

IRELAND'S LEADING MARITIME NEWSPAPER **MARINE TIMES** JUNE 2023 - PRICE €3



Does Ireland Want A Fishing Industry?

Decommissioned and scrapped fishing vessel at New Ross - Photo courtesy Amy Foley

New Control Regulation Adopted By EU

Wind Farm Developers Not Listening To The Industry

Five years after the EU Commission's proposal to replace existing control regulations, revised arrangements were agreed by the EU Council and the European Parliament on Wednesday, June 1st. So new control regulations are expected to come into operation, probably from January 1st next.

The full context of the changed arrangements have not yet been seen by the country's fishing industry representative organisations. Early indications are discussed in this month's INDUSTRY OPINION by Chief Executives on pages 8 & 9. One of the unexpected changes appears to be the extension of electronic vessel monitoring and the electronic logbooks to vessels of all sizes.

The CEOs also highlight dissatisfaction with the attitude of wind farm developers towards the industry where, it is claimed, there is not adequate discussion about the location of turbines. Despite promises of full consultation, it is claimed that what has been described as "consultation" is "cosmetic for public relations."

Another issue raised is the preservation of the industry into the future. Does Ireland want a fishing industry is the question raised. Our Editor asks 'Why has it come to this?'

All of this plus so much more inside this issue including our MARITIME IRELAND JOURNAL Supplement.

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the fine Art of Marine Finance

by Art Kavanagh

Is It False Advertising?

Back in the days when Banks were Banks one of the slagging remarks was that they would give you an umbrella and ask for it back if it actually started to rain. I never like the Banks being slagged - and I still don't - but God knows lads you bring it on yourselves.

We see slogans telling us that "We Back Brave" and "We're here to support your Business as it keeps building for years to come with easy day to day Banking and dedicated business teams"

Forgive me lads but you are Lying BOTH of you.

I have been looking at the definitions of **Misleading Advertising** which are interesting to say the least in the context. Not sure that either of you are doing what it says on the Tin and you have the market to yourselves now???

Face to face Banking on which business

was founded as the local Manager came to know his Clients and their Business has ceased to be.

We can't even cash a cheque without ceremony.

In correspondence the expression "Relationship Manager" frequently crops up. How can you have a **relationship** with someone you cannot meet or talk to.

YOU CAN'T!!!!

One of the oldest tricks in the book even when I was a young banker (wasn't it awful about that Titanic!) to buy time and to delay decisions was to lob in a stupid question.

That process has now been perfected and enhanced by the number of unfortunate young bankers - untrained - who are trying to present cases which they do not understand to underwriters.

I recall some years ago an Andy Capp cartoon strip in which Andy as usual was lying on the couch. Wife Flo was in the kitchen when he shouted in "Flo - have you seen my pencil ?" to which she replied "It's behind your ear Pet" ... Andy crossly shouted back "Don't be lazy Flo!—WHICH EAR?"

There is pleasure in dealing with bankers or other providers who understand your business and equally it is miserable dealing with someone who doesn't.

It's good to see that after a struggle the process of the Decommissioning Payments is moving along and hopefully in the coming weeks will progress even more to allow us to reach the December deadline. No matter what we might think of it - there are those who decided it their best option so it was important that it could be concluded with the minimum of additional discomfort being inflicted.

From recent reports it appears that the working from home concept is here to stay. I don't like it and I cannot accept that the same level of efficiency is achieved

compared to that achieved from working in a group situation.

Maybe it's just me and the effects of increased age making me cranky and intolerant. I tend to feel like a bit of a dinosaur these days and find it harder to maintain the standards which I set and maintained for many years.

For the time being I will do my best to support an Industry in which I have great faith and hope that you all will make the best of whatever increased catching opportunities present themselves.

I am glad to see regular evidence that your POs are spending more and more time in the Lobbies both here and in Brussels.

I believe that increased contact with the Establishment and the building of your profile must yield benefits.

LB Johnston was quoted as saying "Better to have him inside the tent pissing out, than outside the tent pissing in"

Not sure who he was talking about but I always believed it vital to have people inside the tent, which is what your POs are trying to do now.

Important that as many of you as possible are members Power in numbers lads!

Stay safe you all.



Ambitious entering Ros a Mhíl. Photo courtesy Christopher Griffin

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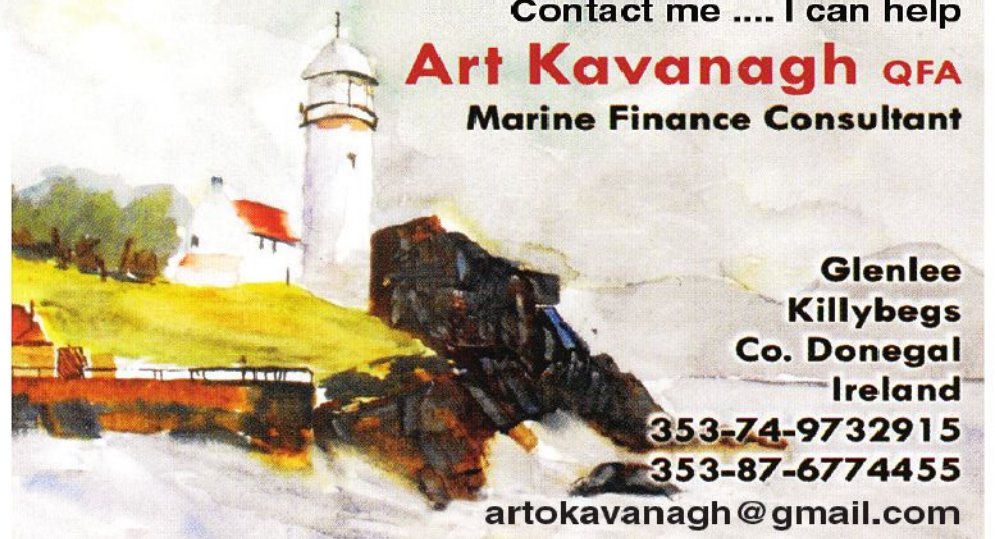
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Unity Is Vital for The Industry Says IFPO CEO

Marine Times Reporter

Unity in the voice of the fishing industry is essential, according to the Chief Executive of the Irish Fish Producers' Organisation who says there is now "a lot of admiration at EU level for how the views of the industry have been expressed in Brussels.

"The entire industry is at the moment in jeopardy, there is no doubt about that," said Aodh O'Donnell in an interview with the MARINE TIMES. "We have paid a high price for decisions which were not good for the industry, but we have worked hard, in recent months and with the processors we have made a strong case for the industry which is being recognised. It is essential that the voice of the industry is clear, that it is clearly known what Ireland needs, what the industry needs."

He was not suggesting a single representative organisation he made clear, each sector had specific needs which their organisations had a responsibility to express. This can be done while making very clear the overall position of what the industry needs for its future. That unity of voice must also be backed by the Minister for the Marine

and his Department and all officials in it.

In May Mr. O'Donnell and the CEO of the Irish Producers and Exporters Association, Brendan Byrne, met senior member of the EU DG Mare cabinet as well as MEPs in Brussels. "There was positive engagement. There is a lot of admiration for the unity of voice presented by the Irish fishing industry. This is a positive position for us."

Mr. O'Donnell said that each sector has particular needs and their representative organisations have a responsibility to express them. "There is more concentration in the industry in getting our views to the public, get them onto the media, as well as through social media and that has been worked on, quite a lot of effort is going into making the case for the industry known to the public."

Immediate Government Assistance for Inshore Fishing Sector Required

Livelihoods in the inshore fishing sector are being put at risk due to Government inaction, Social Democrats leader and Cork South-West TD Holly Cairns has warned.

A report from Bord Iascaigh Mhara (BIM) – Ireland's Seafood Development Agency – highlights the serious issues that inshore fishers are facing. The findings show there is a clear and urgent need for the Government to provide targeted supports to this sector

"The price of food has been in the headlines recently, but the reality is that many small primary producers, like family farms and inshore fishers, are barely getting by. I have consistently called for greater protections for our food producers.

"BIM's recent economic analysis of the Irish small-scale fleet makes for grim reading. The net profit fishers generate is in effect their salary, which is already very low compared to average incomes. These profits are being slashed by rising operating costs.

"The report's projections warn of polyvalent potters for vessels under six metres seeing their net profit fall by 50 per cent. In the 6-10m class, the impacts range from a 33 per cent reduction for the pelagic vessels to a 70 per cent drop for the potters. These fishers are clearly not profiting from the almost 27 per cent increase in frozen fish prices in shops over the past year.

