

IRELAND'S LEADING MARITIME NEWSPAPER

# MARINE TIMES

FEBRUARY 2023 - PRICE €3



Ronan Ross leaving Ardglass - Photo by Christopher Feenan

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## Change of Direction Needed to Support Inshore Fishing

The Irish Islands Marine Resource Organisation (IIMRO) has called for “a change of direction in how small-scale and inshore fishing is supported in Ireland.” IIMRO says that the fishing community is facing challenges that need “a whole-of-government approach in order to address the current lack of ambition that will result in significant losses to communities all around our coast.”

This year will see many changes in the marine sector with marine protected areas and offshore renewable installations being introduced, IIMRO notes and warns that, without appropriate safeguards for fisheries these risk displacing smaller boat owners and forcing them out of their livelihoods.

- Read more on page 12

## “They Are Such A Headache For Us”

Windfarms and Fishermen - Page 10

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## the fine Art of Marine Finance

by Art Kavanagh

### Be Careful About Pleading Poverty

**I** remember years ago going to the Doctor with a horrible pain in my leg. He told me to sit on the couch and remove my shirt to which I said "It's a pain in my LEG I have Doc" but I did what I was told and he fixed the problem which actually for interest was Sciatica which emanates from a nerve in the BACK. The same principal applies when preparing Loan Applications Lads.

The old formula relating to Loans has not changed; **How much do we want? What for? How are we going to pay it back? Have we Security to offer?**

We therefore have to make a detailed Plan for the Bank which will detail our Fishing Plan, or projected cashflow to demonstrate that we can afford the payments.

The Bank will insist on Financial Accounts fresher than 6 months but certainly within 12 months.

It's like building a House – or a Boat.

We need to have all the materials on site

and in my business my job is to make sure that we have the materials so I can assemble them for presentation to the Bank.

In the case of fishing, proper information never was more important as from yourselves and your POs we have ongoing negativity about the Industry and its prospects.

When you look at some of the commentaries from the various organizations the question must be asked – Would you lend money into this industry which is declaring itself "Banjaxed"?

You are far from Banjaxed lads and despite the various pressures - you are

doing OK and I continue to be proud of my association with you.

Just be careful about pleading poverty lads ..... It can backfire !!!!

ooOoo

### The initial Decommissioning Offers have issued with Mixed Results.

Some of you are very disappointed at the results and I know that BIM who are more than anxious that the Scheme be successful are examining calls for "Recounts" some of which may result in increased Offers.

The Scheme has included Tax Incentives which I don't fully understand myself - because I am neither an Accountant or a Tax Advisor - but each of you who received an offer WILL HAVE an Accountant who you need to consult BEFORE SIGNING ANYTHING!!!!

I believe (rightly or wrongly) that no matter how little the Tax Concession the option of taking Decommissioning outweighs the prospect of selling the vessel even for the fact that the scheme is designed to remove vessels from the fleet freeing up quota for those remaining.

By leaving vessels in the fleet which have been offered a Decommissioning Payment the net benefit to those vessels

remaining is diluted.

ooOoo

### I have to refer again to the almost total collapse of the Registration and Licensing systems which is now at CRISIS level.

The fact that the system involves separate Government Departments who appear to be grossly understaffed is unhealthy but sadly mirroring the situation in our Health Service and our Schools not to mention the Driving Test and NCT Systems.

Within so many Departments we have decent respectful Civil Servants who are mortified at the lack of service they are able to provide.

I referred some months ago to an expression which Professor John Crown coined when talking about the Health Service but which applies to so many other services.

We have what Professor Crown described as **COMPASSION FATIGUE** – It's not that people don't care, they are too tired, too overworked or maybe too overmanaged to care.

If you are an "overmanager" I have a plea that you reflect on the effect this has on decent staff who despite the difficulties are trying to maintain a decent service level - and also please reflect on the suffering being caused to those of us on the outside waiting for things to be done.

There are times when to avert a crisis rules may need to be modified to make them easier to implement. No need to break them or even bend them- just use a tiny bit of "cop on" and decency.

I often use the simile of the sinking canoe where everyone is bailing like mad to keep her afloat.

There will always be a couple who refuse to bail because they have "seen it all before" and believe we are wasting our time. Then there will be the oddball sitting at the back who is not only not bailing – but throwing the odd bucket of water back into the canoe.

Disgusting.

**We all know a couple of those!!!!**



Cisemar coming into Douarnenez. Photo by Shane Kelly

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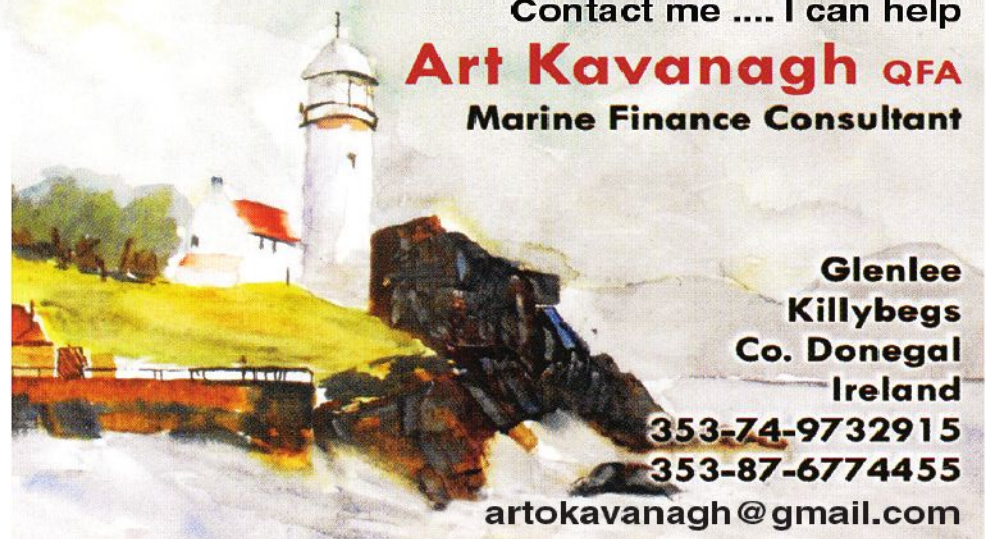
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### BIM New Fishermen Scheme

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**O**f the sixty-four applications made under the decommissioning scheme, 57 have been approved by Bord Iascaigh Mhara which issued offers to those owners to remove their boats from the fleet and scrap them.

The cost for scrappage will fall to the owners.

Indications, garnered by the Marine Times, are that not all those who have been approved will take up the offers because the pay-outs will not be sufficient. The possibility, identified to this paper, is that the total number of boats to decommission could be under 40.

Resistance to the offers was evident at a meeting held in Limerick in mid-January, organised by the Irish South and West Fish Producers' Organisation.

"We were approached by many people about this scheme, including many from outside our organisation," said Chief Executive Patrick Murphy. "There was not one person in the room who was happy with the scheme and they represented more than 50 per cent of the 57 who had got an offer. Some had got the top offers they could possibly get and they were not happy."

Along the South-East coast there is also dissatisfaction about the complexity of the scheme.

"We are in a wait-and-see situation now to see who will accept and who will decline," said John Lynch, CEO of the Irish South and East FPO. "Some of the offers were considered poor and they were sent back to BIM and I think some of those offers were improved when they were reviewed. The conditions are complex."

Particular criticism and a degree of anger are aimed at the demand for repayment of compensation paid-out under the second temporary tie-up scheme.

This scheme has been described by Marine Minister Charlie McConalogue as a compensation for his Department's refusal to introduce a fuel subsidy to compensate fishing boat owners for increased diesel prices due to the Ukrainian War. Though such a subsidy was approved by the EU and introduced by several Member States, Minister McConalogue turned down repeated requests from the Irish industry to provide a subsidy to the fleet here.

Now, to qualify for decommissioning, owners who have been approved for the scheme have been told they must repay money paid to them for the temporary tie-up.

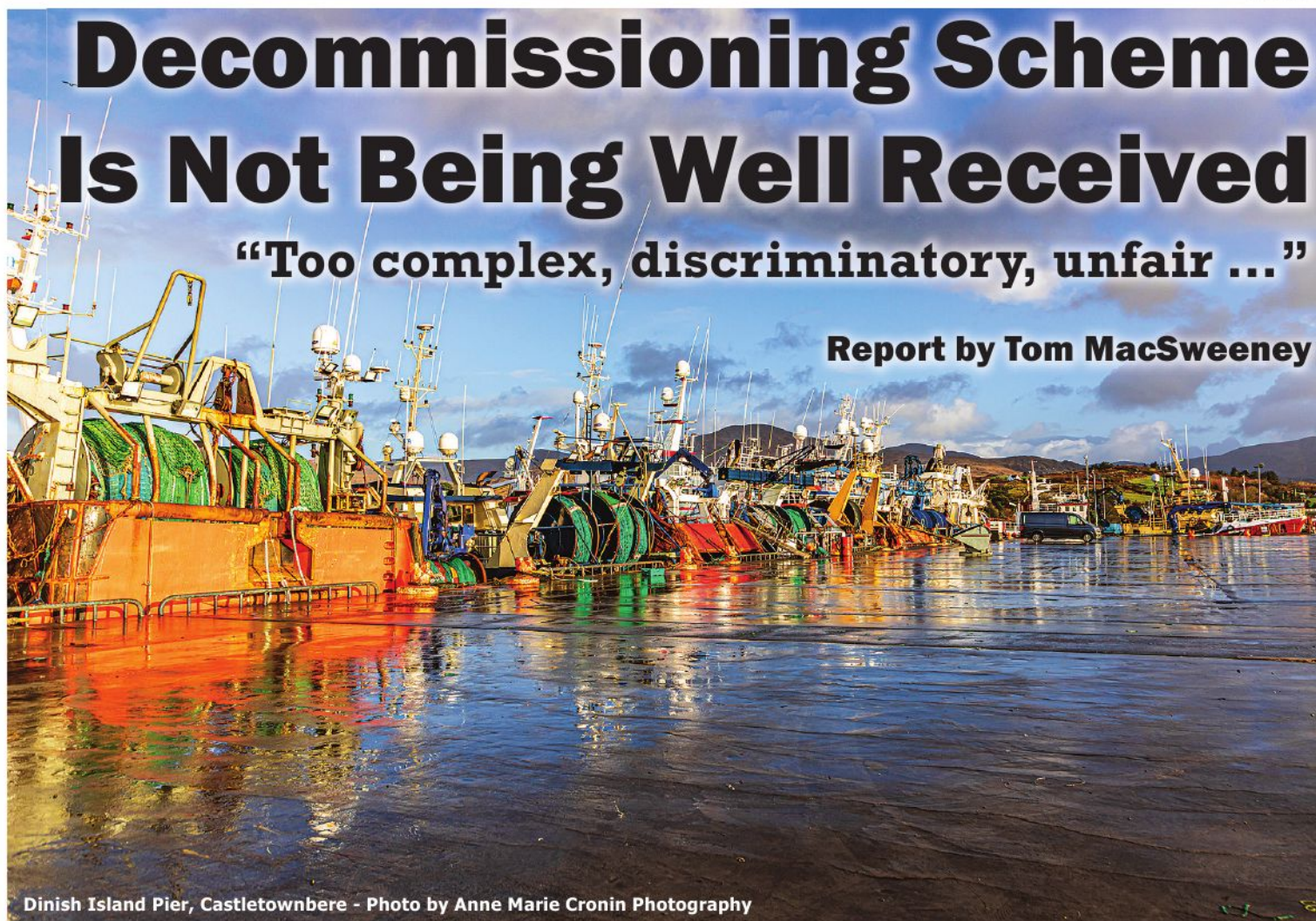
"I don't think there is any justification for taking back the tie-up money paid for the temporary scheme as a condition of the decommissioning offer. I do not think that is fair," said the South-East's John Lynch. "Boats were tied-up under that scheme, now what was given for that has to be paid back and that is unjustifiable. It was not in the criteria for the temporary tie-up scheme."

"It is very hard to determine at this point how many will go ahead with decommissioning," according to Aodh O'Donnell, CEO of the Irish Fish Producers' FPO.

# Decommissioning Scheme Is Not Being Well Received

"Too complex, discriminatory, unfair ..."

Report by Tom MacSweeney



Dinish Island Pier, Castletownbere - Photo by Anne Marie Cronin Photography

"Obviously the status between the State and the individual applicant is a private matter and we are not privy to it, but we estimate that a significant percentage may not go for the decommissioning scheme unless there is a meaningful reassessment of some of the conditions. The view generally is that some of the conditions and criteria are overly complex and need to be looked at."

"The scheme is designed contrary to what it should be," according to Patrick Murphy of the ISWFPO in Castletownbere. "It should be flexible right across the board. It is unworkable. There were people from Donegal down to Castletownbere and from the south-east coast at our meeting in Limerick and many were very angry and upset. The scheme is still not sufficient to make it worthwhile for many owners."

He was particularly critical of the concentration of scheme provisions on catch in comparison to age of a vessel offered for decommissioning.

"We suggested how this could be dealt with. We were not listened to. The scheme is still not sufficient to make it worthwhile for many owners. We are being proved correct in what we said about the scheme when we were on the industry Task Force."

He was also strongly critical of the taking back of compensation paid to boats that tied-up in port under the temporary fishing cessation scheme: "That was compensation, but now someone taking the decommissioning scheme has to give that money back, so where is the compensation for that scheme?"

It does seem, on the balance of what the MARINE TIMES has been told that, in regard to the temporary tie-up, owners who did tie-up as suggested by the Minister and his Department, are being hit with an extra deduction penalty if they accept decommissioning. It does seem that there

was no prior advice contained in the offers made to owners during the temporary tie-up scheme, that they would have to repay the compensation received, if they took part in the decommissioning scheme.

"This decommissioning scheme will not solve the problems of the Irish fishing industry," says ISWFPO CEO Patrick Murphy.

The Irish Islands Marine Resource Organisation has also warned that decommissioning will not solve problems in the fishing industry.

"IIMRO has taken part in a variety of forums since being recognised as a PO in early 2021 and has consistently opposed the policy of diversification away from fishing, instead promoting policies of retaining fishing and encouraging new entrants into the community. The various decommissioning schemes currently being introduced will not solve the imbalances in the current system and an urgent rethink is needed on how fisheries are managed here."

Read more about decommissioning in the CEOs columns on pages 8 & 9

## Government Appears to Re-Announce Same Funding Package for Killybegs

**I**ndependent TD for Donegal, Thomas Pringle, said the recent Government announcement of spending for Killybegs is not the first time this funding was announced.

The Government recently announced nearly €9 million for Killybegs projects.

However, Deputy Pringle said, "In July of last year, €10.5 million was announced for the same projects. In fact, going back to 2017 there was an announcement of the same work as well in Killybegs.

"I'd love to say it is great to see this funding, but if the reality is that it is only €400,000 or €500,000 in funding this year, why doesn't the minister come out and say that? Either these figures are misleading, or they aren't. If they're right, they raise serious questions about the overall cost of the projects," he said.

The deputy said the projects slated for funding are ongoing.

Deputy Pringle said: "The extension of Smooth Point Pier has been ongoing for a number of years. The work on the small

crafts harbour has also been announced on a number of occasions, and it's under construction.

"It may be that the €9 million will be invested over 10 years, but rather than announcing the incremental investments each year they announce €9 million every year.

"These works are already progressing and this funding is allowing the work to continue. Why don't they just say that?"

The deputy said the works are important to Killybegs and surrounding region and should be completed in a timely fashion.

Deputy Pringle said: "I said last year that I hoped we wouldn't hear this announcement of the same funding in two years' time, but here we are."

See page 4 to read more on this announcement by Minister McConalogue

# €37.3m Investment in Capital Projects in Ireland's Six Fishery Harbour Centres for 2023

**Minister for Agriculture, Food and the Marine, Charlie McConalogue TD, has announced the allocation of €37.3m for capital projects in 2023 in Ireland's six state-owned Fishery Harbour Centres at Killybegs, Ros an Mhíl, An Daingean, Castletownbere, Dunmore East and Howth through the Fishery Harbour and Coastal Infrastructure Development Programme.**



Works continuing at Smooth Point in Killybegs

The Minister noted “The six Fishery Harbour Centres are critical infrastructure for our seafood industry. Approximately 90% of all fish landings into Ireland come through these facilities. This demonstrates how successful these Harbours have become as economic hubs for the Seafood industry. The continuous development of the infrastructure in these Harbours has been critical to the fishing fleet and the land-based seafood processing industry. These Harbours are the economic development drivers for the largely peripheral coastal communities and hinterlands where they are located. The Government is committed to continuing to develop these Harbours to underpin our seafood industry and drive on economic development in these areas.”

The Minister added that “Ireland’s 200 miles Exclusive Economic zone provides rich nursery and fishing grounds for our own fleet and for other EU fleets. The Irish Seafood industry and Government, working on the strategy set out by the industry led Seafood Taskforce, are committed to overcoming current challenges and building a strong sustainable Irish seafood industry on a bedrock of sustainably managed fish stocks. A critical element for the future of our fisheries dependant coastal communities is top class landing infrastructure, where a modern seafood industry can operate effectively and be efficiently serviced. Our geographic position close to the fishing grounds and the likely rising real cost of energy in the coming decades provide a strategic opportunity for our harbours and coastal communities to become growing seafood hubs offering best facilities that attract landings from a greater portion of the fish caught in our 200 mile zone. This will help realise

the maximum opportunities for primary and secondary processing of seafood in Ireland and provide for a strong Irish seafood processing industry to service our fishing fleet and others and maintain these coastal communities. These are the reasons why I am announcing this significant Government capital investment programme in our Fishery Harbour Centres today.”

In addition to the Fisheries and Seafood Production industries, the Fishery Harbour Centres are accommodating an ever-increasing amount of diverse marine commercial business, including commercial cargo traffic, cruise liners, restaurants and other leisure, tourism and social activities. All of these activities complement the critical economic activity generated by our fishing industry and help to maintain the vitality of these coastal communities.

In 2021, approximately 88% of the sea fish landed into the State was landed into the six Fishery Harbour Centres. For 2021, Bord Iascaigh Mhara reported that the Irish seafood industry contributed €1.26 billion to the Irish economy.

Two flagship projects are already contracted under the 2023 Programme. These include the Deep Water Quay at Ros an Mhíl (€16m in 2023) for which the Minister announced a contractor had been appointed in December 2022 and the ongoing Smooth Point pier extension at Killybegs (€7.5m in 2023) which should be substantially completed this year. The funding announcement will also enable completion of the major Castletownbere development project which the Department has been undertaking for the last four years.

The Programme also supports maintenance at Cape Clear and a small number of piers, lights and beacons around the coast

in accordance with the 1902 ex-congested Districts Board Piers, Lights and Beacons Act. Additionally, the Department’s commitment to supporting the Government’s environmental and sustainability objectives is demonstrated with a number of pertinent projects planned under this year’s programme including changeovers to energy efficient lighting and power and water metering to monitor resource consumption.

