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A Fishing Nation Once Again?

Lorna Siggins speaks to members of the fishing communities around the coast to hear their views on the ongoing decimation of the Irish fishing industry

“If farmers in Munster – a beautiful green province – were told that they had to sell off their farms to one or two investment companies, there would be an outcry...”

“But that is the agricultural equivalent of what is happening here. And once you surrender your license, there is no way back in...”

The words of CAITLÍN UÍ AODHA, owner of the 22-metre fishing vessel Dearbhla, in relation to the Government’s latest fleet decommissioning scheme which BIM is accepting applications for.

“The foundation was poor from the start, and it’s just not an easy place to be anymore,” explains Uí Aodha from Helvick, Co Waterford. “But we can’t keep blaming the EU, when we did this to ourselves.

“Successive governments have done relatively little to commit to developing this indigenous industry. And now, with Brexit, it is very hard to see how viable it is anymore for the single boat owners, the small family companies,” she says.

Uí Aodha has known both success and heartbreak through her strong connection with the sea.

She trained with BIM to become Ireland’s first qualified female skipper and was first woman to secure a State grant for her own fishing vessel. In January 2012, her husband Michael Hayes and four crew died in the *Tit Bonhomme* incident in Glandore, Co Cork

In 2014, Uí Aodha named a new prawn trawler she acquired after the couple’s youngest daughter, *Dearbhla*.

It supplies catches to the *lasc* Seafood Bar in Dungarvan, which she opened in the early days of 1st in line of fishing stock Covid-19. However, increased regulations, fuel prices and Brexit-related quota losses have piled on the pressure, she says.

“I think my family has been involved in fishing since before the Famine,” she says. “My grandfather fished, my father, brothers, cousins... and now maybe I am the last one in that line.”

EU approval for the decommissioning scheme was announced in a week when the agricultural sector dominated news headlines – as in the



“My grandfather fished, my father, brothers, cousins...and now maybe I am the last one in that line.”

Caitlin Uí Aodha: The last in line of fishing stock?

Cabinet row over sectoral targets for emissions under the Climate Action Plan.

However, the decision’s implications were not lost on public figures like Galway poet Mary O’Malley.

Speaking at the unveiling of her poem entitled *Lockdown Aubade* in the Claddagh Basin, she dedicated it to “*muintir na mbád, muintir na mara agus m’athair*” – as in the people of boats, of the sea, and her late father, who had first taken her to sea in the family pucán.

O’Malley noted that “the Irish fishing community has, I think, been almost decimated” since then.

Industry leaders like Aodh O’Donnell of the Irish Fish Producers’ Organisation (IFPO) and John Lynch of the Irish South and East Fish Producers’ Organisation (IS&EFPO) point out that even after decommissioning, the fish in these waters will continue to be caught by other EU vessels with larger quotas than that of Ireland.

Overall, EU stocks are in a far healthier state than two decades ago. A recent study led by French scientific agency Ifremer found that 72% of fish populations are not overexploited in the north-east Atlantic area and fish biomass was 33% greater in 2020 than at the beginning of the 2000s.

However, the share-out is uneven. France is catching 56 per cent of what is landed, compared to 4.6 per cent for Ireland, according to 2017 figures quoted by Ireland’s Marine Institute.

FUEL ISSUE IS WORSE THAN BREXIT

BRENDAN WALSH has been fishing since his early teens, and now works the family-owned 23-metre vessel *A La Garde de Dieu* from Kilmore Quay, Co Wexford.

Like Uí Aodha and many other vessel owners, he has been looking at the figures for the decommissioning scheme. He availed of two one-month voluntary tie-ups this year, which were funded under Brexit compensation.

However, payment for tie-ups is to be deducted from the decommissioning payment under the scheme’s rules.

“We fish prawns, mainly on the Smalls and Labadie Bank, and though Brexit didn’t

affect our share on the south coast, we did lose out on whitefish quota,” he says.

“Fuel has tripled in price, and our government is giving no subsidy even though the EU approved use of existing European maritime and fisheries funds for same,” Walsh says.

“Fuel has gone from 30 cents a litre in 2020 to 1.15 to 1.16 a litre this summer, with a recent slight dip to 90 cents.”

“It means a six to seven day trip can cost you between 8,000 euro and 10,000 euro in diesel, so you’d be thinking twice about buying any new gear,” Walsh says.

“Sometimes it feels as if the fuel issue is

worse than Brexit,” Walsh adds. “I’ve been lucky with crew as I have had the same lads for a good while – many vessels have problems as it is not such an appealing job for young people,” he notes.

“But if I didn’t have phone and internet connections on the boat, which is an extra 7,000 euro cost, you wouldn’t get crew at all. Still, you look at the number of French and Spanish boats landing into Irish ports now – they are out off our coast 300 days a year,” he says.

“There’s never a check on them, whereas there are some EU ports where we wouldn’t be welcome to tie up.”

Massive knock-on effect

CIARAN WHELAN, who fishes the 24-metre Willie Joe, is from Duncannon, Co Wexford. He lost his brother Willie, who died with fellow crewman Joe Sinnott when their scallop dredger, the Alize, sank suddenly some seven nautical miles southwest of Hook Head on January 4th, 2020.

"We spent 60 per cent of our time in British waters before Brexit, but now we can't land there anymore and so we could travel 24 to 36 hours to discharge the catch," he says.

"It means fuel costs are as bad as Brexit, and we didn't qualify for any Brexit compensation – so we have asked to meet Minister for Marine Charlie McConalogue, but haven't even had an acknowledgement," Whelan says.

"If these family-owned boats are taken out of the fleet it will have a massive knock-on effect on everyone from shopkeepers to lorry drivers and mechanics to marine suppliers," Whelan says.

"My eldest daughter, 13 years old, wants to be a marine architect, but I can't see a future in fishing for my sons, nine and seven years old, even though they have salt water in their veins," Whelan says.

"It was a great career, and we held our own for as long as we could, but it just gets harder and harder."



Stevie Joyce's Oileáin an Óir off the Waterford coast.

Who did we conserve it for?

STEVIE JOYCE, fishing the Oileáin an Óir based in Ros-a-Mhíl, Co Galway agrees. The south Connemara harbour has lost at least 20 vessels from the local co-operative in recent years, he says.

Joyce, from the Aran islands, remembers a time when vessels had to queue up to land in Ros-a-Mhíl, but "we don't have that problem now."

"The Porcupine Bank to the west of us is a valuable prawn fishery, but it is closed to us now till October or November," he says.

"Irish fishermen took a bold move in 2010 to close the Porcupine when the female prawns started to show... as in, to close it for two months of the year," he says.

"Now it's closed every May and June, but unfortunately for the Irish boats we cannot go out there when it opens because our quota is gone for that part of the year," Joyce says.

"Who did we conserve it for?" Joyce asks.

"Our French and Spanish and Northern Ireland counterparts?"

"We are tied at the pier the month of May, and come June again all those other boats can go out there and hammer away at it 24/7, and we have to look out at them," he says.

"We have to go to the south coast or the north coast to catch some prawns, and they are just outside our front door here, you could say, but we can't go out there," he says.

"We used to be able to do some quota swaps with France, but the French boats are back on the Porcupine now, and I hadn't seen them out there for at least seven years," Joyce says.

"The Spanish are out there too, and there are Irish boats from south and south-east ports coming round there because of Brexit," he says.

"We did a voluntary tie-up in June, and we are back from the Bay of Biscay where we were targeting albacore tuna before the quota expired," Joyce says.

"I could buy fuel in Douarnenez in France for 76 cents a litre as it is subsidised for EU boats, and is about 72 cents a litre in Spain," he says. →

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John Conneely and his partner, Mary-Frances Beatty.

Without young people, it will not survive

JOHN CONNEELY and his partner, MARY-FRANCES BEATTY, based on the Aran island of Inis Mór, are considering applying for the decommissioning scheme.

The Conneelys, who live in Gort na gCapall on Inis Mór, are a fourth generation fishing family.

They own the 20 metre *Conquest*, along with the 17-metre *Connacht Ranger* which is currently fishing out of Ardglass, Co Down.

John, who fished with his sister Cliona for many years, is son of the late Gregory Conneely who lost his leg during his long career at sea.

In 1968, Gregory was at home with his wife, Maggie, who had given birth to their first child, when he had a premonition.

His vessel *Ard Aengus* had grounded on a reef at the back of the island; with several young Aran men, Gregory took his brother's vessel

and rescued all crew from the vessel before it broke up.

John recalled how his late father Gregory advised him to get out of fishing after the family's vessel *Maggie C* was arrested back in 2006.

In May 2015, John Conneely was acquitted of breaching EU fishing regulations – the case was not heard until almost ten years after the initial detention.

"I didn't want to listen to my father then... it was like I had blinkers on... but I would not like my young son Gregory to go into this industry," he says.

His partner Mary-Frances said that from her perspective the challenge to remain fishing had become "increasingly harder".

Layers of bureaucracy, coupled with fuel costs and struggles to find crew, made it almost impossible for family businesses to remain in the industry in her view.

"We can see them (bluefin tuna) jumping at the back of the island, yet we can't catch one of those fish."

Ireland's lack of a bluefin tuna quota is one example of the unfairness of the Common Fisheries Policy, she pointed out.

"We can see them jumping at the back of the island, yet we can't catch one of those fish," she said.

The Conneelys noted that the industry offered little in the way now of a career for Aran islanders, and "without young people, it will not survive."

Conneely said in his opinion the Government would have been better off

using the 60 million euro to purchase excess quota from France than to using it to breaking up vessels.

It had not been so long ago since the Irish government had funded a fleet renewal scheme, he notes.

"There's no point in having a scheme like that, encouraging people to take out big loans, when there isn't an appetite to fight for more quota," he says.

"The signals from the forthcoming Common Fisheries Policy review suggest that other EU member states are not going to give up an inch on quota", he says.

"It means too much to them," Conneely said, pointing out that countries like France, Spain and the Netherlands are "fishing nations", whereas Ireland "is not". ■

■ **At time of going to press, the Irish government had withheld any assistance with fuel, in spite of EU approval, although Minister for Marine Charlie McConalogue alluded to the Budget in a meeting with industry representatives in late September.**



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Spanish and French boats will be most affected by VME Closures.



Bottom Fishing Ban For 87 European Fishing Areas

Ireland, Spain, France and Portugal oppose a closure in the Northeast Atlantic that the EC defends as “the best possible solution”

THE EU COMMISSION has acted to close 87 sensitive zones to all bottom gears in the EU waters of the North-East Atlantic. The closures concern vessels equipped with bottom gears, meaning bottom trawls, dredges, bottom-set gill nets, bottom-set longlines, pots and traps.



The measure will impact the Irish Prawn fleet on the Porcupine Bank and severely restrict the French and Spanish longline and Gill net fleets in Irish waters

Based on the Deep-sea Access Regulation and on the advice from the scientists of the **International Council for the Exploration of the Sea (ICES)**, the new regulation protects 57 vulnerable deep-sea ecosystems.

The implementing act will enter into force on October 9th 2022 and will be immediately applicable to all vessels of EU Member States and of third countries operating in EU waters.

Virginijus Sinkevičius, Commissioner for the Environment, Oceans and Fisheries, said:

“Our oceans and fisheries depend on healthy marine ecosystems. By closing 17% of the area between 400-800 meters depth of EU waters of the North-East Atlantic to bottom fishing gears, we are delivering on our commitment to protect and restore marine life and after 4 years we finally implement one of the key provisions of the Deep-Sea Access Regulation. It is our duty to our society, to the future generations and in particular to those whose livelihood depend on marine resources. I am grateful for the commitment and efforts made by the fisheries sector to accompany this new chapter of ocean conservation.”

The total area of the closures represents 16,419 km² reserved for the protection of vulnerable marine

ecosystems below 400 metres. This represents 1.16% of the EU waters of the North-East Atlantic.

The measure was drafted after extensive consultations with Member States and stakeholders, including the fishing industry and NGOs over the past two years. After the ban on bottom trawling below 800 meters, which was introduced in 2016, these closures offer further protection to help restore vulnerable marine ecosystems such as cold waters coral reefs, sea mounts and sea pens in deep waters.

The closure order will be appealed by both Irish and Spanish governments over the incomplete data used by ICES in the opinion they proved to the EU but it is not expected to be reviewed till 2023

“We are at the beginning of a process. The scientific opinion is going to be reviewed every year to include the data provided by the Member States,” Sinkevičius explained.

In this sense, he has indicated that the first scientific advice from ICES will arrive in November and that, if appropriate, the closures of the zones will be reviewed.

“We don’t know how advice is going to be. We have an obligation to review these closures and we are going to do it. We are waiting for this new scientific advice by 2023,” he concluded. ●

“It is our duty to our society, to the future generations and in particular to those whose livelihood depend on marine resources.” **Virginijus Sinkevičius**



VIRGINIJUS
SINKEVIČIUS

No aid to Fuel aid

Marine Minister Refuses EU Fuel Aid Despite Zero Cost to Irish Exchequer

FISHING INDUSTRY REPRESENTATIVES say they are confounded and disappointed by the Government's repeated refusal to draw down EU fuel aid. They met with the Minister for the Marine on Friday 23rd September and urged him to secure the existing EU aid to help with the crippling costs of going to sea.

However, Minister McConalogue failed to meet this demand, although it would incur no cost to the Irish exchequer. Furthermore, a statement issued by the Minister after the meeting on Friday made no reference to the EU fuel aid scheme.

The meeting was attended by the Irish South and East Fish Producer Organisation, the Irish Fish Producer Organisations, the Irish South and West Fishermen's Organisation, Killybegs Fishermen's Organisation, Irish Island's Marine Resource Producer Organisation, National Inshore Fisheries Forum, Irish Fish Processors and Exporters Organisation and IFA Aquaculture. Bord Iascaigh Mhara (BIM) and the Marine Institute also attended.



IFPO

Aodh O'Donnell of the Irish Fish Producers Organisation said that prior to the meeting the Minister had been presented with a pre-budget submission. This outlined fully costed measures aimed at creating a level playing field for Irish fishers in Europe.

"Based on BIM (Bord Iascaigh Mhara) annual consumption data, we require fuel aid of €20m to €25m a year to compete effectively in Europe. Otherwise, we are up against fleets whose governments are distributing the existing EU fuel aid or offering other fuel aid support. Whereas many Irish boats can't afford to fish because of fuel costs or can't make a profit on fishing."



IFPEA

Brendan Byrne of the IFPEA said this was the second meeting they'd requested and held with the Minister this year. "The industry spoke with one voice on the key issues of fuel aid and securing EU approved measures to enable our fleet to compete."

"The Minister took note and undertook to assess the industry's needs. We also pressed for the unallocated €5m European Maritime and Fisheries Fund (EMFF), which is fully EU funded, to be used as a support measure for our industry."

Mr O'Donnell said they would be discussing the Minister's response with their members and hoped the Minister would take practical action soon to address their concerns. "Our fishing families and coastal communities deserve clear answers and clear action. Jobs, livelihoods, and communities are all at risk here. We are operating in an environment of uncertainty requiring a decisive approach in line with European counterparts. The time for action is now."



KFO

The Killybegs Fishermen's Organisation (KFO) Chief Executive, Seán O'Donoghue said that the Irish Government has been given approval for such a support scheme for the sector which is already in place in many other EU member states. Governments in those countries have acted swiftly to provide a beleaguered industry with financial support to offset the huge spike in fuel costs.

"It genuinely beggars belief that our Minister can stand idly by and effectively refuse to release funds which the European Parliament has approved for fishermen in light of the extreme escalation in fuel costs for their vessels."

"We met Minister McConalogue and implored him to act swiftly with the average Irish fishing trawler now paying 70% more for diesel since March 2022 to remain at sea to earn a living. Approximately half of our members gross earnings are now gone on putting fuel in their boats. This



Clogherhead prawn vessels in port.