"This entire sector is in crisis. These vessels make up the majority of our fishing fleet, yet the Government is refusing to give them the supports they need to address soaring fuel costs. The report makes very clear that the Irish small-scale fleet has been majorly impacted by the ongoing fuel crisis, combined with Brexit and the aftereffects of the pandemic.

"I have urged the Minister for Agriculture, Food and the Marine to avail of the European Maritime and Fisheries Fund to assist inshore fishers in addressing high fuel costs. The report also points out that the dispersed nature of this sector makes other inputs more expensive due to transport and logistical costs.

"Without proper support, fishers are simply going to withdraw from the sector. Fisheries play a vital role in our coastal and island communities. Our offshore islands are particularly dependent on fishing, where family enterprises help make island living possible.

"Not only are these irreplaceable jobs, but fishing is also an important part of our culture. This is all being put needlessly at risk by Government inaction."



A busy morning in Kilkeel harbour - Photo courtesy Leslie Campbell

Wind Developers Are Not Engaging Meaningfully With The Fishing Industry

"Picking the site is one thing, the actual location of the turbines is another..." says Irish South & East Fishing CEO

Report by Tom MacSweeney

The fishing industry is not being given the input which it was promised into the development of the offshore wind industry. Much of the consultation and discussion which was promised has turned out to be a "cosmetic approach" without any meaningful engagement, according to industry sources who have spoken to the MARINE TIMES.

That is the view garnered from within the industry after the Government announced the success of four out of six offshore wind farm applications in the State's first wind auction under the Renewable Electricity Support Scheme.

Sceirde Rocks off Galway's coast, Dublin Array, Codling Wind Park off Wicklow and the North Irish Sea Array off the coast of Dublin, Meath and Louth were successful.

Minister for the Environment, Climate and Communications, Eamon Ryan, welcomed this stage in the development of offshore wind

However, there has been no formal Government acknowledgement of concern about the impact on the fishing industry.

The Chief Executive of the Irish South and East Fish Producers' Organisation, John Lynch, says that "at this stage" companies involved should be presenting their proposed turbine layouts to the fishing industry.

"Picking the site is one thing but picking the actual location of the turbines is another thing," he said. "Companies had previously stated in correspondence that the fishing industry should have an input at this stage into the actual location of the turbines within the site. We were always promised that we would have an input, but nobody has offered us this yet.

"Promises were made but so far the fishing industry has been offered nothing, nothing and this is not what was indicated. There is going to a lot of marine spatial squeeze. We will have massive squeeze in

the Irish Sea particularly. Marine protected areas are only another step away.

"Projects which got through the first stage need to have proper engagement with the fishing industry. They have to engage properly. Meaningful engagement is not happening and that is needed, not what has been said to be engagement where developers are not willing to discuss any of specific, serious issues with the industry. They just come along and they show you how far they are along with their projects, but you don't get any opportunity to have any meaningful input into anything really."

Mr. Lynch said that the fishing industry is "more than willing to talk and to negotiate with these people and to try and find a way forward. But we're not being given anything meaningful, there is nothing been given to us to show the way forward," he said. "That is important for the wind farms to understand."

NIFA, the National Inshore Fishermen's Association says that the promises made by the ORE industry have proven so far to be more fiction than fact and has claimed that companies involved in survey work are using non-Irish boats and crews rather than give local employment. It has contrasted indications given prior to Government's approval of projects in the first 'wind auction.'

See 'Separating Fiction From Facts In The Ore Industry' in the NIFA column on Page 13. See also 'Is the Sound of the Sea Heard at the Cabinet Table' (page 4) and COASTWATCH advises caution about offshore wind developments (page 5).

Is The Sound of The Sea Heard at The Cabinet Table?

Marine Institute Launches New Strategy to Inform Government Policy

Analysis by Deputy Editor, Tom MacSweeney

Marine Minister Charlie McConalogue declared that Ireland's future is "dependent on a healthy and sustainable ocean" when he launched the Marine Institute's new five-year strategy. It will "tackle national and EU policy goals in sustainable seafood production, ocean science and management, environment and biodiversity, maritime transport, offshore renewable energy and climate action," he said.

That is a wide cohort of issues, a powerful exhortation of the importance of the seas around Ireland. It is a detailed plan, the actual implementation of which will be of considerable importance.

"Much like the rest of the world, Ireland is at a crossroads where challenge meets opportunity in marine research and knowledge," the Minister said. "Under the stewardship of the Marine Institute, I am confident we can navigate the next horizon of change together." This was a nicely-fused usage of maritime wordage. "My Department," he pledged, "is committed to on-going investment in marine scientific research, international co-operation and building skills capacity in this evolving sector."

But, his Department of the Marine has been sidelined by Ministerial colleagues in the very important aspect of maritime planning. One is left to wonder what is the response around the Cabinet table when the marine sector is raised as a topic?

Indeed, one could be forgiven for taking the view that the normal democratic process in relation to maritime matters has been occluded by some Government Ministers, by politicians of the Coalition parties and by administrators in Government in their attitude to the essential life and economic force which surrounds them in the sea.

That is changing because of offshore wind energy and marine protected special areas, but there is no role for the Department of the Marine and the emerging consequence of these developments is creating a marine spatial squeeze challenge.

HOUSING TAKES MARITIME CONTROL

For example, it seems somewhat incongruous in an island nation that the biggest

reform of marine governance in almost a century has been given to the Department of Housing, which has not resolved the serious housing problem, the main social challenge in Ireland and the job for which it is primarily responsible.

The Department of Housing now has responsibility for many aspects of maritime planning. Consents required before developers of offshore wind farms can make a planning application must be given by the new authority – MARA. Ireland's first State authority for marine planning will be established on July 17 and is "part of the biggest reform of marine governance in Ireland in almost a century," according to Minister for Housing, Darragh O'Brien.

So, the Government believes the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage is the correct one to decide on maritime developments which will have major future effects on Ireland's inshore and offshore waters.

It has not been possible for the MARINE TIMES to get a direct, clear answer to the rationale for this allocation of marine responsibility.

The Department of Housing would seem to have enough to do to sort out Ireland's housing problems which show little prospect of being resolved in the foreseeable future.

The Maritime Area Regulatory Authority will be chaired by the former Head of the Defence Forces, Vice Admiral Mark Mellett.

"TAIL-END" MARINE DEPARTMENT IGNORED

There is no dedicated Department of the Marine, the truncated remnants of what was once a full department are now the

"tail end" of the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine," as one source told me. "It has been excluded from involvement with the biggest reform of marine governance and aspects of maritime relevance are distributed over several Government Departments."

THE MARINE INSTITUTE PLAN

The Marine Institute's corporate strategy sets out eight strategic priorities which include developing more maritime knowledge for giving advice to Government. "Ocean Knowledge that informs and inspires," it says, "set out a map to enable Ireland deliver on national and EU policy goals of sustainable seafood production, ocean science and management, environment and biodiversity, maritime transport, offshore renewable energy and climate action."

Minister McConalogue said he was pleased with this approach: "While expansion and growth are themes, the focus is most definitely sustainability. The Marine Institute and this government are working towards a climate-neutral, knowledge-based blue economy for Ireland."

Government should recognise, placing strong public emphasis that the maritime sector is vital to the nation. It should also make clear that consultation with stakeholders about developments must be more than a cosmetic exercise and not rush headlong into decisions which may not be the best.

There is little to no recognition from government of the arising issue identified

by marine sectors – the maritime spatial squeeze, a challenge arising because of increasing pressure on the marine area. This is reflected by concerns about communication with stakeholders.

The need for alternative energy sources is accepted, but there is need for more reflective thinking at Government level about the overall impact of what is being planned/proposed. For example, there is no definitive indication of how many wind farms and turbines there will be around the Irish coastline. Some estimates say hundreds. Could that be?

Dr. John Killeen, Chair of the Marine Institute, has experience and knowledge of the sea as a sailor. I once sailed with him on the Round Ireland Yacht Race and saw him in all the conditions, good and bad weather, which that race can impose.

"The work of the Marine Institute is at the centre of how we navigate through the major challenges facing society around food security, climate, and energy," he said at the launch of the new strategy. "It sets out an ambitious agenda for the development of the Institute and its service to the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine and key clients in a way that informs Government policy and inspires stakeholders and society to understand, value, protect and develop our maritime area and resources."