The Minister concluded by saying that “Fishing has always been of significant social and economic importance to Ireland with over 16,000 direct and indirect jobs across fisheries, aquaculture, processing and ancillary sectors and the seafood industry plays a vital role in the sustainable economic viability of many coastal communities across Ireland. With this €37.3m announcement and my recent

announcement of €55.3m investment this year in 164 public marine infrastructure projects in Local Authority piers, under the Brexit Adjustment Local Authority Marine Infrastructure Scheme 2022-23, I believe this unprecedented investment in state-of-the-art facilities around the coast reinforces this Government’s strong commitment to support the seafood industry, other marine related industries and coastal communities”

The funding provided under the Fishery Harbour and Coastal Infrastructure Development Programme is in addition to the funding of €55.3m for the Brexit Adjustment Local Authority Marine Infrastructure Scheme 2022-23 which the Minister announced in December 2022. That scheme provides funding to local authorities to revitalise Ireland’s public marine infrastructure.

Fishery Harbour & Coastal Infrastructure Development Programme 2023

Location	Project Description	Cost €
Howth	Middle Pier berthing Face	300,000
	Howth Harbour Dredging	150,000
	Harbour Workshop	50,000
	CCTV upgrade	25,000
	Boatyard Surfacing Upgrade	20,000
	Fishermens toilet and shower facility	10,000
	East Pier storage sheds - upgrade and waterproofing of structure	100,000
<b>Total</b>		<b>655,000</b>
Dunmore East	West Wharf Fishing Pontoon Extension	350,000
	New Retaining Wall along cliff	150,000
	Industrial Effluent Pipeline	20,000
	Workshop Upgrade	50,000
	Syncrolift Repair/Upgrade Works	100,000
	Replace Building at Site 18	50,000
	Water Metering	300,000
West Wharf Extension & Return	300,000	
<b>Total</b>		<b>1,320,000</b>
Castletownbere	Dinish Wharf Expansion	800,000
	Mainland Quay Surrounds Upgrade	50,000
	Water Metering & Sewer Installation	100,000
	Removal of Rock under Old Oil Tank Site (Dinish)	150,000
	Mainland Quay Wall Repairs	400,000
	Replace piles at ferry slipway	700,000
	Syncrolift Upgrade Works	150,000
	Harbour support facilities, Dinish	2,500,000
	Small Craft Harbour on Dinish Island	50,000
	Syncrolift Fendering Replacement	50,000
	Upgrade public lighting	100,000
Oil Tanks Re-location on Dinish Island	30,000	
Dinish Island Traffic Management Study	60,000	
<b>Total</b>		<b>5,140,000</b>
Dingle	Western Marina Extension - Dredging, Floating Breakwater & Marina Furniture	50,000
	Remedial Works to East side of the Main Pier	300,000
	Western Marina Pontoon Repairs	700,000
	Renewable Energy Upgrade on all FHC Buildings	200,000
	East basin Passenger Pontoon Replacement	100,000
<b>Total</b>		<b>1,350,000</b>
Ros An Mhíl	Welfare Building for SCH	750,000
	Deep Water Quay	16,000,000
	Water Metering	300,000
	Net Storage Works	100,000
	Upgrade of HM offices/Drying room	60,000
Upgrade of CCTV system	150,000	
<b>Total</b>		<b>17,360,000</b>
Killybegs	Piles on Blackrock Pier and Landing Pier	100,000
	Small Craft Harbour Service Building	300,000
	Water Control Measures	350,000
	Smooth Point Pier Extension	7,500,000
	Provision of Harbour Master's Store	100,000
	Passenger Embarkation Pontoon	50,000
	Energy Saving measures	450,000
	Provision of Workshop Stores	100,000
<b>Total</b>		<b>8,950,000</b>
Cape Clear	Road Improvement & Watermain Works	450,000
	Safety & Maintenance Works	40,000
	Disability Access Works	10,000
<b>Total</b>		<b>500,000</b>
PLB's:- 6 FHC's:- 6 FHC's:-	Piers, Lights and Beacons	24,000
	Safety & Maintenance Works	1,900,000
	Disability Access Works	120,000
<b>Total</b>		<b>2,044,000</b>
<b>Programme Total</b>		<b>37,319,000</b>

# Killybegs Fishermen Angry Over No Brexit Burden Pay-Out

Marine Times Reporter

**Killybegs fishermen are angry over their treatment by Government which has not delivered on undertakings agreed as a result of the Brexit impact.**

“Burden-sharing” is not happening as far as they are concerned, having lost €53m over three years because of quota transfers to the UK.

“We are still waiting to get as much as a Euro in the pelagic sector. We have been asking for this for the last two years. The Task Force recommended it. How long does this have to be looked at without a pay-out,” asks Sean O’Donoghue, Chief Executive of the Killybegs Fishermen’s Organisation.

“I can accept that things have to be done in a certain timeframe but we definitely thought there would be some monies coming at the end of last year. The Danish scheme has got State aid approval from

Brussels and they will be paying significant monies to their pelagic fleet in the next two months. We needed it before Christmas. For the first time in my memory the pelagic boats were tied-up and could not fish to give a bonus to their crews before Christmas. That never happened before in my memory and I have been there for 40 years.

“The money is there. It can be drawn down. It doesn’t cost the Exchequer anything. We took twenty six per cent of the Brexit hit the biggest of any country and it is absolutely ridiculous that we have not got a Euro since.”

- Read more from Sean O’Donoghue in THE CEOs feature on page 9

## BIM Showcase Their Supports and Services for Industry at Irish Skipper Expo 2023

**BIM are delighted to be a headline sponsor to the Irish Skipper Expo in 2023. The state agency has sponsored the event for over a decade with support from the European Maritime and Fisheries Fund (EMFF). The trade show is taking place at the University of Limerick Sport Arena on Friday 24, and Saturday 25 February next.**

BIM’s state-of-the-art stand will feature a range of information and activities this year, including: updates on potential funding from BIM administered schemes, findings from the fishing gear technology trials, information on our ‘Man Overboard’ initiative with the RNLI, and the latest news from our Clean Oceans Initiative.

Live demonstrations of the digitised version of the fisheries management chart are available at the BIM stand. The online chart has experienced high volumes of use among industry since its launch two years ago. Features include information about key regulations including quota and technical conservation measures, updated in real-time.

A model display of selective gear will be suspended over the BIM stand while underwater footage taken during recent gear trials with members of the Irish fishing industry plays on screens. Another important strand at this year’s Expo is the Clean

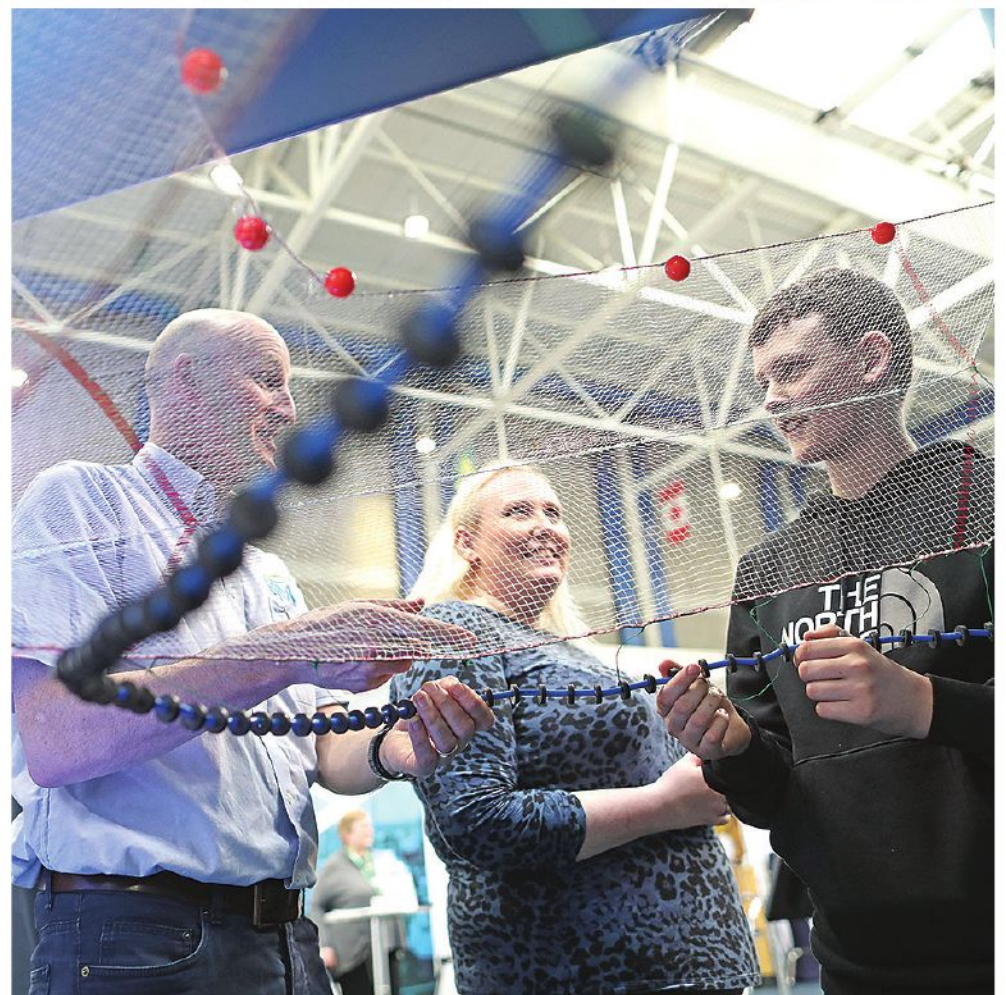
Oceans Initiative. One of the next steps in this successful initiative is to engage with vessels on gear retirement.

BIM’s Coastal Training Unit (CTU) is a familiar sight at the annual show, highlighting careers and training in the seafood sector and is a great opportunity for fishers to meet our staff and instructors to discuss their training needs.

BIM will host two gear retirement sessions on the Coastal Training Unit, based just outside UL Arena, on Saturday February 25th next. The first – for Ros A Mhíl enquiries – will be held at 11am and that will be followed by a session at 12 noon for Clogherhead enquiries. Here, vessels can get more details, pre-register on the traceability platform with Frank Fleming of Verifact and meet Sharon of IFF Plastics to learn more about the opportunities for gear’s second life in renewed plastic products.



Great to see - New builds nearing completion at Mooney Boats are (above) the Sparkling Star pictured on sea trials and (below) the Eilean Croine on the syncrolift with sea trials imminent. Photos courtesy Alan Hennigan / Mooney Boats.



Pictured at the Irish Skipper Expo are young Fisherman Darragh Guildea, his mother Ciara Guildea and Ronan Cosgrove from BIM.

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**“Inshore fisheries will not survive on the watery gruel of Government rhetoric.”**

**The Rural Independent Dail motion demanding a €12m financial support package for inshore fishermen has been approved. However, there has been no guarantees by the Minister that the money will be made available**

Speaking following the Dail debate on the Motion which was passed, Michael Collins TD said: “We welcome the support of the Dail for our Motion. However, the Minister for Agriculture, Food and the Marine Charlie McConalogue showed a complete lack of understanding and gross insincerity of the needs of small-scale fishermen, as he outrightly failed to provide a concrete guarantee, that the sector would receive the requested €12 million emergency funding package – as requested by the motion. Instead, the minister demonstrated gross incompetence as he engaged in ‘game’ of deflection tactics and ‘petty political squabbling’.

“Once again, the Rural TDs redouble their call for the acute urgency in the government sanctioning a €12 million direct state financial package to mitigate the socio-economic pressures on the sector and support the vitality of coastal communities.

“Failure by the Minister and the government to act upon the direction of this motion will result in 9 in every 10 of Ireland’s fishing fleet, facing a wipe-out situation, with up to 3,000 jobs in rural areas being placed in jeopardy in rural coastal communities

“It is completely unacceptable and bitterly disappointing that the Minister with responsibility for fisheries and the government would flippantly accept the contents of the motion in the Dail today, yet give absolutely no guarantee that the €12 million allocations will be made. It is a devious way to treat small-scal fishers who are under astronomical pressure.

“These fishers deserve to be treated honestly and fairly. The ‘nod and wink’ politics of Fianna Fail and Fine Gael will be letting them all be down. This matter is too im-

portant for these establishment parties to be playing politics with people’s livelihoods.

“We know from the recent BIM report, that fuel costs for fishermen have skyrocketed by 114 percent over the past year and this cost alone now represents 28 percent of the average fleet’s operating costs.

“The government cannot ignore this situation. We need this grant scheme up and running immediately, to allot available EU funds to all impacted inshore boats through the BIM grant porthole system. Doing this would enable an almost instant allocation system to be established providing short-term immediate relief.”

Speaking during the debate Deputy Collins said; “I and my colleagues have made a clear and unambiguous case for the immediate allocation of financial support to inshore fisheries. If that is not provided then the signal will go out yet again that we have a Government, for all of its rhetoric, that does not actually give a damn what happens when it comes to fisheries.”

So let’s see what the Ministers next move will be ....



Four winds hauling in Youghal - Photo courtesy Jack Nolan

# MARINE TIMES

**The Strong Voice for Ireland’s Fishing, Marine and Coastal Communities**

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## The Land Grab

**or How A Nation Conveniently Forgets How Our Seas Have Been Taken From Our Fishermen Over the Decades**

It would be hard to miss the soap box protests and teeth gnashes that have taken up the news bulletins and column inches in our daily newspapers. The relentless media bombardment regarding the so called land grab as a British investment fund could buy upwards of 123,000 acres of rural Ireland as part of a deal to help the State’s forestry agency meet its climate targets would be hard to miss.

The inhumanity of it all – imagine rural Ireland being sold off like that! How can the government continue to justify a corporate takeover of tens of thousands of acres of Irish land?

Errrr let’s rewind a bit before the sarcasm is lost – It is fifty years since our submission and the surrender of our seas to the EU. It seems to be forgotten about, never properly conveyed in the media or is it that Joe Public just doesn’t care?

The irony of tech job losses making headline news whilst thousands of jobs systematically destroyed around our coast doesn’t seem to take a flinch out of society.

There exists an unfair quota policy that favours our European neighbours rather than those the seas belong to. A common fisheries policy is anything but common for this Island Nation.

A spatial squeeze is developing as those that remain in the fishing industry are boxed in so tight that if they cast a net or threw a lobster pot they would either land in a proposed Marine Protected Area or slap a future offshore windfarm.

Those that will be left in the industry after yet another round of decommissioning will see a smaller slice of the fish pie available to them ... crumbs even.

If our fleet is being systematically eviscerated by a failure to support it why then are we funding an increase in quay space in our fishery harbour centres ... is it just infrastructure for foreign fleets to land our fish and cargo vessels to load Coillte forestry timber ..... only for us all to import it all back again as there will be nobody left in the sea or on our land.

There has been an ethnic cleansing of fishing traditions for generations now. The Coillte sell-off deal shows the Agriculture Minister’s astonishing dereliction of duty .....how is the irony lost on how Irish fishermen have been ousted out of our own waters by decades of dereliction of duty by successive governments and the civil service?

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FOR IRELAND'S  
COASTAL COMMUNITIES

## Information Session

### Brexit Blue Economy

#### *Enterprise Development Scheme*

Did you know that €25 million in funding is available this year to businesses to stimulate growth in rural coastal communities? Come along to one of our Information Sessions to find out how it can benefit you, your business, your community, and how to apply.

**All meetings will take place from 6.30pm to 8.30pm each evening**

### February

7 <sup>th</sup>	<b>Tralee</b>	Meadowlands Tralee, V92 DC83
8 <sup>th</sup>	<b>Portmagee</b>	The Bridge Bar, V23 RX05
15 <sup>th</sup>	<b>Carna</b>	Ionad Carna, H91 W607
16 <sup>th</sup>	<b>Clifden</b>	Station House Hotel, H71 AK52
23 <sup>rd</sup>	<b>Limerick</b>	Seafarers Conference, Castletroy Park Hotel, V94 Y0AN
24 <sup>th</sup> / 25 <sup>th</sup>	<b>Limerick</b>	Skipper Expo, UL Sports Arena, V94 XT66

### March

7 <sup>th</sup>	<b>Belmullet</b>	Broadhaven Bay Hotel, F26 D8N7
8 <sup>th</sup>	<b>Rosses Point</b>	Radisson Blu Sligo, F91 XW7Y



Fisheries Local Action Groups  
Grúpaí Gníomhaíochta Iascaigh Áitiúla



Rialtas na hÉireann  
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**The fishing industry is not being adequately communicated with by offshore windfarm developers. There is no certainty that the decommissioning scheme will be a success, because of the complexity of regulations and the perceived unfairness of some aspects of the offers. The on-going negotiations over blue whiting quotas with Norway, which are continuing at the time of publication.**

**These are the major issues at the country's leading fish producer organisations, as reflected in the comments and analysis of the latest developments in the industry by the CEOs.**



*“The blue whiting season will be upon us next month, there has to be motivation to get a good outcome for Irish fishermen, but a deal is predicated on having an agreement that is meaningful.”*

**Aodh O'Donnell, CEO of the Irish Fish Producers' Organisation**

**W**e are about to move into the fifth round of negotiations between the EU and Norway, subject to the Norwegians coming back with fresh proposals to the EU Commission. It's a very important time. It is deemed to be the last round of the negotiations so it's generally accepted that the Norwegians have to come with proposals. It's hard to judge what the final outcome will be. There has been a lot of work done at all levels, both EU and nationally here with the government, the Minister and his officials and lot of work done with the Commission also themselves so we are hopeful there will be some form of meaningful reciprocation if access is granted to the Norwegians.

The industry has been listened to. There has been a reasonable communication there about what the key issues are between ourselves, the Commission and the Minister, so now it is really a question of delivering, the blue whiting season will be upon us next month, so there has to be motivation to get an agreement and an outcome for Irish fishermen but a deal from our perspective is predicated on having an agreement that is meaningful.

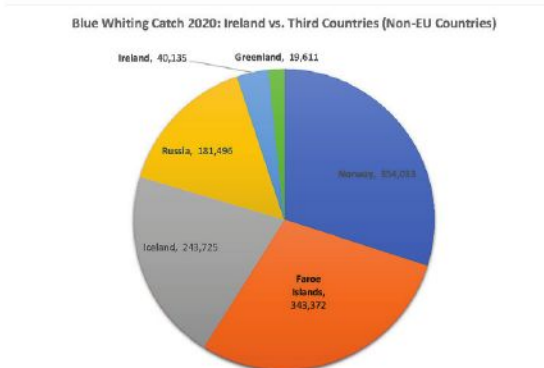
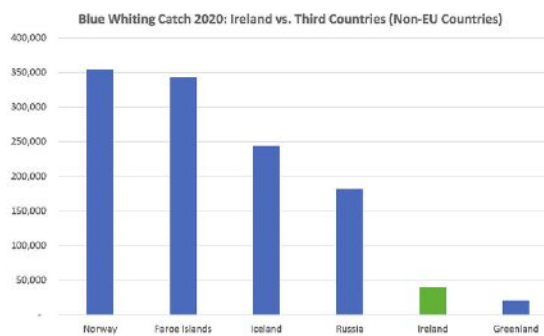
On decommissioning there is a mixed set of feelings in response to the proposals issued. Some people are unhappy with the offers they have received. The view generally is that some of the conditions and criteria are overly complex and need to be looked at. That is a purpose of engagement between the producer organisations and the government at the moment.

It is very hard to determine at this point in time how many will go ahead with decommissioning. Obviously the status between the State and the individual applicant is a private matter and we are not privy to it but we estimate that a significant percentage may not go for the decommissioning scheme unless there is a meaningful reas-

essment of some of the conditions.