"This is a real bitter pill which fishermen cannot swallow. The money is in place, it's just a matter of the Minister acting and affording the industry some support in a time of spiralling need." Seán O'Donoghue (KFO)

is not sustainable given that a break-even situation is 60 cent per litre – fishermen having been consistently paying over 105 cent per litre since March."

"Moreover, it's placing Irish vessels at a major disadvantage compared to our EU counterparts which have had the scheme implemented in their respective countries. The Government is trying to fob us off with pithy soundbites stating they're 'acutely conscious' of our plight but that's simply no use."

"This is a real bitter pill which fishermen cannot swallow. The money is in place, it's just a matter of the Minister acting and affording the industry some support in a time of spiralling need," he concluded.

Mr O'Donoghue said that the fuel support package should not be confused with ongoing Departmental engagement with the pelagic sector regarding a scheme to mitigate against the loss of €35million of mackerel quota since the Brexit transition in January 2021.



IS&WFPO

Patrick Murphy from the IS&WFPO stated:

"In the press release after the meeting the Minister Charlie McConalogue stated he listened to each representative of the Seafood Sector, all present and accounted for but obviously he did not hear the unified request made to him and his Department."

"We fundamentally disagree with the Ministers view the BAR money secured from Europe is there and being used to deal with the rising energy costs, the funds listed in the first paragraph came from a report submitted to the Minister from his task force in October 2021 five months before the Russian Ukraine conflict even started."

"This is really simple. Our Industry, like all others, is suffering from the fallout of the Russian conflict with its neighbours, the Ukraine, the European Union show of solidarity with Ukraine has led to a removal of Russian Oil and Gas supply to the European markets, fuel prices as a result have more than doubled."

"In recognition of the hardship and jeopardy to Europe's fishing Industry the European Commission invoked Article 26.2 of the European Maritime Fisheries Fund (EMFF) under Regulation 2021/1139

"This provides for in case of exceptional events causing a significant disruption of markets, compensation to operators of the fishery and Aquaculture sector for their income forgone or additional costs.

"The Minister has acknowledged there are unallocated funds left over in the 2014-2020 EMFF but is still trying to decide where this money is best spent for the benefit of the fishing Industry, despite all Industry consultation that the greatest threat currently is our inability to cover the additional costs of rising fuel prices."

"In short, not supporting the Industry now will damage the current participants to a degree that will be damaging in the short term and fatal in the not so long term to come." ●

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Only 5 months to go!

THE COUNTDOWN is well and truly underway to the Irish Skipper Expo 2023, with the much-loved event due to take place a month earlier, from **Friday 24th February to Saturday 25th February**.

With the motto, **'Your Industry, Your Show'**, the team at The Skipper continuously seek to improve the show experience for all involved, and following close consultation with visitors and exhibitors, the new dates were selected to reflect the right tides and season.

While the 2022 show marked a hopeful return to normality, the lingering effects of the Covid 19, which had experienced a huge surge in cases leading up to the event, undoubtedly made its mark on the attendance – a factor which will hopefully be in the shadows as we look into the future.

As the anticipation now builds towards February 2023, and with over **80 exhibitors already**



Venue: The spacious new venue provided great opportunities to do business.

confirmed, several exciting announcements have been made that will add to the buzz of the event. The welcome return of the **Show Reception** on the Friday evening will bring exhibitors and guests back together in a social setting to enjoy a seafood reception and live music at the **Kilmurry Lodge Hotel**. With many exhibitors and visitors expressing

that they missed the event in 2022, we look forward to organising the complimentary evening once again as a celebration of the Irish Fishing Industry.

As well as this, many visitors requested further emphasis on the inshore and aquaculture sector, and the announcement that the **IFA Aquaculture's annual conference and AGM** will take place at the Kilmurry Lodge Hotel on the eve of the show will be welcomed by all. In addition, the confirmation of more inshore exhibitors, including **Fairwater Fishing**, will add to the variety of the event.

Water safety has always been a huge focus at the Irish Skipper Expo, and new exhibitors, **Errigal Training Centre**, will add a new dimension to this. Specialising in training for renewables, wind Energy, maritime & offshore oil & gas industry, they are Ireland's first GWO accredited safety training facility.

As the show continues to diversify, *Sharon Boyle, Commercial*



Fishing Manager explains, "while the Irish Skipper Expo is a business event, it is also a fantastic event for the entire family to enjoy together."

"With lots of uncertainty in the fishing industry in the last number of years, it was extremely encouraging to see the number of young people in attendance last year – all eager to learn about the prospects of the industry and this is something we hope to add to next year."

"We are currently in consultation with a number of organisations to offer much needed information and advice to young people looking to embark on a career in the industry, as well as those already employed and looking for new prospects."

The Irish Skipper Expo will take place at the spacious UL Sports Arena, Limerick on Friday 24th February, 10am-6pm and Saturday 25th February, 10am – 4pm.



Family Event – Encouraging to see a large number of young people at the 2022 show.

2022 VISITOR & EXHIBITOR TESTIMONIALS

VISITOR TESTIMONIALS

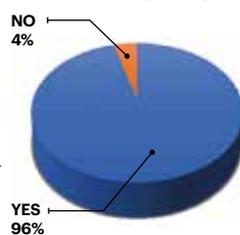
JOHN MENARRY – Donegal

"Much more than a show. Great access to multiple suppliers and agencies with expert advice and products on hand."

KEVIN SHEEHY – Kerry

"Great show very well organised and a lot of effort put into making it such a great venue. Large selection of stalls was a great plus this year."

Would you recommend to others to visit the show? (Visitors)



EXHIBITOR TESTIMONIALS

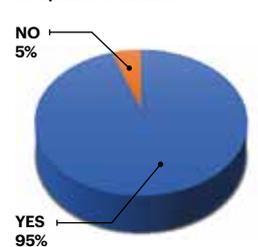
GEORGE McCORMICK - GEMS Ltd

"The venue was excellent with lots of room for exhibitors and visitors alike. Having all stands in one room was much more conducive to doing business."

DAVID ASH – Mantsbrite Marine electronics

"Great to be back after three years and catch up with friends and customers, new and old. Good results and well worth the effort."

Would you recommend others companies to exhibit?



IFA Aquaculture to host annual conference & AGM on the Eve of Irish Skipper Expo

IFA AQUACULTURE will host its annual conference and AGM at the Kilmurry Lodge Hotel, Limerick on Thursday 23rd February 2023. The event will take place on the eve of the Irish Skipper Expo taking place at the UL Sport Arena on Friday 24th and Saturday 25th February – *The Skipper* welcomes the addition of the IFA Aquaculture Conference & AGM taking place in advance of the Irish Expo.

A full agenda for the day will be issued in advance of the event but will include an update on the next EMFAF programme, the National Strategic Plan for Sustainable Aquaculture, along with a brief on relevant issues relating to the sustainable development of Irish Aquaculture.

Details on registration for the event and information regarding the AGM for IFA Aquaculture members will also be issued in advance of the event.



Teresa Morrissey, IFA Aquaculture, Michael Mulloy, IFA Aquaculture chairman, Trish Daly, BIM and Rory Campbell, BIM at the opening of the IFA Aquaculture Conference & BIM Mussel Workshop in Westport 2022.



The Fairwater Fishing stand – always hugely popular among visitors.

FAIRWATER FISHING returns to the Irish Skipper Expo

WITH A FOCUS ON promoting hook line fishing and improving customer catches, **Fairwater Fishing** is a renowned business in the inshore industry.

Based in Cornwall, the company specializes in supplying top quality hook & line fishing gear to commercial fishermen. Run by **Ed Russell**, with the help of his father Alan and a team of experienced staff members, family ethos is a core component of Fairwater Fishing.

Describing the success of the company since its establishment in 2004, Ed says, "Our continuous drive for innovation and personal rapport with customers has driven our success, with the company going from strength to strength each year.

"As commercial fishermen ourselves, we are constantly looking for ways to enhance the hook & line fishing experience, therefore we have first-hand experience with our product range and knowledge on how best to use them, which is something that our customers place great trust in.

"We are very much looking forward to returning to the Irish Skipper Expo. Two of our new team members will be joining me this year, with lots of expert knowledge on the products and gear

on offer."

Having exhibited at the Irish Skipper Expo in previous years, the announcement of Fairwater Fishing's return will be welcomed in the industry.

Sharon Boyle, Commercial Fishing Manager with *Mara Media* explains, "Having reviewed visitor feedback from last year's show, we are focused on providing a greater variety of stands dedicated to the inshore industry.

"We are delighted to announce the return of Fairwater Fishing, who were hugely popular in previous years and will have a fantastic range of products and deals on offer, including rigged/ loose Yo-Zuri diveboards, Gummi Lures & kits, Mackerel Traces, Asso lines, Longlines and much much more."

Taking place earlier in the year, on Friday 24th February 10am-6pm and Saturday 25th 10am-4pm, the Irish Skipper Expo will provide the perfect opportunity for fishermen to find the best products at the most competitive prices.



25% growth in sales for PORTUMNA MARINE following their first year at the show

AS IRELAND'S LARGEST STOCKIST OF Honda Marine, **PORTUMNA MARINE** have over 100 engines in stock at any one time, ensuring that they have a wide range of products and services for all your boating needs.

Exhibiting at the Irish Skipper Expo for the first time in 2022, **Leslie Shaw, Managing Director at Portumna Marine**, expressed his delight at the positive impact it had on his business.

"I found my first year at the show a great opportunity to meet both new and existing customers. It has a very concentrated audience unlike any other show in our industry.

"In 2022 we **increased our sales** to fishermen, seaweed harvesters, oyster farmers and commercial workers by 25% and this was mostly due to the Irish Skipper Expo."

As a result of their success and the continued growth of the company, Portumna Marine plan to expand their presence at the expo in 2023, where they will be showcasing their vast array of engines inside, as well as one of their many multi use boats in the outside display area.

"We will be displaying the full range of **Honda engines** from 2.3hp to 250hp and as the **Pioneer Boats** dealer for Ireland, we will be displaying a Pioneer Multi at the show. This boat is hugely popular as a workboat, ferry and pleasure boat for wheelchair users."

With a focus on customer support, they pride themselves on their extensive back-up boat services and boat storage to ensure that customers can get the most out of their vessels, particularly during peak seasons.

Check out the products and services on offer at the Portumna Marine stand.



Leslie Shaw taking orders at the 2022 show.



In 2021, the fleet landed 233 thousand tonnes, an increase of 7% from 2020.

BIM To Publish Inaugural Annual Fisheries Report

BIM'S NATIONAL SEAFOOD SURVEY provides insights into the status of Ireland's catching sector on an annual basis. It is an integral part of fisheries' performance data reporting to the EU. Based on the most recent survey returns the **Annual Fisheries Report 2022: A Snapshot of Ireland's Fisheries Sector**, examines the economic performance of the national fleet and its multiple segments. It also details the social demographics of people employed in the sector and the current challenges impacting the industry.

The report provides insights and trends for the financial and operational performance of the Irish fishing fleet based on economic data of 2020 operations. It also provides an overview of key forces impacting the economic performance of the Irish fleet from 2020- 2022 based on industry feedback.

Some of the impacts referenced in the report include Covid-19, Brexit, inflation, and the Russian invasion of Ukraine. Future projections for economic performance are included in the closing section.

Creating an accurate picture of the industry relies on a strong response rate, and consistent support and goodwill from skippers and vessel owners to provide economic and operational data on an annual basis. The results of the survey help both industry and policy makers to understand the challenges and opportunities they face, as well as the impact of fisheries management measures such as Total Allowable Catch (TAC) and quota allocation.

The survey returns also form the basis for the justification of national and EU grant aid programmes, focused on supporting the industry and coastal communities. The next survey for 2021 will open in October 2022 and end on 31 January 2023. The report is available

on www.bim.ie

BIM will be hosting National Seafood Survey information meetings with vessel owners at various ports from October onwards to discuss the findings of the Annual Fisheries report 2022, the importance of returning the annual survey and how to register and complete the online National Seafood Survey for 2022.

If you would like to register to attend one of the meetings listed below, please email Dr. Sarah Perry, National Seafood Survey Coordinator, for further details: DCFData@bim.ie

Additional meetings are scheduled with the NIFF and RIFFs and further meetings may be organised at more locations at a later date.

KILLYBEGS

KFO Board Room, October 11th, 2022, at 2pm

GREENCASTLE

BIM National Fisheries College, October 12th, 2022, at 6.30pm

CASTLETOWNBERE

BIM National Fisheries College, October 18th, 2022, at 6.00pm

DINGLE

Harbour Masters Office, October 19th, 2022, at 2.30pm

The Annual Fisheries report has the following key findings for 2020:

- Profitability of the Irish fleet has increased since 2019. Revenue increased by 2%, amounting to €312 million; gross value added (GVA) €161 million (+6%), gross profit €65 million (+24%) and net profit decreased to €32 million (-20%) due in part to Covid-19.

- The Irish fishing fleet spent 77,460 days at sea, of which 84% were fishing days representing a decrease of 16% and 17% respectively from 2019.
- Energy consumption decreased by 35% over the same period reflecting this decrease in effort.
- The fleet landed over 218.6 thousand tonnes valued at €312 million, an increase of 5% from 2019 in live weight and an increase of 2% in landed value (€306.5 million). In 2021, the fleet landed 233 thousand tonnes, an increase of 7% from 2020.
- Overall, the cost structure of the fleet has remained stable with a slight increase in all costs except non-variable costs (e.g., insurance, loan interest). Operating costs totalled €255 million, a slight increase of 1% from 2019 with energy costs increased by approximately 10%. When capital costs are included, the total cost of operating the national fleet rose by 4% since 2019 to €278.5 million.
- Direct employment generated by the sector was estimated at 2,928 jobs corresponding to 2,684 full-time equivalents (FTEs).
- Based on feedback from industry, the impact of the Russian invasion of the Ukraine on inflation and rising fuel costs was the main driving force influencing the economic performance of the Irish fleet in 2022. In 2020, average fuel costs per litre were €0.42 whereas average fuels costs per litre in mid-2022 stood at €0.90 representing a 114% increase in cost and the current reported costs of €1.20 per litre represents a 18% increase since 2020.