The Government should listen a lot more to the sound of the sea

MARITIME IRELAND is a monthly Podcast and Programme presented by the Marine Times Deputy Editor, Tom MacSweeney, reporting on Ireland's maritime culture, history, tradition and development.

It is available on all major Podcast services including, Apple, Spotify, Mixcloud, Amazon, Google and Marine Times.ie



And it is broadcast on these radio stations:

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Lily Tom III passing Ireland's Eye on its way home to Howth. Photo by James Grandfield

Coastwatch Advises Caution About Offshore Wind Developments

Report by Tom MacSweeney

“As more and more industry-led exploration and plans are rolled out we are becoming increasingly concerned,” Coastwatch Ireland, the environmental organisation which has been involved in discussions about offshore wind projects for over 20 years, said when launching a five-point policy paper about these developments.

The paper indicated concern about a Government policy of “steaming ahead with many unknowns.”

Companies interested in setting-up offshore wind energy projects have “risen dramatically” in number and it is “difficult to keep an overview,” according to Coastwatch Director, Karin Dubsk. She said companies were generating vast amounts of unshared data but providing inadequate notification about surveying activities.”

She referred to South Wexford, stating that six offshore windfarms were proposed, encroaching on eight Natura sites.

Coastwatch says that it strongly supports development of renewable energy and acknowledged the importance of offshore wind as an important element in the switch from fossil fuels.

But it warned: “Rapid growth and application of new marine technology, which itself has a significant carbon footprint, has environmental and societal impact risks we must seek to minimise.”

Coastwatch said that if Ireland gets involved in assembly and shipping of wind turbines from ports, with associated works which might be needed of widening and deepening shipping channels, developing onshore storage and other aspects, local immediate and long-term effects could impact on ecosystems.

“If each single turbine in this, or any other wind farm, represents the loss of a livelihood of even one single fisherman then no amount of ‘green energy’ is worth it”

Read the IFSA opinion on page 12

Dun Laoghaire as A Base for Former New Zealand Vessels?

Suggestions That They Will Reduce Naval Capability

By Marine Times Reporter

It is expected to be next year before the two former New Zealand Navy ships which have been bought by the Irish Government for €26m. will be ready to go into service and when that happens it will most likely be on the East and South/East coasts because they lack the capability to cope with the wilder Atlantic seas along the southern and western coastlines. The 55 metre-long ships are smaller than LÉ George Bernard Shaw and LÉ James Joyce, but require less crew, considered a benefit in the circumstances of the Naval Service’s personnel difficulties.

Some doubts have been expressed about the suitability of the ships, amongst them from Captain David Barry, a retired 40-year veteran who was Commanding Officer at Naval Operations and said in ‘Signal,’ the official magazine of RACO Raco (Representative Association of Commissioned Officers), that “pivoting towards smaller ships and crews may initially seem attractive, particularly on cost grounds and being immediately available, but could mean reduction in capability.”

Apparently, deployment of the NZ vessels may be more contingent than existing Navy ships, dependent on weather and patrol areas.

This could result in “reduction of the use of the resource” according to other Naval personnel, former and some current, who commented to the Marine Times only on condition of anonymity.

It is expected that the operation of them may result in Dun Laoghaire becoming an operational base. The Marine Times has been told that examination of this proposal is continuing.

They were sold because, basically, the New Zealand Navy “outgrew them.”

Built in Whangarei on New Zealand’s North Island and commissioned into the Navy in 2009, they were in service for a decade with their main mission being fishery monitoring, search and rescue, border security and maritime surveillance operations around the country’s 15,000 km coastline. In 2019 a project team within the Navy identified that a better capability would be achieved by utilising two current offshore patrol vessels, supplemented with a Southern Ocean patrol vessel planned for the future.



“At the time of their entry into service, they provided operational capability around our coastline. But now we have a far greater need to project a presence further afield and that’s something these ships simply weren’t designed to do,” said Rear Admiral David Proctor, Chief of New Zealand’s Navy.

The vessels were formally decommissioned in October 2019.

When purchasing the ships in March last year, Ireland made a condition of the transac-

tion that the NZ Navy must ensure they are seaworthy. The NZ Navy said that more than 15 businesses in the country spent last year bringing the vessels back to a seagoing state at a cost of about €10m which provided “an economic boost for local maritime contractors involved.” The vessels underwent an overhaul of all major machinery including main engines, generators, drive shafts, propellers, stabilizers and boat davits. They also had a number of system upgrades installed including a new integrated platform management system, maritime communications suite and CCTV system.



Tánaiste and Minister for Defence, Micheál Martin welcomed the delivery of two Inshore Patrol Vessels (IPVs) to the Naval Service at Haulbowline Naval Base.

The two ships, replacing LE Orla and LE Ciara which were both former Royal Naval vessels which had been in service off Hong Kong. They are stated to be highly manoeuvrable and capable of speeds up to 25 knots. They need a crew of only 20, less than half that of Orla and Ciara. They will be re-named and are likely to be used mainly in fisheries protection and patrolling in the Irish Sea where they are suited to the calmer conditions of those waters. This will allow the larger offshore vessels of the Irish Navy to focus on Atlantic Ocean operations.

New Convention to Strengthen Ireland’s International Role in Maritime Safety and Marine Aids to Navigation

Ireland has ratified the Convention on the International Organization for Marine Aids to Navigation which will support safe and efficient navigation around our coasts. As shipping and offshore activity continues to grow, the Convention will enable collaboration and development of consistent standards and practises at international level.

The Convention changes the status of the International Association of Marine Aids to Navigation and Lighthouse Authorities or IALA from a Non-Governmental Organisation to an Intergovernmental Organisation (IGO). The status of IGO will give further weight to the standards and recommendations of IALA, leading to greater compliance and navigational safety.

Marking the ratification of the IALA Convention, Minister of State Chambers said: “The transport of critical resources by sea enables the majority of our international trade. The last few years have illustrated Ireland’s reliance on marine supply chains with over 90% of goods by volume transported into our ports. New opportunities in offshore wind will bring huge benefits and must be planned and managed carefully in conjunction with fisheries, lei-

sure and marine protected areas.

The offshore environment will be busier while physical and electronic aids to navigation will continue to support the protection of lives, trade, property and the environment around our coast. Ireland’s membership of IALA, along with the work of my Department at the International Maritime Organisation, will ensure that Ireland contributes proactively at international level to the safe and sustainable development of our shipping and maritime sector.”

Irish Lights Chief Executive, Yvonne Shields O’Connor said, “We welcome the Irish Government’s support for the ratification of the IALA convention. Increased digitalisation, connectivity, cyber security, expansion of offshore infrastructure, developments such as autonomous vessels and changes in trade patterns and climate are just some of the key issues being addressed at IALA.

“As the organisation responsible for delivering essential navigation safety services around the coast of Ireland Irish Lights understands the importance of global cooperation and coordination in harmonising marine navigation and related services. Ireland though Irish Lights has been a member of IALA since its establishment in 1957 and we look forward to continuing to play our part in this important work.”

MARINE TIMES

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

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Why Has It Come To This?

Our front page photo this month is an image of something that I never wanted to show in the pages of the Marine Times. Why has it come to the situation that the sight of a scrapped fishing vessel has to give us a stark reminder of what has become of our industry. Why as the editor of this publication was I so reticent of publishing such a stark image on our front page? The question has to be asked, why have we as an industry and a coastal community let it come to this?

As a nation we successively vote political parties into power who have shown little regard to the Irish fishing industry and its coastal communities. The rotating power brokers of Fianna Fail and Fine Gael with sprinklings of others propping them up have done nothing for what should be a thriving industry in our waters and around our coast. Instead we have seen our fish quotas dwindling, our fleet ravaged and our waters handed over to interests who have no interest in what remains of our fleet and the fishing grounds they try to eke out a living from.

Will a sea change in the political structure really change things for the industry when the real power is held by the true unelected government who have held the grim reapers scythe over us for decades? How difficult will it be for us to turn around the regulation and enforcement culture that exists in suppressing us?

Would the national media be willing to assist in getting the message out and siding with Irish fishermen for a change? If recent experience is anything to go by the answer is a clear NO. A recent front page headline in the Irish Independent bemoaned a report that over 200,000 cattle would have to be culled to meet emission targets where was the mainstream media when Irish fishing vessels were being culled to meet EU / Brexit targets. Where was the mainstream media when Irish fishing families were being ethnically cleansed from our coastal communities? Not that anyone in the media or indeed the government can accept that there might even exist generations of Irish fishing families affected by political diktat ... for god's sake our own Minister can't even bring himself to say Fishing Families (check his speeches and Dail record) yet he regularly doles out the phrase 'Farming Families' at every turn.

