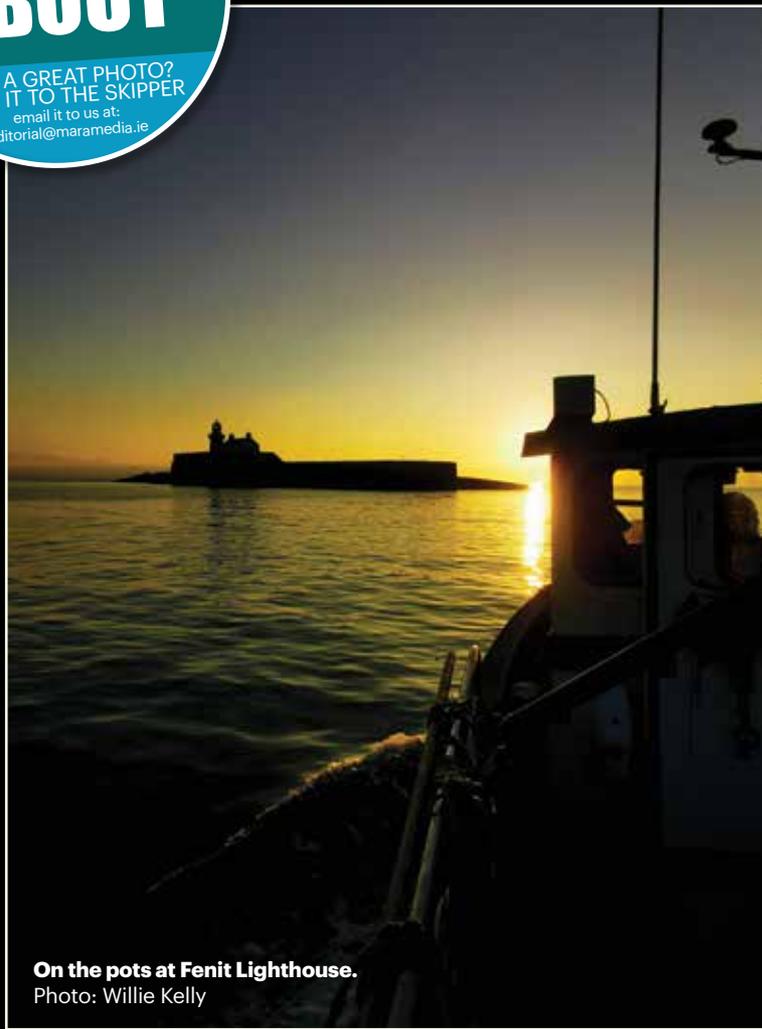
Scott Williams enjoying October issue of the Skipper . Photo: Carole O'Sullivan

OUT & ABOUT

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John Flaherty Darba, 77, with Máirtín Flaherty Darba, 7, salting Wrasse and Mackerel for the Winter.



On the pots at Fenit Lighthouse. Photo: Willie Kelly

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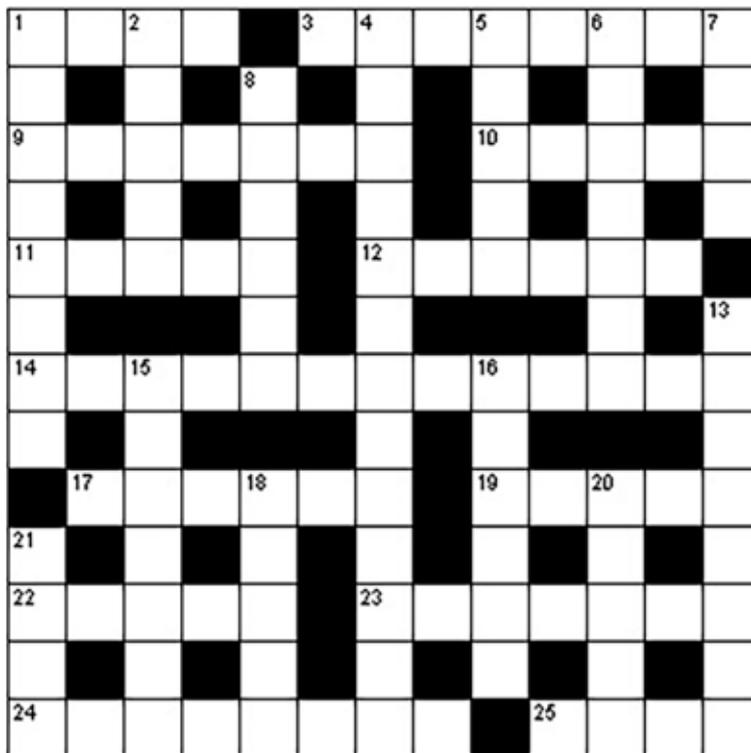
*Failure to select jacket size will result in void entry