FUTURE PROJECTIONS

- In terms of the outlook for economic performance for 2021-2022, preliminary data point to a decrease in revenue and profitability for the Irish fleet. For 2021, the data indicates an increase in landings by weight from 2020 (+6%) and a decrease in value of landings (-7.5%) due to decreasing fish prices and changes in quota allocation. Gross profit for 2021 is projected to decrease significantly (-58%) to €27.6 million combined with a decreasing net profit (-75%) to €8.1 million.
- Preliminary data for 2022 compared to 2021 indicate a decrease in landings by weight (-17%), an increase in value of landings (+5%) and a decrease in gross profit (-12%) to €24.5 million. It is anticipated that the Brexit tie-up schemes will mitigate these projected outcomes and allow the industry to absorb the impacts of rising fuel costs for some segments of the fleet and the reduced access to fishing quota as a result of Brexit. In the long-term, decommissioning will help to bring fleet capacity back in balance with available quotas and improve the profitability for vessels remaining in the Irish fleet. ●



National Fisheries Colleges of Ireland



Upcoming Courses 2022

OCTOBER

- STCW Fire Prevention and Firefighting
3rd October - 5th October
NFCI Greencastle
- STCW Advanced Firefighting
3rd October - 7th October
NFCI Castletownbere
- Three Day Basic Safety Training
4th October - 6th October
Cromane, Co Kerry
Coastal Training Unit 1
- GMDSS Short Range Radio Certificate
10th October - 12th October
NFCI Greencastle
- Three Day Basic Safety Training
11th October - 13th October
NFCI Castletownbere
- Enhanced Safety Training
11th October
Coastal Training Unit 1,
Cromane, Co Kerry
- Three Day Basic Safety Training
17th October - 19th October
NFCI Greencastle
- STCW Personal Safety and Social Responsibility
20th October
NFCI Greencastle
- Three Day Basic Safety Training
25th October - 27th October
NFCI Castletownbere
- Enhanced Safety Training
27th October
NFCI Greencastle

- Surface Supplied Diving Operations
31st October - 25th November
NFCI Castletownbere

NOVEMBER

- GMDSS General Operators Radio Certificate
1st November - 12th November
NFCI Castletownbere
- Enhanced Safety Training
10th November
NFCI Greencastle
- Three Day Basic Safety Training
14th November - 16th November
NFCI Greencastle
- STCW Fire Prevention and Firefighting
15th November - 17th November
NFCI Castletownbere
- STCW Advanced Firefighting
21st November - 25th November
NFCI Greencastle
- Navigational Command & Control (Fishing)
21st November - 2nd December
NFCI Castletownbere
- Three Day Basic Safety Training
22nd November - 24th November
NFCI Castletownbere
- STCW Medical Care Aboard Ship
28th November - 2nd December
NFCI Castletownbere

DECEMBER

- Navigational Control Course (Fishing)
5th December - 16th December
NFCI Greencastle
- Three Day Basic Safety Training
6th December - 8th December
NFCI Castletownbere
- STCW Fire Prevention and Firefighting
7th December - 9th December
NFCI Greencastle
- Three Day Basic Safety Training
12th December - 14th December
NFCI Greencastle

Greencastle College - Maria McCarron
T: +353(0) 749381068
E: maria.mccarron@bim.ie

Castletownbere College - Della O'Sullivan
T: +353(0) 2771230
E: della.osullivan@bim.ie

Coastal Training Unit 1 - Bob Walsh
T: +353(0) 876837134
E: bob.walsh@bim.ie



Rialtas na hÉireann
Government of Ireland



Fishery update

Overall it wasn't a bad year despite bills and quota worries.

By Dick James

The summer prawn fishery is coming to an end. Mid September usually sees the fishery take off in a flash, from plenty to poverty and there is no reason to see that things are different now. As the Irish sea fishery fails where do we go?

The Clyde always used to be a safe and close to home bet but in recent years a voyage to the North Sea has been the destination of choice but with Covid, fuel prices and Brexit fouling the return of catches to home markets that is not so attractive. On top of that this year the prawners have the uncertainty of crew potential loss and the very real difficulty of replacement particularly in foreign parts. Survival through the winter and into the next summer fishery is now a major concern.

Overall it hasn't been a bad year. Initially the shock of the unprecedented price of fuel gave cause for concern and the analysts of our futures gave dire predictions over the well-being of the prawn fleet (notably Seafish!) but in reality the price rise in product along with a steady fishery gave us good grossings if substantially offset by higher costs. Still wages were paid along with bills and quota was never an issue unlike in previous years. There was optimism and talk of



Harvest Dawn heading out to the fishing grounds. PHOTO: LESLIE CAMPBELL

investment in new additional boats and a regrowth of the fleet but that of late has fell foul of crewing uncertainty.

Still the past month has proved comfortable with a fishing in the west Irish Sea and the option of the Clyde if the mood took you there. There was an odd showing at the Cumbrian grounds but nothing massive whilst the usual venturers worked the south Minch and grounds adjacent to that.

The North Sea was utilized by local boats but more recently an upturn in fortunes has tempted some of the larger boats to up-sticks and make their way northabout. Some of these were erstwhile Porcupine fishers where limiting quotas, limited fishery and high fuel costs made the Porcupine Banks a less attractive option. Some also went south to the Bay of Biscay where a tuna fishery is apparently to be had. Stayers were the Boy Connor and Rocco Reed both recently into the fishery and with no quota worries.

There has been a fishery of sorts for a few and mainly Kilkeel boats at the queenies at the Isle of Man subject to quota of the Manxmen's own making but apparently workable.

The whitefish boats have also found a reasonable fishery and thoughts are that some prawners may switch gears to take that as an option when the prawns give up. Cod has been a problem this year with the lack of quota only partially offset by the paucity of fish yet Haddock is there for the taking along with a smattering of by-catch.

The pelagic fishery has been the star of the month with the start of the autumnal Herring fishery.

The Voyager set off later that usual from her summer retreat in Skagen (Denmark) and worked on the North Sea Herring east of Orkney and soon making regular landings into Flore (Norway) apparently on a contract for Herring with roe market to the far east.

The StefanieM/Havilah pair started late August and found the herring soon enough landing on a daily basis into Belfast for carriage to the Ardglass and Kilkeel factories. Very often the nights fishing was landed, transported and waiting at the factory gate by 7-30am ready for the workers coming on shift and red-up by mid afternoon. Some talk was of a smaller size in the run but that bodes well for next year and the processors could handle it. This fishery could run into October this year giving a chance that any uncaught bonus Herring if and when redistributed could finish off the Herring fishery and allow time for the mackerel to come further south on its migration route and make it in range for the local boats to catch and land locally.

On the small boat fishery the Brown Crab is reaching its prime and good demand is easing things along with lobster soon to be in demand for storage for the Christmas markets. ■

Harbours In Turmoil

■ A letter of accusation was sent to the Chairman of the Northern Ireland Fishery Harbour Authority (NIFHA) under signature of the Chairmen of the two Northern Ireland F P O's seeking the dismissal of the Chief Executive of the Northern Ireland Fishery Harbour Authority citing various complaints over issues and decision making. This was then subject to an enquiry set up by the Authority and conducted by Board Member of the NIFHA Kate Burns. The Department responsible (Fisheries) of DAERA opined that the Board of NIFHA was advisory rather than authoritative which left little option for any action; if appropriate.

Subsequent to that, the Chairman of NIFHA, Robert McConnell resigned with immediate effect giving no reason but thought to be health related and is now replaced by serving Board member Alan McKeown.

There is reputed to be legal action in course over individual statements originally made and all of this at a time when major redevelopment of NI Fishery Harbours is due to take place.

Industry Given Notice Of End Of Transit Visas For Foreign Crew

By email notice from the leading Northern Ireland PO the Northern Ireland Fish Producers Organisation members were given the stark notice that present crewing arrangements utilizing Transit Visas to access crew from foreign nations such as Ghana, The Philippines and India was to be terminated on 1st October and crew presently serving on fishing vessels not exclusively working outwith the 12 mile territorial sea were to sent home immediately.

Enforcement involving repatriation would follow for remaining crew with vessels working regularly inside the 12 mile limited being targeted first (probably in November) and vessels with occasional fishing inside the 12 mile line later. Vessel owners were advised that a new law was enacted to legislate for this.

The alternative given to vessel owners was to source foreign crew using a new skilled worker visa which had been sought by fishing industry representatives to regularize transit visa use. The Transit Visa was originally intended to allow foreign crew to join vessels in the United Kingdom which were to embark on international voyages. Thus the 12 mile line distinction which in the past had been used with some tolerance to allow fishing primarily outwith 12 miles to utilize the Transit Visa scheme (75% being accepted as "primarily"). The new legislation does not allow this tolerance and all fishing has to happen outside the 12 mile line to qualify for Transit Visa application.

The new Skilled Worker visa as applied to fishermen comes with conditions the most notable of which is a guaranteed minimum wage of £26,000 pa and working conditions to comply with National law including tax, health insurance, fixed holiday time, working hours limits, sick pay and leave etc. The main Industry representative organisations in the UK had been seeking the Skilled Worker visa scheme for some time and hailed its acceptance with some enthusiasm

notwithstanding the implications that may come with it. What scope there may be to modify those conditions is not clear but what is clear is that the Transit Visa scheme is to end.

The announcement by the Northern Ireland Fish Producers Organisation followed meeting between the Borders Agency and fishermen in the Clyde and Mallaig and rumours of the new regime following those meetings. Apparently there had been meeting at a higher level involving Government bodies, Agencies and Industry and it was as a conclusion of these meeting that the new policy has been conveyed to vessel owners and crew.

There has been a heavy reliance within Northern Ireland on foreign crew over the past few years with many boats having adopted regular crew based on the Transit Visa system. It is now likely that these arrangements will fail as the new system relies on intended crew being subject to qualifying conditions including an examination on English Language competence which is only superseded by the applicant originating from an English speaking country such as America, Canada, Australia etc. Apparently Belize qualifies as English speaking so interest in this source of crew is now appearing. The examination of crew for acceptability under the Skilled Worker visa scheme is therefore outwith the control of the sponsoring vessel which also has to be registered as acceptable as recipient of the new crew. All in all the new rules will have a major impact on the Fishing Industry in Northern Ireland (as well as elsewhere) and the ability of operators to live within the new system must be in doubt for many present day boats and crew.

The times are certainly "a changing" as is probably the structure and possibly the future of the Northern Ireland fishing fleet as the reliance on foreign crew easily sourced and accommodated comes to a potential end. ■



Caolan Og on the way out of Kilkeel. PHOTO: LESLIE CAMPBELL

Additional Quota For Herring Resolved For Now

The Minister responsible for Agriculture Environment and Rural Affairs (which includes fishing) announced that following consultation with fishermen's representative organisations he had concluded that the apportionment of the with-held quota for Irish sea (north) Herring would be as follows.

50 tonnes to be apportioned to the skiffs fishing the Mourne shore under licence.

The rest to be leased through the 2 Northern Ireland Producer to non-Pelagic boats at £50 per tonne the monies to go toward science research into Herring. This quota cannot be transferred between vessels and if uncaught by 14th October it will be reallocated to the Pelagic dedicated Herring fishers. As a consequence of this the Irish Sea Herring quota has been uplifted to the Anglo North Irish PO by 223 tonnes and to the Northern Irish PO by 151 tonnes (in proportion to their original FQA holding) plus some to the North Atlantic PO. Thus the Minister has ducked the rows that will follow over the allocation of the additional quota and left the 2 PO's with the problem (and the management of it) and allowed the pelagic men an expectation that they may yet get the fish. The Northern Ireland called for application from members for their share of 125 tonnes the feeling that no one would get enough to get a decent return over the costs involved. Also the processing factories will have the option to buy the boxed Herring off the non-pelagic boats or wait for their preferred quality from the tank boats.

A political solution to a problem of potential conflict the resolution of which should be revealed in the next issue of *The Skipper*.

The allocation of the other species of unallocated quota, notably **Area VU Nephrops** has yet to be resolved. Responses to the consultation on the entire issue are subject to a freedom of information request which the Department are minded to accede to with some content redacted to protect individuals privacy. ■

ARDGLASS HARBOUR PROGRESS FOR DEVELOPMENT

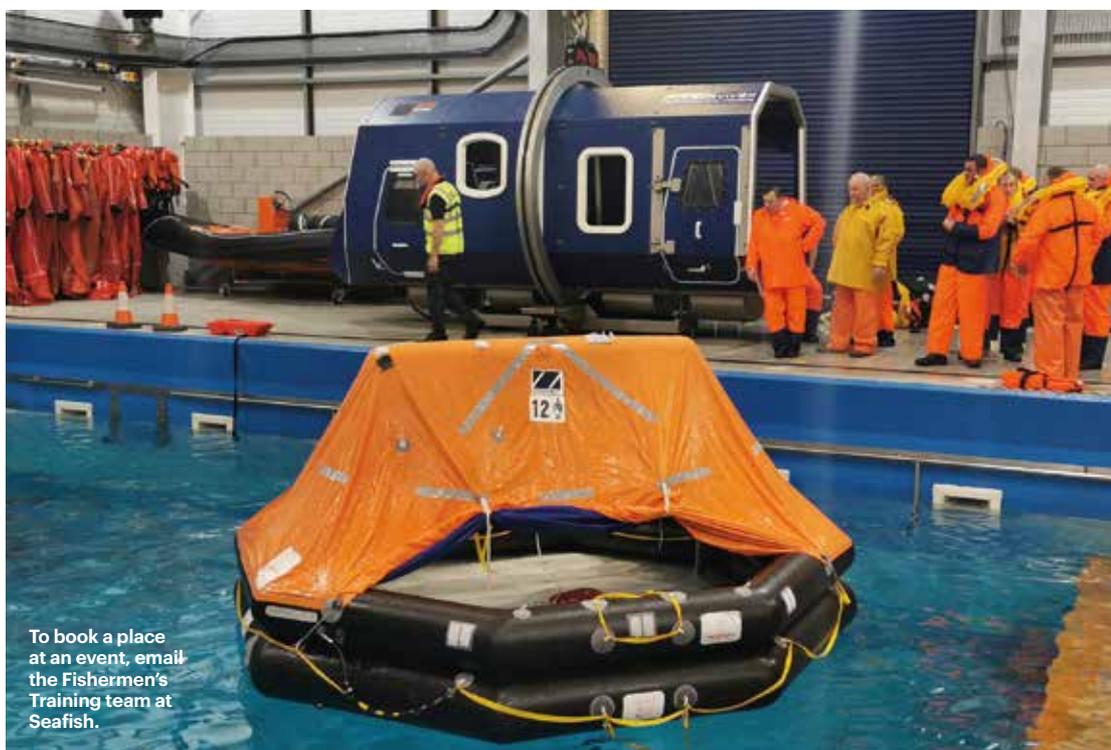
■ It has been reported that two South Down politicians in a meeting with officials of the Department of Agriculture Environment and Rural Affairs (DAERA) had been advised that there had been some delay in the timescales originally intended for the redevelopment of Ardglass and Kilkeel but that technical studies were still ongoing and a costing of £31-35 million was envisaged for Ardglass and £73-91 million for Kilkeel. The start of a tendering process is envisaged as the critical time for the commencement of the search for funding and that relies on the conclusion of the technical studies.

Meanwhile the Ardglass project has now been split into two projects with the

deepening of the outer harbour being the larger project subject to the technical studies and the costing of £31-35 million whilst the sawpit project covering deepening of the sawpit area of the harbour to allow access at all states of the tide for the small boat fleet of mainly crabbers and also pontoon berthing with walkway access for this fleet. This will represent a major upgrade from the existing facilities which are obviously inadequate and unsafe for these boats which have seen an increase in numbers and individual quality in recent years. This is presently costed at £1.7-2.4 million and following a meeting between stakeholders, engineers and the NIFHA plans have been put forward for

planning permission and fund sourcing has been identified for application following planning approval (hopefully). This project could progress at a much faster pace than the larger projects and was a major factor in the decision to split it from the original joint project.

A steering committee has been set up with the NIFHA local fishermen and the originators of the original project the Ardglass Harbour Developments Company to take this project through development and construction phases into fruition. The only bone of contention at present is over the charging for use of the pontoon berthing with opinions varying from free to the sky's the limit! ■



To book a place at an event, email the Fishermen's Training team at Seafish.

Dates Announced For Further Man Overboard Awareness Events

Seafish and the RNLI have announced dates for 10 further **Man Overboard (MOB) Awareness** events for UK commercial fishermen.

THE EVENTS are taking place at venues across the UK in October, November, and December, with the final sessions taking place in February 2023. Booking is now open for the following locations and dates:

- ABERDEEN: 18, 19 and 20 November**
- LOWESTOFT: 30 November, 1 and 2 December**
- FLEETWOOD: 10 and 11 February**

Created by the **Fishing Industry Safety Group (FISG)**, the events are organised by **Seafish**, delivered by the **RNLI** and funded by **Trinity House** and the **Maritime & Coastguard Agency**.

At present, commercial fishermen can attend these voluntary events free-of-charge, with all travel, subsistence and accommodation costs reimbursed, plus a £200 training grant provided. However, these are likely to be the last events delivered under the current funding. It is hoped that more events will take Dates announced for further Man Overboard Awareness eventsplace in future, but the funding rules may change.

MOB Awareness events enable commercial fishermen to experience what going overboard might be like. This is done using special environmental pools with rain, wind and wave machines that make the experience as realistic as possible.

The purpose is to help fishermen understand why they need to do everything they can to prevent anyone falling overboard from their vessel. It also stresses the importance of wearing a personal flotation device (PFD) when working on deck and reinforces the need for fishermen to undertake regular MOB safety and recovery drills.