At the end of the day the permanent loss of up to a third of the whitefish fleet is going to have significant social and economic impacts on coastal communities. It is a traditional fleet. It is very unfortunate that this is happening which, as we all know, is another outcome of the Brexit process.

On offshore wind farms we have a situation now where marine area consents were granted by government to seven or eight wind projects in December. These are now moving into the planning process. They are part of Phase One which will account for up to 43 per cent of the total generation capacity that is targeted for 2030 so it is a meaningful phase of the offshore renewable. Obviously there is concern in the affected areas that fishermen and local communities should have some say and some form of consultation between the marine area consents and the planning phase. We still haven't achieved or delivered a standard communications model for the sector. It is a work in progress. It is on-going but we have nothing finalised at this stage.



**IS&EFPO - Working For The Fishermen**

*“The scale of windfarm development is phenomenal. We want an obligation on developers to discuss with the fishing industry where these developments are going and where the least effect can be. There should be some initiative, benefit to accruing to fishing, which is having to give up so much, from all of this development in the marine space. On decommissioning, we are in a wait-and-see situation now to see who will accept and who will decline.”*

**John Lynch, CEO of the Irish South and East Fish Producers' Organisation**

**T**he decommissioning offers came out and there are those unhappy with them that the offers were not as good as expected, so we are in a wait-and-see situation now to see who will accept and who will decline. Some of the offers were considered poor and they were sent back to BIM and I think some of the offers were improved when they were reviewed. The conditions are complex.

I am still not happy, even though it is in the rules and the Minister and Department are sticking to it, I still don't think there is any justification for taking back the temporary tie-up money paid for the temporary scheme. Under the decommissioning offer, that it has to be repaid. I do not think that is fair. Boats were tied-up under that scheme, now what was given for that has to be paid back and that is unjustifiable. It was not in the criteria for the temporary tie-up scheme, though it is there for qualification for the decommissioning scheme. It was not there in the criteria for the temporary tie-up. That it has been put in the rules now does not make it right.

There is definitely not a hundred per cent approval response to the decommissioning scheme. Sixty-four applied, 57 were approved for an offer, but we will have to wait to see how many of that number take up the offers. We don't have that figure at the moment. The success of the scheme will be decided by the level of acceptance of the offers.

It is hard to know how it will work out. Perhaps up to two-thirds of those approved will go ahead. There could be thirty-eight or thirty-nine boats and that will still have a major effect on the communities from which they operate.

We lost €43m worth of fish due to Brexit overall, which has been and is a really severe blow to the Irish fishing industry. It was a very bad deal. We are left in a very bad position, our quota position was very badly hit. Decommissioning is very tough for people to have to decide about.

Turning to the development of wind farms, the scale of this is phenomenal. It is a huge issue, a huge step for the fishing industry where the development of offshore

wind farms is concerned and piled on top of that there are the new proposals for marine protected areas. All of this is going to have an effect limiting fishing.

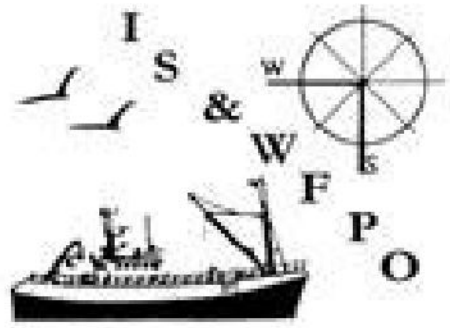
It is very hard to get public opinion in favour of fishing because there is such promotion about renewal of energy, reducing our dependence of fossil fuels which is on top of the agenda and being pushed hard at international, government and EU level, it is being pushed so hard that everything else is being pushed aside. We do need to clean-up in those regards, there is no question about that and we all accept that, the industry accepts it, but there is a need to take a hard, realistic look at what is being proposed and not to throw away what we have and that includes the fishing industry and its rights to fish in areas where it always has.

There is work being done on a document in relation to the communication issues on this with the developers. Contact and consideration is not even at present. At the Seafood Offshore Renewables Group they come and tell what they are going to do, where they are going to do it, when they are going to do it, They meet regularly, but they never discuss the fishing industry having an input into the location sites and that is where we want to get with the Seafood Offshore Working Group.

We want an obligation on developers to discuss with the fishing industry where these developments are going and where the least effect can be, that there will be on the industry, that is our objective and after that then we'll be talking compensation for fisheries which are having to give up so much for this new industry.

There should be some initiative, benefit to accruing to fishing from all of this development in the marine space.





**“Political decision-making has denied Irish fishermen the right to catch Irish fish. That is the reason for this decommissioning which is not getting full support. It is not a fair scheme and we have not been listened to when we pointed out the problems with it. We are now being proved right in what we have said.”**

**Patrick Murphy, CEO of the Irish South and West Fish Producers Organisation**

**W**e were approached by many people about this scheme, many from outside our organisation included and we gave everyone the right to have their say at a meeting in Limerick. There was not one person in the room who was happy with the scheme and they represented more than 50 percent of the 57 who had got an offer. Some had got the top offers they could possibly get and they were not happy. The scheme is designed contrary to what it should be.

It should be flexible right across the board. It is based on the catch. The age of the vessel does not come into it because the boat can't be sold on. This scheme is unworkable and seems to be designed to force Skippers off the water and to pit fisherman against fisherman. There were people from Donegal down to Castletownbere and from the south-east coast, many were very angry and upset. The scheme is still not sufficient to make it worthwhile for many owners. There is no distinction in age, there is in fish. This is a discriminatory action. We suggested how this could be dealt with. We were not listened to. The second tie-up, the Minister said, was to count for the fuel subsidy that was being sought. That was compensation, but now someone taking the decommissioning scheme has to give that back, so where is the compensation for that scheme? We have asked for an explanation for that and we have not got an answer. There are people being forced out of the industry who would wish to stay in it, the culture and the heritage of the industry is being wiped and that is forever, for the future, because we cannot get back what is now being lost. This is not good for Ireland. It is losing its ability for future fishermen to earn a living from the rich waters around the country. This is a permanent cessation, a permanent loss of the tradition of fishing which is being erased from certain parts of our country. I think that, when it is looked back at in the history books, it will be seen as a crime.

The decommissioning will not solve the problems in the fishing industry.

On the blue whiting, why should anyone not a member of the EU be allowed more access to our waters without giving anything in return? You have to stand and make your case as the producer organisations did in regard to the Norwegian access request and I think we have got our point

**“It gives us recognition that we didn't have before,” says Michael Desmond, following the approval of NIFA as an EU Producer Organisation. “It means we are seen as a group of fishermen who deserve to be recognised for what we do.” ... See page 13**

across to the EU that there cannot just be access given away to our waters without fair treatment for Irish fishermen. We could have a very healthy, lucrative business for the economy from the fish in our waters, if our industry and our waters were properly recognised and that would build up our coastal communities, building up from our own resources, but that logic has not been applied.

Resources that have been taken from our waters - and no one will disagree that we got a very bad deal from the Common Fisheries Policy and from Brexit - should be given back to us.

Where the wind farm developments are concerned, the environmental impact of these developments, what will the disturbance to the environment do and how will that cause effects, this is not clearly known. How will they alter what has been there, spawning grounds and so on. They will be altering the environment they are going into. There are aspects of this that are not known and, while there is need for energy renewal, there is no indication known how this development will affect the overall marine environment.



**Killybegs Fishermen's**  
ORGANISATION LTD.

**“We are still waiting to get as much as a Euro in terms of the pelagic sector who have lost over the three years €53 million in the transfer to the UK and this is just intolerable.”**

**Sean O'Donoghue, CEO of the Killybegs Fishermen's Organisation**

**T**he big story for us really is Brexit and burden-sharing because. We have been asking for this for the last two years. The Task Force recommended it. There are a couple of schemes there, but how long do you have to keep looking at this.

We needed it before Christmas. For the first time in my memory the pelagic boats were tied-up and could not fish to give a bonus to their crews before Christmas. That never happened before in my memory and I have been there for 40 years.

The RSW vessels were all by a majority affected and this even though there was always a trip they could do that they could give a Christmas bonus to their crews and they could not this time. I can accept that things have to be done in a certain timeframe, but we definitely thought there would be some monies coming at the end of last year. The Danish scheme has got State aid approval from Brussels and they will be paying significant monies to their pelagic fleet in the next two months.

We took twenty six per cent of the Brexit hit the biggest hit of any country and it is absolutely ridiculous that we have not got a Euro since. A lot of schemes announced, but the main sector affected has not got anything.

This year alone we are going to lose over 13,000 tonnes of mackerel that is going to be transferred to the UK, which is worth about €19m. That is just for 2023. We have had the same for '21 and '22. We have lost up to about €54m. There are two schemes written into the Task Force that we all signed up for and Government signed up for. I just cannot understand it at this stage and we are desperate about this to get it

done. It is really critical for us. The money is there. It can be drawn down. It doesn't cost the Exchequer anything. We have been highlighting this. Everybody recognises that we are the most affected sector. If you look at Donegal overall both in whitefish and in pelagics you'll see that 70 per cent in terms of value relates to stocks, pelagics and whitefish, off the Donegal coast, with obviously mackerel being over 90 per cent of that.

The mackerel share-out negotiations are going on at the moment to be completed by the end of March. So we are moving might and main to see can the EU get back some of the percentage that it lost in Brexit.

There is also this Danish mackerel thing that did not happen at the December Council. If those two things happen they could address some of the burden-sharing issues.

The blue whiting situation is important. There is no agreement so far with Norway. As far as we are concerned if there is to be access inside the Irish Box it has to be paid for in terms of blue whiting. If that doesn't happen there isn't access and we think we have the support of the Member States on that. The Norwegians say they won't pay for access and that is ridiculous. It is stalemate at the moment. Something may happen next week in relation to it, but time is running out for them as well. The blue whiting season will be starting.



The new Courtmacsherry Lifeboat, the Shannon-class RNLB Val Adnams and a flotilla of boats makes its way into Courtmacsherry in West Cork led by the Trent-class RNLB Frederick Storey Cockburn that has been stationed in Courtmacsherry since 1995. (Read more on page 16) Picture: Martin Walsh.

# “They Are Such A Headache For Us”

## Windfarms and Fishermen: An analysis of the current situation by Deputy Editor, Tom MacSweeney

**R**elations between the fishing industry and the developers of wind farms do not appear to be the best at the Seafood /Offshore Renewable Energy Working Group.

This was set up by the Minister for Housing, Local Government and Heritage, Darragh O’Brien, last Summer to “facilitate discussion on matters arising from the interaction of the seafood and offshore renewable energy industries, to promote and share best practice and to encourage liaison with other sectors in the marine environment.”

The MARINE TIMES has learned that there is disagreement over the way in which the fishing industry is being treated and that developers are perceived as being favoured by Government.

Attempts are now being made to improve communications between both sides. This comes at a time when developers have moved into the planning stage for offshore construction sites.

“We have a situation now where marine area consents were granted by Government to seven or eight wind projects in December. These are now moving into the planning process. They are part of Phase One which will account for up to 43 per cent of the total generation capacity that is targeted for 2030 so it is a meaningful phase of the offshore renewables preparations,” said Aodh O’Donnell, Chief Executive of the Irish Fish Producers’ Organisation.

“Obviously there is concern in the affected areas that fishermen and local communities should have some say and some form of consultation between the marine area consents and the planning phase. We still haven’t achieved or delivered a standard communications model for the sector. It is a work in progress. It is on-going but we have nothing finalised at this stage.”

For those whose fishing livelihoods are focused inshore the development of wind farms is a major issue.

**“They are such a headache for us. Any wind farm where there was a planning permission put in for, we had a member affected,”** says Michael Desmond, Chairman of the National Inshore Fishermen’s Association, which has just been given official recognition as an EU Producers’ Organisation.

### General Public Have No Idea

“The general public have no idea how badly fishermen will be affected by wind farms. It is a big imposition on inshoremen who have to take on the issue individually. NIFA does not have the resources to fight on their behalf, so it could cost individuals between ten and twenty thousand Euros to fight for the right to fish where they always fished. It is hard to imagine that men have to fight to be allowed fish where they always fished, for the right to do it and the right to fish where their fathers, grandfathers fished for a hundred years. It is an unbelievable situation to end up in.”

“It is very hard to get public opinion in favour of fishing because there is such promotion about renewal of energy, reducing our dependence on fossil fuels which is top of the agenda and is being pushed hard at international, government and EU level,” says John Lynch, CEO of the Irish South and East Fish Producers’ Organisation. “It is being pushed so hard that everything else is being brushed aside. There is no question about climate change and the environmental protection and we all accept that. The industry accepts it, but there is a need to take a hard, realistic look at what is being proposed and not to throw away what we have and that includes the fishing industry and its rights to fish in areas where it always has fished.

“The scale of development is phenomenal. This is a huge issue, a huge step for the fishing industry where the development of offshore wind farms is concerned and piled on top of that there are the proposals for marine protected areas. All of this is going to have an effect limiting fishing.

“There is work being done on a document in relation to the communication issues on this with the developers. Contact and consideration is not at an even level at present. At the Seafood Offshore Renewables Group they come and tell what they are going to do, where they are going to do it, when they are going to do it, They meet regularly, but they never discuss the right of the fishing industry to have an input into the location of sites and that is where we want

to get with the Seafood Offshore Working Group. We want an obligation on developers to discuss with the fishing industry where these developments are going and where the least effect will be on the industry, that is our objective and after that then we’ll be talking compensation for fisheries which are having to give up so much for this new industry. There should be some benefit accruing to fishing from all of this development in the marine space.”

Wind farm developers are being strongly supported by government with heavy lobbying and a State-generated message about climate change which is particularly pushed by the Green Party in Coalition. “Offshore wind generation is an essential contributor to providing enough electricity for the nation in the future”, according to Environment Minister and Green Party Leader, Eamon Ryan.

### Adequate Information According to Developers

Developers do not accept that the fishing industry is not being adequately informed. Wind farm industry sources pointed out to the MARINE TIMES that leaders of fishing industry representative organisations had been hosted on a visit to a Scottish offshore wind farm to show how development is being done. They also pointed to a planning application for a floating offshore wind farm costing up to €3 billion off the south coast of Donegal, which was announced last September and described as “to be lodged in the next 18 months with the support of Killybegs fishermen, the planned offshore wind farm is a joint venture by Killybegs Fishermen’s Organisation (KFO), Sinbad Marine Services and Hexicon, a Swedish firm that specialises in offshore wind farm technology.”

It is not only in Ireland that concerns have arisen about wind farms. Fishing industry complaints about the number of offshore farms being built across the North Sea and other EU basins are increasing. It has become apparent, despite undertakings given prior to development, that access to waters around windmills has been closed off.

There are other concerns being raised—shipping and marine leisure organisations say that they too have issues to be addressed. The impact of noise and more obstacles underwater to marine species is not fully clear.

The WindEurope industry representative group has claimed, through Chief Executive, Giles Dickson, that “offshore wind farms act as marine preservation areas, fishing and trawling is prohibited, which helps to reduce pressure on fish stocks.”

“Fishermen don’t like shrinking of fishing areas because it leads to displacement and intensifying fishing in other areas,” said Pim Visser, CEO of the Dutch fishermen’s organization VisNed. “The industry hasn’t noticed any increase in fish numbers even among species supposedly attracted to wind tower foundations such as cod.”

There is a vast industry around offshore wind development. Many companies with hundreds of employees are involved, from construction to technology and ancillary businesses. Billions of Euros are being invested as development companies perceive huge profits to be made.

Maritime Spatial Planning has become the new mantra, but the science of fish and the relationship to wind power is still not clear.

### Why Is Housing Department In Charge of Maritime Matters?

The Irish Government has given responsibility for marine planning to the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage. Why it allocated this to a land-based Department rather than the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine has not been adequately explained.

One opinion voiced in the fishing industry is that “it shows the Cabinet’s disregard for fishing.”

Irish Fish Producers’ Organisation CEO, Aodh O’Donnell, says every industry needs to co-operate to reduce fossil fuels but co-operation must work both ways “and we are not being properly consulted. Fishing interests are affected by both the location

and operation of wind farms. Charts indicate that most of the rich Irish Sea fishing area is targeted for turbine development. Fishing vessels could be displaced if there is an untrammelled development of offshore wind turbines. Our industry has already taken too many hits, but proper consultation could allow us all to co-exist.”

The new Maritime Area Regulatory Authority (MARA) is also under the aegis of the Department of Housing, again ignoring the maritime department by government. The Irish Farmers' Association, representing aquaculture/fish farmers has protested that they have been excluded from inclusion or consideration under MARA's responsibilities.

In December Minister for the Environment, Climate and Communications, Eamon Ryan, issued Maritime Area Consents (MACs) to the first phase of seven offshore renewable energy projects. “This represents a significant milestone in the delivery of offshore wind in Ireland,” he said.

“Rushed and without much consideration shown to our views,” came the fishing industry response.

### Fish and Wind Science

As mentioned, the science of fish and wind still requires research and definition.

Researchers have found that marine mammals and fish tend to avoid areas of offshore wind farm construction. Underwater noise by pile drivers that are used to pound holes into the seabed before installing the turbines, impacts on them. Increasingly there have been concerns expressed, the latest in the USA, about

mammals washing up dead on coastlines where this had not been previously experienced. Scientists have found evidence that loud noises cause marine mammals to avoid certain areas, while causing tissue damage and even killing them and fish.

Marine researchers in the UK have reported that once an offshore wind farm is operational, the seabed is protected from the impact of fishing and marine habitats regenerate, including algae and invertebrates that are eaten by fish flourish.

But there is still not clear evidence how or if this translates into larger fish populations.

The effectiveness of financial and strategic environmental assessment in the development of offshore wind farms has also been raised.

“There are issues around marine interests and socio-economic or environmental impact assessments. But there are also huge questions about foreign ownership of Irish energy sources, which could affect future energy security,” an expert in the sphere told the MARINE TIMES. “Strict, strong controls, before farms are built are necessary.”

“Where wind farm developments are concerned, the environmental impact, what will the disturbance to the environment do and how will that cause effects is not clearly known,” according to Patrick Murphy, Chief Executive of the South West Fish Producers' Organisation in Castletownbere. “How will they alter what has been there, the spawning grounds and so on? They will be altering the environment they are going

into. There are aspects of this that are not known and, while there is need for energy renewal, there is no indication known how this development will affect the overall marine environment.

### Interaction Between All Sectors Not Looked At

Mark Healy is an engineer who worked in maritime renewable energy before he became a ship's deck officer. For his qualification for a B.Sc. at the National Maritime College in Ringaskiddy, Cork Harbour, he undertook a research thesis which looked at the potential interaction between planned Irish offshore wind farms cumulatively and commercial shipping routes - how they might affect each other and the benefits of effective planning now to ensure that neither sector impinges negatively on the other, so that both can develop to their full potential, even potentially harnessing some mutual benefits and opportunities.

“This interaction does not appear to have been looked at in any great detail up to this point. The study was facilitated with the co-operation of the Commissioners of Irish Lights, with additional permissions/data from the Irish Coast Guard, UK MCA, UKHO and European Marine Observation and Data Network. Both the Department of Transport and Department of Environment, Climate and Communications (DECC) have shown interest in the study and I have presented the findings to them. DECC are currently working on the Offshore Renewable Energy Development Plan II, a sectoral spatial plan to inform how the State transitions to a more plan-led approach to the development of offshore renewable energy.