In the past few weeks I've had two young fishermen who have young families stop me and tell me that 'fishing is f####d!' Where is the support for these families from our power brokers and main stream media? Where is the concern and empathy for fishing families around our coast?

If the current trend in corridors of power and the media darlings with our national broadcaster and newspaper magnates is anything to go by, the offshore energy industry will soon leave no room at the inn for our fishermen and their families. Such is the onslaught of news bulletins, announcements and column inches given over to the offshore energy charm offensive that ironically the one wee snippet of a fishermen being interviewed about his concerns for his livelihood was filmed in a harbour where fishermen are currently having problems with access and are being made very unwelcome in their own home port!

So why has it come to this that our national broadcaster couldn't relate the more obvious story staring them in their face on that quayside?

Maritime Ireland Journal: Effective communication of the maritime sector needs specialist, knowledgeable voices and a strong public outlet in an island nation.

The MARINE TIMES provides this and has been developing and extending its role as the voice of the coastal, fishing and maritime communities through the addition of more news reports, features and columnists, providing widespread comment and opinion. This is intended to create more widespread public understanding, appreciation and support for the maritime sphere, coastal, fishing and the marine community in all its sectors and spheres of interest.

It is our belief that the maritime sphere should be more to the forefront of Government support and national, public attention in this island nation where the resources of the seas that surrounds us are becoming ever more important. In further pursuance of this belief, the MARINE TIMES has added a quarterly supplement in this edition, focusing on Ireland's maritime culture, history and development.

This will add more value, more reading, more understanding and appreciation of the maritime sector, focused on uniting general, public interest throughout Ireland, coastal, rural, urban in maritime matters brought to you by the MARINE TIMES, the strong voice of Ireland's maritime, coastal and fishing communities.

SFPA Seizes Large Quantity of Undersize Lobster in Limerick Market

The Sea-Fisheries Protection Authority (SFPA), operating on information received through the SFPA Confidential Line, undertook an inspection at the Limerick City Casual Trader Market which is the trading area adjacent to the Milk Market in Limerick on Saturday 29th April. The inspection resulted in the detection of twenty-eight undersize lobsters and four undersize brown crabs which were seized and returned live to sea. A file is currently being prepared for consideration by the Director of Public Prosecution.



The minimum landings size for lobster is 87mm carapace length. In Irish waters the minimum size for brown crab is 140mm. A key initiative for the conservation of lobster is the 'v-notch' scheme where a small mark is cut into the tail of any female lobster found. Once marked in this way, it is illegal to land, possess or sell such a lobster. A certain percentage of the population is therefore protected for breeding, thus boosting egg production and in turn recruitment to the stock.

Under EU and national legislation, recreational or non-commercial fishers who do not have a commercial fishing licence are restricted to doing no more than the following in pot fisheries:

- Fish for lobster and crab with pots from 1st May to 30th September only every year.
- Fish up to six pots (i.e., a maximum of 6 pots associated with their boat either in the water or on board at any time).
- Retain up to five crabs and one lobster daily.
- Eat their catch themselves or share with their immediate family – they cannot sell or offer for sale any catches (a commercial fishing license is needed to sell fish).
- Only land fish above the legal-size limits. In Irish waters the minimum size of brown crab is 140mm; spider crab (130mm for males and 125mm for females) and velvet crab 65mm, while lobsters must be a minimum size of 87mm and maximum size 127mm (carapace length). Anyone who catches a crab or lobster outside these size limits, must return it immediately to the sea.
- Never retain a lobster that has been V-notched or has a mutilated tail – they must be released back into the water.
- Never catch crabs or lobster by

means of skin-diving, which includes using apparatus of any kind which enables a person to breathe under water.

An SFPA spokesperson commented: "The SFPA acknowledges the support of the public in alerting the SFPA and encourages people who have concerns about suspected illegal fishing or activity that could compromise food safety to contact their local SFPA port office or contact us via our Confidential Line channels. The volume of such a find of undersize lobsters is both significant for the future viability of the fishery and concerning given the scale of the find. The fishery for lobster is one of the most traditional fisheries among coastal communities and the mainstay of many small vessels fishing all around the coast of Ireland. The actions of a few fishermen selling undersize and v-notch lobsters and undersize brown crab undermine the legitimate fishermen trying to maintain a sustainable fishery and livelihood."

"The majority of inshore fishermen act responsibly and in conjunction with state agencies, including the SFPA, to ensure the protection of the species which have been in decline in recent years. Many inshore fishermen participate in voluntary measures such as v-notching to assist with restocking of lobster."

Consumer trust in the quality, provenance and safety of Ireland's seafood produce underpins the reputation and success of the sector on which many coastal economies rely. If a member of the public has any concerns regarding fisheries control, seafood fraud and/or seafood safety, they are advised to please contact the SFPA through our Confidential Line channels. Call our Confidential Line on 1800 76 76 76. Send us an email to confidential@sfpa.ie. Alternatively, complete the Confidential Report form on sfpa.ie

Upcoming Courses 2023

NFCI Castletownbere

- **Three Day Basic Safety Training**
06 June - 08 June 2023
04 July - 06 July 2023
26 September - 28 September 2023
10 October - 12 October 2023
17 October - 19 October 2023
07 November - 09 November 2023
05 December - 07 December 2023
- **STCW Fire Prevention and Firefighting**
17 October - 19 October 2023
21 November - 23 November 2023
18 December - 20 December 2023
- **Advanced Firefighting**
19 June - 23 June 2023
02 October - 06 October 2023
- **Deck Officer Second Hand Full Certificate of Competency**
28 August - 20 December 2023
- **Navigation Control Course**
26 June - 07 July 2023
09 October - 20 October 2023
- **STCW Medical Care Aboard Ship**
29 May - 02 June 2023
10 July - 14 July 2023
04 September - 08 September 2023
27 November - 01 December 2023
- **Passenger Boat Proficiency**
29 May - 02 June 2023
26 June - 30 June 2023
03 July - 07 July 2023
18 September - 22 September 2023
23 October - 27 October 2023
27 November - 01 December 2023
- **Commercial Scuba Diving Operations**
25 September - 20 October 2023

- **Surface Supplied Diving Operations**
06 November - 01 December 2023
- **GMDSS Short Range Certificate**
10 July - 12 July 2023
- **GMDSS General Operators Certificate**
28 August - 08 September 2023
06 November - 17 November 2023
- **Surface Supplied Diving Operations**
06 November - 01 December 2023

NFCI Greencastle

- **Three Day Basic Safety Training**
10 June - 21 June 2023
10 July - 12 July 2023
11 September - 13 September 2023
23 October - 25 October 2023
- **Enhanced Safety Training**
13 July 2023
14 September 2023
- **Deck Officer Second Hand Full Certificate of Competency**
28 August - 15 December 2023
- **Deckhand Foundation Programme**
04 September - 13 October 2023
- **Class 3 Engineering (Fishing) Certificate of Competency**
04 September 2023 - 02 February 2024
- **Navigation Control Course**
28 August - 08 September 2023

- **STCW Medical First Aid**
03 July - 05 July 2023
02 October - 04 October 2023
 - **Advanced Firefighting**
12 June - 16 June 2023
27 November - 01 December 2023
 - **STCW Fire Prevention and Firefighting**
13 December - 15 December 2023
 - **STCW Medical Care Aboard Ship**
20 November - 24 November 2023
 - **Passenger Boat Proficiency**
17 July - 21 July 2023
18 September - 22 September 2023
 - **GMDSS General Operators Certificate**
28 August - 08 September 2023
 - **GMDSS Short Range Certificate**
26 June - 28 June 2023
- ### Coastal Training Unit 2 Kilmore Quay
- **Enhanced Safety Training**
07 June 2023
 - **GMDSS Short Range Certificate**
13 June - 15 June 2023
- ### Clogherhead
- **Enhanced Safety Training**
20 June 2023
21 June 2023
22 June 2023

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INDUSTRY OPINION: Chief Executives of the FPO's discuss the latest industry news.



Killybegs Fishermen's
ORGANISATION LTD.

Control Regulation Change Agreed

Sean O'Donoghue, CEO of the Killybegs Fishermen's Organisation says; "Five years after the Commission's proposal on replacing the existing control regulation, it was finally agreed by the Council and the European Parliament on Wednesday, the first of June. So we have a new Control Regulation which I presume will come into effect starting probably on the first of January next year. This is a bit like all the schemes. Some of the headlines of it appear to be addressing some of the issues that we have with the existing control regulations around margin of tolerance and weighing and CCTV and a lot of other issues. But on face value it looks like some of them have been addressed, maybe not all to our satisfaction.