Fisherman **NIGEL SCOURFIELD** from Dorset attended a Man Overboard Awareness event earlier this year. Commenting on his experience, he said:

"It was an excellent course that was interesting and informative and provided a realistic in the water Man

Overboard simulation.

"I think that enabling as many fishermen as possible to be able to experience the difference between immersion with and without a PFD is key to changing attitudes towards wearing them at sea."

The MOB Awareness events are always popular and often fully booked. Anyone interested is advised to book quickly to avoid missing out.

SIMON POTTEN, Head of Safety and Training at Seafish, said:

"The response we have had from the 335 fishermen who have attended previous events has been amazing. Without exception, the experience has made everyone more safety conscious and understanding of why they need to wear a PFD. Ten fishermen lost their lives last year, many as a result of falling or being dragged overboard, so I cannot stress enough how important these events are."

"Although this is the last wave of events we can deliver under the current round of funding, we hope the fishing industry will want to see them continue. However, I would urge anyone interested to sign up now, as any future events may not be so generously funded."

■ To book a place at an event, email the Fishermen's Training team at Seafish at training@seafish.co.uk or call **Katie Hooper on 07966 764151** or **Lee Haigh on 07904 660484**.

■ More information about the events is available at www.seafish.org/MOBAwarenessEvents



UK Seafood Innovation Fund Widens its Net

APPPLICATIONS are now open for a fourth round of funding from the **UK SEAFOOD INNOVATION FUND**. Sitting under the government's £100m UK Seafood Fund, this will continue to champion a sustainable future for our seafood sector by seeking ideas from innovators looking to introduce novel and practical solutions for the industry.

The latest round of the UK SEAFOOD INNOVATION FUND (SIF) has launched today, providing £3 million of additional funding to support cutting-edge solutions that disrupt the status quo and help address challenges across the UK seafood sector.

Taking the total funding made available under the scheme to £19 million, the latest round will support even more pioneering research that tests new ideas and approaches to provide long-term, practical, and scalable benefits to the seafood industry.

Open to innovators across fisheries, aquaculture and the seafood supply chain, funding will be provided for up to 18 months and there is no cap on the amount an applicant can apply for, although a strong emphasis on value for money must be demonstrated in the proposal.

Part of the £100 million UK Seafood Fund, SIF launched in 2019 and has since supported almost 100 projects across the UK, spanning aquaculture, capture fisheries, and the seafood supply chain. Previous projects have pushed the boundaries of new technologies, and have investigated consumer habits, market gaps, animal welfare issues, and the circular economy. For instance, **InsPro Ltd** have trialled the process of feeding farmed fish with insects raised on local food waste, while **Hook Marine Ltd** aims to improve fisher safety by field-testing a system that alerts fishing crew when their vessel is at risk of capsizing.

Another of SIF's high-profile projects, led by **Fishtek Marine** and best known as "Scallop Discos", recently worked to refine a novel and low-impact method to catch scallops using illuminated pots.

DR. ROB ENEVER, Head of



Another of SIF's high-profile projects, led by Fishtek Marine and best known as "Scallop Discos".

Science and Uptake at Fishtek, said: "Without doubt, the Seafood Innovation Fund was responsible for a new scientific discovery. The fund continues to facilitate the research investigating the potential for a new, low impact fishery for scallops."

In Round 4, SIF is looking to further diversify the range of work funded. The Fund welcomes applicants and collaborations from across the UK that draw together knowledge from the seafood

sector and beyond, and apply novel solutions to sustainability challenges. SIF is keen to see ideas aimed at benefiting capture fisheries or the supply chain, as well as aquaculture and other parts of the sector.

Environment Secretary RANIL JAYAWARDENA said:

"Britain has a brilliant fishing and aquaculture industry, and we are backing their cutting-edge ideas in order to help the British economy to grow.

"Through the £100m 'UK Seafood Fund' we are funding ambitious projects using the latest science and technology to unlock potential across the seafood sector and supply chain."

Defra Minister MARK SPENCER said:

"The additional £3 million we are making available through the Seafood Innovation Fund today is about giving the seafood industry a boost and laying the groundwork for its success in the future. I encourage fishermen, businesses and experts from across the sector to come forward and apply to help secure our seafood industry for generations to come."

HEATHER JONES, CEO of the Sustainable Aquaculture Innovation Centre (SAIC), sits on the Seafood Innovation Fund steering group, and provides input and guidance on aquaculture innovation. Speaking on the launch of Call 4, Heather said:

"Building on the success of previous rounds, SIF is again inviting innovative applied solutions to boost the efficiency, effectiveness, and sustainability of the UK's seafood sector. Applications that address the

commercial needs faced by those seeking to farm the seas responsibly, those operating in sustainable wild-caught fisheries, and those who can see ways to improve seafood product quality and shelf-life are warmly welcomed from all quarters of the UK."

■ CALL 4 OPENS on 21st September 2022, and the Fund will accept applications until midday on 7th December 2022. For more information on how to apply, visit the SIF website: <https://www.seafoodinnovation.fund/apply/>.

■ PROJECT TEAMS are also being offered the opportunity to submit their innovative idea for feedback (in advance of a full application) via an Expression of Interest (EOI) form, up until 31st October 2022. The form can be found at: <https://www.seafoodinnovation.fund/apply-now/>

■ FOR MORE INFORMATION on previously funded projects, and those that have received follow-on funding, visit the fund's website: <https://www.seafoodinnovation.fund/projects/>.



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On the afternoon of the 9th of September, a special naming ceremony took place on the quays of Macduff harbour celebrating the building of two large new fishing trawlers by the yard, the **ENDEAVOUR V** and **VENTURE IV**, for the Scottish fishing fleet.

Owned and operated by **Peter Lovie, Mark Lovie** and partners, these trawlers have the distinction of being the largest vessels produced by the **Macduff Shipyards Limited** to date. The memorable day was organised by the Lovie family and included a large group of guests including many of the businesses involved in both the building and the operation of the vessels.

The vessels were named in tandem with **ENDEAVOUR V** being named by Peter's wife Natalie Lovie, and **VENTURE IV** being named by Mark's wife Katie Lovie with the customary champagne bottles being smashed on the respective hulls.

ENDEAVOUR V was handed over in late 2020 but due to the social restrictions at the time a formal naming ceremony could not take place. **VENTURE IV** is currently undergoing final outfitting and commissioning and is schedule for delivery in October this year.

Both vessels were designed by the yard with close collaboration from local **Naval Architecture & Marine Consultants, Macduff Ship Design**. Due to their large physical size, the hulls of both were subcontracted to **Finomar Shipyards** based in Szczecin, Poland.

Full outfitting and engineering

ENDEAVOUR V and **VENTURE IV** named at Macduff



Both trawlers have the distinction of being the largest vessels produced by the Macduff Shipyards Limited.

works was carried out by the yard, with help from its many partners, in Macduff, Aberdeenshire.

The yard would like to thank the Lovie family for organising the special day which marked a significant milestone in the company's history. "This was a very special day for the shipyard. The company has enjoyed a close working relationship with the Lovie family tracing back generations to the firm's very beginning. The family has continually helped the firm to prosper, pushing our abilities to new heights and helping us grow. We thank Mark and Peter for organising the special day and for their continued trust and support" said John Watt, Managing



Director, Macduff

The yard would also like to thank the harbour team from Aberdeenshire Council for facilitating the event. ●

The Lovie family with crew and friends at the naming ceremony.

Fishing For Data In Orkney

SafetyNet Technologies and **Heriot Watt University** (HWU) are collaborating on the 'Fishing for Data' project, funded by **Cisco Systems**. The project aims to create underwater weather reports, to help fishermen better understand the underwater environment and how it affects their catch. The **Orkney Fisheries Association** (OFA) and the Orkney based fishing vessels *FV Alison Marine* and *FV Queline* are also participating in this project.

THE FISHING FOR DATA PROJECT

There is a lack of environmental data being collected for inshore fisheries, which is mostly due to limited funding. However, it is crucial to

collect environmental data because it is used in stock assessments. Despite this, there is still a shortage. As a result, fishermen and fisheries scientists don't have a detailed understanding of how the marine environment affects fish stocks.

Automating data collection would make it easier and cheaper to collect. At **SafetyNet Technologies**, we're designing **Enki**, an ocean sensor to do just that. Enki attaches to fishing gear and passively collects temperature, salinity, depth, and turbidity data during fishing every fishing trip.

As part of the 'Fishing for Data' project, two Orkney based creel boats have each been given an Enki sensor system to trial. The aim of this trial is to test the sensor system and gather data which will be later analysed by HWU. Starting in August 2022, The *FV Alison Marie* and *FV Queline* will be deploying Enki in their creels for three months. The data they collect belongs to them to enhance understanding of their fishery.

Why should fishermen collect data?

Sean, Skipper of *FV Queline*, told us at SafetyNet Technologies, "I want to understand

how environmental parameters affect my catch and exactly what ranges each species thrives in."

He explained that the catch varies a lot around Orkney during the summer when the water is warmer, as this is when crabs moult their old shells. Sean estimated that during this time, he returns up to 90% of his catch to the sea. However, Sean also reported pockets around the islands that maintain high levels of catch as the crabs here haven't yet moulted. He wants to use Enki to find out what is driving this



The Enki sensor, designed by SateyNet Technologies.

Support For North East Scotland Green Freeport Bid

SEAFOOD PROCESSORS have given their backing to the North East Scotland Green Freeport bid, which if successful could provide a massive growth boost for the sector.

The Scottish Seafood Association, representing 75 companies across Scotland, described proposals to increase annual turnover by up to £175 million, tackle acute labour shortages and improve productivity as “truly transformational”.

The bid outlines a **Seafood Transformation Project** that would inject £77 million into the sector over five years, with almost £50 million invested in processing businesses.

A development group has been established to devise plans for a Sustainable Seafood Park, for new and expanding processors. The park would be net zero through shared renewable energy sources, infrastructure and waste facilities.

SSA chief executive Jimmy Buchan said: “Scotland’s seafood sector produces nutritious, low-carbon protein food of the highest quality.

“It has worked very hard to punch above its weight in recent years, amid some serious challenges especially around investment and labour supply.

“We are hugely supportive of the North East Scotland Green Freeport bid because it recognises the intractability of those challenges and proposes concrete solutions that will have a truly transformational impact on the sector.

“Ministers in both of Scotland’s governments must recognise the breadth of vision, not only



for seafood but for sectors across the North East economy, and approve the bid.”

Bill McKenzie, Director, Don Fishing Company Ltd, said: “As Scotland’s leading fish selling and vessel management company, the Don Fishing Company warmly welcomes the NESGF bid.

“Securing Green Freeport status will create a more favourable investment climate in NE Scotland and catalyse momentum in the Seafood Transformation project which aims to enhance the performance of the local seafood processing sector. In turn, this will strongly benefit the fishing industry.”

David Leiper, Managing Director, Seafood Ecosse, said: “Seafood Ecosse – a major exporter of premium-quality seafood – is strongly supportive of the bid to secure Green Freeport status for NE Scotland.

“With the North East of Scotland a vital part of the new world, where energy and food security is top of the agenda. I can see no better area in the UK for Green Freeport status. We are based in Peterhead and believe it is vital that the seafood industry accelerates the scale of investment to enable its full economic potential to be expressed. Securing Green Freeport status will complement the Seafood Transformation

From left: **William Grant (Caladero Scotland Ltd)**, **Reece Fraser (Colin Fraser Ltd)**, **Gordon Sinclair (GT Seafoods)**, **Hayden Duff (AG Duff)**, **Jimmy Buchan (SSA)**, **Jason Jack (JG Jack)**, **Colin Fraser (Colin Fraser Ltd)** and **Danny Couper (Couper Seafoods Ltd)**.

Project and represent a major step forward for the whole fishing and seafood sector, which is a key component of the local and national economy.”

Ryan Scattery, Chief Executive Officer, Thistle Seafoods, said: “Thistle Seafoods is hugely supportive of the North East Scotland Green Freeport bid, with our growing export markets and the ever competitive international scene this can only be a boost to the North East and wider Scottish economy.

“The North East has long been an economic powerhouse not just in Scotland but also the United Kingdom and a successful bid will see the entrepreneurial spirit of the North East come to the fore once again to make it an undoubted success.

“We encourage the Scottish and British government to back the North East bid to maximise the potential of the region and help with the transition to a more balanced and sustainable economy.” ●

variation. Specifically, he wants to know what influence temperature has.

Support fishermen’s knowledge in a changing sea

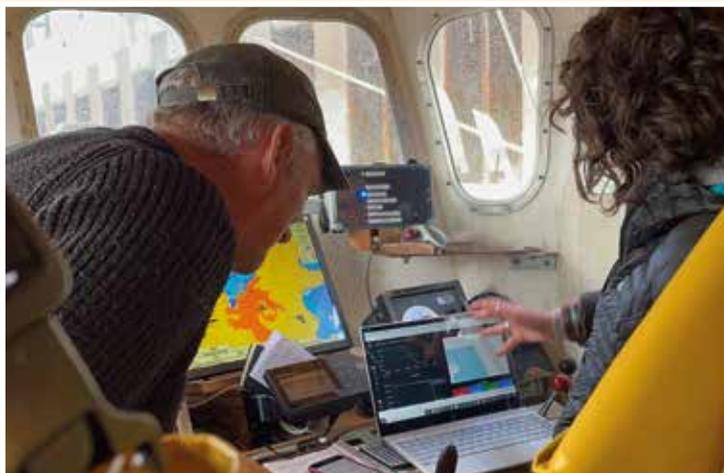
Climate change is rapidly altering the oceans. The effect of climate change is especially obvious in the shifting distributions of important commercial species. For example, the northward movement of North Sea Cod is one of the most documented changes.

Shifting migration patterns and seasonal timings undermine years of local knowledge. In Orkney, fishermen report that the migration of Brown Crab is happening later and later each year. Fishermen and fisheries scientists think that increasing temperatures are causing this change. However, they don’t have the numerical evidence to support their observations.

Data collected will help fishermen and scientists know what factors are influencing the Brown Crab migration.

What data does Enki collect?

Four different types of environmental ocean data are collected: temperature, salinity, depth,



The Enki collects four types of environmental ocean data: temperature, salinity, depth, and turbidity.

and turbidity. These factors will make up the underwater weather report and are important for understanding the characteristics of seawater and fish distributions.

The Enki sensor system is made up of three parts. The first is the sensor ‘node’ that is attached to the fishing gear. The node passively collects data whilst the fishing gear is in use.

After hauling, the data collected by Enki is transferred to the ‘hub’. This makes up the second part of the sensor system. The ‘hub’ connects Enki to the internet so the data can be sent to the cloud and displayed on a dashboard. The dashboard forms the third part of the system. It displays Enki data in a clear and easy to read format. ●



Campaign against gillnetting strengthens

SHETLAND ISLANDS COUNCIL is to write to the Scottish Government to request a ban on the use of gillnetting by boats over 15 metres in the country's waters.

It comes after a report on the controversial issue was brought to a meeting of the council's development committee on Tuesday.

Gillnetting – a practice generally undertaken by foreign fishing vessels – uses huge monofilament plastic nets that cover vast areas of sea and are designed to catch everything in their vicinity, often resulting in the entanglement of sea mammals and birds.

The nets are generally discarded in the water after use, posing a continued threat both to wildlife and to shipping traffic. The nets are regularly dragged up by local fishing vessels.

There are also concerns that gill netters squeeze out local boats from their traditional grounds.

Meanwhile, a protest with around 20 people organised by the **Fishing Forward UK group** was held in Lerwick in late August, and further action including a larger protest march is planned for October.

The Scottish Government recently ran a public consultation on its future catching policy, which the local fishermen's association responded to.

The netting issue was brought to the council earlier this year in a motion by local **Green councillor Alex Armitage**, who has called gillnets "curtains of death".