This is considering shipping amongst many other aspects and a draft is expected to be published towards the end of the year.”

“While the study concentrated on shipping because most data is available in that sector, he made the point that fishing and leisure interests are major sectors that also need to be considered and their needs, concerns, evaluated and responded to.

“This is a bit more difficult because the data is not as readily available. although there are ways to accumulate it by observation and talking to the various sectors.

“The scope of developer's wind farm boundaries cover greater areas in the planning phases than will exist in reality once turbines get installed in the water. The build-out areas are usually a subset of the licensing areas, so their planned footprints can look 'worse' on paper. Nonetheless, the proximity of shipping to planned offshore wind farms needs to be considered and planned-for in general from a State perspective.

“How best to use space and share it out equally and co-ordinate that interaction between all the various, different sectors, windfarms, shipping, fishing, aquaculture, leisure, these are the essential, major issues and my study will hopefully facilitate that conversation.”

*You can hear more from Mark Healy on the February edition of the MARITIME IRELAND PODCAST and read more about what the Fish Producer Organisations have to say about offshore wind farms in The CEOs Pages on pages 8 & 9 in this edition of the MARINE TIMES.*



## 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](http://www.bim.ie) or simply scan here:



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The need for a 'change of direction' in the support of small-scale and inshore fishing and that the organisation is still waiting to receive any EMFF funding to support delivery of its Producer Organisation plans, despite having fulfilled all of the criteria of the scheme through PO recognition and delivery of an ambitious plan for the islands, is highlighted by Seamus Bonner, Secretary of IIMRO.

## Government Attitude to Small-Scale and Inshore Fishing Must Change

The Irish Islands Marine Resource Organisation (IIMRO) are calling for a change of direction in how small-scale and inshore fishing is supported in Ireland. The fishing community is facing challenges that need a whole-of-government approach in order to address the current lack of ambition that will result in significant losses to communities all around our coast.

IIMRO have been working hard with limited resources and a volunteer team since 2014 when the group was established to represent the offshore islands. We have proposed many constructive changes to the way fisheries are managed with a view to improving conditions on the ground for our members and the wider fishing community. Initiatives include the Islands Fisheries Heritage License Bill which aims to give fairer access to quota species for island vessels. The Bill has been opposed by the government and is currently being held at third stage in the Oireachtas legislative process. IIMRO are also working at the Quota Management Advisory Committee (QMAC) and have recently proposed that 2,000 tonnes of the national mackerel quota be allocated to the sustainable line caught fishery.

This year will see many changes in the marine sector with marine protected areas and offshore renewable installations being introduced. Without appropriate safeguards for fisheries these risk displacing smaller boat owners and forcing them out of their livelihoods. Fuel costs are a continuing burden on fishing operations and the Government decision to refuse supports available to our counterparts in other European Member States is regrettable. IIMRO has taken part in a variety of forums since

being recognised as a PO in early 2021 and has consistently opposed the policy of diversification away from fishing, instead promoting policies of retaining fishing and encouraging new entrants into the community. The various decommissioning schemes currently being introduced will not solve the imbalances in the current system and an urgent rethink is needed on how fisheries are managed here.

### Specific Recognition for Islands

An IIMRO initiative to include the Irish islands as a specific heading in the EMFAF regulation fell at the last hurdle in Europe and no provision for the differences of fishing on the islands has been included in Ireland's EMFAF operational programme despite repeated calls by IIMRO. This islands funding heading would have addressed the infrastructure deficit we have on the islands and supported fishers as we move to direct sales and other value added initiatives that are proposed in the islands production and marketing plan. IIMRO are working with our colleagues in Europe through LIFE to make sure that the CFP is changed to reflect the reality at sea for smaller boats and the families that operate them.

### Still Awaiting Funding

IIMRO have still to receive any EMFF funding to support delivery of our PO plans despite having fulfilled all of the criteria of the scheme through PO recognition and delivery of an ambitious plan for the islands. This approach further hinders the ability of small organisations to improve prices and advocate on behalf of members and communities to keep fishing alive on the islands and elsewhere. To date the policies around fisheries in Ireland are failing fishers while the state agencies and decision makers have no interest in changing the status quo. That too has to change.



Sauveur Du Monde at Kilronan, Aran Islands - Photo courtesy Donal Healy

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UL Sports Arena, Limerick – Friday 24th and Saturday 25th February '23

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1.5mm, 2.0mm, 2.5mm, 3.0mm, 3.5mm, 4mm, 5mm & 6mm  
Braided PE twines in Green and Black Colour. Per Kilo.

### Nylon Twines - IN STOCK

2 Kilo Spools x 210/66 White Anzalon  
1 Kilo Spools 0.75mm, 1.0mm, 1.3mm and 1.5mm Cross Braided  
Nylon Twines - In Stock.

### Anchor

4 Prong Galvanised Grapnel Anchors - IN STOCK.  
8kg, 12kg, 16kg, 20kg & 25kg

### Knives & Accessories

Stainless Steel fish filleting knives.  
Engel Electric Heat Knife with Blade (Spare Blades also available)  
8" Blade and 10" Blade - Stainless Steel Serrated Bait knives. Selection of small size serrated knives available with round (tomato) end, vee point or half round end.  
Loewen Messer Crab Nicking Knives with Wooden Handle & Stainless-Steel Blade.  
Accusharp Knife Sharpeners. Stainless Steel Vee Notch Clippers.  
Plastic Shellfish measure gauges in 130mm, 140mm and Stainless Steel in 150mm.  
Net Needles in sizes 5", 6", 7", 8", 9", 10", 12", 14", 16" & 20".  
Mixed colours of Lobster Bands x 1LB Weight. 25mm x 13mm (2513) & 20mm x 10mm (2010) sizes. Stainless Steel Lobster Banding Tool to suit 25mm x 13mm (2513) & 20mm x 10mm (2010) Bands.  
Made to measure to **twisted and KNOTLESS Nylon Eye entrances** and bait bags. Supplied in rolls or made up singly.  
Pots Hooks and Bungee Cords (Supplied Loose) or Hook and 6.5mm Bungee Combined Unit with Double Stainless-Steel Crimps.  
100 Metre Rolls **Quality Bungee Cord** in Sizes 3mm, 4mm, 5mm, 6.5mm and 8mm  
PVC Entrance Rings in Sizes 30mm, 40mm, 60mm, 90mm, 100mm (4"), 125mm (5") and 150mm (6").  
1.5 Ton, 2.5 Ton & 3.5T heavy duty white nylon Spinners in both 18/21mm and 18/24mm hole sizes.  
9" Scotch Toggles with 12mm Holes in Red, Green and Blue Colours.  
6" Scotch Toggles with 14mm Holes in Colour Green.  
Plastic Pot Bases for repairs in sizes 22" x 22", 25" x 18", 26.5" x 17" & 36" x 20" (all bases 5mm Thick) Rolls of Pot Rubber for binding.  
Polypropylene (PP) Pot binding rope in 6mm, 8mm, 10mm & 12mm.  
SOLAS Approved reflective tape (9 Metre Rolls)  
Purse Seine Net Floats in both used and new condition with centre hole.  
50mm x 70mm Dahn Flags (UV Treated) in Red, Black, White & Blue.  
300mm x 4.8mm Black Cable Ties (Packs of 100)

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8mm, 10mm and 12mm, 13mm, 14mm & 16mm leaded Polysteel Ropes - 3 Strand x 220 Metres  
6mm, 8mm, 10mm and 12mm, 13mm, 14mm & 16mm unleaded Polysteel Ropes - 3 Strand x 220 Metres

### Braided Pot Netting EX Stock -Portuguese Manufacturer

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# THE MARINE TIMES INTERVIEW

## Michael Desmond, Chairman, National Inshore Fishermen's Association



*"It gives us recognition that we didn't have before," says Michael Desmond, following the approval of NIFA as an EU Producer Organisation. "It means we are seen as a group of fishermen who deserve to be recognised for what we do."*

Picture by Denis Minihane, Courtesy Irish Examiner

**Deputy Editor, Tom MacSweeney talks to Michael Desmond about the issues facing inshore fishermen. These include a lot of concern about the impact of wind farms. "They are such a headache for us. It is hard to imagine that men have to fight to be allowed fish where they always fished, for the right to do it and the right to fish where their fathers, grandfathers fished for a hundred years. It is an unbelievable situation to end up in."**

**Michael Desmond has "the smallest boat in the fleet" in Roaringwater Bay in West Cork, he says. "The Girl Sadie," is a 17ft punt and is named after his daughter.**

It was built in 2005 by a local man, David Finn.

"He got the hull from Roaringwater Bay Marine, everything is local." Michael tells me. "She is a grand boat."

For inshore fishermen, 'local' is very important, they are a vital part of their local communities, but they have had to struggle for many years to get recognition beyond that. It has now come in being designated as an EU Seafood Producer Organisation.

"It's very, very important. We have been fighting for it for years and years, Alex Crowley in particular and those who started NIFA, the work they did, the effort that has been put in has been huge. What has been achieved is a great tribute to them all, the amount of paper work and campaigning to achieve this is unbelievable. What it means to us is that, finally, we have a seat at the table where we can give our views about how the fishing industry goes in the future, the direction it could take..

"The inshore sector is 90% now at least of the total fishing fleet and basically it gives a voice to the inshore industry that there is finally a seat at the table for us."

As we talk, he recalls that the day before our interview took place was the first time in his life when he heard the

words velvet crab, whelk, shellfishery being mentioned in a Dáil debate.

"I never heard of our part of the industry being mentioned before. There is recognition at last."

Yet small boats are all over the coast.

"They are indeed. They vary in size and they are all over the coast, from Donegal to down here in West Cork and back up again around the coast, in all shapes and sizes in every single small pier, piers that never get a mention at all. The general public I would say have a feeling about the Irish fishing industry as being of the larger boats, but there is so much more to it."

NIFA has 210 members and its directors cover all coastal counties. They are all voluntary. "We are all fishermen and our system is working. Every member is a fisherman, every director is a fisherman."

One of the issues he identifies as being particularly important is "lack of data."

"One of the biggest problems facing the inshore industry is lack of data and that is a lot of our problems, in relation to dealing with wind farms and to raising funding. It is very necessary to raise our profile."

For under 10 metre vessels, there was not a requirement for log book entries as with bigger vessels, so data that would be needed to establish working/fishing history in areas and which species were being caught in what numbers is not as available to the extent which would give an adequate, clear and strong picture of the inshore sector overall. This is relevant in instances such as dealing with fish farm proposals.

"Data gathering has got better, but we need more and are putting emphasis on gathering this. But up to our recognition, we were not seen in a way as even existing as a group, an entity, Now we are. Things have got better in gathering data and we need a concentrated effort on this, which we will be giving to it."

Up to the recognition as a PO, inshore fishermen have not had a strong public presence.

Alex Crowley has taken a step back from the frontline, so to speak, but remains available to NIFA. Avril Egan

from Waterville in County Kerry is now the NIFA Secretary. The members decided, all of them being actively engaged in fishing, that administrative support is essential.

There are issues to be faced – wind farms particularly – which are causing a lot of concern to inshore fishermen.

"They are such a headache for us," Michael says. "The amount of submissions that Alex had to do in the last three years was mind-blowing because of us having such a spread of members around the coast. Any wind farm where there was a planning permission put in for, we had a member affected,"

That is a big imposition on inshoremen who have to take on the issue individually. NIFA does not have the resources to fight on their behalf, so it could cost individuals between ten and twenty thousand Euros to "fight for the right to fish where they always fished."

"That is hard to imagine that we are in the situation that men have to get legal help to be allowed to fish where they always fished, for the right to do it and the right to fish where their fathers, grandfathers fished for a hundred years. It is an unbelievable situation to end up in.

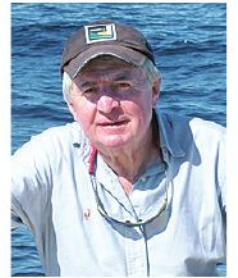
The general public have no idea how badly fishermen will be affected by wind farms, Michael Desmond says. We turn to what PO recognition will mean in terms of marketing and other aspects of NIFA's operations.

The members will be meeting to discuss all of this. They knew that EU recognition was being discussed, but the announcement that it was being accorded came without advance warning to NIFA. So an annual general meeting will be convened to discuss their new situation, to form a marketing plan and decide on other responses and developments needed.

"Everything we do is member-led, so there will be discussion and decisions made with all the members being involved. We do hope it will be a big, positive benefit to our marketing and have other benefits for inshore fishermen.

"It gives us recognition that we didn't have before. Out hauling pots, there could be other boats around me, all of them had POs and a voice at the table. Our representation wasn't there. Now it is and that is very important for us."

# Tom MacSweeney's Maritime Diary



## Reflecting On SACs and Common Sense

**There are profoundly divergent and, apparently, irreconcilable attitudes at present towards Special Areas of Conservation which, in the general interest of marine sustainability, diversity and development need resolution, preferably with reconciliation.**



Baltimore Harbour in West Cork

SACs arrived in Ireland, like several other conceptions born outside of this country, by force of EU conception and dictation, then baptised by Irish State bureaucracy, pressured by environmental interests.

Within this 'twinning,' pragmatism was ignored, that being concern for a 'third' element – adequate communication, prior to decision-making with those most affected

In County Cork, these issues have been highlighted by County Councillors who have called for the removal of SACs where they affect harbours and inlets and could

prevent construction of breakwaters and development of essential maritime infrastructure, as well as excluding traditional rights of fishermen.

The environmental lobby has become very strong, its voice at times drowning out contrasting views which, in County Cork, have raised the issue of whether a SAC is more important than a safe harbour.

Experience indicates that there is narrow conception of the right to express contrary views to environmental demands which have targeted fishing and other maritime

developments. "Commonsense" is a quality and resource of which more use is needed to accommodate all interests in the marine sphere where SACs are introduced.

'Consultation' by the State has been carried out, but has not always been of the best standard of 'adequate communication,' resulting in disagreement about whether resultant outcome is 'dictation,' rather than 'agreement'.

Cited by Councillors in Cork is Baltimore Harbour, where winter shelter is said to need a breakwater, but there are concerns that SAC designation will prevent. So the Council has called on the Minister for Housing, Local Government and Heritage to "remove SACs" where they have a detrimental impact on safety and the commercial enhancement of communities, coastal and fishing, which depend on the sea for a living.

Minister Darragh O'Brien has lots to deal with in the national housing crisis and it remains difficult to understand why his Department should be deciding on SACs and not the Marine Department, other than that this is Government indication of disdain for the marine sphere.

One Cork County Councillor said he hoped that decisions on SACs would contain "a commonsense approach."

"Commonsense" has been defined as "sound and prudent judgment based on a simple perception of the situation or facts...."

Does it exist in State administration?

## Tom MacSweeney's Maritime Ireland Radio Show & Podcast

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**KINVARA FM**  
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**BE PART OF 'THE COMMUNITY OF THE SEA' WITH MARITIME IRELAND**

## Caroline Bocquel Appointed as New BIM CEO

**Bord Iascaigh Mhara (BIM), Ireland's Seafood Development Agency, has announced the appointment of Caroline Bocquel as its new Chief Executive Officer (CEO). Caroline Bocquel has held the role of Interim CEO at BIM since November, 2022 and has a proven track record of leadership. Prior to joining BIM in 2021 as Director of Corporate Services, she held senior executive roles at GOAL and the Marine Institute.**

BIM Chair, Aidan Cotter, said: "Following a rigorous search process, I am pleased to announce Caroline's appointment as CEO at BIM. Caroline brings significant drive, experience and insight to her new role that will help take the organisation and Ireland's seafood industry to the next level of sustainable development and secure its future in the face of major change. She is a strong leader with extensive experience and sectoral knowledge, and I look forward to working with her in the coming years."

Caroline takes on this role at a time when BIM is implementing a range of schemes for industry, with a total value of €265M under the Brexit Adjustment Reserve, delivering on the recommendations of the Seafood Taskforce. The aim of these schemes is to develop and restructure the sector ensuring it is profitable, innovative and sustainable - and to identify opportunities for jobs and enterprises in coastal communities, dependent on the sector.

This year will see the launch of new European Maritime Fisheries and Aquaculture Fund schemes, with a value of €258M, further enhancing the sector's ability to develop. These funds will be allocated for the management of fisheries, aquaculture and fishing fleets, and also cover

measures such as scientific advice, controls and checks, market intelligence, maritime surveillance and security.

Welcoming the appointment of the new CEO, Minister McConalogue stated, "I am delighted to announce the appointment by BIM of Caroline Bocquel as its new Chief Executive Officer. In a period of unprecedented challenges for the seafood sector, Caroline's extensive experience will help to ensure that BIM has the necessary leadership to deliver a sustainable future for Ireland's seafood industry."



As CEO of BIM, leading a team of 140 people located in six main coastal locations in Ireland, the new CEO will oversee the development of the Irish seafood sector, valued at €1.26 billion in 2021, building on its natural advantages, a strong commitment to sustainable fishing and the development of a high-quality aquaculture and seafood processing sector.

Caroline Bocquel, a native of Co. Louth, has extensive managerial and change leadership experience, with an emphasis on diversity, equality and inclusion with previous posts held including Director of Corporate Service in the Marine Institute and a period as Chief Financial Officer of GOAL (the international humanitarian response agency). Caroline is a fellow of the Institute of Chartered Accountants of Ireland, holds a Degree in Business and Languages from Technological University Dublin and has completed programmes at Harvard Business School and the Institute of Directors.

Commenting on her new role, Caroline Bocquel said: "I am delighted to take on the role of CEO at BIM at this critical time, where the need for innovation and strong leadership has never been more necessary. The Irish seafood industry has shown enormous resilience and ingenuity in the face of challenges, turning them into opportunities in many cases. I am confident we can leverage the industry's skillsets to deliver BIM's vision to significantly boost value creation of an Irish sustainable seafood sector, across the supply chain, from catch to consumer. I look forward to working collaboratively with all stakeholders to deliver on this mission, particularly my colleagues on the senior leadership team, the wider BIM team, and the industry we serve."