Like all of these documents I don't intend to jump the gun here because the devil is going to be in the detail. There are a large number of pages in this document and, as I understand it 70 per cent of the existing rules have been changed. The devil will be in the detail, as I have said and it while it is all very well for headlines to appear suggesting good from various sides, it needs careful examination. One thing I am a little surprised at that while we have electronic vessel monitoring and the electronic logbook for all vessels over 15 metres, while our understanding was that this would go down to about 10 metres, the final agreement, which I'm a little surprised is that it seems to go all the way down and that there will be no exception for the electronic monitoring and log books for vessels of any size once this comes into its full implementation. There is a derogation for under 9 metre vessels in certain circumstances up to 2030.

A key issue for us is the margin of tolerance and it looks as if there will be some relief on the landings of pelagic fisheries in terms of the margin of tolerance and there is this new concept of designating ports where this new margin will apply.

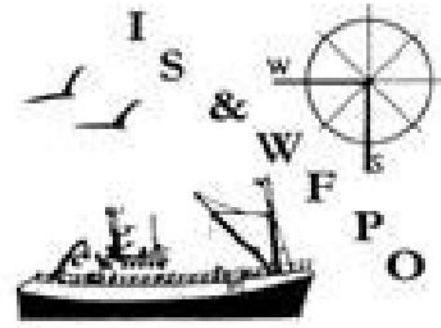
We lobbied extremely hard on getting changes to these unworkable rules. I think

it has gone some way towards what we want, but not the hundred per cent, but at least it is better than what is there at the moment. We will have to look at the detail around the remote electronic monitoring and the CCTV in terms of the landing obligation and particularly the definition of high-risk vessels to which it is connected. Nobody seems to have a final text at the moment, other than that there is an agreement. Hopefully, we will get a clear version of the text and see what impacts both positive and negative this may have. There will be a phasing in period, I think, for some of the provisions of two years and four years for others.

Minister and Government must put huge emphasis on Review of the CFP

A key issue for us is putting a huge emphasis on trying to get a review of the Common Fisheries Policy and that the Minister and government follow through on the CFP group report which they have fully committed to and signed up to as the strategy.

There is a limited time here and there is no appetite as we know in the European Commission - and that is an understatement - which has made it clear, that there will be no revision of the CFP as far as they are concerned.



Do We Want A Fishing Industry For A Nation Which Has The Richest Waters In Europe?

Patrick Murphy, CEO of the Irish South & West Fish Producers Organisation asks; "The industry is faced with so many changes, are all aspects understood. Do those making changes understand the industry?"

The target to rebalance boats and the fleet against quotas which the Minister sought and after the good work which BIM did in evaluating the decommissioning scheme, is not going to be achieved, which we forecast would be the outcome, so that there is a shortfall and boats will have to tie up to the pier wall, costing them tens of thousands of Euros at a time when they need the money to replenish and keep their boats and crews. So we are appealing to the Minister to give fishermen another tie-up scheme this year. The industry did not get a fuel concession, he said it got a tie-up scheme instead, but the cost of fuel is still very high, the price of fish to fishermen is going down, so the situation facing us is that we need help. The EU agreed that Ireland got the toughest share of the UK Brexit withdrawal, there was talk of burden sharing but it has not happened, there has not been support for Ireland. An additional tie-up is needed for the end of the year for the fleet to help balance the situation. The Government must make this arrangement, it is a key message. The situation is there facing us clearly, that the industry needs this and there is support for this approach from the POs. The Minister must listen and must act quickly to ensure that it is done within the EU rules but he has to get the message and the Government must get it too and support the industry.

The Census has shown the reduction of people in the fishing industry, down 8 per cent and that is before the full impact of the decommissioning which will add further to that loss of people. The decommissioning of tonnage, taking it off register and not keeping it which the State could do as it is an asset of the country? It belongs to the people and it should be kept for the future, not extinguishing it. Why doesn't the Government be long-sighted rather than short-sighted? That should be re-evaluated. It is removing a future asset for the industry for generations ahead. It is bad enough to be losing fishermen from the current fleet,

but to take off the tonnage from the register for ever, that is a major mistake rather than keeping an asset. I have no trouble with that tonnage not being on the current register, but why get rid of it altogether? There are changes appearing with fish moving into our waters, new species and there is an opportunity for the future. They are scrapping, removing tonnage, rather than keep it in a reserve for the future of the fishing industry. Why is there no forward thinking of this nature? Why is the Government not thinking ahead, not planning for the future? They should definitely be setting this tonnage aside. We are losing the indigenous people of this nation who go fishing. Who is going to follow, to succeed the current fishing people? The young people do not see the industry as an attractive one to be getting into. Who will do it in the future? There are no plans for succession in the fishing industry, like there have been put in place for agriculture, for the farmers. So who is going to continue the industry in the future? It would be a commonsense approach to plan for the future for an industry that is essential to the coastal communities and which is on its knees at present. Do we want a fishing industry for a nation which has the richest waters in Europe? That question needs to be answered.

We do not know what is contained in the new control regulations. There are huge complications, such as with the UK regulations which no longer correspond with EU regulations. Was Brexit taken into consideration in the changes in the control regulations? Fish are migratory, there is no such approach in the regulations. Were all of these aspects taken into account in the control regulations changes? These will have to be examined in detail. Do those who are making the decisions understand the fishing industry? I don't think they do. They don't seem to appreciate the real world of fishermen as we do and that is reflected in regulations which divide fishermen.



Latest addition to the Kilmore Quay fleet "BooLavogue"- Photo courtesy Alan Hinchy

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IS&EFPO - Working For The Fishermen

Offshore Wind Developers Must Engage Meaningfully With The Fishing Industry And A Porcupine Management Plan

John Lynch, CEO of the Irish South & East Fish Producers Organisation says; “Now that the allocations have been made to companies in the State’s first wind auction, those involved should be presenting their proposed turbine layouts to the fishing industry. This is not happening. Picking the site is one thing, but picking the actual location of the turbines is another thing. Companies previously stated in correspondence that the fishing industry should have an input at this stage into the actual location of the turbines within the site. We were always promised that we would have an input, but nobody has offered us this yet.

There is going to be a lot of marine spatial squeeze. We will have massive squeeze in the Irish Sea particularly.

Projects which got through the first stage need to have proper engagement with the fishing industry. They have to engage properly. Meaningful engagement is not happening and that is needed, not what has been said to be engagement where developers are not willing to discuss any of specific, serious issues with the industry. They just come along and they show you how far they are along with their projects, but you don’t get any opportunity to have any meaningful input into anything really.

The fishing industry is more than willing to talk and to negotiate with these people

and to try and find a way forward, but we’re not being given anything meaningful, there is nothing being given to us to show the way forward.

That is important for the wind farms to understand.

Porcupine Survey

We are working on a project between all the POs where we have a Summer survey in the Porcupine for scientific purposes. We have this set up between ourselves, the Department and the Marine Institute. This is a positive move in developing a management plan for the Porcupine. It is important for the industry. The bulk of the larger vessels in the whitefish fleet are dependent on it.



State Agencies Must Move Proactively To Deliver EU - Funded Supports

Aodh O'Donnell, CEO of the Irish Fish Producers Organisation says; “The Irish Fish Producers Organisation is making a call for urgent funding for the pelagic sector, to address the loss of €28m from Brexit’s impact. The failure to implement pelagic measures amounting to €29m is not acceptable.

It is nearly two years since the Brexit Task Force recommended these measures, and if the funding is not allocated in Ireland, it could be returned to Europe. It would be an absolute disgrace if our pelagic sector lost out on these essential funds because of our Government’s failure to allocate them.

Ireland carried the main adverse impacts of the Brexit quota Transfers to the UK. In total, 40 % of the total value of quota gifted to the UK in the Brexit giveaway in 2020 was taken from Ireland’s quotas. In this quota transfer agreement, the main impacts related to the traditional and valuable pelagic sector with mackerel being the main species transferred.

Ireland’s Brexit Task Force Report valued the annual loss of Irish Quota in the Brexit Trade and Co-operation Agreement (TCA) at €43 million by 2026. Around €28 million of this is accounted for by pelagic species.