His intervention resulted in the report being brought to the development committee.

A motion was also previously approved by councillors in 2020 on the problem of marine pollution from discarded fishing gear.

The new report from development director

Discarded gillnetting. Right: protest organiser Arlene Robertson.



Neil Grant said there has been "limited progress" on the issue with government over the years.

It added that old nets should be taken ashore for disposal, and that lost nets should be reported.

"However this is clearly not working," the report wrote. "The vessels involved in intensive gillnetting often bypass the modern and well regulated local fish markets and land directly into refrigerated trailers, making it very difficult to control how old gear and litter is taken ashore and new gear supplied."

"The sheer proliferation of discarded gillnetting is becoming a bigger issue and local fishing crews often trawl up lost or dumped entanglements of gillnetting."

"Old gillnets are often washed up on the Shetland shoreline. The practice of gillnetting is rarely used by Shetland vessels and only by some inshore vessels under 15 metres, for specific fisheries."

Armitage said: "A productive fishery in Shetland depends on a thriving marine environment: gillnetting is damaging in both respects."

"I will continue to work with local fishers and with the Scottish Greens to bring this issue of gillnetting to the attention of decision makers at Holyrood."

Protest organiser Arlene Robertson said the hope was to instigate the banning of industrial gillnetting in boats over 15 metres because of the "endless destruction and cruelty to marine life and birds".



Some of the placards held up included photos of animals trapped and killed in netting.

Robertson – who has family working in the industry – said that in July, for the first time, an EU-owned boat brought ashore four skip loads of discard at a Scottish port.

"Traditionally that has been thrown into our waters for decades," she said.

Shetland Fishermen's Association (SFA) was not involved in the protest, but its executive officer Sheila Keith said local crews are encouraged by seeing these types of events taking place.

"The sheer scale of intensive gillnetting carried out by visiting vessels around Shetland continues to have consequences for the economy and ecology of our islands," she said.

"SFA members, environmentalists and the wider public have made constructive and concrete suggestions to the Scottish Government through its recent future catching policy consultation."

"Having asked for views, and having been left in no doubt about the strength of feeling in our community, ministers can no longer abdicate responsibility over these shared concerns." ●

'No brainer' marine litter scheme going from strength to strength

Fishing for Litter project members.



A SCHEME to encourage fishermen to collect marine litter and dispose of it onshore has reached a milestone – two thousand tonnes of rubbish has now been collected in Scotland since 2005.

In Shetland around 58 tonnes of marine litter has been brought ashore through the **Fishing For Litter** scheme since it launched locally in 2014, with more than 30 boats participating.

An event marking the project's progress was held in Lerwick earlier in September. It coincided with a pile of gillnet being taken ashore in Lerwick by a local vessel.

The Fishing For Litter project is organised by KIMO International, a network of local governments working together for healthy seas, cleaner beaches and thriving coastal communities.

The project coordinator Julia Cant said around 80 per cent of rubbish picked up through the scheme originated from land.

She said the intentional scheme was a "no brainer" and was going from "strength to strength".

Shetland Islands Council is a founding member of KIMO UK since the early 1990s, and it is also hosts its international secretariat.

Fishermen are provided with hardwearing bags to collect marine litter they find in their net, and when they are ashore it is placed into a skip.

In Scotland there are 20 harbours and around 300 vessels involved, with funding coming from the Scottish Government. ●



Julia Cant, project coordinator

Research needed before offshore wind farms east of Shetland are built, fishing industry warns

SHETLAND Fishermen's Association (SFA) has again called for "urgent research" into offshore wind development's impact on the industry after developers were announced for three sites to the east of the isles.



SFA executive officer Daniel Lawson said the areas in question overlapped with known haddock nursery grounds and

saithe spawning sites, two of the Shetland fishing fleet's valuable and popular whitefish catches.

Meanwhile Shetland Islands Council said it will work with all associated parties to "ensure they maximise the benefits to Shetland and its community".

In August, Crown Estate Scotland announced that three sites to the east of Shetland are in

line to be developed into floating offshore wind farms.

The total output could be up to 2.8GW, with green hydrogen a potential by-product. The total area covered by the three windfarms could be as much as 560km².

The three lead developers are **Ocean Winds**, **Mainstream Renewable Power** and **ESB Asset Development** as part of the Crown Estate Scotland's ScotWind leasing round.

The local fishermen's association has repeated its concern over the impact of development east of Shetland, and responding to the news Lawson said the industry should not be displaced.

"The impact of these projects on nursery grounds and spawning sites is unknown, and research is urgently needed before productive and pristine fishing grounds are destroyed in this offshore windrush," he said.

"It is clear to everyone that more renewable energy is needed, however fish is a low carbon source of nutritious protein food - displacing legitimate fishing activity is environmental madness."

"These and other wind farm developments will have an impact on ecosystems and therefore on fish stocks and fisheries in the area."

"Unlike the offshore windfarm sector, fishing relies entirely on the good state of marine ecosystems for its survival."

"The Scottish Government is effectively privatising areas of seabed which are critical to our local economy here in Shetland, for the benefit of Irish, Norwegian and French/Spanish multinationals."

Lawson added that it was imperative for the impact of any projects that do proceed to be minimised, especially through joined up cable corridors to protect inshore fisheries and



The three lead developers.

mandatory tension leg mooring systems so that turbine anchor lines take up less space.

Meanwhile a spokesperson for Shetland Islands Council said: "We will be working with all associated parties to understand their intentions for these offshore wind projects to ensure they maximise the benefits to Shetland and its community."

Two other large offshore wind projects around Shetland have previously been mooted; **Cerulean Winds** is proposing to install 200 wind turbines west of Shetland and in the central North Sea, which would power a hydrogen plant at Sullom Voe.

Meanwhile a huge 500-turbine wind farm was proposed 90 miles to the north of Shetland. ●



New book explores Shetland's 'natural link with Europe' through its fishing industry

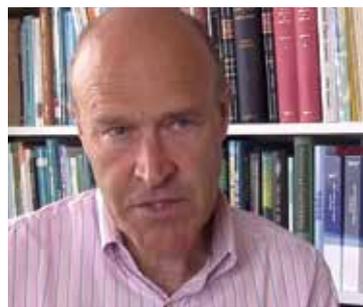
SOME of Shetland's unexpected historic links and connections with Europe are being explored in a new book by author John Goodlad who tells the extraordinary story of how salt fish from the isles became one of the staple foods on the Continent.

The Salt Roads, published by *Birlinn* in early September, takes the reader to the wild waters of the North Atlantic and tells the story of how over the centuries the local fishing industry has not only inspired and affected Shetland's culture, but also shaped people far beyond our shores.

The book explores in far greater detail some of the aspects touched on in Goodlad's previous publication *The Cod Hunters*, which was shortlisted for best maritime book of 2020 by the Maritime Foundation.

"It's about three iconic Shetland fisheries, the Haaf, cod and the herring boom," the former chief executive of the Shetland Fishermen's Association said.

"One of the themes running



Author and former CE Shetland Fishermen's Association, John Goodlad.

through all of them is Shetland's natural link with Europe – Shetland has been connected to Europe in a very powerful economic and cultural way.

"This is not a history of the fishing industry but about people and how art runs through all of this. Another theme is sustainability."

From the middle of the 19th century onwards cured fish, first cod and later herring, became an essential part of the diet of millions of people on the Continent.

"Salt fish was absolutely enormous in Europe," Goodlad said. "It would be wrong to

think that Shetland was the biggest supplier into Europe, but the Shetland salt fish was not insignificant; it also eventually was able to get into Basque country because of its high quality."

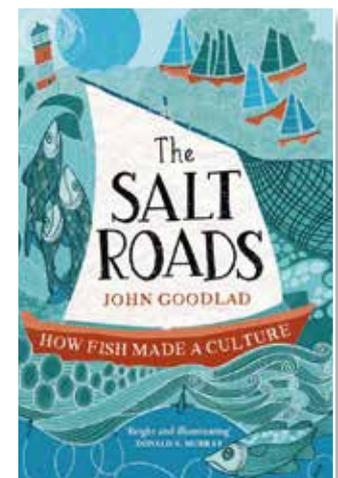
Cod became a staple food in northern Spain in terms of quality and being very sought after, but it was herring landed and processed in Shetland that fed millions of impoverished people in eastern Europe from the start of the 20th century.

Goodlad said: "The Dutch had started exporting herring to eastern Europe.

"By 1905 Shetland was called the herring capital of Europe; for many years more than two million barrels of herring left Shetland every year.

"That was going to Hamburg, to Lübeck, to Königsberg, a lot to Petersburg and some to Stettin.

"And then the salt herring went from these Baltic ports quite far inland, especially in Russia and in Poland where the rural poor lived in appalling poverty, Jews in particular. Salt herring was a cheap



New book *The Salt Roads* will be available in September.

source of protein.

"A barrel of salt herring was often the difference to get through a severe Siberian winter or not – and Shetland was a big player in that whole salt fish trade."

Goodlad said the book developed "organically" after having "really enjoyed" speaking to and hearing the stories of so many people as part of his research for *The Cod Hunters*.

And when the Covid pandemic hit, he found himself at home with plenty of time at hand to start working on *The Salt Roads*. ●

Today only 179 vessels are left in the system for larger vessels and 217 in the small boat quota sector.



Shrinking Fleet But Similar Catch

On September 1st a new fishing year started in Iceland. In total 396 ships and boats were allotted fishing quotas compared to 423 one year ago. The decrease is mainly in the number of smaller boats.

The fleet still shrinking

■ The reduction of the fishing fleet has been a steady trend for many years. Twenty years ago, for example, commercial fishing licenses were issued to almost 1,700 vessels, large and small, whereof 870 ships were allotted a quota usable for all types of fishing gear and roughly 800 received a small boat quota allowing fishing only with hooks and line. Today only 179 vessels are left in the system for larger vessels and 217 in the small boat quota sector.

This dramatic reduction of the fleet is the result of a massive consolidation of quotas which has taken place without any interference or financial help from the state. Vessel owners have simply bought other vessel owners voluntarily out of business.

Similar total catch

■ The total allowable catch of bottom fish in Icelandic waters today is similar to the TAC twenty years ago, around 500,000 tons. Therefore the capacity of the fleet is now much more in accordance with the yield of the fish stocks and thus the fleet is more economically viable than before.

Free-for-all

■ It has to be noted, however, that in addition to the separate

This dramatic reduction of the fleet is the result of a massive consolidation of quotas which has taken place without any interference or financial help from the state.

quota systems for larger boats and small boats respectively there is a third option open to everybody during summer. About 11,000 tons of cod were allotted to this “free-for-all” fishery this time. The fishery was restricted to 12 days a month from May till August, the catch was limited to 700 kg a day per boat and only jigs were allowed. A little over 700 small boats participated this summer, partly boats without quotas and partly boats that checked out of the quota system temporarily to take advantage of this opportunity.

The big are getting bigger

■ The consolidation of quotas has inevitably had the effect that big fishing companies are getting bigger. Twenty years ago the ten largest companies were allotted 39% of the total quota. Now they are in possession of 53% of the quota and even more because many of them own shares, directly or indirectly, in other fishing companies. Officially no company can possess more than 12% of the total quota.

Brim is the largest quota holder

in Iceland possessing about 33,000 tons in cod equivalents (meaning the worth of all species converted to cod). That amounts to 10.26% of the total quota. Samherji Iceland holds almost 22,000 tons (6.78%) and Fisk-Seafood comes third with 20,000 tons (6.24%).

Less cod – more haddock

■ In June the Marine and Freshwater Institute in Iceland issued its quota advice for the coming fishing year. Its recommendations were followed to the letter by the the Minister of Fisheries, as has been custom for quite many years

The total allowable catch of cod has been reduced by 13,000 tons (6%), from 220,000 tons to 209,000 tons. Fishermen heavily dependent on cod fishing will feel the pinch. Many of these, however, benefit from a 23% increase of the haddock quota which allows for a TAC of 62,000 tons during the current year, up from 50,000 tons.

For information on the allotment of all species, see the July issue of The Skipper. ●

Coming to Grips with Fuel Costs

FLOATING OFFSHORE WIND & ENERGY PARKS



Capt Brian FitzGerald - Director of External Affairs and Stakeholder Liaison Simply Blue Group.

Michael Galvin - Director of Hydrogen and Sustainable Fuels Simply Blue Group (left)

IRELAND IS IN THE GRIP of an energy security crisis that is seeing rapidly rising costs and fears of disruptions to supply as we face into the winter of 2022. The deleterious impact of this on industries that cannot operate without fuel, such as our fishing industry is stark.

As fishermen weigh the balance of costs versus sales while under the incessant pressure of loan repayments and vessel maintenance, the future of the fishing industry is facing increased threats to its sustainability and viability. How do we deal with the crisis faced by our fishing industry? How can we ensure that fishing is protected to deliver food security, jobs and thriving coastal communities? How can we develop capacity to deal with key issues such as the cost of fuel prices to remove vulnerability to international shocks in the market? Ireland is neither energy secure nor energy independent. Until it can achieve this status, vagaries such as rising fuel prices, will continue. However, through floating offshore wind, Ireland has the chance to

become energy secure and most importantly, achieve energy independence which would allow Ireland to control the price of its fuel for our indigenous industries including fishing. As Ireland has the perfect combination of wind and continental shelf resources to make itself energy secure, it will be through Irish companies such as **Simply Blue Group** that this will be achieved.

Renewable Energy Parks

Simply Blue Group has added a new division to its portfolio which is focusing on the production of green hydrogen and sustainable fuels from the electricity sourced from floating offshore wind farms. These products will be manufactured onshore in large-scale renewable energy parks. Green hydrogen is produced by electrolysis, using renewable electricity to produce hydrogen from water. The sustainable fuels will include e-fuels¹ and biomass fuels². E-fuels are made by combining green hydrogen with carbon dioxide or nitrogen that is captured from the air and recycled making it a carbon neutral resource. The main objective of renewable energy parks is to produce 'drop-in' fuels³ for the shipping (including fishing vessels), aviation, chemical production, and the wider transport sectors.

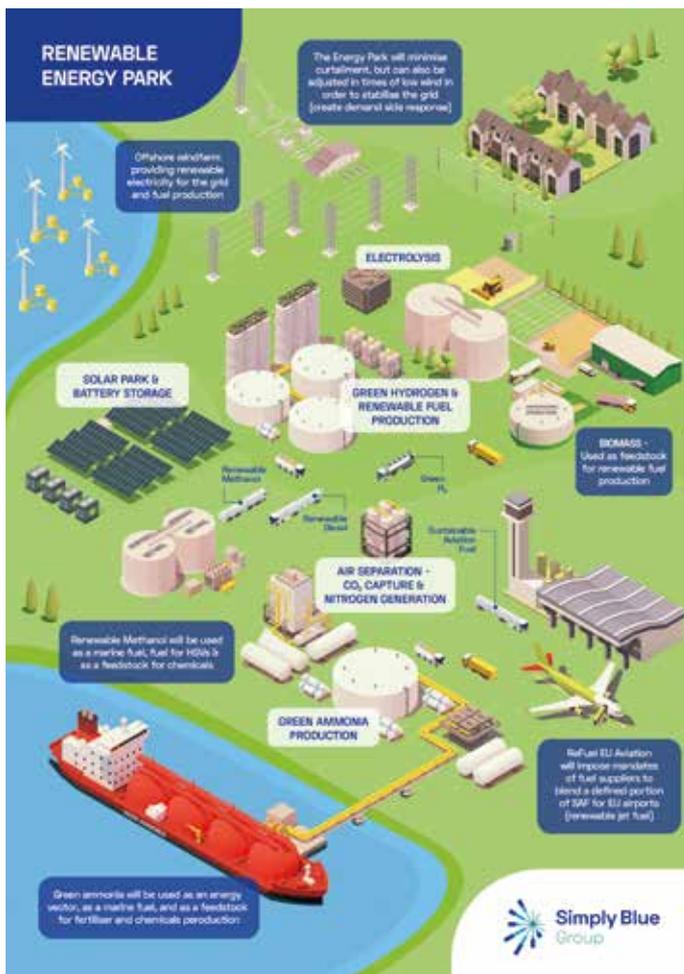
Renewable energy parks are highly integrated facilities, where renewable fuel production and renewable energy consumers are co-located.

challenges, including limited electricity market size, electrical grid infrastructure constraints, variability of renewable energy which may affect electrical grid robustness and stability, balancing frequency levels on the grid and price variations. The consequent e-fuel production will therefore ramp up and down to match the demands of the grid. The resulting sustainable fuels will be indigenous, energy dense products that can be stored and transported efficiently in large volumes and be compatible with Ireland's existing fuel storage and distribution infrastructure.