ACROSS

- 1 Formerly (4)
- 3 Deathless (8)
- 9 Three-pronged spear (7)
- 10 Cast, shed (5)
- 11 Prohibited (5)
- 12 Stableman (6)
- 14 Not readily noticeable (13)
- 17 Language of the Middle East (6)
- 19 Take forcibly (5)
- 22 Electronic communication (1-4)
- 23 Without assistance (7)
- 24 Young person (8)
- 25 Slender rod (4)

DOWN

- 1 Go far ahead of (8)
- 2 An upward slope (5)
- 4 Movie (6,7)
- 5 Group of eight performers (5)
- 6 Underwater projectile (7)
- 7 Grassed area (4)
- 8 Fame (6)
- 13 Moved up (8)
- 15 Slaughter (7)
- 16 Free-and-easy (6)
- 18 Strong very light wood (5)
- 20 Asian country (5)
- 21 Period of fasting before Easter (4)



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Fishermen from Leenane Pier Co Donegal, that helped with the documentary.

Exploiting Irish Fishermen - the EU's Common Fisheries Policy

Irish Fishing Communities document their stories to raise awareness amongst our TD's and the general public of the continuing theft of our greatest natural resource by our EU neighbours.

Following on from the protest flotillas held in Cork and Dublin earlier this year, Irish Fishermen have enlisted the help of Sean Moroney, Santander Media from Kilmore Quay to document and highlight the continuing issue of the unfair and disproportionate share of fish that Irish boats can catch in our own waters.

Sean Moroney is the creator of The Fishers Voice, a social media initiative created to garner support for the plight of Irish fishermen who feel they go unheard by our government and representatives. With the support of Niall Duffy, Editor of The Skipper, Sean travelled the country to record the voices of Irish fishing communities in crisis.

The result of this collaboration is a 26 minute documentary that was screened to TD's and media on 29th September at Buswells Hotel

before being released on social media to the public. Invitations were sent to all the political party leaders, fisheries spokespersons and coastal community TD's to attend the screenings. A link to view the documentary was also sent to all sitting TD's and Senators who couldn't attend on the day.

Five months in the making, this documentary lifts the lid on decades of unfairness, whereby the EU, under the Common Fisheries Policy, allocated the lion's share 85% of the Total Allowable Catch (Quota) to the mainland European countries, despite the majority of this fishing taking place in Irish Waters.

You will see the effect on entire coastal communities of Irish fishermen denied the equal rights and equal opportunities to fish in our own Irish Waters, while having to watch French, Dutch, Belgian, Spanish and other EU vessels land tens of thousands of tons of fish on Irish piers and drive them away in trucks, for processing in Europe, all with the full backing of the Irish government over decades.

Belgium, as a case in point, has 0.1% of EU fishing

grounds while Ireland has 10%. Yet the Belgian fleet has a greater quota for some prime species in Irish waters than local Irish fishermen.

In the documentary, individual fishermen and business owners, who rely on

You will see the effect on entire coastal communities of Irish fishermen denied the equal rights and equal opportunities to fish in our own Irish Waters

the fishing industry for their income, speak out about how the continuing lack of access to the raw material i.e. fish in Irish waters is causing a crisis in our coastal communities where some towns derive as much as 90% of the local economy from fishing.

From the Malin Head Peninsula in Donegal to the Beara Peninsula in West Cork, our fishing communities have been suffering in silence for too long. With this documentary they finally feel their story is being told. ●

The full documentary can be viewed on YouTube at <https://youtu.be/tqNYmCWTsfA>

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