The EU pelagic scheme funding has

been in place under the Brexit Adjustment Reserve for some time now. The IFPO cannot understand why the Irish Government is not setting up a pelagic scheme to draw it down. The resilience of the pelagic fleet is being severely tested while our Government fails to act.

The IFPO recommends that the State agencies move proactively to deliver the EU funded supports. They need to partially mitigate the short term and immediate impacts of Brexit particularly for the segment which has been hardest hit.

We are in the last phases of the Brexit Adjustment Reserve (BAR) funding. We must act now in the overall interests of the entire fishing sector. Otherwise, the support opportunity and vital funding streams will be lost. This pelagic scheme must be prioritised and designed with criteria that take account of the losses inflicted on the pelagic sector. We call on the Minister for the Marine to act now, without delay.

Castletownbere RNLI Involved in Rescue of 13 People After 33m Fishing Trawler Runs Aground Off Dursey Island

Castletownbere RNLI in conjunction with the Irish Coast Guard Rescue 115 helicopter crew from Shannon have rescued 13 people on the evening of Friday 1st June, after their 33m fishing trawler ran aground onto rocks off Dursey Island and started to list and roll.

The volunteer crew were requested to launch their all-weather lifeboat at 2.30pm following a report from the Irish Coast Guard that a vessel was in difficulty on the southwest corner of Dursey Island.

The lifeboat launched immediately under Coxswain Dean Hegarty and with crew members Marney O'Donoghue, Dave Fenton, Sean Bawn O'Sullivan, Carl Cronin and David O'Donovan onboard.

Weather conditions at time were good with a Force 3-4 south easterly wind and a 1-1.5m swell.

Once on scene and arriving at the same time as Rescue 115, the lifeboat crew observed that the vessel was hard aground, listing and rocking back and forth. The vessel’s crew who were on the deck and all wearing lifejackets were safe and well. However, with the trawler rolling 20-30 degrees to the right towards rocks, there were concerns that the boat may not hold. A decision was made not to attempt

to pull the vessel off the rocks at that point but instead to airlift nine of the vessel’s crew off to safety.

Following a successful winching operation, the trawler eventually came off the rocks but lost steering 100m from the shore. The lifeboat crew worked with the four remaining crew to establish a tow line. Due to the near proximity to the shore, the lifeboat crew were assisted by the crew of a local fishing boat that was in the area at the time who helped to push the casualty vessel away from the shore.

The tow was successfully set up 15-20m from the shore and the trawler was then towed out to sea by the lifeboat. The crew of Castletownbere RNLI subsequently passed the tow over to a tug on arrival.

The crew arrived safely back to the lifeboat station at approximately 6.20pm.

Speaking following the call out, Castletownbere RNLI Coxswain Dean Hegarty said: ‘This was a challenging call out given that the boat was listing and there were concerns that it might roll further. We want to thank and commend our colleagues in Rescue 115, this was a great example of joint work and co-operation. We also want to thank the vessels in the area at the time who either stood by or assisted along with the two tugs that came from Atlantic Towing and Marine. We wish the trawler’s crew well following their ordeal today.’



Castletownbere RNLI and Rescue 115 off Dursey Island assisting crew of the 33m fishing vessel which run aground. Photo courtesy Kevin Flannery

Marine Engineering Returns to BIM's National Fisheries College in Greencastle

Following a four-year hiatus, a revised version of the Fishing Vessel Engineer Course is due to return to the College in Greencastle in October 2023.



This course is targeted at school leavers or new entrants to the sector, who wish to pursue a career that may ultimately lead them to becoming Marine Engineer Officers on Irish registered fishing vessels. The restructured course also offers recognition of prior learning for those already in the fishing industry, as another entry route exists for any Fisher that has at least three months documented sea time and already completed Personal Survival Techniques, Elementary First Aid, Fire Prevention and Fire Fighting, Personal safety and social responsibilities courses.

The Marine Survey Office (MSO) in the Department of Transport regulates the manning of fishing vessels in Ireland. As the regulator, the MSO sets the minimum standards of training for fishing vessel crew and during this process we worked closely with them and QQI to agree a new format for the course and have now submitted for approval, a 14-week Fishing Vessel Engineer programme with QQI, which will lead to a non-CAS (common award system) special purpose award.

One of the entry options for securing a place on the course will be to complete the Deckhand Foundation course, which is six weeks in duration and includes several of the safety courses required for the issue of a Class 3 certificate of competency. This will mean that the total time that a student wishing to complete initial training towards a Class 3 Certificate of Competency, following this route, will be 20 weeks at

NFCI Greencastle plus a further 12 months sea-time on a fishing vessel. When completed, they can present for an oral examination conducted by the MSO, and if successful will be awarded a Class 3 Certificate of Competency (CoC) Engineering Officer (Fishing Vessel).



Those that wish to remain at sea can progress their certificates of competency to Class 2 and Class 1 (Engineering Officer – Fishing Vessel). There is also the option to transfer across to the merchant navy engineer officer certificate of competencies. This gives the option to work on any merchant ship worldwide.



Those that do not wish to pursue a career at sea can choose to progress their career ashore in the marine engineering services sector (shipyards, engine overhauls, specialised marine equipment technician, service engineer etc).

Another advantage of the restructured course is that we have separated out the General Engineering Science 1 & 2 (GES 1 and GES 2) courses that were previously integrated into the programme, and plan to deliver these after the Class 3 programme finishes, in February and March 2023.

The College will run an open day on Wednesday 19 June for anyone interested in any of the courses available in Greencastle. The open day will also give an opportunity to see the facilities available at the college and speak to our instructors directly.

Information on any of the BIM courses can be found at www.bim.ie

Marine Institute Explorers Education Programme wins 'Best Education Outreach Award'

The Marine Institute Explorers Education Programme has topped the 'Best Education Outreach Award' category of the Education Awards 2023, announced at a gala event in Dublin, organised by the BusinessRiver network solution, supported by The Irish Times and amárach research.



Celestine Rowland (Galway Business School / Galway Cultural Institute) representing the national Education Awards 2023, presents Cushla Dromgool-Regan (Camden Education) and the Explorers team for the Best Education Outreach Award for the Marine Institute's Explorers Education Programme. (l-r): William McElhinney (Leave No Trace – Ireland), Dr Noirin Burke (Galway Atlantaquaria), and Padraic Creedon (Leave No Trace – Ireland).

Congratulating all those involved with the programme, Dr Paul Connolly, Marine Institute CEO, said the win was truly justified: "We are delighted that the Explorers Programme's outreach module *Healthy Ocean Project & Ocean Champions Award* has been recognised for its excellence in promoting ocean literacy at primary-school level. This award recognises the quality of the programme and the work of those delivering it throughout the country".

"This initiative provides children with invaluable knowledge about the marine environment, and it inspires innovation and presents opportunities across marine science, technology and the arts," added Dr Connolly.

The Explorers healthy ocean initiative is based on cooperation and co-creation and applies an 'all-school' approach where teachers, children, the programme's outreach teams and local communities work together towards becoming ocean champions.

The Education Awards aim to recognise, encourage and celebrate excellence, and are designed to highlight the key areas that impact upon student performance and to provide a wealth of opportunities.

The judges described the Marine Institute Explorer's Programme as a 'creative and innovative method of outreach and engagement'. The 'very cohesive programme' highlights an important subject: healthy oceans and has a 'highly commendable collaborative approach in place to resolve

the challenges the ocean faces. It shows a firm methodology that is achieving great results,' they remarked.

"This recognition highlights the importance of marine-themed content being taught in primary schools. Seashore fieldtrips, along with STEM and STEAM projects help teachers to focus on delivering content that promotes ocean literacy and engagement, in line with the new Primary Curriculum Framework," said Cushla Dromgool-Regan, Strategic Manager, Camden Education, Strategic Managers of the Explorers Programme.

"The teams have worked extremely hard on the healthy ocean initiative and we're very lucky and proud to have such talented people on board who inspire teachers and children to want to learn more about the ocean and how it influences all facets of life – from the oxygen we breathe, to the energy we use in our homes and to the food we eat," Ms Dromgool-Regan added.

"Applying an integrated approach helps schools to implement key competencies and skills for children's learning. The annual Healthy Ocean School Project & Ocean Champion Awards initiative is an excellent example of how this can be achieved," she said.

The Explorers Education outreach teams include: Galway Atlantaquaria, Leave No Trace – Ireland, Sea Synergy, Old Cork Waterworks Experience, Oceanics Surf School, and Seashore Kids.

BIM Deckhand and Engineering Training Programmes



The BIM Deckhand Foundation Course is a six-week programme providing essential skills to prepare for a career in the fishing industry.