Simply Blue Group is therefore developing projects to produce millions of tons of sustainable fuel per year in large-scale production facilities, powered by floating offshore wind. Ireland can harness its abundant offshore wind resource and convert it in renewable energy parks to produce its own sustainable fuels including renewable diesel that can be used to power its fishing fleet. Ireland can replace imported fossil fuels with clean, indigenous, carbon neutral sustainable fuels and secure its energy supply and energy independence for decades to come. In addition, this could create thousands of highly skilled and secure new jobs for local communities as Ireland pursues its own energy security and meets its climate targets of 7GW by 2030 and 30 GW of floating offshore wind by 2050. Renewable energy parks would harness much of Ireland's renewable energy resource and convert it to forms in which it is needed, including the feeding of Ireland's liquid fuel requirements. Importantly, sustainable 'drop-in' fuels will not necessitate changes to the types of engines and machinery extant within our transport and fishing fleets.

Thriving fishing and offshore renewable energy industries

Whereas renewable energy from floating offshore wind farms is required to meet Ireland's growing climate action targets, this should not be at the expense of the fishing industry and the vital role it plays in delivering our food security. Ireland will continue to need a thriving sustainable fishing industry. Action #4 from the Seafarer Conference in March 2022 at the NMCI advocated for a thriving fishing industry in coexistence with the offshore renewable energy industry and marine protection. As the energy security crisis drives up the price of fuel it will not be possible to sustain a thriving fishing industry. Perhaps healthy coexistence between our two industries could enable an essential ingredient towards sustainability in the form of renewable energy parks delivering e-fuels, where Ireland controls the price, and with the right Government supports, Irish industries such as fishing can be prioritised. This topic will be explored further during the next Seafarer's Conference taking place at the NMCI on 3rd March 2023. ●



“Ireland can replace imported fossil fuels with clean, indigenous, carbon neutral sustainable fuels and secure its energy supply and energy independence for decades to come.”

The concept of integrating large scale floating offshore wind farms with large onshore energy parks and sustainable fuels production facilities (sustainable aviation fuel (SAF), methanol, and green ammonia) offers many advantages. Much of the renewable energy generated offshore will be connected to the electricity grid to meet domestic electricity demand. However, when the grid does not demand electricity, the abundant supply can be converted into sustainable e-fuels.

Delivering renewable electricity faces several key

¹ 'Electro Fuels' or fuels derived from electricity.

² 'Biofuels' - derived from plants and organic waste.

³ 'Drop-in' fuels are fuels that can utilize existing petroleum infrastructure.

Clean Oceans Initiative

Ireland's Fishing Ports to raise the flag for the Worlds Sustainable Development Goals.

IN SEPTEMBER 2015, 193 countries met in New York and signed the United Nations' 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. This Agenda has become the guide to the world's social, economic, and environmental actions to achieve a sustainable future by 2030. The framework consists of 17 SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS (SDGs). Currently individual countries provide voluntary national reviews to the UN and BIM's Clean Oceans is one such initiative that demonstrates commitment to sustainability and contributes towards Ireland's responsibilities under the SDGs.

In partnership with BIM, the 12 ports signed up to **BIM's Clean Ocean's Initiative** will join the International SDG Flag Campaign which runs from the 23rd to 29th September with activities being promoted and reported until the 8th of October. Be part of the global movement working together for the SDGs, **#TogetherForTheSDGs**.

All registered vessels have received a Clean Oceans pack featuring **SDG Goal14, Life Below Water**. Please share your involvement online so that the ongoing contribution of the Irish catching sector to achieving the UN SDG targets is promoted to the wider public.

The SDGs are for everyone, and we all can contribute to their success, regardless of what actions we take, large or small. The SDGs are now gaining momentum and developing clear actions to address the targets. In 2017, the UN's Ocean Conference recognised the importance of addressing marine pollution (including plastics) as a socioeconomic issue, requiring the adoption of reuse and recycling, the development of economically viable waste streams and encouraging behavioural change to stop plastic waste entering our oceans. In 2021, to further underpin the critical importance of the ocean, the UN Ocean Decade was launched (2021-2030) as the ocean holds the keys to an equitable and sustainable planet for all.



DEIRDRE LANE

Harbour Master, Dunmore FHC.

"Dunmore accounts for handling 60 tonnes of all the FFL material to date through our ports waste management system. The Clean Oceans initiative gives us all as stakeholders a common ambition to play our part for the Ocean Decade."

BIM'S CLEAN OCEANS FOCUSES ON 3 SDGS IN PARTICULAR:

UN SDG 14 – Life below water, in particular the target "Prevent and significantly reduce marine pollution of all kinds".



■ This target is the touchstone for the Fishing for Litter (FFL) Programme. To date BIM has 12 key fishing ports participating in FFL across the country. A recruitment drive to get vessels to sign up was hugely successful with 244 officially registered vessels representing 1,169 crew. This represents about 95% of the Irish over 12 metre registered demersal fleet that are best placed to be effective to retrieve passively fished waste (the technical term for FFL). As of June 2022, fishers and ports have retrieved, recorded and responsibly disposed of 824 tonnes of passively fished waste as part of the FFL scheme, collectively protecting life below water and reducing marine pollution. While engagement on FFL initially targeted the retrieval of litter, it has also contributed to increased interest and requests from vessels and ports to assist in improving waste management facilities and services.

UN SDG 12 – Responsible consumption and production, in particular the target "By 2030, substantially reduce waste generation through prevention, reduction, recycling and reuse".



■ This year, BIM in partnership with ports and fishers, has begun to collate national data on retired waste fishing gear, which, to date, totalled 49 tonnes. This autumn, BIM and the ports will co-design a systemic gear retirement scheme, with imminent plans to conduct two pilots. The pilots will be blockchain based to add value to the recyclates in the supply chain. Based on the results of these pilots BIM plans to scale the retired gear collection scheme nationwide in 2023 and positively apply the principles of a circular economy to fishing gear with plastic. This will be referred to as operation BIM Net Effect (**#BIMNetEffect**)

UN SDG 17 – Partnership for the Goals, in particular the target "Encourage and promote effective public, public-private and civil society partnerships, building on the experience and resourcing strategies of partnerships".



■ Initially BIM worked to developed strategic partnerships between vessels and ports. However, to succeed and deliver for SDG 17, BIM is now working closely across government and in particular with Ireland's EPA (*Environmental Protection Agency*) so that both schemes (*Net Effect and FFL*) align to the National Waste Framework. This will also assist with improving the categorisation of these materials so it can enter the plastic and circular economy and minimise the economic impact of the forthcoming extended producer responsibility (EPR) scheme for fishing and aquaculture gear containing plastic. Clean Oceans leads on stakeholder engagement of new and emerging stakeholders such as plastic recyclers and waste contractors needed to unlock the opportunities and achieve SDG 12 (*Responsible Consumption and Production*), thereby changing the landscape for a Circular Economy of marine plastics and improving the competitiveness of the sector.



DENIS HARDING

Professional fisherman and gear maintenance contractor.

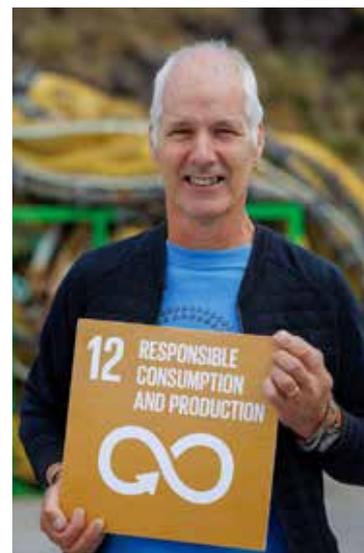
“At sea, vessels and crew will do their best to bring in marine litter as it keeps the fishing ground clean and healthy for the stocks. Improving facilities on the shore to help us prepare and move old gear to specialist recycling will be of great importance.”



MARTYN SIMPSON

Professional Inshore Fisherman.

“Mending and refurbishing fishing gear is part and parcel of fishing as extending the life of gear keeps costs down. Developing networks to reuse and repurpose ropes and floats either retired from or lost in bad weather would be a hugely welcome.”



CATHERINE BARRETT

BIM Fisheries Development Officer.

“All of the work and success to date of the Clean Oceans Initiative is built on the good will and sterling efforts of the crews and harbour masters right around the country. Celebrating the SDGs gives us a change to reflect on what the sector has done to date and gives us all big ambitions to play a key part in the UN Ocean Decade.”

EUROCLYDON GY 77

Length overall: 17.40 m
Length Registered: 16.45 m
Beam: 6.80 m
Depth: 3.80 m
Depart port displacement: 210 t
Fresh water capacity: 6,000 li
Oil fuel capacity: 11,000 li
Viver tank capacity: 40,000 li
Speed: 9.5 knots
Crew: 6-8



Macduff's Euroclydon GY 77

Macduff Shipyards Limited are delighted to announce the recent signing over of new build number 698, Euroclydon, GY 77.



SKIPPERS HELM.

EUROCLYDON is the second crabbing fishing vessel built by the yard in a space of only three years, following on from LEVANter, GY7, with both vessels belonging to the same owner STUART MACDOUGALL of fishing company Euroclydon Ltd. The new build replaces the owner's previous vessel of same name, built by Miller & Sons in 1987.

The tender for the Euroclydon was signed in summer of 2020, just six months after the owners took delivery of the *Levanter*. The vessel is a new design of vivier crabber fishing vessel designed between the yard and local Naval Architecture & Consultancy firm Macduff Ship Design. It features many similarities to the *Levanter*, with a similar arrangement

throughout. However, with increased length, breadth, and depth, the Euroclydon provides noticeably more space all around to enhance crew comfort, sea keeping and fishing activity.

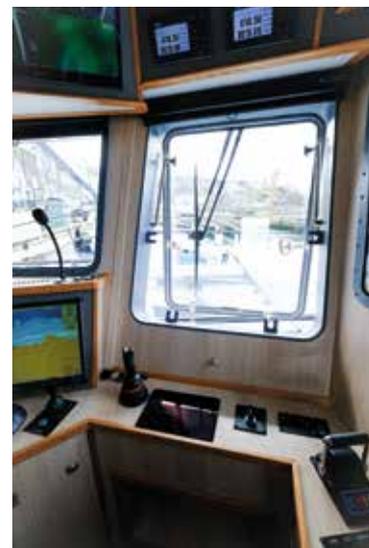
The design work began in summer of 2020 with consultation between the yard and owner to finalise the general arrangement to their exact needs. With the initial design complete, the construction plans were drawn up by Macduff Ship Design and submitted to the MCA for plan approval under their newly adopted construction standard, inherited from Seafish.

THE HULL

■ The hull of Euroclydon up to main deck along with the aft accommodation casing and the forward section of the shelter



WHEELHOUSE.



OVERLOOKING THE HAULER.

The large 40,000 litre vivier tank is subdivided with fibreglass grating partitions so catch can be separated into different species/grades.

is fitted forward of the collision bulkhead in the bow.

ABOVE DECK

■ Above the deck features the accommodation area aft with galley/mess to starboard, WC aft and a two berth skippers' cabin and dry locker/laundry to port. Forward of this is the large fully sheltered working deck where the pots are brought onboard, catch emptied into the vivier tank, and pots stacked up until ready to shoot again. The shelter is protected by a large hydraulically powered hatch.

The hauler is mounted forward and leads to a block which is fitted at the end of a telescopic boom which extends outboard of the hull to keep the pots clear of the side when hauling up. Forward at main deck a weather-tight bulkhead is fitted, and a store space is arranged with shelving for storage and the anchor chain locker.

Above the shelter deck a large open deck space provides for generous stowage of pots when moving gear to the grounds.

Euroclydon features some safety features built into the

hull such as recessed foot/hand holds beneath the port and starboard fixed side ladders extending below the waterline and permanent guard rails around the wheelhouse perimeter. In addition, the owner preference of a raised shooting table is arranged in place of a low deck level side opening to keep the crew safe within the shelter. *Euroclydon* is fitted with a large vivier tank with a capacity of over 40,000 litres of sea water. The tank is subdivided with fibreglass grating partitions so catch can be separated into different species/grades. The tank is serviced by two large electrically powered circulation pumps supplied by **Bombas Azcue** with the intention one pump is used in service and one on standby. Overflow pipes are arranged port and starboard, →

is built from **Lloyds grade A ship building plate**. The mid part of the shelter where fishing activities take place, along with the wheelhouse and mast are built from marine grade aluminium to help reduce the vessels displacement. The hull form features a double chine hull form, transom stern and modern bow designed to cut cleanly through the sea with less energy leading to a reduction in fuel consumption and emissions along with increased crew comfort.

BELOW DECK

■ The layout of the *Euroclydon* below the main deck features two three-man cabins aft, followed by a large engine room which extends forward over the top of the vivier tank. The vivier tank is positioned amidships with its trunk up to main deck fitted through the engine room. Forward of the engine room a bait store is situated and finally a water tank



Congratulations to owner Stuart MacDougall and crew on your new vessel Euroclydon GY 77.



Macduff HQ. The Harbour, Macduff, Aberdeenshire, AB44 1QT
Tel: 01261 832 234 Fax: 01261 833 541
email: enquiries@macduffshipyards.co.uk web: macduffshipyards.co.uk





HAULING & BAITING STATIONS.



AUXILLARY GENSET.

above the waterline, so the crew and skipper can visibly see when the pumps are in operation.

PROPULSION

■ The propulsion setup of *Euroclydon* is based around an innovative, large 2000 mm diameter four bladed propeller designed and supplied by **Wartsila**. During the creation of the specification the yard put forth to the owners a **Mitsubishi S6B3** with 320 kW output as the proposed main engine due to its success and fuel economy on other projects in the past. Wartsila were then asked to investigate the optimal propeller diameter and design for the vessel given the engine particulars and a range of gear reductions available. Upon their conclusion the 2m propeller was selected along with a **Masson Marine W6000 gearbox** with a large ratio of 8.705:1 which was calculated to provide optimal free steaming thrust per kW of power available. It was witnessed during trials that the vessel achieved a good speed for her length and the propulsion package performed smoothly with little vibration.

HYDRAULICS

■ A hydraulic system was designed by the yard and



MASSON MARINE W6000 GEARBOX.

features a 1.5 t hauler provided by **Britannia Engineering**, a telescopic boom for the hauling block and large hauling hatch supplied by the yard, a KT120 bow thruster with 800 kg of thrust supplied by **Kort Propulsion**, and a MFB6 landing crane provided by **Thistle Marine**. Hydraulic power is provided by two large 37.5 kW motors which can be powered separately, or simultaneously, by either of the vessel's generator sets providing complete redundancy. ■



EXPANSIVE WORKING DECK.