# Upcoming Courses 2023

## FEBRUARY

- Enhanced Safety Training  
**1st February 2023**  
Fenit, Co Kerry CTU 1
- Enhanced Safety Training  
**2nd February 2023**  
Fenit, Co Kerry CTU 1
- GMDSS Short Range Certificate  
**7th February - 9th February 2023**  
NFCI Greencastle
- GMDSS Short Range Certificate  
**7th February - 9th February 2023**  
Fenit, Co Kerry CTU 1
- STCW Fire Prevention and Firefighting  
**7th February - 9th February 2023**  
NFCI Castletownbere
- Three Day Basic Safety Training  
**7th February - 9th February 2023**  
Kilmore Quay, Co Wexford CTU 2
- STCW Medical First Aid  
**13th February - 15th February 2023**  
NFCI Castletownbere
- Three Day Basic Safety Training  
**13th February - 15th February 2023**  
NFCI Castletownbere
- Three Day Basic Safety Training  
**13th February - 15th February 2023**  
NFCI Greencastle
- Enhanced Safety Training  
**15th February 2023**  
Kilmore Quay, Co Wexford CTU 2
- Enhanced Safety Training  
**16th February 2023**  
Kilmore Quay, Co Wexford CTU 2
- Three Day Basic Safety Training  
**21st February - 23rd February 2023**  
Fenit, Co Kerry CTU 1
- Advanced Firefighting  
**27th February - 3rd March 2023**  
NFCI Greencastle
- Three Day Basic Safety Training  
**28th February - 2nd March 2023**  
Clogherhead, Co Louth CTU 2

## MARCH

- Commercial Scuba Diving Operations  
**6th March - 31st March 2023**  
NFCI Castletownbere
- Enhanced Safety Training  
**7th March 2023**  
Clogherhead, Co Louth CTU 2
- Three Day Basic Safety Training  
**7th March - 9th March 2023**  
NFCI Castletownbere

- Enhanced Safety Training  
**8th March 2023**  
Clogherhead, Co Louth CTU 2
- Three Day Basic Safety Training  
**14th March - 16th March 2023**  
Howth, Co Dublin CTU 2
- STCW Medical Care Aboard Ship  
**20th March - 24th March 2022**  
NFCI Castletownbere
- GMDSS General Operators Certificate  
**20th March - 31st March 2023**  
NFCI Castletownbere
- Deck Officer Second Hand Full Certificate of Competency  
**20th March - 7th July 2023**  
NFCI Castletownbere
- Enhanced Safety Training  
**22nd March 2023**  
Howth, Co Dublin CTU 2
- Enhanced Safety Training  
**23rd March 2023**  
Howth, Co Dublin CTU 2
- STCW Personal Safety and Social Responsibility  
**23rd March 2023**  
NFCI Greencastle
- Three Day Basic Safety Training  
**27th March - 29th March 2023**  
NFCI Greencastle
- Enhanced Safety Training  
**30th March 2023**  
NFCI Greencastle

## APRIL

- STCW Medical First Aid  
**4th April - 6th April 2023**  
NFCI Castletownbere
- Surface Supplied Diving Operations  
**10th April - 5th May 2023**  
NFCI Castletownbere
- STCW Fire Prevention and Firefighting  
**11th April - 13th April 2023**  
NFCI Castletownbere
- Enhanced Safety Training  
**12th April 2023**  
Howth, Co Dublin CTU 2
- Enhanced Safety Training  
**13th April 2023**  
Howth, Co Dublin CTU 2
- Three Day Basic Safety Training  
**17th April - 19th April 2023**  
NFCI Greencastle
- Three Day Basic Safety Training  
**18th April - 20th April 2023**  
NFCI Castletownbere

- Three Day Basic Safety Training  
**18th April - 20th April 2023**  
Howth, Co Dublin CTU 2
- STCW Fire Prevention and Firefighting  
**19th April - 21st April 2023**  
NFCI Greencastle
- Passenger Boat Proficiency  
**24th April - 28th April 2023**  
NFCI Castletownbere
- STCW Medical Care Aboard Ship  
**24th April - 28th April 2023**  
NFCI Greencastle
- Three Day Basic Safety Training  
**25th April - 27th April 2023**  
Howth, Co Dublin CTU 2

## MAY

- Three Day Basic Safety Training  
**2nd May - 4th May 2023**  
NFCI Castletownbere
- Deck Officer Skipper Full Certificate of Competency  
**2nd May - 7th July 2023**  
NFCI Greencastle
- STCW Fire Prevention and Firefighting  
**8th May - 10th May 2023**  
NFCI Greencastle
- GMDSS General Operators Certificate  
**8th May - 19th May 2023**  
NFCI Greencastle
- Three Day Basic Safety Training  
**16th May - 18th May 2023**  
NFCI Castletownbere
- STCW Fire Prevention and Firefighting  
**23rd May - 25th May 2023**  
NFCI Castletownbere
- Enhanced Safety Training  
**25th May 2023**  
NFCI Greencastle
- Three Day Basic Safety Training  
**29th May - 31st May 2023**  
NFCI Greencastle
- Passenger Boat Proficiency  
**29th May - 2nd June 2023**  
NFCI Castletownbere
- STCW Medical Care Aboard Ship  
**29th May - 2nd June 2023**  
NFCI Castletownbere

## JUNE

- Three Day Basic Safety Training  
**6th June - 8th June 2023**  
NFCI Castletownbere
- Navigation Control Course  
**26th June - 7th July 2023**  
NFCI Castletownbere
- Advanced Firefighting  
**12th June - 16th June 2023**  
NFCI Greencastle
- Advanced Firefighting  
**19th June - 23rd June 2023**  
NFCI Castletownbere
- Passenger Boat Proficiency  
**26th June - 30th June 2023**  
NFCI Castletownbere

## JULY

- STCW Medical First Aid  
**3rd July - 5th July 2023**  
NFCI Greencastle
- Three Day Basic Safety Training  
**4th July - 6th July 2023**  
NFCI Castletownbere
- Passenger Boat Proficiency  
**10th July - 14th July 2023**  
NFCI Castletownbere
- STCW Medical Care Aboard Ship  
**10th July - 14th July 2023**  
NFCI Castletownbere
- Passenger Boat Proficiency  
**17th July - 21st July 2023**  
NFCI Greencastle

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# Val Adnams Arrives in Courtmacherry



**Niamh Stephenson, Media Manager reports on a very special trip to Courtmacherry to help welcome a new addition to West Cork**



**S**he may have arrived a week later than expected and the weather gods were not kind for her stately entrance but that did nothing to dampen the excitement in the village of Courtmacherry in West Cork, when the lifeboat station's new Shannon 'Val Adnams' came home. Coxswain Sean O'Farrell stood proud along with Second Coxswain Mark Gannon and their lifeboat crew, all waving out at the crowds that had gathered to line the route.



Courtmacsherry's new Shannon class lifeboat Val Adnams arrived to a big West Cork welcome despite the bad weather. Photo Bob Bateman.

Val Adnams pictured after its arrival into Courtmacsherry in West Cork with crew (left to right): Mark John Gannon, coxswain Sean O'Farrell, Denis Murphy, Dara Gannon and Stewart Russell. Also included are Dave Philips, Gearoid O'Donovan, Micheál O'Donovan, Gary Barrett and Conor Dullea. Picture: Martin Walsh.



The new All-Weather lifeboat, let out a blast of the horn, and suddenly she emerged. It's at times like this that I've learned to step back and let the local community get first glimpse of their newest resident. Excited as I always am to welcome a new lifeboat home, this isn't my day and there's plenty of time. I won't be running down to the station at all hours when the pager goes and I won't be at home anxiously waiting for loved ones to come home. Though I still wanted to see the lifeboat crew greet their families and their children clamour to get a look at the big shiny new lifeboat. It was also lovely to see former lifeboat crew I recognised, Coxswain Dan O'Dwyer was there and pulled into photos like he'd never retired. Former Lifeboat Mechanic Michéal Hurley, who has never needed an introduction and never will, was on the microphone for the event and led the station in a rousing rendition of Phil Coulter's 'Home from the Sea'.

The rain didn't stop but nobody that I saw cared or seemed to notice. I met lifeboat volunteers from Crosshaven, Youghal, Union Hall and Kinsale, delighted to see each other and Area Lifesaving Manager Joe Moore. I know there were more, but you can't see everyone. You get swept up in a sea of hugs and hearing about the training the crew are undergoing and what's new in Courtmac and who is up to what and how their families are doing and how thrilled they are with the new lifeboat.



Sean O'Farrell, coxswain of the new Courtmacsherry Lifeboat. Picture: Martin Walsh.

For those who like detail, 'Val Adnams' arrived into Courtmacsherry, led by a flotilla of local boats, at exactly 13.45, which is also the operational number of the lifeboat. She is the latest in a long line of search and rescue boats provided by the RNLI to Courtmacsherry over the past 198 years. It's 27 years since the last new Trent class Lifeboat arrived in 1995 and it's only the 11th Lifeboat to be stationed in Courtmacsherry since the arrival of the first RNLI boat "The Plenty" in 1825.

Courtmacsherry Lifeboat Operations Manager Brian O Dwyer said it best when he said, "The station has been looking forward to this day for a long time. The past few weeks and months have been spent in preparation and training by all the crew, in order to receive this incredible piece of kit from the RNLI. It will proudly serve the south west coast for many years to come."

The Trent Class Lifeboat will depart in a few weeks, when the whole crew are

trained up on the Shannon, to take its place in the RNLI's relief fleet. But in saying goodbye it's timely to remember the many callouts carried out over its 27 year stay here. These included the Yacht 'Super-taff' rescue of its three crew which earned Coxswain Dan O Dwyer, the coveted Bronze medal for bravery, was carried out in terrible conditions 22 miles off the Seven Heads in 1998. There was also the rescue of 30 people from the Tall Ship 'Astrid' off Oysterhaven in July 2013, along with Kinsale RNLI.

The lifeboat will be named in September, and we will have the honour of the donor, to make it even more special.

## Arklow RNLI

**I need to make a special mention of the seven members of Arklow RNLI who have been honoured for their roles in a service, which saw a crew of three people, onboard a nine-metre yacht rescued.**

For his exceptional display of seamanship in the service, a Signed Letter of Thanks from the Chairman of the Institution was awarded to Arklow RNLI Coxswain Brendan Dillon and for their teamwork in challenging sea conditions and their part in completing a highly effective service, individual Chief Executive Commendations were awarded to Station Mechanic Eddie McElheron and volunteer crewmembers Austin Gaffney, Geoffrey Kearns, Trevor Conroy, Craig O'Reilly, Daniel Downey.

The rescue was carried out back on 4th of August 2020, 24 nautical miles east-southeast of Arklow. The 9-metre yacht, 'Infinite Jest' was on passage from Newlyn, in England to Largs, in Scotland, and was experiencing very poor weather and rough sea conditions, with the crew of three people, suffering from exhaustion and seasickness. It was a demanding service, which involved a tow from the lifeboat, which lasted over three hours, in winds up to Force 8, with upwards of 5-metre swells, at night. I don't think this mention could do justice to all the challenges that were thrown at the crew during the rescue. From the Coxswain crossing the Arklow Bank, to intercept the yacht, in terrible sea conditions, to the navigator having to use dead-reckoning to find the position of the casualty. The crew of the yacht were sick and exhausted, but the lifeboat crew kept with them, establishing a tow and boarding the vessel when needed, to help the crew reach shore. It was a well-deserved honour.

The presentations were made during Arklow RNLI's sold-out fundraising event 'Dan's Hurry to the Curry, which was held at the Arklow Bay Hotel after an absence of a few years due to the pandemic. The awards were presented on the night by RNLI Trustee and Chair of the Irish Council, Mr. John Killeen.

There will be many more events to celebrate during the year, namings, fundraisers and other occasions. I hope to see some more familiar faces there.



# Sixty Fishermen Attend BIM / RNLI Man Overboard Sessions in Donegal and Cork

**BIM** in partnership with the RNLI, welcomed 35 people to Man Overboard sessions in the Errigal Training Centre, Falcarragh, Co. Donegal and a further 25 to the National Maritime College of Ireland in Cork over the past two weekends. The sessions are designed to provide fishers and seagoing aquaculture producers with the experience of falling into cold sea conditions, wearing full work clothing and without their Personal Floatation Device (PFD), or lifejacket as they are commonly known. This is then followed by the same experience with a correctly fitted PFD.

Although the conditions are controlled and undertaken under the watchful eye of experienced RNLI trainers, they provide a realistic experience, simulating the impact of how work clothing, oilskins, and boots affect a person's buoyancy, coupled with challenging sea conditions. The sessions also underpin the importance of having and following your Man Overboard recovery plan.

Peter McBride of the family-run, Mc Bride Fishing company had a number of crew attending the session and has urged as many fishermen as possible to undertake this experience.

"McBride Fishing has three state of the art vessels that allow us to supply crab all year round to our markets. This often means fishing in difficult sea conditions and the safety of our skippers and crew is of paramount importance to us. Wearing a correctly fitted PFD and knowing what to do if someone accidentally hits the water are vital to avoiding loss of life. These sessions allow fishermen to experience the shock of striking cold water, unsupported by their PFD's and to realise how limited their chance of survival might be if this situation was real."

BIM's Skills Development Director,

Ian Mannix, said: "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 a 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 'Accidental 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."



Poolside training with Ben McBride, Garvan Meehan and Frankie Horne.



## BIM to Host Series of Public Information Sessions on Funding Available to Coastal Communities

**A series of public information sessions relating to the Brexit Blue Economy Enterprise Development Scheme and funding opportunities available to businesses in coastal communities will be hosted by BIM.**

The information sessions will take place in numerous locations around the coast of Ireland over the next few months with a webinar in March also planned to facilitate those who wish to attend online. The webinar will be recorded and made available online for ease of access for those who cannot attend.

People are being invited to come along to one of the Information Evenings to learn how businesses in Ireland's rural coastal communities can apply for funding through the Brexit Blue Economy Enterprise Development Scheme.

With €25 million in funding available, this is the largest Scheme of its kind and is

designed to stimulate growth in rural coastal communities. Funding is available to businesses operating within ten kilometres of the coastline, and involved in blue economy activities including seafood, coastal tourism, boat building and repair, marine leisure and sport, small non-commercial harbour or pier activities, and renewable energy initiatives.

Brenda O'Riordan, BIM Regional Officer, said the scheme has already received some very promising and innovative proposals and is encouraging others to come along to one of the information sessions to find out more about the funding available and get advice on preparing a submission.

Information sessions are taking place around the coast of Ireland throughout February and March including in Cobh, Tralee, Portmagee, Carna, Clifden, Limerick, Sligo and Mayo. All meetings will take place from 6.30pm to 8.30pm each evening.

The Brexit Blue Economy Enterprise Development Scheme - Flying the flag for Ireland's coastal communities. For full details of the Scheme visit [www.bim.ie](http://www.bim.ie) or contact: Brenda O'Riordan +353 87 3512327 / [brenda.oriordan@bim.ie](mailto:brenda.oriordan@bim.ie); Paul Downes +353 87 1171449 / [paul.downes@bim.ie](mailto:paul.downes@bim.ie)

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# Naval Vessels to Be Scrapped Rather Than Sold?

Report by Tom MacSweeney

**The Department of Defence is seeking tenders for the recycling of decommissioned Naval Service Vessels.**



Three were decommissioned at the same time last Summer - LÉ Eithne and two in-shore patrol vessels LÉ Orla and LÉ Ciara.

This was described at the time as “an unprecedented move” and there has been speculation about what would be done with them. There were reports of interest from the Philippines Government and from a possible buyer in the Netherlands.

However, the last Naval ship auctioned off, LÉ Aisling, eventually ended in the ownership of Libyan warlord General Khalifa Haftar. That caused controversy because

the auction achieved €110,000 for the State. A Dutch company and another in the UAE were later reportedly involved. Reports claimed that it was purchased by Haftar for a reputed €1.3m.

LÉ Eithne was the last Naval Service ship built in the Verlome Dockyard at Rushbrooke in Cork Harbour, close to the Naval Base. She went into service in 1984 and was the first Irish Naval vessel to cross the Atlantic in 1986.

Cork County Council was reported to be interested in acquiring Eithne as a floating

museum in the harbour, but more recently it has been reported that the Department of Defence was in discussion with Dublin Port about the vessel going there.

On the Government e-Tenders website the Department of Defence is now seeking tenders “for the provision of Ship Recycling Consultancy Services to support the recycling of decommissioned Naval Service Vessels by safe and environmentally sound recycling methods via an EU approved ship-recycling facility in accordance with the EU’s Ship Recycling Regulation.”

While the EU’s Ship Recycling Regulation does not apply to warships, the Department says its intention is “to follow the Regulations in the re-cycling process.” It estimates that the expenditure on the Services to be covered by the proposed Services Contract “may amount to some €130,000, excluding VAT. Tenderers must understand that this figure is an estimate only based on current and future expected usage.”

The closing date for tenders is noon on Monday, February 13.

It appears that, for the decommissioned, laid-up vessels, the Department of Defence is now looking at demolition and recycling, which would prevent Irish Naval vessels going to warlords!

## Three New EU Inspection Vessels

The European Fisheries Control Agency has introduced its three new chartered patrol vessels for EU fisheries inspections in European and international waters. They have been named as Ocean Guardian, Ocean Protector and Ocean Sentinel.



All three vessels fly the Portuguese flag, and will be deployed primarily as fisheries patrol vessels to support MS in the different EFCA joint deployment plans from the Mediterranean and Black Sea to the Western Waters, North Sea, Baltic Sea, NAFO and NEAFC. They will also be deployed as fisheries patrol vessel in the scope of multipurpose operations in the framework of European cooperation on coast guard functions.

The three vessels, during their operations will also be available for supporting other coast guard functions, inter alia, providing support during search and rescue situations, maritime surveillance and pollution response.

## “Engage With Me” Says Betelgeuse Tragedy Lawyer to Government

Maritime lawyer Michael Kingston, a consultant with the United Nations maritime authority, the International Maritime Organisation, is continuing his long battle with the Government on behalf of the Irish and French families of those who died in the Betelgeuse tragedy, including his own father, Tim.

He continues to claim that there is a lack of accountability for the deaths of 50 people in the tragedy and has sent letters to the Taoiseach and several Government Ministers, calling for “fresh inquests, a public inquiry” and the release of reports which, he alleged in the letters the Department of Transport have been “buried.”

“This is a doubling down on grief, by utterly disrespecting the lives that were lost in 1979. The families continue to demand a public enquiry into regulatory failures in the public interest and safety, the most gross display of failure that the Irish State has ever seen.”

Marking the 44th anniversary of the January Betelgeuse oil tanker disaster at Whiddy Island oil terminal in Bantry Bay in January, Mr. Kingston repeated previous requests that the Taoiseach and the Minister for Transport should engage with him and the families he represents.

## “We’ve never seen anything like this before”

# Underwater Video Camera Lets Fisherman Improve His Trawl Net

“We’ve never seen anything like this before,” says Darren McClements, Skipper of the Golden Ray, as he watches a video of juvenile whitefish escaping his prawn trawl net via the square mesh panel. This video was recorded by CatchCam, an underwater camera designed by SafetyNet Technologies specifically for commercial fishing.



For most fishermen, their gear is out of sight after shooting. Once the fishing gear is retrieved, fishermen must rely on their intuition to figure out why they had a good catch or not. But, for Darren and his crew, CatchCam is removing the guesswork from fishing.

Using CatchCam, Darren has collected over 200 hours of underwater video showing his prawn trawl net in action. This

footage has provided evidence that the square mesh panel is working effectively. Furthermore, CatchCam is helping Darren further improve the efficiency and selectivity of his trawl net, allowing him to fish more precisely.

“It’s not just about getting rid of fish; it is about making sure you are catching what you need to catch. We could clearly see that our sole rope was not sitting on the bottom

and that we lost prawns. When we got back to the harbour, we measured up the gear and took two meshes out of the top sheet. Following this small alteration, we now have better contact, and the boat is fishing better.”

Despite being the size of a coke can, CatchCam is highly durable and can easily withstand the inside of a trawl net. Due to its small size, the CatchCam camera and accompanying LED lamp can easily be attached to multiple areas of the fishing gear. As a result, fishermen can get a wholistic understanding of their gear performance and fish behaviour.

Underwater video cameras are a powerful tool. Using CatchCam, fishermen can record colour video of their fishing gear in action. As a result, they can get quick answers to on deck observations. These answers allow fishermen to make rapid decisions that optimise fishing gear and improve its sustainability.