This is followed immediately by the Fishing Vessel Engineer Programme. This 14-week course provides the necessary skills to work towards an Engineer Officer Certificate of Competency.

Whilst the Fishing Vessel Engineer Programme can be completed independently. For new entrants, it is designed to be completed immediately after the Deckhand Foundation Programme. It can also be undertaken independently.

Deckhand Foundation Programme

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

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

CERTIFICATES

STCW Certificate in:

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

COURSE DATES

Six-week programme running from Monday 4 September - Friday 13 October 2023.

Fishing Vessel Engineer Programme

Gain essential skills from experienced instructors in Marine Engineering Processes and Operations, General Engineering, Maths and Control Systems and Health & Safety.

An introduction to these skills will allow you to successfully start your career as a Marine Engineer in the fishing industry. Successful completion of this programme meets the initial training requirements for a Class 3 Certificate of Competency.

CERTIFICATES

Subject to QQI validation, successful participants will receive a Level 5, 60 Credit Special Purpose Award in Fishing Vessel

- The BIM Deckhand Foundation Programme is a prerequisite for new entrants to this programme.
- Experienced crew may enter through alternative route.

COURSE DATES

14-week programme running from Monday 16 October 2023 to Friday 2 February 2024.



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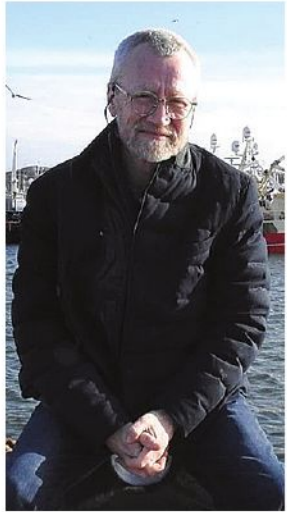
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The Human Cost of 'Green' Energy

Cormac Burke, Chairman of the Irish Fishing & Seafood Alliance questions the true cost of 'Green' energy to our fishermen around the coast



“If each single turbine in this, or any other wind farm, represents the loss of a livelihood of even one single fisherman then no amount of ‘green energy’ is worth it”



Traveling recently on the Belfast to Liverpool ferry my attention was drawn by a massive wind farm off the English coast (which, from a bit of online googling I believe to be the Burbo Bank wind farm) and I was in awe of the sheer size of it - I counted approximately 60 turbines and there were dozens more off in the fading distance - so I'm guessing the entire installation consists of at least 90 to 100 units.

My research tells me that this installation is under the ownership of Danish company Ørsted and was previously owned under the name of DONG (Danish Oil & Natural Gas) - however, their website which it

seems hasn't been updated in quite some time, claims that this farm consists of only 25 turbines which provide power for 80,000 homes.

Regardless of who owns the massive wind farm area that I observed, it struck me that if each single turbine in this, or any other wind farm, represented the loss of a livelihood of one single fisherman then no amount of 'green energy' is worth it.

I use the words 'green energy' and not 'cheap energy' as, despite all that we've been previously told, sustainable and renewable energy is of course important given the global issues of climate change etc., but energy customers on either side of the Irish Sea have yet to see the promised 'cheaper' energy that we were all promised.

So lets go back to the fishermen - - on any wind farm anywhere, the installation of such an operation firstly involves a closing and loss of fishing grounds of at least 20

sq miles (and much more than that in some cases) - and not only does this mean these fishing grounds are no longer an option to fishermen who have traditionally worked these grounds for hundreds of years but it means these fishing vessels become displaced and have to move on to other grounds further away (and suffer increased fuel costs and longer times at sea in dangerously poor weather in doing so) - grounds that are already being worked by a different group of fishermen - and therefore this results in increased pressure on fish stocks on those grounds.

Such scenarios have obviously resulted in some fishermen simply going out of business - so now we have a situation of a man who was previously earning a wage, paying his taxes, his mortgage, his wife doing the weekly food shopping locally, his children attending local schools and sports clubs - - and with the loss of his only way of earning now gone, many must relocate away from their original areas, sign on for unemployment benefit (going from a contributor to a dependent on the State) and the impact of this in socio economic terms to small coastal communities is massive.

During my several trips to beautiful Newfoundland I observed the damage that an uncaring government can cause to rural fishing communities and its a sad sight to see so many once-thriving small fishing communities now ghost villages with tumbled down cottages and witness the skeletons of old vessels that once provided employment and food to entire generations of sea faring families.

Indeed the same can be seen in many parts of the west of Ireland where, several decades ago, the government of the day bent to external pressure and put a ban on the catching of wild salmon - a seasonal fishery that, along with having a few sheep on the hill and a bit of land to tend for potatoes and other crops, provided small crofter families and communities with a lifeline for a thousand years.

At the stroke of a pen in permanently ceasing the wild salmon fishery, the result over the coming years was thousands of young people now left with no livelihood to follow their parents into, emigrated to

the cities or else abroad and leaving a dying older generation and many abandoned homes which stand like gravestones as a tragic reminder of a now-dead community and a way of life eradicated by politicians who know the price of everything but have no clue about the real value of anything.

And so, as modern day environmental groups, often backed by wealthy NGO money, pollute the media and political circles with cries of how the fishing industry is destroying the world, none of them ever seem to object to a wind farm project - its impact on the sea bed with structural disturbances during construction or the cables that have been widely reported to emit electrical pulses that drive local fish stocks off these grounds - and even the 'floating' wind farms where there is no mention from these same groups of the carbon footprint of the construction, maintenance and relatively short life span of these turbines.

From an Irish fishing industry perspective, due to Brexit and events arising as being part of the EU community which has enabled the fishing powers of other nations but left Ireland with 15% of the fish in its own waters, we have gone from a food producing nation to one that has a fleet and fish processing industry that is dwarfed by smaller European nations with much smaller coastlines - - and we now import more fish for human consumption than we catch ourselves, all the while our government condones State reports to cover up this fact by including huge volumes of different types of imported seafood as being 'Irish' and thereby papering over the cracks of an industry of an island nation that they are responsible for the systematic eradication of.

Green energy, save the seals, protect the birds - there is an endless list of well intentioned groups in existence but yet no where, not within one single corner of Irish political life is there an ounce of goodwill or effort into saving Ireland's coastal fishing communities.

So next time you look out to sea to a wind farm then remember that you are indeed looking at green but not cheap energy but take note and count the cost that each turbine represents a fishing family who were put out of work and their loss contributes to another stab of an already dying fishing community.

With the motto of "your voice in our industry", IFSA is a self-funding, non-profit organisation which is not restrained by any existing regional political divisions, nor is it divided by differing industry sector interests and will be the spokesman for all individuals, vessels, fish companies of all sizes, fish shops, and all ancillary service companies involved in the industry nationwide.

This provides a unique platform from which to give ALL interested parties a voice in demanding that our government affords our industry the support we deserve to navigate our way safely through the storm that BREXIT has forced upon our coastal communities. We will provide the opportunity for those who have invested and those who work in this industry to voice their frustration and demand action.

Contact details: IFSA (Cormac Burke) 087-3913117 or ifsacormac@gmail.com



Orca at Kinsale. Photo courtesy Carroll O'Donoghue, Kinsale Deep Sea Angling

JUNE PROMOTION

Wide Range of Monofilament and Multi-Monofilament Netting **IN STOCK!**

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1.5 x 10 Ply in 10 1/2" mesh x 10.5md x 300 yards - IN STOCK NOW!

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Braided PE twines in Green and Black Colour. Per Kilo.

Nylon Twines - IN STOCK

2 Kilo Spools x 210/66 White Anzalon

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4 Prong Galvanised Grapnel Anchors - IN STOCK.

8kg, 12kg, 16kg, 20kg & 25kg

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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.

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Made to measure to **twisted and KNOTLESS Nylon Eye entrances** and bait bags. Supplied in rolls or made up singly.

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1.5 Ton, 2.5 Ton & 3.5T heavy duty white nylon Spinners in both 18/21mm and 18/24mm hole sizes.

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

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Mesh Sizes available: 40mm, 48mm, 50mm, 60mm & 75mm.