Electronic package supplied by Woodsons Marine Electronics of Aberdeen

RADIO-TELEPHONES

- 1 x JRC JSS 2150 150W GMDSS MF/HF SSB
- 1 x Sailor 6210 VHF
- 1 x Icom M423 VHF with DSC
- 1 x Jotron Class A AIS

GPS

- 2 x Furuno GP39 GPS receiver
- 1 x JRC JLR-21 GPS Gyro

ECHO-SOUNDER

- 1 x Hondex HE-7300Di 10.4", 50/200Khz echosounder

NAVIGATION

- 1 x Olex 3D seabed mapping system
- 1 x Sodena Easywin V9 plotting system

RADAR

- 1 x JRC JMA5410-6BB radar
- 1 x JRC JMA 5209 radar 4Kw

WIND SENSOR

- 1 x ultrasonic wind speed and direction sensor

AUTO PILOT

- 1 x Navitron NT921MKII

TALK-BACK

- 1 x Phontech 3100 5 way system talkback

CCTV

- 1 x CCTV System c/w 16 cameras

SATELLITE TELEVISION

- 1 x e-SEA 60 Satellite TV system

SATELLITE COMMUNICATIONS

- 1 x Sailor 600 KA INTERNET communications system
- 1 x LT-4100 Iridium communications System

EMERGENCY

- 1 x Jotron TRON 60GPS Float Free EPIRB with GPS
- 2 x Entel HT649 GMDSS Hand Held VHF c/w
- 1 x EASY NAVTEX

MONITOR

- 6 x AG Neovo X19AV, with glass front



ON SEA TRIALS.

The combined control system will be used on the Arctic Pearl.

PHOTO: AVA OCEAN.



“We are proud and excited to supply our vision and control systems for this important and ground-breaking project.”

Espen Karlsen Eik, R&D Manager, Scantrol.

Combining Vision and Control for Sustainable Scallop Harvesting

Ava Ocean using new technology

Using technology from Scantrol and Deep Vision, Norwegian company Ava Ocean will begin sustainable scallop harvesting in the Barents Sea later this year

Scallop dredging on the Norwegian seabed has been prohibited for 30 years because of its damaging effects on marine ecosystems. Ava Ocean has been working to develop and test their technology since 2016.

Gentle and sustainable

selective harvesting methods are a central aspect of this work. Several years of testing, research and development together with SINTEF and the Norwegian Institute of Marine Research have resulted in new patented technology methods for documented sustainable harvesting methods for the seabed.

With Ava Oceans’ innovative approach to scallop harvesting, shells can be identified, selected,



Ava Ocean visit the Scantrol team to discuss the project.

and sorted without destroying the surrounding flora and fauna.

“It was important for Ava Ocean to connect with the most experienced and preferred control systems suppliers for this unique catch operation. We already knew Scantrol and trust their high-quality products. The collaboration with Scantrol and Deep Vision was established early in the process,” says Øystein Tvedt, CEO at Ava Ocean.

“Ava Ocean has challenged us to make a control system that combines Active Heave Compensation (AHC), Trawl Control and Deep Vision Catch Identification. We have had the pleasure to play a central role in this pioneering project,” says Helge Hammersland, Managing Director at Scantrol.

The two scallop harvesters are controlled by Scantrol’s standardized solution for monitoring and control together with mTrack AHC Controller.

The harvesters will also use Deep Vision cameras to take images and videos of the seabed. All images will be used for

scientific purpose in a project directed by SINTEF.

“Our goal is that the Deep Vision software will make it possible to automatically recognize scallops on the seafloor by the help of images and machine learning,” says Hege Hammersland, Business Development Manager at Scantrol Deep Vision.

The combined control system will be used on Ava Ocean’s vessel ‘Arctic Pearl’.

“The patented technology will initially be used onboard the Arctic Pearl, but the potential for this technology is global, and also for other species on the seabed,” says Bjørn Roppen, Head of Subsea Projects and Deliveries. ●

www.avaocean.no



Deep Vision cameras take images and videos of the seabed.

Automatic Forfeiture Provisions Rebalanced



BY DERMOT CONWAY,
CONWAYS SOLICITORS

SINCE IRELAND LEGISLATED in its own name on the issue of Fisheries, it has always been in the most draconian way. Forfeiture was first a feature of the Fisheries Act of 1925. Later the 1959 Fisheries Consolidation Act provided for forfeiture of all of the catch and gear should the Master of the

vessel plead guilty or be found guilty.

Several challenges rendered this act useless. Most notably the case brought by this office concerning *Montemuino v Min for Communications and Others*. The Supreme Court found that a Trial Judge could exercise his or her discretion on the question of forfeiture.

The 2006 act was no different. It provided in Section 28(5)(b) that upon recording conviction the it is an automatic consequence that “any fish and fishing gear found on the boat to which the offence relates or in any other place where they may be are, as a statutory consequence of the conviction, forfeited.”

As if this was not severe enough, the Politicians decided that there could be no wiggle room or technical arguments as to the determination by the Judge of the forfeiture.

They enacted Section 29:

“Where a person is convicted by a court of an offence specified in a Table and any fishing gear or fish under section 28 is, as a statutory consequence of the conviction, forfeited, then, notwithstanding any rule of law, it is not



Court of Justice of the European Union. Time to prioritise fishing for once.

necessary for the court—

- (a) to pronounce the fact of such forfeiture at the time of adjudication, or
- (b) to record the fact of such forfeiture in the judge’s minute book, the charge sheet or in the order of conviction.”

This was an extraordinary enactment and a highly distrustful one.

I acted for a client who was convicted in 2015 of a Fisheries offence. There was a considerable amount of catch and gear on board. It was felt that the legislation which had been used to convict was not clear cut. An appeal was submitted to the Court of Appeal. During the course of the hearing of the Appeal the Court of Appeal was persuaded that while the conviction was safe, the consequential forfeiture provisions might be disproportionate and deliver an unjust consequence. The matter was referred to the European Court of Justice (ECJ).

The ECJ delivered Judgement earlier this year and concluded that provided Ireland had a modular approach to sentencing to include an examination of the Masters means and allowing for the variation of the degree of forfeiture, then Ireland’s legislation was consistent with European Law.

Of course, Ireland’s draconian legislation does not provide for such an approach as outlined earlier. As a result Ireland could no longer seek forfeiture. This of course is good news.

On the 5th of August 2022 Minister Charlie McConalogue signed the following amendment:

- 6A) Where a person who is convicted of an offence to which subsection (1A), (5)(b) or (6)(b) applies demonstrates that the mandatory forfeiture required by the subsection concerned is disproportionate, the court may in those exceptional circumstances adjust, modulate or mitigate the extent of the mandatory forfeiture order. In making this assessment the court shall have regard to the requirement that the severity of the sanctions must be commensurate with the seriousness of the breaches for which they are imposed, in particular by ensuring a genuinely dissuasive effect.

It is an extraordinary development. It is clearly open to challenge in terms of putting the onus on the fishermen. It is also extremely disappointing that a Minister from a fishing community would put his hand to such an unfair and biased provision. It does not even outline what disproportionate might mean and through the back door allows the State to argue in Court that this is a very serious offence, and we require full forfeiture to ‘send a message’. For those who think I am cynical, I would point you to the Barlow decision. The Irish State went into the Supreme Court of Ireland and argued that Fish is not a natural resource.

At a time that the National Herd is being reduced and food inflation is rampant, it surely would be a time to prioritise fishing for once. Instead, it is the same refrain echoing back to 1925. ●



Commissioners of
IRISH LIGHTS | Navigation
and Maritime
Services

Vacancy for Able Bodied Seafarer (Deck) – ILV Granuaile

Irish Lights is recruiting for an Able Bodied Seafarer (Deck) on board its multi-purpose DP1 vessel, Granuaile.

THE SHIP

Granuaile is an Irish Flagged 80 meter multi-purpose DP1 vessel with a 20 tonne crane and significant mooring handling capabilities. She is a diesel electric ship powered by 5 x MAN gensets with total power of 3700kW driving 2 x Schottel Azi Pod propellers and a Gill Jet Azimuth Bow Thruster. She is classed by Lloyds and has UMS notation. Primary duties involve maintenance of floating and fixed Aids to Navigation. Over the ship’s 20 years in operation she has successfully completed a wide range of offshore contracts including subsea operations.

THE ROLE

As the **Operational Maintenance Operative** (OMO) Deck you will be required to carry out shipboard duties as directed by the Deck Supervisor (Bosun). Your work as OMO is classed as general purpose and in addition to deck/bridge/boat work you will also work in the Engine Room, Accommodation and Galley work as directed. On completion of an on-board training programme, you will be expected to be competent in the operation of cranes and daughter craft.

THE REQUIREMENTS

You must hold a valid STCW Able Seafarers Deck Certificate and all the essential criteria listed in the Candidate Briefing Pack. Previous experience on Aids to Navigation Maintenance or Offshore Anchor Handling vessels would be a distinct advantage. Ex-Naval personnel with experience of small craft operations will also be considered, subject to eligibility to progress to STCW Able Seafarers Deck Certificate and achieving all relevant STCW certifications for the role. You will need to be able to take ownership of tasks and responsibilities and work efficiently. You will need strong communication and teamwork skills. If English is not your first language, you must achieve at least 80% on the Marlin Test. The ship’s core operations of buoy maintenance and lighthouse replenishment can be physically demanding so you will need a good level of physical fitness.

An attractive salary, time on time off roster and pension scheme is available. Please visit our website (www.irishlights.ie/who-we-are/vacancies) to view the Candidate Briefing Pack for further information about the role and the requirements. Closing date for applications is close of business **Monday, 17 October 2022**. Please apply by emailing a CV and cover letter to Gemma Gregan at human.resources@irishlights.ie. Please view Irish Lights Job Applicant Privacy Notice on our website.

New lobster ban aims to protect spawning stock

SCOTLAND'S FIRST BAN ON LANDING EGG-BEARING LOBSTERS IS BEING INTRODUCED IN SHETLAND.

THE MOVE, DRIVEN BY local fishermen and agreed by the **SHETLAND SHELLFISH MANAGEMENT ORGANISATION (SSMO)**, outlaws the practice of boats keeping so-called berried lobsters, which carry thousands of eggs.

Preventing the removal of these lobsters will help protect the spawning stock needed for a sustainable fishery.

Around 30,000 lobsters have been landed annually in Shetland in recent years – four times as many as in 2005, which saw the smallest catch this century.

SSMO inshore coordinator John Robertson said: “This ban is seen by many fishermen as a positive way they can boost stocks in the absence of a lobster hatchery in Shetland.

“It is going to hit their income

from creel fishing significantly in the short term but hopefully it's a sacrifice that will reap rewards for them, and the buyers, in years to come.

“It was the fishermen who called for the ban and they backed it in a vote conducted last year by the SSMO.

“Marine Scotland supports the change which the SSMO is able to impose under its own regulatory powers.”

A voluntary ban was introduced from 1 August ahead of the measure becoming mandatory from 20 September.

Some Shetland fishermen chose to return berried lobsters to the sea anyway, cutting a v-notch in their tail which makes them illegal to land under Scots law. In England, landing berried lobsters is already outlawed.



Berried lobster. This ban is seen by many fishermen as a positive way they can help boost stocks. PHOTO: WWW.SEAFISH.ORG

Breaching the SSMO ban could see a shellfish licence holder suspended from fishing for anything up to eight weeks.

The trade in live lobsters is monitored by officers from Marine Scotland's compliance team, which checks catches on boats or when shellfish is being sold for live export from Shetland.

The SSMO exercises powers devolved from the Scottish Government to manage sustainable shellfish fisheries within the six-mile zone around Shetland, restricting licences to 106 mainly small boats.

This keeps out large, industrial-scale fishing fleets which operate elsewhere in Scottish waters.

The SSMO seeks to prevent overfishing and to promote policies which protect sensitive seabed habitats. It works in partnership with UHI Shetland on research and stock assessments, largely funded by Shetland Islands Council.

In August Shetland News reported that the council had approved support funding worth almost £180,000 – due to be administered by the SSMO – in a private meeting earlier in the summer. ●



Committed to Sustainability

The Clean Oceans Initiative is the umbrella name for a range of BIM and seafood industry supported programmes to minimise the impact their sector has on our oceans, including Fishing for Litter, Co-ordinated Local Aquaculture Management Systems (CLAMS), the new pilot Gear Retirement Scheme, shore and pier cleans.

Involvement in the Clean Oceans Initiative demonstrates the Irish seafood industry's commitment to sustainability for a healthy ocean and contributes towards Ireland's responsibilities under the UN Sustainable Development Goals and the EU plastics strategy.

For more information visit www.bim.ie or simply scan here:



An Roinn Talmhaíochta, Bia agus Mara
Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine



EUROPEAN UNION
This measure is part-financed by the European Maritime and Fisheries Fund

Flapper Skate

(*Dipturus cf intermedius*) tagged and released in the Central Irish Sea

ON 21 SEPTEMBER 2022, the MFV *Eblana* (D379) [Skipper: Brendan Lynch, Howth], captured, tagged (No. 47453) and released an exceptionally large female **Flapper Skate** (*Dipturus cf intermedius*) [DRJ] measuring 229 cm total length (TL), 170 cm disc width (DW), and weighing >100 kg, while demersal trawling at a depth of 100 m in the Central Irish Sea, in an area known as 'The Peaks' (ICES Vlla, 35E4; 53.0833oN, 5.2833oW) [Figs. 1-3].

Since 2020, the *Eblana* has captured and released four large **Flapper Skates** in the Central Irish Sea, three of which were tagged. The Flapper Skate is known to attain a maximum TL of at least 230 cm, albeit possibly up to 285 cm. The current specimen represents one of the largest recorded from Irish waters to date. A specimen of similar length (TL 229 cm) was

captured on rod & line by Andy Logan in Belfast Lough during June 2020.

Although the Flapper Skate and the closely related Blue or 'Common' Skate (*Dipturus batis cf flossada*) [RJB] (Fig. 4) were historically described as widespread and 'common' in European seas, both species are currently regarded as *Critically Endangered by the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN)*, and designated as a 'prohibited species' under European Union Regulation No. 2019/1241, which states, inter alia, "When caught accidentally, the species shall not be harmed and specimens shall be promptly released back into the sea, except for the purpose of allowing scientific research on accidentally killed specimens". All captures should be logged.



Figure 1. Flapper Skate captured, tagged and released by the MFV *Eblana* in the Central Irish Sea.



Figure 2. Andrew Nealon (MFV *Eblana*) and the Flapper Skate (21.09.2022)

The Blue Skate (identifiable by the presence of a distinct ocellus on each wing) [see Fig. 4], attains a maximum TL of c.143 cm. Although the species was declared to be commercially extinct in the Irish Sea during 1981, there is growing evidence that the status of both the Blue Skate and Flapper Skate may be improving in Irish waters, at least in some areas.

Commercial fishers and recreational anglers have a very important role to play in contributing to the conservation of endangered skates in Irish waters. Apart from releasing incidental captures unharmed, and where possible contributing to the



Figure 3. Flapper Skate tagged and released by the MFV *Eblana*.

tagging effort, they can help fill the current knowledge gaps about the distribution and abundance of both species by logging all discards. In the absence of reliable up-to-date information, both species will continue to be regarded as threatened. ●



Figure 4. Blue Skate (*Dipturus batis cf flossada*) PHOTO: SAMUEL IGLESIAS

Crawfish

(*Palinurus elephas*) captured off Lambay Island

ON 14 SEPTEMBER 2022, the MFV 'Lily Tom II' (D6) [Skipper: Alan Fanning] captured and released a **Crawfish** while potting in the Irish Sea off Lambay Island (53.6247oN, 5.9464oW), Co Dublin (Figs. 1-2). The carapace length (CL) and total length (TL) of the specimen was 100 and 240 mm respectively. This is the third small Crawfish captured by Alan off Lambay since 2018. On 17 June 2022, the MFV 'Mary James' (D724) [Skipper: Brian Leonard] captured and released a small Crawfish weighing 630 g while potting for lobster in the same area. The current minimum legal CL for Crawfish is 110 mm.