SafetyNet Technologies are working with the Golden Ray and Whitby Seafoods to improve the selectivity of the Nephrops fishery in the Irish Sea and will be exhibiting at Stand 28 at the Irish Skipper Expo. Visit [sntech.co.uk](http://sntech.co.uk) to watch underwater video filmed with CatchCam and learn about how cameras could benefit you.



## An Roinn Iompair ag Earcú Ceannairí le hAghaidh Sé Phost Ríthábhachtacha San Earnáil Mhuirí agus i nGarda Cóstá Na hÉireann

Tá an Roinn Iompair ag féachaint le roinnt poist ríthábhachtacha cheannaireachta, oibríocháin agus ghnó a líonadh, go háirithe i nGarda Cóstá na hÉireann (IRCG), i bhfianaise go bhfuil an t-éileamh ar an tseirbhís ríthábhachtach seo ag méadú, i.e. daoine a thabhairt saor ón mbás ar muir.

Tá 100 buanbhall foirne sa Gharda Cóstá agus tugann beagnach 1,000 oibrí deonach díograiseach i 44 aonad ar fud na tíre tacaíocht dóibh.

Tugtar thart ar 400 duine saor ón mbás gach uile bhliain agus freagraítear do thart ar 3,000 glaoch amach.

Tá aitheanta ag an Roinn gur gá freastal ar phleananna an Gharda Cóstá go mbeadh príomhról ag an tseirbhís i saol na hÉireann agus, chuige sin, tá ceannairí nua á bhfoinseáil le haghaidh poist ar fud na heagraíochta trí chomórtas oscailte. Táimid ag earcú Ceannasaí Beartais Mhuirí chomh maith d'fhonn Beartas an Rialtais san earnáil mhuirí a bhrú chun cinn agus a chur chun feidhme. Tá an Roinn tiomanta don chomhionannas deiseanna, don éagsúlacht agus don ionchuimsitheacht, agus caithfidh dúthracht lena chinntiú go mbíonn an fórsa saothair ina léiriú ar na pobail go léir a bhfreastalaíonn sí orthu.

Más mian leatsa ról lárnach a bheith agat sa saothar seo, seo a leanas na deiseanna i Rannóg Beartais Mhuirí na Roinne Iompair agus i nGarda Cóstá na hÉireann atá le fógaire go gairid:

### > Ceannasaí an Bheartais Mhuirí (Post Rúnaí Chúnta)

Tá an Roinn Iompair ag lorg duine cumasach le ceannaireacht a thabhairt maidir le beartas muirí na hÉireann agus le fíorthionchar a bheith aige nó aici thar raon iomlán na saincheisteanna a bhaineann leis an earnáil seo, lena n-áirítear an fuinneamh in-athnuaite amach ón gcósta.

### > Rúnaí Cúnta le Garda Cóstá na hÉireann

Táimid ag lorg duine eisceachtúil ag an leibhéal Rúnaí Chúnta den chéad uair ar a mbeidh freagracht fhoriomlán as seirbhís an Gharda Cóstá in Éirinn ó thaobh straitéise, oibríocháin agus rialachais de, agus a oibreoidh as lámha a chéile le hoibríthe deonacha agus baill foirne le seirbhís inbhuanaithe a fhorbairt a bheidh oiriúnach don am atá le teacht.

### > Stiúrthóir Gharda Cóstá na hÉireann

Beidh Stiúrthóir Gharda Cóstá na hÉireann freagrach as seirbhís den chéad scoth a sholáthar a mbeidh muinín ag an saoránach aisti agus a mbeidh idir oibríthe deonacha agus bhuanbhail foirne bródúil as bheith ag obair inti.

### Deiseanna bainistíochta eile atá le teacht go luath ar [publicjobs.ie](http://publicjobs.ie)

### > Oifigeach Dearbhaithe Cáilíochta le Garda Cóstá na hÉireann

Cabhróidh an tOifigeach Dearbhaithe Cáilíochta lena chinntiú go n-oibríonn an Garda Cóstá de réir a Chórais Bainistíochta Cáilíochta (QMS), a nósanna imeachta athbhreithnithe agus na mbeartas a bhaineann leis an QMS, lena chinntiú go gcomhlíontar an beartas eagraíochtúil agus na ceanglais rialála áitiúla agus idirnáisiúnta.

### > Oifigeach Sláinte agus Sábháilteachta le Garda Cóstá na hÉireann

Is é príomhaidhm an Oifigigh Sláinte agus Sábháilteachta ná timpistí, gortuithe agus tinnis a bhaineann leis an obair a chosc i nGarda Cóstá na hÉireann. Beidh an tOifigeach Sláinte agus Sábháilteachta, trí chumarsáid réamhghníomhach agus dhearfach, chun tosaigh sa saothar le beartais sláinte agus sábháilteachta a cheapadh agus a chur chun feidhme, agus cinnteoidh sé nó sí go gcuirfead beartais den sórt sin chun feidhme ar fud Gharda Cóstá na hÉireann.

### > Oifigeach Leictreonaice le Garda Cóstá na hÉireann

Beidh an tOifigeach Leictreonaice mar chuid d'fhoireann a bheidh freagrach as bainistiú agus feidhmiú foriomlán gach gné teicniúla de na líonraí náisiúnta cumarsáide muirí timpeall chósta na hÉireann.

Beidh na sonraí go léir maidir leis na rólí thuas, sainriachtanais incháilítheachta san áireamh, ar fáil ar [www.publicjobs.ie](http://www.publicjobs.ie)

## Department of Transport Hiring Leaders in Six Critical Maritime and Irish Coast Guard Positions

The Department of Transport is looking to fill a number of key leadership, operational and business critical positions, particularly in the Irish Coast Guard (IRCG), given the increased demand for this essential service, saving lives at sea.

The Coast Guard comprises almost 100 full-time staff, who are supported by nearly 1,000 dedicated volunteers across 44 units nationwide.

Around 400 individuals are saved every year, with 3,000 calls responded to.

The Department has identified a need to meet the IRCG's growing ambitions for the service's key role in Irish life by sourcing leaders for roles across the organisation through open competition. We are also recruiting a Head of Maritime Policy to drive and deliver Government policy in the maritime sector. **The Department is committed to equal opportunity, diversity and inclusion and a workforce that is reflective of all the communities it serves.**

**If you want to play a pivotal role in this work, the following are the opportunities in the Maritime Policy Section of the Department of Transport and the Irish Coast Guard which will be advertised shortly:**

### > Assistant Secretary Maritime Policy

The Department of Transport is looking for a talented individual to lead Ireland's maritime policy and to make a real impact across a full range of issues relating to this sector including offshore renewable energy.

### > Assistant Secretary Irish Coast Guard

Recruiting at this grade for the first time, we are seeking an exceptional individual at Assistant Secretary level to have overall strategic, operational and governance responsibility for the Coast Guard service in Ireland, and who will work with volunteers and staff to continuously develop a sustainable service, fit for the future.

### > Director of the Irish Coast Guard

The Director of the Irish Coast Guard will be responsible for delivering a best-in-class service that is trusted by the citizen and where volunteers and permanent staff are proud to work.

### Other upcoming management opportunities coming soon to [publicjobs.ie](http://publicjobs.ie)

### > Quality Assurance Officer in the Irish Coast Guard

The Quality Assurance Officer will assist in ensuring the IRCG operates in compliance with its Quality Management System (QMS), review procedures and policies relating to the QMS, to ensure compliance with organisational policy and local and international regulatory requirements.

### > Health and Safety Officer in the Irish Coast Guard

The Health and Safety Officer's main aim is to prevent accidents, injuries and work-related illnesses in the Irish Coast Guard. The Health and Safety Officer, through proactive and positive communications, will lead in creating and implementing health and safety policies and ensuring their implementation throughout the Irish Coast Guard.

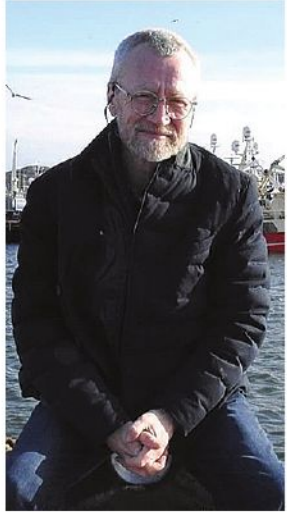
### > Electronics Officer in the Irish Coast Guard

The Electronics Officer will be part of a team with responsibility for the overall management and operation of all technical aspects of the national marine communications networks around Ireland's coastline.

Full details of the above roles, including specific eligibility requirements, will be available on [www.publicjobs.ie](http://www.publicjobs.ie)



# A Decision That Will Sink or Save This Industry



*Cormac Burke, Chairman of the Irish Fishing & Seafood Alliance believes that too much power has been in the hands of too few and above all else, the lack of transparency and accountability has been at the core of the problem that has blighted every sector of the industry for so many years*



**“For the past two decades, at the various annual EU Council quota talks, Ireland’s negotiators viewed any quota reduction of 15% or less as a success while the representatives of other EU Member States considered any quota increase of less than 15% as a total failure - - it has been this mindset that has seen Ireland, despite holding the richest waters in Europe, become the poor relation of the EU fishing industry...”**

It is believed that a senior level panel of interviewers will, in the very near future, gather to discuss the appointment of the new heads of the Department of Agriculture, Food & Marine (DAFM).

Given the track record of those who are now being replaced after some 25 years at the helm, these new appointments are critical to the future survival of the Irish fishing industry - both nationally and within the EU framework.

I feel a sense of basic decency prevents me from highlighting the catastrophic management of this industry by the two outgoing civil servants over the past two decades, but it has been clear that a reign of anti industry strategy, lack of co-operation, and abuse in many different forms has been in play.

Put simply, too much power has been in the hands of too few and above all else, the lack of transparency and accountability has been at the core of the problem that has blighted every sector of the industry for so many years.

Many questions have remained unanswered as a legacy of the current regime such as the [civil servant denied] relationship between the DAFM and the SFFA; how much tax payers’ money was wasted in taking anyone who tried to fight the system to court on trumped-up charges; and the coincidence that anyone who stood up to the DAFM suddenly found themselves being a ‘person of interest’ to the SFFA...

How can it be that more than a dozen marine ministers have come and gone in the past 25 years - some of them good people with great intentions and yet they achieved

nothing during their term?

And the only constant throughout that time has been the marine senior civil servants who in fact held all the power - - so much so that they earned themselves the title from fishermen as the ‘Department Against the Marine’.

**For anyone at an administrative level who may take offence at this opinion then I believe history shows that, under the outgoing regime, the Irish fishing industry has not once made a gain in terms of increased quotas or better fishing opportunities for any sector and any improvement in quotas came solely as a result of ICES advice to the EU Commission and not from any case or fight taken to the EU by Ireland.**

As I have mentioned in a previous article, in the past 25 years at the various annual EU Council quota talks Ireland’s DAFM negotiators viewed any quota reduction of 15% or less as a success while the representatives of other EU Member States considered any quota increase of less than 15% as a total failure - it has been this mindset that has seen Ireland, despite holding the richest waters in Europe, become the poor relation of the EU fishing industry.

Looking in terms of this industry being a commercial business, how can its ‘managers’ claim to have done their best when we have arrived at the point where the seafood catching, processing and retail industry is now at an all-time low with the pelagic, demersal and inshore sectors all on their knees with Ireland trying to survive on crumbs of quotas while the rest of the EU fleet enjoy a boom time in Irish waters?

And meanwhile the latest (doubtless DAFM-edited) BIM Seafood Report attempts to paint a pretty picture to Government and the general public of an Irish seafood sector showing growth (while Irish quotas are vastly reduced) by including data of imported fish which is sold in Ireland.

From administrators and many politicians dropping the term ‘fishing industry’ and using the sexier-sounding ‘seafood sector’, and replacing ‘fishermen’ with ‘fishers’, its clear that there is a move towards whitewashing this industry and

its traditional way of life to something else - - something that will sound better in corporate reports but will paper over the cracks of an industry and a group of people who are being systematically eroded from Irish heritage - a group of people who are slowly going from catchers and processors of Irish-caught fish to a forgotten section of society who are being forced out of work and forced to look on while the fleets from every other EU nation successfully harvest the rich resources in Irish waters.

To those who will be selecting the next generation of senior DAFM managers I would ask that you please look at the past track record of failure and think of the future - - recognise that Ireland’s catching and processing sectors and the socio economics of the coastal regions that rely on them are on the very brink.

Meanwhile rumours are strong within the industry that a certain candidate, well known for sharing the same attitude of his outgoing colleagues, is a hopeful for this appointment and, if this decision receives even the slightest consideration, which would surely bring about the final end of commercial fishing in Ireland, then this industry will react in the strongest manner in defence of itself.

**It matters little whether the new appointees have previous experience in this industry or not but what’s more important is that they will have the dedication and willpower to work WITH this industry instead of against it and that they are willing to do their best to view this industry in terms of a failing commercial venture and address what can be done to make it successful.**

The very futures of many thousands of Irish people today, and for generations to come, are in your hands and the decision you now make will either sink or save this industry once and for all .....

The Irish Fishing & Seafood Alliance would like to thank the many subscribers who continue to make the existence of this organisation possible through payments and donations during 2022 and into 2023. If you would like to support the IFSA please contact Cormac Burke by phone or text at 087 3913117 or email: ifsacormac@gmail.com

## Historic Aran Ferry Is A Problem Creating A Problem In Dublin

The former CIE Galway-Aran Islands passenger and freight ferry Naomh Eanna, which was withdrawn from the Aran Islands route 37 years ago and has been the subject of preservation campaigns has capsized at the Grand Canal Basin in Dublin and is, most likely, headed for scrapping.



The vessel is regarded as ‘unsafe’ and needing to be removed. Vandals have done it a lot of damage. In 2015 it was bought for a Euro by Sam Field-Corbett of Irish Ship and Barge Fabrication whose company restored the former Cork Harbour liner tender, Cill Airne, as a floating restaurant and bar venue in Dublin Port. At one stage there was a plan, which failed, to move the Naomh Eanna back to Galway.

## Pat Lawless To Try Again

Former fishermen Pat Lawless from Kerry is going to try again to sail alone around the world in a yacht race.

Having had to retire from the current Golden Globe Race at Cape Town due to problems with self-steering on his yacht named Green Rebel, he has announced that he will enter the Global Solo Challenge to start next September from La Coruna in Spain. Unlike the GGR which was for older boats that were not allowed use modern technology, this race is for modern boats of over 32 feet in length, using the benefits of modern technology.

It costs €7,500 just to enter and needs a budget of around €60,000 to prepare boat and sailor for several months at sea, circumnavigating east-about as they round the three Great Capes - Africa’s Cape of Good Hope, Australia’s Cape Leeuwin, and South America’s Cape Horn and traverse the Antarctic Region. This month Pat Lawless is to sail Green Rebel back from Cape Town in South Africa back to Ireland, then try to raise sponsorship and prepare the yacht for another round-the-world attempt.

## Waterford and Wexford Coastal Monitoring

There will be acoustic monitoring equipment off the coasts of Co Waterford and Co Wexford for three to four months.

These are being deployed by Energia as part of its works for Energia’s North Celtic Sea and South Irish Sea offshore wind projects.

# SET YOUR FUTURE COURSE

## at the Irish Skipper Expo

BIM is here to help you navigate any challenges, and chart a course for a prosperous future.

The Irish Skipper Expo is the first port of call, showcasing the resilience and dynamism of the Irish seafood industry, and offering you the right conditions to do business, network and socialise.

After the turbulence of recent years, it's your chance to reinvigorate yourself and look forward to the future with confidence.



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## Following Requests from Inshore Fishing Organisations Public Consultation on Herring Stock Management in North West Announced

The Minister for Agriculture, Food and the Marine, Mr Charlie McConalogue, T.D., has launched a consultation process on a review of the 2012 Herring Management Policy, in relation to the quantity of herring set aside from the southern North-West herring stock (Herring 6A South) for smaller / inshore fishing vessels.

The Minister received a request from the Chairs of the National Inshore Fisheries Forum (NIFF) and North Regional Inshore Fisheries Forum (RIFF) for a review of the 6A South Herring Policy of 2012, in relation to inshore vessels.

Minister McConalogue said; "I have carefully considered the request from the NIFF and RIFF and I am satisfied that there are sufficient changed circumstances to justify a limited review of the 2012 Policy, in relation to the quantity of herring set aside from the Herring 6A South quota for the inshore fleet. Inshore fishing families are the linchpin of rural coastal communities and it is important that we continue to seek ways to improve fishing opportunities for this sector."

The Herring Management Policy of 2012 Herring 6A South stock sets aside 5% of the quota for vessels under 20 metres in length that did not have a qualifying track record for the fishery.

Minister McConalogue continued, "When the 5% provision was set in the 2012 Herring Management Policy, it reflected an expectation that Ireland would have a reasonable quota available to it, as had been the case in the years prior to the setting of the Policy.

"I am open to considering amendments to this part of the policy so that inshore vessels have a reasonable allocation available to them when the quota available is low, taking into account that this stock is important for our inshore vessels."

Minister McConalogue added; "We are moving into a better place with this fishery following years when the fishery was closed for commercial fishing because it was in a poor state. The scientific advice on the state of the stock is now positive and we can look forward to a good fishery for the fishing fleet, both for inshore and offshore vessels.

"This demonstrates clearly that taking strong conservation measures, when necessary, rebuilds fish stocks. I appreciate fully the strong support given by our fishers for these conservation measures even though they were deprived of a commercial fishery for 6 years."

The Minister said, "I will shortly be inviting stakeholders and in particular those involved in the fishery over recent years to submit their views. To assist consideration, I asked my Department to prepare a consultation paper setting out the background and giving possible options. I look forward

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to good engagement from stakeholders including any alternative proposals put forward during the consultation.

"Following the consultation, I will consider all the issues involved and make a decision on any justified amendment to the 2012 Policy including any new arrangement in the interim or on a longer-term basis."

### EU & Irish Authorities Must Stand Firm Against Norwegian Fishery Demands

Sinn Féin MEP for Midlands Northwest, Chris MacManus, met with Irish fishing representatives and organisations in Brussels. MacManus has urged the Minister for the Marine, Charlie McConalogue and his department officials to not accept any deal that gives the Norwegian government unfettered access to Irish fishing grounds.

The Midlands Northwest MEP said: "The insistence by the Norwegian government and fishing industry to gain unfettered access to Ireland's territorial waters is intolerable. It is completely unacceptable and Irish authorities and the EU need to hold firm."

"Not only does Norway have a track record of overfishing mackerel, but it also has an inflated 25% of the total catch for blue whiting, while Ireland only has 3%."

MacManus said the culture of repeatedly relinquishing our fishing rights must end. "The historic legacy of Irish authorities and senior department officials giving away Irish fishing stocks for nothing is reprehensible and worthy of further scrutiny. The welfare of Irish coastal communities always seems to be bottom of the government's priorities list. Even lower than the Commission's it would too often appear."

"Minister McConalogue and the European Commission must not cave in to the Norwegians' demands. Ireland is a Member State, Norway is not, and so the onus is on Brussels and the Member States to stand with and act in solidarity with Ireland in these negotiations."

"The North-western Waters Advisory Council and Euro-pech must also commit their support to Ireland's fishing and coastal communities in this regard."

Pádraig Mac Lochlainn, Sinn Féin TD for Donegal and party spokesperson for fisheries added: "Minister McConalogue must stand firm in the current negotiations between the EU and Norway and ensure that the sheer injustice of how Irish fishing communities ended up shouldering 40% of the entire loss of income from fish in the European Union due to Brexit is not repeated again."

Deputy Mac Lochlainn concluded, "Myself, MEP MacManus and indeed the wider Sinn Féin team will be reminding Minister McConalogue and the European Commission's Virginijus Sinkevičius that their full support is necessary in defending our native industry."

### Pringle Focuses on Ireland's Fishing Losses as EU Anniversary is Marked

Independent TD for Donegal, Thomas Pringle, said Europe should acknowledge how Ireland was 'hoodwinked' over its fish stocks when the country became an EU member.

Addressing the joint sitting of the Houses of the Oireachtas, Deputy Pringle said: "The purpose of today is to commemorate the 50th anniversary of our membership of the European Union.

"It would be nice to have Europeans here thanking us for our total contribution of fish to the EU that far outweighs any help and value of money that we have received from Europe since then.

"Acknowledging that we have been hoodwinked over the years, even to this day, when France, Spain, Belgium and a host of other EU countries have more entitlement to our fish stocks than we have would be welcome and would at least make us believe that the EU was interested in what we have to say.

"Of course, the European Union has always had plenty of our ruling parties to help them along the way. We are guilty of assisting in our own denigration as well, unfortunately," he said.

Deputy Pringle spoke after the address to the joint sitting by European Parliament President, Roberta Metsola.

# Mission Blue Announces Ireland's First 'Hope Spot' Greater Skellig Coast deemed critical to the health of the ocean by global organisation

**A** large swathe of ocean off the south west coast of Ireland has been added to a list of 'Hope Spots' by a global marine conservation movement. Mission Blue is led by legendary oceanographer Dr. Sylvia Earle and now has a network of 148 Hope Spots across the globe. It aims to inspire public awareness, access and support for a worldwide network of Marine Protected Areas.

Hope Spots are special places that are scientifically identified as critical to the health of the ocean. Existing spots include the Galápagos Islands, the Great Barrier Reef, the Northwest Passage and parts of Antarctica. Some locations are already formally protected, while others still need defined protection.

The Greater Skellig Coast stretches from Kenmare Bay in Co Kerry to Loop Head in Co Clare and covers an area of roughly 7,000km<sup>2</sup> of Irish coastal waters. It is home to critically endangered sharks, globally important seabird colonies, and animals threatened with extinction which rely on these areas for breeding and feeding.

The area has been championed by Fair Seas, a coalition of Ireland's leading environmental non-governmental organisations and networks, with the support of Sea Synergy, a marine awareness and activity centre based in Kerry. Fair Seas has been campaigning for the Government to designate a minimum of 30% of Irish waters as Marine Protected Areas (MPA) by 2030. The Greater Skellig Coast is one of 16 'Areas of Interest' identified for possible MPA designation by the organisation.

Mission Blue was founded by American oceanographer, explorer and author Dr Sylvia Earle. She has been National Geographic's Explorer in Residence since 1998 and was named the first Hero for the Planet by Time Magazine.

Dr. Sylvia Earle, Founder of Mission Blue says, "This Hope Spot is being announced at a crucial time for Ireland because in 2023, new national Marine Protected Area (MPA) legislation will be introduced for the first time. 81% of Irish people believe that we need to protect, conserve and restore the ocean. This legislation will help achieve this very desirable protection."

Aoife O'Mahony, Campaign Manager for Fair Seas said, "It is incredible to see a small part of Ireland's seas being recognised as critically important to global ocean health by Mission Blue, and joining the likes of the Galapagos Islands and other world-famous marine locations. The waters off the coast of Kerry and Clare are rich with fascinating creatures and marine life but there has been an alarming decline in the numbers of iconic species like angel sharks in recent years. We want to halt that decline and give species every chance to

thrive. The Hope Spot will help us to raise awareness and bring the public closer to the ocean as we work to safeguard the water and the marine life within. This global recognition is even more critical now as we finalise our own national MPA legislation in Ireland. We have one chance to do this right and we owe it to the next generation to do this well."

Minister for Tourism, Catherine Martin added, "I welcome the news that a large area of ocean off the south west coast of Ireland has been added to a list of 'Hope Spots' by the global marine conservation movement, Mission Blue, which is led by legendary oceanographer Dr. Sylvia Earle. Our small island of Ireland is not only draped in a wealth of natural beauty but it is also surrounded by an ocean filled with an assortment of marine life and a coastline, which houses numerous colonies of birds and wildlife. This all contributes to the richness and attractiveness of Ireland as a destination for tourists and all of which needs to be preserved and protected. Announcements like this are also timely as we are currently developing a new national tourism policy. This new policy will seek to support sustainable economic development in communities throughout the country, whilst protecting our environment and natural resources."

Aoife O'Mahony from Fair Seas and Lucy Hunt have been named as champions of the Greater Skellig Coast Hope Spot by Mission Blue.

Lucy Hunt said, "I founded Sea Synergy in 2014 to help raise awareness of the importance of the ocean and encourage others to fall in love with the ocean and to help protect it. We have so much to be proud of when it comes to our coast and the Wild Atlantic way, from the wildlife to the views. It's important we do everything we can to preserve and where needed restore it. We're lucky that we can see dolphins, seals and huge bird colonies from the shore as well as experience a whole other amazing world beneath the surface from kelp forests to jewelled sea walls. The Hope Spot designation confirms what we already knew in Co Kerry and Co Clare, that the ocean is critically important. It's my wish that this designation will help inspire people to take a closer look at what the ocean offers and that we will see more Hope Spots and action to live in harmony with Ireland's ocean."



## IRISH WHALE AND DOLPHIN GROUP IWDG NEWS

*The Irish Whale and Dolphin Group Chief Executive, Dr. Simon Berrow has a chat with a fish producer organisation CEO*

### Common Ground – Found and Appreciated

**T**he CEO of a well-known fish producers' organization said to me recently "you know Simon, we have far more in common than against", "I know" I replied "and the Irish Whale and Dolphin Group have been saying this for years".



Feeding Minke Whale. Photo Credit Simon Berrow/ IWDG

Although I was surprised at the comment, I was pleased that common ground was recognized and that we can, and should, work together. Fishing has a huge impact on our marine waters, both inshore and offshore but the history of sustainable fisheries management is not good. There are many positives with some fish stocks rebuilding following recovery plans, but many are still over-fished.

The fishing industry is under huge pressure, quota restrictions following Brexit, increasing fuel costs, and the lack of local labour. How many of the older fishers who are retiring and decommissioning their vessels, see a future for their children?

On top of all these pressures the so called "spatial squeeze" where fishers could potentially lose access to fishing grounds due to the roll out of offshore renewables and Marine Protected Areas is real. However is this a threat or an opportunity?

Fisheries management needs a change. For too long the old system, which has not served most fishers well, has led to stock declines and degradation of marine habitats. It's time for new ideas and models, which not only support sustainable fisheries benefiting local communities but marine biodiversity as well. However only by fully including fishers in local decision making, giving them the power to influence and

benefit, and importantly develop long-term plans for management will this be successful.

Anytime I have sat around the table with fishers (both catchers and processors) in a management regime I have been struck by their fairness, honesty and respect shown to all. This is the basis on which potentially disparate people and groups can chart a way forward to achieving healthy seas with abundant resources for fishers and marine predators alike. It's not going to be easy but there are models that have worked in Ireland and elsewhere. However we must start soon. IWDG would fully support a number of pilot projects to build representative stakeholder groups, listen to all concerns, identify commonalities and start moving down an inclusive path to restore our marine waters.

Not everybody will be happy, but I do believe "we (fishers and conservationists) have far more in common than against" and healthy seas with vibrant fish stocks and resilient marine habitats is a common goal we can all support.

Irish Whale and Dolphin Group



[www.iwdg.ie](http://www.iwdg.ie)



# news from Castletownbere

## Helen Riddell



Castletownbere harbour - Photo courtesy Anne Marie Cronin Photography

### Naval Service Detain German Registered Trawler

The Pesorsa Dos, a German-registered Spanish vessel was detained by the Irish Naval vessel the LÉ George Bernard Shaw on January 21<sup>st</sup>. Following the detention the vessel took some days to recover its fishing gear, it was escorted to Castletownbere by the Naval Service and handed over to An Garda Síochána on landing on January 26<sup>th</sup>.

It's understood the 27m long fishing vessel, which left Spain on January 2nd had shot gill nets and was fishing for monkfish at the time of its detention.

On January 28<sup>th</sup>, the vessel's skipper, Juan Pablo Ducal Rubido appeared in Bandon District Court charged with twelve offences relating to alleged illegal fishing activities in Irish waters on various dates in January 2023. One charge related to failing to facilitate safe boarding of the vessel for inspection, a boarding ladder broke as Irish Navy personnel attempted to board the vessel.

There was no objection to granting bail, however, the State did apply to have the vessel detained indefinitely in Castletownbere until the owners of the vessel provide a bond of €245,000 to cover all potential legal costs and fines and the cost of the vessel's catch and gear. Mr Rubido was granted bail on his own bond of €5,000 and

was due to appear before the next sittings of Cork Circuit Criminal Court on January 31<sup>st</sup>.

### Castletownbere Coast Guard

Castletownbere Coast Guard Team are currently recruiting new members. Those interested should live within 16 miles or 20 minutes of the station, have a reasonable level of fitness and be prepared to undertake regular training to reach the level of competence needed to be an effective member of the team.

For further details contact the officer in charge Leo O'Shea on 086 8501812 or at oiccastletownberecgu@ircg.gov.ie

The team was called out at on January 18th to assist an ill crew member of a French-registered fishing vessel Rio Da Bouza. After the trawler had docked at Dinish Island, the coast guard crew helped to transfer the casualty into the waiting ambulance, and he was taken to hospital for treatment.

### Castletownbere RNLI and CoAction Beara Fundraiser

The weekly fundraising lotto draw in aid of Castletownbere RNLI and CoAction Beara has now returned. Tickets are €2 each and can be purchased from a number of businesses in the town. The weekly draw

takes place on Wednesdays, if the jackpot is not won five lucky dip winners will each receive €50.

### Castletownbere Develop- ment Association

The Castletownbere Development Association is busy making plans for 2023 and in doing so is reviewing the events of last year. In collaboration with many individuals, several local voluntary organisations and local businesses, the CDA was able to facilitate holding the St Patrick's Day events, the Festival of the Sea and the Christmas celebrations which were a huge improvement on the bleak Covid years. The support of many volunteers was vital to all of these events and the CDA is grateful to all for their participation whether it was in suggestions, in planning or in their presence on the day.

The first event this year will be St Patrick's Day Parade followed by an Easter Fun Day for children on April 8th and an Easter Market on April 10th. In 2022, following a call out to the community, several individuals, businesses and organisations took on the responsibility of running some of the events at the Festival of the Sea. This collaboration proved hugely successful and made everything more manageable. As a result, it has been decided to carry on with this model. If anyone has any ideas for

events, they are asked to get in touch with the CDA via their Facebook and Instagram pages.

It's been proposed that on the June Bank Holiday weekend, there will be a multi-cultural celebration. This follows on from the success of the Spanish Fest of previous years, and the group would like to build on the concept to celebrate the many nationalities who contribute to the diversity of the local community. Ideas, suggestions and participation in running this celebration are all welcome.

### Beara West Family Resource Centre

The Beara West Family Resource Centre provides information, advice and support to families, individuals and groups. The centre can provide access to low-cost counselling through links with a number of local counsellors and therapists. For further details contact 027 70998.

### Beara Historical Society

The Beara Historical Society will hold their next meeting on Wednesday February 8th at 8.00pm in Twomey's Bar, Castletownbere. Madeline Hutchins will speak about her great-great-grand aunt Ellen Hutchins of Ballylickey, Ireland's first female botanist. All are welcome. There will be a €5 charge for non-members.



Pictured at the signing of contracts between the Port of Cork Company and Safehaven Marine for the commission of a new state-of-the-art pilot launch are Aidan Fleming, pilot with the Port of Cork Company, Frank Kowalski, Managing Director of Safehaven Marine, Eoin McGettigan, Chief Executive Officer of the Port of Cork Company and Mark Moran, pilot with the Port of Cork Company. The new vessel will be built in Cork and will be delivered by March 2024.

## Port of Cork Company Sign Contract with Safehaven Marine for New Economical Pilot Launch

**T**he Port of Cork Company has signed a contract with Cork-based boat builders, Safehaven Marine, to commission a new, economical, state-of-the-art pilot vessel.

Due to be delivered in March 2024, the pilot vessel will be designed and manufactured in Cork by the Youghal-based Safehaven Marine, which also built the Port's current two vessels 'Glean Mor' (2005) and 'Failte' (2011). The new 'all-weather capable' pilot vessel will be more economical than its predecessors and will be powered by modern, highly efficient engines that reduce fuel usage and will be capable of operating on Hydrotreated Vegetable Oil (HVO) Biofuel that reduces emissions.

Speaking at the signing, Port of Cork Company Chief Executive, Eoin McGettigan stated, "This is a time of great excitement for the Port of Cork as we once again work with the renowned Safehaven Marine. The new pilot launch will have the latest technology that improves performance, economy and functionality - helping in turn to ensure the safety of our pilots and crew who often face inhospitable marine conditions as part of their daily routine. We are also proud to be continuing our commitment to investing in more sustainable and economical equipment as part of our journey to a Net Zero future. We look forward to progressing this venture in the year ahead."

Frank Kowalski, Managing Director of

Safehaven Marine added, "In 2005, Safehaven Marine first signed a contract with the Port of Cork to build the 'Glean Mor' - which was the first pilot boat that we ever built - previously having specialised in work boats. Today, some 18 years later, Safehaven is delighted to have signed contracts again with the Port of Cork to build a third pilot boat for the Port, which will be our 60th pilot boat delivered globally. Over the last nearly 20 years it's been particularly satisfying to see our pilot boats in operation and whilst out on sea trials. I look forward to continuing seeing our vessels in operation in Cork harbour for many years to come."

The new pilot launch will have an overall length of 15 metres and will accommodate seven pilots and crew during pilotage operations at a speed of 25kts. It will be fitted with the latest navigation equipment and finished to the highest standards, ensuring the crew and pilot's comfort and safety.

Safehaven Marine was established in 1998 and currently employs 30 staff. The company has built over 150 commercial vessels, operating in over 30 different countries worldwide. To find out more about Safehaven Marine, please visit [www.safehavenmarine.com](http://www.safehavenmarine.com)



Looking back into Dublin harbour and up the Liffey from Poolbeg - Photo courtesy James Grandfield

# Sales from New Speciality Coffee Range to Fund Marine Restoration in Clew Bay, Co. Mayo

**Green Ocean Coffee, a new speciality coffee range from Irish company Watermark Coffee, has been officially launched to coincide with a unique partnership agreement with Clew Bay Oyster Co-op.**



Expertly roasted in Ireland, Green Ocean Coffee is made from 100% speciality grade arabica beans sourced directly from farmers in Brazil, Kenya and Honduras. Available in fully recyclable packaging, the three coffee blends deliver a vibrant, modern flavour and are named 'Inishgowla', 'Dorinish' and 'Inisheeny' after islands in Clew Bay.

Recognising the importance of the ocean in tackling and reversing the effects of climate change and improving coastal biodiversity, Watermark Coffee's partnership with Clew Bay Oyster Co-op aims to restore up to 180 hectares of seabed in Clew Bay, Co. Mayo from sales of Green Ocean Coffee.

**For every 1kg bag of Green Ocean Coffee sold, one square metre of the oyster and seagrass bed will be restored** helping to lock away oceanic and atmospheric carbon at rate up to 35 times faster than the tropical rainforest.

David Lawlor, Managing Director of Watermark Coffee explains the motivation behind this novel project; "At Watermark Coffee, we are committed to producing exceptional coffee whilst running our business in a way that minimises our environmental impact. As a sailor and diver myself, I have witnessed significant change to the ocean habitat and I have a deep appreciation of the vital role the ocean plays in stabilising our global climate. As a company, we want to play our part, and give our customers the opportunity, to protect the biodiversity of our ocean in the long term. Green Ocean Coffee is about providing the conduit that links drinking amazing coffee with authentic climate action right here in Ireland".

As an island nation, the role the ocean and in particular, oysters and seagrass, play in protecting our marine environment cannot be underestimated as Alex Blackwell, Fisheries Biologist and Manager of Clew Bay Oyster Co-op explains;

"Balance is key to a healthy ocean. Oyster and seagrass beds are a pivotal component in sequestering atmospheric carbon dioxide as well as providing coastal protection and creating sustainable employment.



"Oysters are nature's most efficient filtration system, filtering up to 190 litres of seawater a day. They keep algae blooms at bay and encourage the growth of seagrass - one of the planet's most overlooked sequestering plants. It's a

dream come true to have Green Ocean Coffee on board so we can continue to do this important restorative work".

The launch of Green Ocean Coffee joins Watermark Coffee's wider sustainable range, Woodland Coffee, which saw the company investing in a dedicated woodland plantation in Pallasgreen, Co. Limerick in 2020. To date, 27,000 trees have been planted as a result of Woodland Coffee sales. Watermark also participates in the rigorous Carbon Disclosure Project, a not-for-profit charity that runs the global disclosure system for investors, companies, cities, states and regions to manage their environmental impacts.

Green Ocean Coffee is available wholesale to change-maker companies who share Watermark's passion for driving sustainability, right down to the coffee they provide to their employees in the workplace. Watermark provide on site barista training, tastings, coffee machines and servicing. The range is also available to consumers to purchase on-line via [www.greenoceancoffee.ie](http://www.greenoceancoffee.ie) and retails at €15 for a 500g bag and €25 for a 1kg bag.

David Lawlor added; "We are very excited to launch Green Ocean Coffee after three extensive years of research and planning. We have had tremendous help and advice at all stages from diving experts in Ocean Divers, to Bord Iascaigh Mhara and of course Alex Blackwell and Michael Mulloy of Clew Bay Oyster Co-Op. Their enthusiasm and knowledge have helped make Green Ocean Coffee a reality. We are looking forward to working with new corporate clients and consumers to deliver great coffee and make a meaningful difference to the ocean that surrounds us."

Michael Mulloy, Chair of Clew Bay Oyster Co-op concluded; "Native oysters in a bay is like the canary in a cage to a certain extent. If you have an abundance of native oysters in a fishery, it is an indication that your biodiversity is good. We are privileged to have retained native oyster beds in Clew Bay and we are looking forward to working with our partners in Green Ocean Coffee to ensure these beds are protected into the future".