Although Crawfish are regarded as relatively common off the S, SW, W and NW coasts, they have rarely been recorded off the N, NE and E coasts of Ireland. Indeed, there are only four previous records from Co Dublin: 1880 (Dalkey Sound), 1903 (Lambay Island, 130 mm CL), 1963 (Dalkey Island, 72 mm CL), and 1964 (Lambay Island, 207 mm CL). ●

GET IN TOUCH

■ Declan is always interested in receiving reports about rarely recorded and unusual species in Irish waters.

email: declanquigley2021@gmail.com

WhatsApp/Text: 087-6458485).



Figure 1. Crawfish (*Palinurus elephas*) captured by the MFV *Lily Tom II* off Lambay Island, Co Dublin.



Figure 2. Crawfish captured by the MFV *Lily Tom II* off Lambay Island.

Brixham's Margeret of Ladram. Photo: Waterdance Ltd



New Series Of BBC Trawlermen To Highlight UK Fleet

BBC1, 8pm Tuesday 4th October, for 6 weeks.

THIS SERIES CHARTS the contrasting fortunes of British fishing boats over the course of one brutal week. Each skipper must hunt the catch 24/7 if they are to earn a wage for themselves and their crew. In episode one, Off the south coast of Cornwall, *Ocean Pride* is heading out in pursuit of pollack. It's destination: old sunken shipwrecks in the English Channel. Best mates Ben, Joe and Zyam are targeting £30,000 worth of pollack. If they can catch quickly and land before any of their rivals they'll have a monopoly on the market – and bank themselves a big pay day. But wreck-netting requires pin-point accuracy to hit target.

As the nets miss and seals eat the valuable catch, skipper Ben gambles. Steaming 60 miles West he shoots nets around one of the biggest wrecks in the channel – a 300ft long WW2 tanker – and what could be a haven for thousands of pollock.

380 miles away on the Yorkshire coast, crabber *Tydu* is preparing to

head out. With shellfish prices rising for Christmas the crew have hopes of a big pay day. Stig's aim is six tons in the tank, a catch that this week could fetch well over £30,000. Once expenses are covered, each of the four young deckhands have the potential to earn themselves up to three grand for a week's work. On the trip, there's a greenhorn onboard. 21 year old Glyn has little experience at sea and he's stepping into the toughest job in fishing; he'll be expected to haul and empty one crab pot a minute.

Off the south coast of Devon in the English Channel *Margaret of Ladram*, one of Brixham's most successful beam trawlers is heading for an area of ground known as the 'pot boxes', opening to trawling for the first time in months. Skipper Adam Cowan-Dickie is hoping they contain one of the most lucrative species in British waters: dover sole. With the restaurant trade in full swing for Christmas, Adam could earn £80,000 for the trip – if he can find the fish. ●



TENDER ANNOUNCEMENT

The Marine Institute is inviting personnel to submit tenders for

CATCH SAMPLING SERVICES

Services required are to sample and record catch data on board commercial fishing vessels according to MI standard operating procedures.

If you would like details of the tender specifications and conditions for the above tender, please contact:

<http://www.etenders.gov.ie>

Tender will be launched early Oct 2022

The deadline for the tender submission is the 25th Oct 2022



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PHOTO OF THE MONTH **WINNER: Liam McHale**
Ophelia lying at Belmullet

■ **SUBMISSION GUIDELINES:**
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Nicholas Bendon and Keith McIlroy of CH Marine and Kilkeel Trawler Supplies taking delivery of their first hire rafts order 1992



S106



Westerlea.



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THE IRISH SKIPPER
JOURNAL OF THE FISHING INDUSTRY

AN I.C. TRAWL PAYS BEST!

No. 185. OCTOBER, 1972. SIXPENCE (Inc. Tax)

The main shed at Killybegs boatyard, which is now being extended by 45 feet to permit four trawlers to be built at the same time. The yard also services vessels, and on the left is Tom Ferguson's trawler, the Kenare, from Skerries.

MORE WHARFS TO EASE THE CONGESTION AT KILLYBEGS

THE overcrowding problem at Killybegs caused by the steady growth of the local fleet is to be relieved by wharf extension to the value of £250,000.

Work on a wharf extension to the east of the town pier was in progress last month. Later the new pier is to be extended eastwards, giving a total of 500 additional feet of wharfage.

The extension has been needed for a considerable time because even before the new Black Rock pier was built, the fleet had outstripped the extra facility. Delays in the port caused by boats queuing up to land were so excessive that vessels often left the grounds early in order to avoid a long wait. This was reducing the actual catches.

Other work includes improv-

PROSPECTS GOOD FOR HERRING EXPORTS

WITH the peak of the herring season only a few months away, herring exporters have been discussing ways of making the best out of the European demand.

The generally disappointing returns from the Shetland and North Sea seasons have heightened the intake potential of European markets usually supplied by their own fleets. An example is Norway, Europe's biggest herring catcher, which hopes to buy larger quantities in Ireland this season. The Scandinavian demand is mainly for heads off, gutted, salt or spice cured in barrels.

However, the best market this season may well be West Germany. There is a big demand there for Irish herring, which may be considerably harder this year due to Norway's decision to stay out of the Common Market, thereby losing tariff concessions.

Last season, Ireland sent herring to Germany, but a temporary currency stabilisation tax of up to £18 per ton had to be borne by Irish exporters. That will not apply this season.

Last month exporters met in Athlone to discuss the prospects generally and particularly in the light of the E.E.C., which takes about 40% of Irish fish exports.

The value of herring exports last year was £1,820,000 which was up 32% in value on the previous year.

Catches last month made good prices, the best being at Castle-townbere, where on one day £18 per cwt was paid, with £3 being about the average. At Dingle 80 cwt made £8 and at Killybegs prices ranged from £12.20 to £18.00. A small quantity of fair quality herring was landed at Clogherhead.

Fishermen's tax case for court

IN a number of ports have demanded that skippers submit returns of each crewman's earnings, on the basis that skippers are employers and must abide by Pay-As-You-Earn rules.

The Federation of Irish Fishing Co-operatives has disputed this and is fighting a legal case to decide the issue. If necessary, the Federation says it is determined to take the matter to the Supreme Court.

Last March 1971 the case was heard before an Appeal Commission who decided in favour of the Revenue. The case is to be heard in the Circuit Court soon, and if lost will then be taken to the High Court.

The Federation emphasises that it is the method of collection of tax which is at issue—if the case is won crewmen will remain liable to pay tax, but it will be up to the Revenue people to approach them individually.

Looking for a second-hand boat?

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PURSE SEINERS OFF DONEGAL

Two big Norwegian purse seiners have made an exploratory trip for herring to the "Killybegs area". Although disappointed with their initial findings, the skippers intend to return to the Donegal coast.

This was learnt by the Scottish correspondent of THE IRISH SKIPPER, Leslie James, when he spoke to some of the skippers when landing into a Scottish port. For further details, see page 14.

The Skipper Archives

October 1972

GOOD HERRING
With the peak of the herring season only a few months away, exporters have been discussing ways of making the best out of European demand which was up 32% in value on the last year.

MORE WHARFS
The overcrowding problem at Killybegs caused by the steady growth of the local fleet is to be relieved by wharf extension to the value of £250,000.

PURSE SEINERS
Two big Norwegian purse seiners have made an exploratory trip for herring to the "Killybegs area" where their initial findings were disappointing but plan to return to Donegal.

TAX CASE
In a number of ports the Revenue Commissioners have demanded that skippers submit returns of each crewman's earnings, on the basis that skippers are employers.



Sea Star II heading out.



Ambitious in for the slip at Kilkeel. PHOTO: LESLIE CAMPBELL



Three Generations of the McClenaghan Clan, Adrian, his son Shaun and father John with a Rockall Halibut.



Seanie Harrington in his Cygnus off Galley Head. PHOTO: DAVID EDWARDS



Zephyr LK394 arriving in Lerwick to land their first shot of herring for 2022. PHOTO: CALUM GRAY

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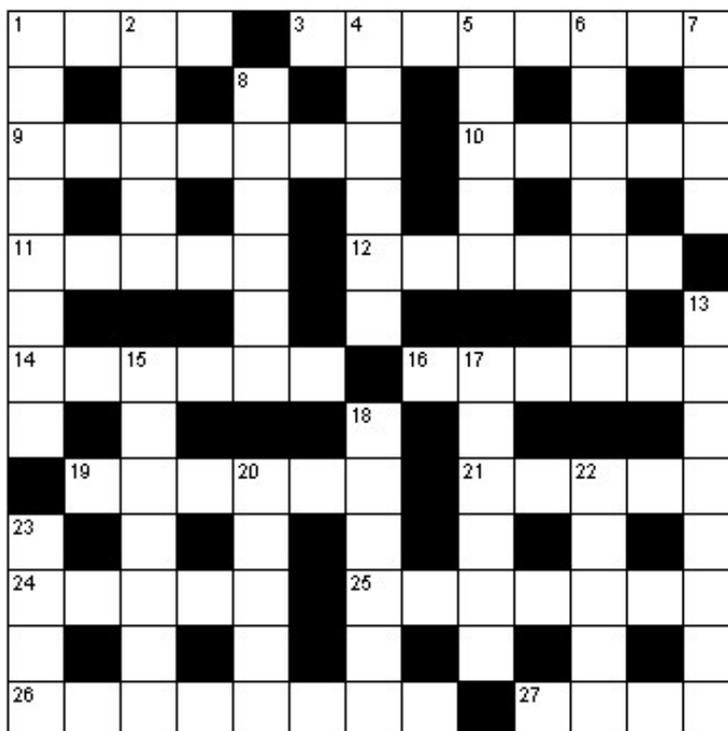
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ACROSS

- 1 Children's card game (4)
- 3 London airport (8)
- 9 Ruler (7)
- 10 Bestowed (5)
- 11 Ascended (5)
- 12 Bigger (6)
- 14 Thin slice of bacon (6)
- 16 Hunting expedition (6)
- 19 Dried grape (6)
- 21 Demise (5)
- 24 More aged (5)
- 25 Liverpool racecourse (7)
- 26 High-handed (8)
- 27 Young deer (4)

DOWN

- 1 Broad-brimmed Mexican hat (8)
- 2 Female relatives (5)
- 4 Breathe out (6)
- 5 Large striped cat (5)
- 6 French holiday area (7)
- 7 Slender rod (4)
- 8 Hypnotic state (6)
- 13 Age of majority (8)
- 15 Defamation (7)
- 17 Passionate (6)
- 18 Uselessly (2,4)
- 20 Gesture of indifference (5)
- 22 Major blood vessel (5)
- 23 Settee (4)



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Lifesaving MOB Strategies

BIM Teams Up with RNLI to Highlight Lifesaving Strategies for fishermen at sea



BORD IASCAIGH MHARA (BIM), Ireland's Seafood Development Agency has partnered up with the RNLI to deliver a series of one day Man Overboard experiences aimed at Irish fishermen this autumn. The aim is to highlight the importance of wearing a correctly fitted **Personal Floatation Device** (PFD) and ensure fishermen are ready to implement their vessels **Man Overboard** (MOB) recovery plan. Participants will experience first-hand the difference between falling overboard in challenging sea conditions with no Personal Floatation Device, followed by the same experience with their PFD correctly fitted.

Although the conditions are controlled, they provide a realistic experience, simulating the impact of work clothing, oilskins, and boots on a person's buoyancy, coupled with challenging sea conditions. The class also looks at the importance of having and following your Man Overboard recovery plan.

Recent research (May 2021) commissioned by BIM to understand more about fishermen and their views on safety at sea revealed the vast majority of fishermen understand that wearing a PFD could save their lives. However, just over half of fishermen interviewed said they do not always wear their PFD at sea. The research also

highlighted that 80% of those that have attended safety at sea training within the past five years are considerably more likely to regularly wear their PFD. This compares to 58% for those that were on a training course more than five years ago or have never been on one before.

BIM's Skills Development Director, IAN MANNIX, said: "The research clearly highlights the importance of reinforcing the message that wearing a PFD is essential at sea. Having participated in this class myself recently, it really brought home the extreme difference wearing a PFD makes.

Without a doubt, it is essential for surviving at sea. We are delighted to be able to partner with the RNLI in delivering these classes free of charge to Irish fishermen. Both BIM and the RNLI have a shared goal of safety at sea. The experience compliments and builds upon the existing mandatory three-day Safety Training offered by BIM in both its National Fisheries Colleges in Donegal and Cork and our two mobile coastal training units."

FRANKIE HORNE, Fishing Safety Manager, RNLI, delivers the course and he said: "As fishermen, one of the most important things we can do is be prepared for an 'Accident

Immersion' whereby we unintentionally end up in the water. RNLI data analysis shows that most Fishing Fatalities from accident immersion are because we cannot stay afloat or be recovered in time. 109 fishermen lost their lives in Irish and UK waters between 2008 and 2017, going about their daily work. Of these, 47 fatalities were a result of accidental Immersion, Man Overboard (MOB). When you go overboard. Capable people, become incapable very quickly. Be Rigged and Ready."

The classes will take place in the National Maritime College of Ireland (NMCI) Ringaskiddy, Co. Cork. Potential participants must have their BIM Mandatory Safety Training completed and be over 16 years of age.

To register your interest contact:
Lisa Hollingum,
E: Lisa_Hollingum@rnli.org.uk
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More information can be found at:
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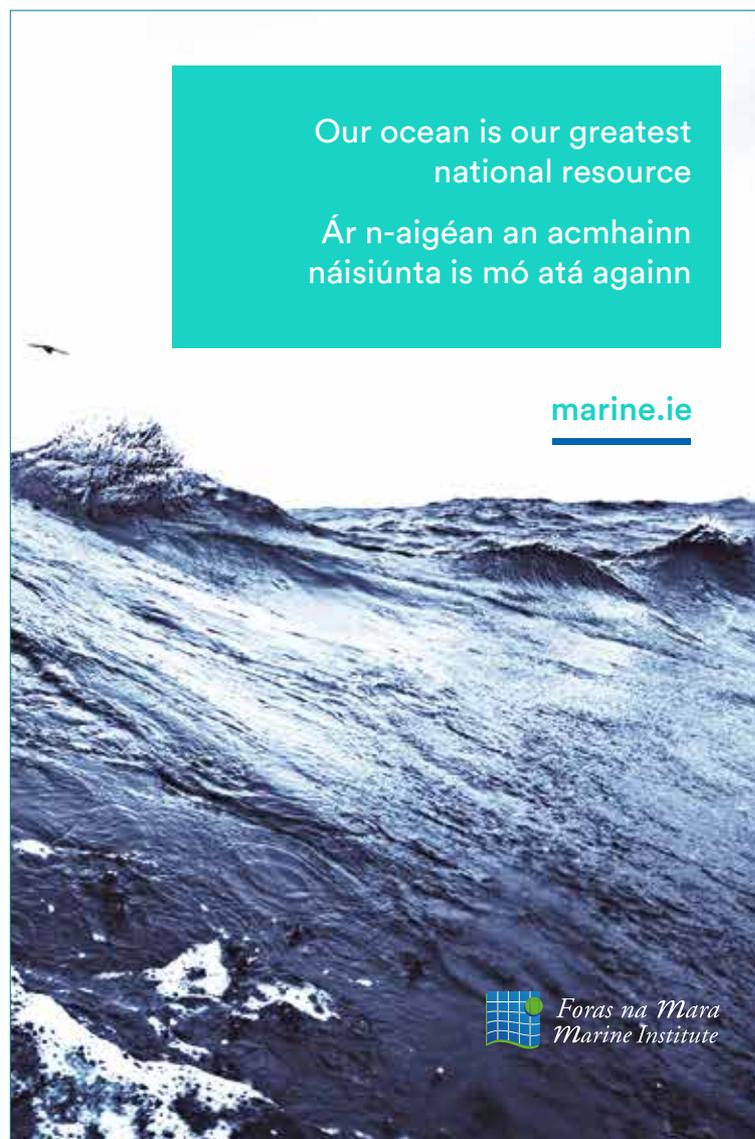


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