Corporate clients who are interested in finding out more, can book a presentation and tasting of Green Ocean Coffee in their office by contacting 01-4666000 or emailing [info@greenoceancoffee.ie](mailto:info@greenoceancoffee.ie). To try this exciting new coffee range at home, shop online on [www.greenoceancoffee.ie](http://www.greenoceancoffee.ie) and let us know what you think via our social media channels along with the hashtag #greenoceancoffeeireland



Pictured in Clew Bay, Co. Mayo at the launch of Green Ocean Coffee, an exciting speciality coffee range from Irish company Watermark Coffee are; Michael Mulloy, Chair, Clew Bay Oyster Co-op, David Lawlor, Managing Director, Watermark Coffee and Alex Blackwell, Manager, Clew Bay Oyster Co-op. Recognising the importance of the ocean in tackling and reversing the effects of climate change, Green Ocean Coffee has partnered with Clew Bay Oyster Co-op to restore up to 180 hectares of protected seabed in Clew Bay. For every 1kg bag of Green Ocean Coffee sold, one square metre of native oyster and seagrass bed in this beautiful bay will be restored. [www.greenoceancoffee.ie](http://www.greenoceancoffee.ie)

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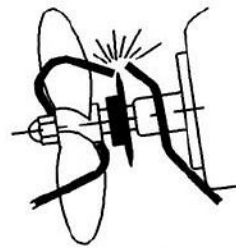
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# Letters to the Editor

Editor,  
Marine Times Newspaper

I sent the following email to Minister McConalogue, and others too, asking them to help stop the intimidating, dangerous and bullying tactics at sea by the Spanish.

Also I have written to the Minister of State for Transport asking to extend list of the port registry of Ireland, to include all local fishing ports as well as our 6 main fishery harbours.

**Cllr Caroline Cronin  
Schull, West Cork**

Dear Minister,

I would like to draw your attention to a recent incident that happened off the west coast of Ireland, between a 32 meter Spanish owned trawler (Eixil) and a 24 meter Irish owned trawler (Ailbhe Rose)

The Spanish trawler has been extremely intimidating and very aggressive, as skipper of the Ailbhe Rose said "the job is difficult enough without this reckless behaviour"

This has happened 4 or 5 times in recent weeks. Where they (Eixil) have been boxing off big areas for themselves where the fishing was good, while intimidating other boats who were trying to fish in the same area.

Some of the video footage on social media of the Spanish trawler approaching them at night, in poor weather conditions, and reduced visibility is extremely concerning.

This is very worrying as this Spanish company, based in La Coruna Spain who run this boat have previously been prosecuted in Ireland for similar behaviour of her sister ship, Punta Candieira

I strongly urge you to intervene, before loss of life is involved with this unacceptable behaviour.

The people effected by this are a well known West Cork fishing family who have been reversing the trend in recent years by encouraging young people into fishing, without young people we will have no industry and as such they should be protected from this heavy handed intimidating behaviour.

Thanking you in anticipation and awaiting your reply

Yours sincerely,

**Cllr Caroline Cronin  
Schull**

Dear Minister,

I'm writing with a proposal to extend the list of ports on the existing Port Registry of Ireland to include the small fishing ports and the 6 fishery harbours. Every fishing boat, ship and ferry have to register, and the vast majority on the list are fishing boats.

The list of ports was made up back in the late 1800's and Arklow was added on about twenty years ago.

My understanding is the Minister of State for Transport can extend the list and include all fishing ports. So I'm asking you as minister if you would consider this proposal?

We are the only country in Europe where you can't register your fishing boat out of your home port.

If you agree to extending the list all paperwork can be carried out in the existing custom offices, no new office has to be open or no extra staff would be required.

This would be great recognition and pride for all the fishers in their home ports.

kindest Regards

**Cllr Caroline Cronin  
Schull**



Race to the loading bay at Ardglass between the Kelly M and Nimrod - Photo courtesy Christopher Feenan

# International Fishing and Maritime News

## Two-Thirds of Fish Stocks in Good Health Says OECD

The Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) Review of Fisheries for 2022 says that two-thirds of the fish stocks assessed are in good health, but at least one in five do not meet sustainability standards and need re-building.

What is known about fish stock health at the country level?



“Many stocks could produce more food or more value for fishers if they were more abundant. OECD Fisheries Management Indicators indicate that 64% of assessed stocks are in good health, while 18% fall below sustainability standards, and for a further 18% assessments are not conclusive (and their health status remains undetermined). Investments in stock assessments, tighter stock management and rebuilding plans for overfished stocks could improve the sustainability of fish resources while generating more food and more value in the sector.”

The Review of Fisheries is the OECD Committee for Fisheries’ flagship report. It aims to support policy makers and sector stakeholders in their efforts to deliver sustainable and resilient fisheries. Based on data reported by governments, the Review analyses major policy developments in OECD countries and emerging economies with large fisheries and suggests priorities for action at national and international levels.

This edition of the OECD Review is the first to be published since the landmark agreement reached by members of the World Trade Organization (WTO) in June 2022. After more than 20 years of negotiations, they agreed to prohibit subsidies for illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing, fishing of overfished stocks, and fishing in the unregulated high seas. They also agreed to take special care and exercise due restraint when subsidising fishing of stocks which are not monitored.

“It is the countries providing the greatest levels of support to their fisheries

that also tend to have some of the largest fisheries sectors”, the report says.

Six economies accounted for 86% of all support reported in the FSE in 2018-20 - the People’s Republic of China – 38% (down from just under half of all reported support in 2012-14), Japan – 13%, the United States – 10%, Canada – 8%, Brazil – 6%, while EU Member countries together accounted for just under 9%. These six economies were also in the top seven in terms of global catch volume, fleet capacity or employment. When considered as a share of the value of landings, per gross tonne of fleet capacity or on a per fisher basis, the support was highest in Poland, Sweden, Slovenia, Denmark and Brazil.

The report reviews how individual species are managed and identifies where management needs to be strengthened to ensure fisheries are sustainable.

### Rainbow Trout Market Share Will Increase

Rainbow trout could become a major species on the global seafood market according to a market analysis which says that, by the end of next year the demand of consumers for healthier foods will increase to €5 billion Euros and that level of market growth will continue in the following years at an average of 5 per cent. Fact.MR has offices in six countries including Ireland.

Fact.MR expects that increasing demand for trout will continue to drive investment in aquaculture, noting that major suppliers are establishing sites in high-demand re-

gions. It notes however that while demand in the US and Japan is high, Europe leads on production.

“In addition to protein, rainbow trout are high in vitamin B, potassium, phosphorus, selenium, and omega-3 fatty acids,” says the report. “Because of its excellent nutritional value, its demand is rising, which is boosting market growth. Rainbow trout sales are being boosted by consumers’ growing attention to healthy foods, as well as retailers’ successful merchandising and marketing, and sampling. The popularity of rainbow trout will ultimately open up attractive growth potential for the market.”

### Supporting Jersey Fishing

The fishing and dependent industries in the Channel Island of Jersey are getting a stg£300,000 support. This is intended to support the island’s fishing and associated industries to manage increasing costs and help seafood businesses to become more environmentally friendly and efficient.



Under the ‘Marine Sector Support Scheme,’ financial support will be made available to help cover increasing running costs such as fuel and staffing, and increased safety requirements, as well as longer-term business investment. Finance allocated to eligible businesses will be linked to their environmental and social impacts.

### Vessels Of the Future as Seen in the UK

A ‘Vessels of the Future Forum’ has been created in the UK with the government’s Seafish agency providing the Secretariat. “The purpose is to facilitate engagement, discussion and initiatives to support the fishing fleet, including aquaculture service vessels, to transition to net zero. The newly formed Forum brings together representatives from the fishing and aquaculture industry, boat builders and surveyors, ports and har-

### Seeing A Large Squid Up Close

A diver in Japan swam and posted photos of one of the ocean’s most mysterious creatures, a giant squid.



Yosuke Tanaka, who co-runs Dive Resort T-Style in Toyooka City, Japan, was told in January that there was “a large squid swimming near the surface off the coast in the Sea of Japan.” He went to see and swim alongside the 8.2 foot (2.5 metre) giant squid. It was “mottled red and white with its skin peeling,” he reported.

bours, engine manufacturers, research community and governments.”

Mike Cohen, Deputy Chief Executive of the National Federation of Fishermen’s Organisations, is the Chairman. An inaugural meeting of the Forum was held in December 2022 where members discussed and agreed working principles. We have published details of agreed work themes. They will include, but are not limited to, supporting the following outline priorities: “Vessels of the Future Forum will support fleet transition to net zero,” a statement from Seafish said.

### Promoting Sushi from The UK To Brazil

While political troubles prevailed back in their home country, top Brazilian sushi chefs were on a trade mission around Scotland designed to promote UK seafood and boost exports to South America.

The visit was organised by the UK Department for International Trade, in partnership with DEFRA, to promote UK seafood, and encourage the chefs to consider importing fish from the UK. It was funded from the British Government’s stg £1m. Seafood Export Package, part of the stg£100m. UK Seafood Fund, which aims to boost seafood exports and promote the industry’s high-quality produce overseas. Sushi is extremely popular in Brazil, home to the largest Japanese community outside of Japan. Despite its vast coastlines and rivers, Brazil lacks cold waters for species such as salmon, cod, haddock, herring, mackerel and others – making it reliant on imports.

### Restoring Welsh Oysters

Bangor University in Wales and the Zoological Society of London have been awarded nearly stg £250,000 to oversee a project that will restore wild oyster populations in Conwy Bay on the North Wales coast.

### Kelp To Reduce Marine Pollution?

Farmed kelp could help reduce marine pollution in coastal areas, according to a new study led by the University of Alaska Fairbanks. This is put down to their water-filtering abilities.

# Deep-Sea Red Crab (*Chaceon affinis*) on the Porcupine Bank

Report by Declan Quigley

**D**uring December 2022, a number of Deep-Sea Red Crab (*Chaceon affinis*) [KEF] were taken by demersal trawlers targeting *Nephrops* prawns on the Porcupine Bank off the west coast of Ireland (Figs. 1-2).



Figure 1 & 2. Deep-Sea Red Crab (*Chaceon affinis*) from the Porcupine Bank (December 2022).

*Chaceon affinis* is widely distributed throughout the NE Atlantic, ranging from SW Iceland (Hvalsbaksbanki; 64.0000°N, 13.0000°W) and SW Norway (Nyeggen, W of Smola; 63.6300°N, 5.8667°E) southwards to Senegal (NW Africa) including the Mid-Atlantic Ridge and Macaronesian Islands (Azores, Madeira, Canaries, and Cape Verde). The species inhabits a wide variety of substrates (mud, sand and rock) on continental slopes, seamounts, and deep-water banks, at depths ranging from 130 to 2047 m, albeit mostly 400-600 m.

Between the late 1920s and late 1960s, isolated specimens of *C. affinis* were reported by Scottish long-liners fishing on the Faeroe Bank, Rockall Bank, Lousy Bank, and George Blight Bank. Between 1978 and 1994, considerable numbers were taken during Scottish research cruises along the eastern edge of the Rockall Trough, Rosemary Bank, Ymir Ridge, Wyville Thompson Ridge and along the continental slope west of St Kilda.



Figure 3. Deep-Sea Red Crab [*Chaceon affinis*] captured by the MFV Pattos Wish, NW Skelligs, Co Kerry (April 1990).

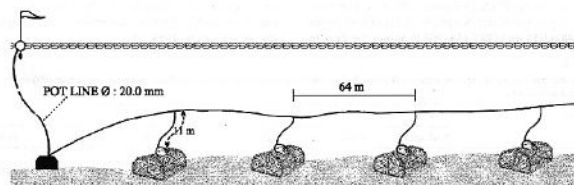
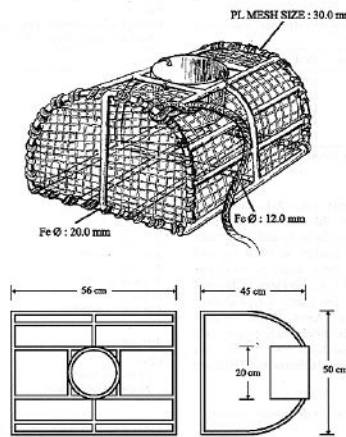
*C. affinis* was recorded for the first time in Irish waters during April 1990 when three specimens were taken by the MFV Pattos Wish (Skipper: Patrick Deasy, Portmagee) while trawling at a depth of 160 m on rough ground NW of the Skelligs, Co Kerry (Fig. 3). A further specimen was captured during May 1993 by the MFV Bjarnery (Skipper: Derry Murphy, Dingle) while trawling at a depth of c.300 m on the Porcupine Bank.

*C. affinis* attains a relatively large size (up to 210 mm carapace width and 2500 g live weight) and yields a large percentage of high-quality meat (47-53% of total weight), valued at up to €16-20/kg (€2-3/kg whole weight).

During 1988, it was noted that *C. affinis* represented a significant by-catch in the newly developed deep-water demersal gillnet fishery targeting Anglerfish (*Lophius piscatorius*) at depths of 400-900m off Galicia (NW Spain). Although a deep-water pot fishery specifically targeting *C. affinis* at depths of 900-1300 m on the Galician Bank was established during the early 1990s, annual landings were relatively low, reaching a maximum of 11.4 tonnes during 1993, and by 1996, only one vessel was still involved in the fishery.



Figure 4. Perorsa Cuatro (BX-757).  
Figure 5. Spanish Deep-Sea Red Crab Pots.

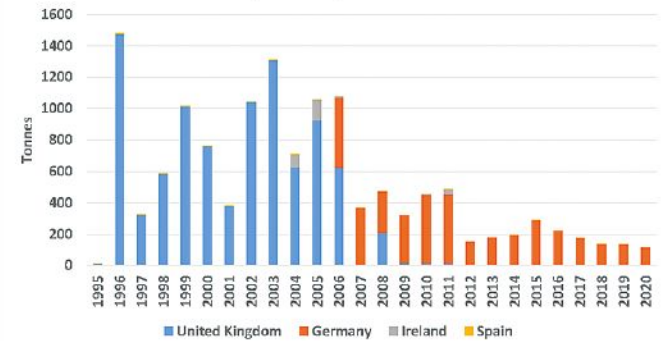


Based on FAO statistics, UK vessels accounted for 90% of recorded NW European landings of *C. affinis* up until the mid-2000s, while thereafter German-flag vessels accounted for 92%, specifically targeted the species using deep-water

pots, and processing and freezing the crab at sea (Figs. 4-5). Although a number of Irish vivier crab vessels participated intermittently during the mid-2000s, they apparently experienced high mortality rates during live transport to on-shore processing plants.

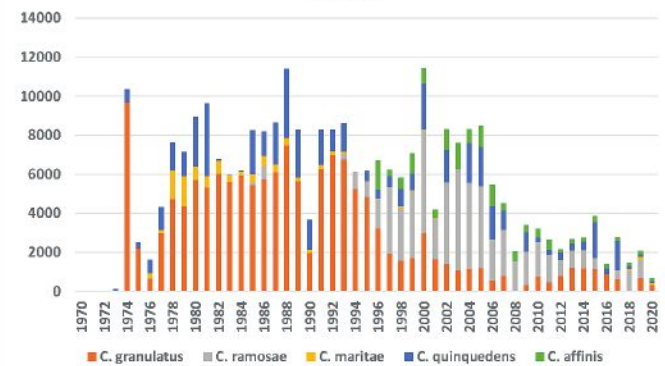
Since 1995, annual landing of *C. affinis* from NW European waters have fluctuated widely (Fig. 6). From a high of 1477 tonnes during 1996, landings dropped to 369 tonnes during 2007, and continued to decline to 113 tonnes during 2020. Over the last decade only one German-flag freezer vessel still appears to be directly involved in the fishery.

Figure 6. Annual landings of Deep-Sea Red Crab (*Chaceon affinis*) from NW European waters (1995-2020) FAO Stats



Since there is no evidence that stock levels of *C. affinis* have decreased, it is possible that this deep-water fishery is currently driven by operational costs and/or market demand. Similar fluctuations have been observed in other deep-water fisheries targeting *Chaceon* species throughout the world e.g. NW America (*C. quinquegens*), South America (*C. ramosae*), South Africa (*C. maritae*), and Japan (*C. granulatus*). Indeed, there has been a significant decline in global landings of all *Chaceon* species over the last decade (Fig. 7).

Figure 7. Annual global landings of *Chaceon* species (1970-2020) FAO data



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

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The Marine Institute's RV Tom Crean at Rathmullan, Co. Donegal with the Chloe J and Katie Shanon in the foreground - Photo courtesy Rathmullan Info (www.rathmullan.net)

## Second Level Students to Learn About Careers in Seafood Sector at Irish Skipper Expo 2023

**BIM** is highlighting careers and training in the seafood sector to second level students at this year's Irish Skipper Expo in Limerick. In addition to BIM's coastal training unit being on site at the trade show, a second BIM mobile unit, its Aquaculture Remote Classroom (ARC), will be on site on Friday 24 February.

The state of the art, mobile classroom currently visits schools throughout Ireland to help build awareness among pupils in primary and second level schools about aquaculture and the wider seafood industry using immersive technologies such as virtual reality.

Locally based second level pupils



BIM Aquaculture Remote Classroom (ARC) facilitator, Aine Lisa Shannon describes the socio-economic impact the seafood industry has on coastal communities to students of Wesley College.

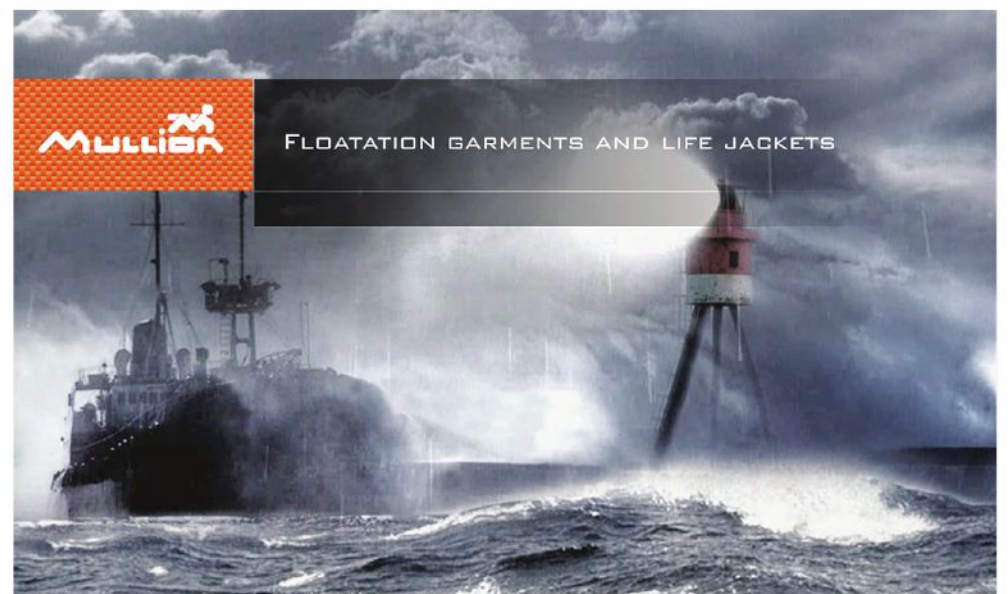
attending this year's show will visit the ARC where they will meet BIM ARC class facilitator, Katie Boyle to gain a better understanding about career options within the seafood sector. Students will also attend a range of talks given by people working in industry to broaden their understanding of the career options within the seafood sector.

A demonstration from BIM's Conservation team about industry gear trials and how they are helping to enhance sustainable fishing practices is planned for the students.

A fire safety demonstration is also taking place. Using a flame generator, students will learn from BIM safety instructors how and when to use

water, foam, and CO2 extinguishers on a live flame.

The RNLI is to demonstrate lifesaving equipment used at sea also.



# Designed for and by fishermen

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