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NIFA

National Inshore

Fishermen's Association

Separating Fiction From Facts In The ORE Industry

Report by Kieran Healy

Separating fiction from facts, regarding the ORE industry in the Irish Sea, when full-time licensed fishermen expressed concerns over disturbance of their work practice and even their futures in the inshore fishing industry, they were assured that before any exploratory work for wind-farms went ahead there would be full consultation with all stakeholders. **FICTION!**

As work progressed, on-going consultation and dialogue was promised in order to minimise disruption to fishing activities. **FICTION!**

A 'worst case scenario' was presented as some fishermen having to leave the industry, but there would be ample employment available in the ORE industry and this should be embraced rather than feared. **FICTION!**

With regard to fears expressed concerning lasting negative impact to the seabed, whelk and other shellfish populations, everyone was assured that environmental impact statements had been carried out and the fishermen's concerns were once again unfounded. **MORE FICTION!**

Now let's look at the facts...

On the Codling windfarm project, Irish vessels involved have been relieved of their duties leading to crew being laid-off as the vessels' owners seek alternative employment. They have been replaced with a third country, UK (not even EU) vessels employing non-local crew and two other

foreign-owned vessels with foreign crews. **FACT!**

A stop has been put to some activities temporarily because it took a fisherman to highlight a list of environmental concerns left unaddressed by the 'environmental impact statement' amongst other concerns. All this at massive financial cost to himself as the case moved to the High Court. **FACT!**

Fishermen, in order to qualify for loans for new boats need to provide detailed projected costs and earnings for their businesses for the duration of their loans. As ORE survey work gathered pace whelk catches alone have fallen by between 60% and 70% within a broad vicinity of the work, just as the fishermen had both feared and predicted. The final fact of the matter (for now) is that if this juggernaut is allowed to continue its assault on the industry will decimate the shellfish stocks and the fishing vessels will be forced out of business, unable to sustain the projected earnings supplied to the banks. Crewmen will desert the boats which will have to be sold and after that? Quite possibly the family homes.

BIM Corporate Approach Is Going For Tourism Rather Than Fishing

NIFA Chairman, Michael Desmond reports

The lobster V-notching system has been working perfectly well for many years, so why change it when it is not broken. Re-opening the support scheme every fisherman now has to register online and then BIM tells them that it will assess their application. This to men who have been doing V-notching for longer than BIM has been involved, and there are members of ours who are not active online, and some of whom have said they will leave the scheme.

What is the rationale for this approach by BIM and it is only one example of what BIM are doing in their corporate approach rather than a fishing approach to fishermen. €25m in grants from the EMFF funds which were intended to go to fishing to create and maintain jobs in fisheries and aquaculture areas and strengthen the role of the small-scale fisheries sector in the development of local communities, are going instead to tourism. You can get a grant for camping and glamping, but not for fishing needs.

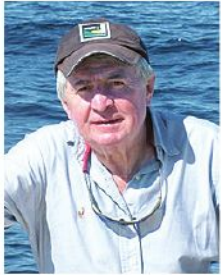
BIM are an arm of the marine, there is another Government Department for tourism, so why are BIM so involved in giving money to tourism projects.

The next thing coming up, by June 15 is an online census of fishermen which the Department has been pushing BIM to do.

There should be more support and commitment to the inshore fishing fleet, but it is not evident and not encouraging. What is happening and the attitude shown will push fishermen out of the industry rather than develop it.

As our article on the facts and the fiction of the offshore renewable development shows, those developing it do not understand the inshore fishing sector.

We had a meeting with Sinn Fein coastal TDs and would like to thank them and Spokesman Pdraig MacLochlainn and Michael Doyle of his office for listening to us and pledging to support our sector and their commitment to include the inshore fisheries in their Budget proposals. TDs from other parties did promise to do this also, but have apparently forgotten their promises!



Tom MacSweeney's Maritime Diary

It is hard to imagine a boat that could be older than the iconic Fastnet Rock Lighthouse off the West Cork coastline. There is one, however and it comes far away from the southern point of Ireland.

The boat was six years old when the Fastnet Lighthouse went into operation. It was built in Carrickfergus in Northern Ireland by the renowned John Hilditch and is one of the great Howth 17's, the oldest classic sailing boats in the world. The first five built are all still in use. After launch-

ing in the Spring of 1898 they set out for Howth, a 90-mile journey that confirmed their robust design and building. Thirteen of the class are heading to West Cork waters where from June 24 to 30 they will mark their 125th year, sailing around the iconic rock



"The boats have a pedigree and history that is unrivalled," says Seamus O Drisceoil from Cape Clear Ferries. "Their visit will be a unique maritime occasion, blending history and maritime culture between West Cork, Dublin and Carrickfergus. The plan is that they will arrive on Cape Clear on Wednesday afternoon, June 28, to a great welcome and every boat will be a winner. Every participating boat merits an award and what better than an engraved bottle of 3Sq Miles Gin from Cape Clear Distillery."

The boat in the photograph on this page is the Howth 17, Leila. She was 6 years old when Fastnet Rock Lighthouse went into operation in 1904. The photograph was taken ten years ago by Ireland's leading sailing writer, WM Nixon.

The plans of the Class were originally drawn up by W. Herbert Boyd in 1897 for Howth Sailing Club of County Dublin. The design was intended for the boats to be able to "endure local rugged conditions." They were to be a miniature version of the big yachts of those days, such as Britannia. They are gaff-rigged design, with jackyard topsail.

Cape Clear Ferries has also introduced the new addition to its own fleet – the Carraig Aonair' formerly the Spirit of Doolin and is pleased with the citation from National Geographic that its Fastnet Rock Tour is an "outstanding maritime experience."

The Carraig Aonair (Fastnet Rock) is certified to carry 200 passengers to the island, the most southerly residential point of Ireland. It is capable of maintaining the service in "unpredictable Irish weather conditions."

Fishermen Call on MEPs for Improved Ports, Better Marine Planning and Fair Quota

Ireland's fishing industry is heading towards the 'end of the line' according to coastal community groups who met with a delegation of MEPs from the European Parliament's Fisheries Committee in Waterford, Dunmore East and Kilmore Quay recently.

For three days, a delegation from the European Parliament's Committee on Fisheries travelled Ireland's Southeast to look into the continued impact of Brexit on trade and fisheries. This comes as the Committee negotiates a report on the implementation of the Trade and Cooperation Agreement. They found port facilities at their limit, frustrated fishers and a distant glimmer of hope.

Fisheries organisations, small-scale fishers, local businesses and civil society groups turned out in large numbers for public meetings held by the Parliamentary delegation in the Waterford Harbour Sailing Club in Dunmore East and the Stella Maris Community Centre in Kilmore Quay on Tuesday May 16th. The issue of quota loss continues to be the most significant issue for fishing communities following a shock 15% cut when the UK left the EU and the Common Fisheries Policy.

MEP for Ireland South Grace O'Sullivan, who proposed and led the mission, said; "The Common Fisheries Policy is supposed to be based on fairness and sustainability. It is failing at both the way it is implemented. The EU so far has provided some funding to stem the bleeding caused by Brexit, but a one-off cheque won't save fishing communities. We need a rebalancing of quota in the aftermath of Brexit. I will be bringing this message both to Commissioner for Fisheries Virginijus Sinkevicius as well as Minister McConalogue."

Those in attendance raised the need for better coordination and consultation with the fishing industry regarding future offshore wind development and Marine Protected Area legislation currently passing through the Oireachtas. They also noted the lack of recognised qualifications and apprenticeships available to encourage

young people to join the industry.

O'Sullivan added; "A constant theme we heard is that young people are not getting into fishing as a way of life anymore. We desperately need apprenticeships and qualifications for young fishers. Currently, there is essentially no recognition of the time and experience fishers gain on the boats so there is no concept of career progression or transferable skills."

On Wednesday 17th May, the Delegation continued to Rosslare Europort where they met with Port Director Glenn Carr. Carr is leading one of the largest port development projects in the history of the State. Rosslare, which has seen weekly sailings to the continent increase from 6 to 36 since Brexit, is preparing for the construction of a massive offshore wind hub as well as improved sail-rail links.

Grace O'Sullivan commented after the meeting: "The growth of Rosslare as a European success story has been perhaps the one silver lining of the Brexit experience. When supply chains were severed overnight after Brexit, Rosslare kept us moving. I'm looking forward to plans to develop rail connections and I fully support calls from the 'South East on Track' group for Irish Ferries to offer Sail and Rail tickets from Rosslare the same way they do from Dublin."

O'Sullivan was joined by Luke 'Ming' Flanagan, Billy Kelleher, Colm Markey as well as MEPs Ana Miranda from Galicia and Pietro Bartolo from the Italian island of Lampedusa. The delegation will present its findings to the Parliament and Commissioner Virginijus Sinkevicius later on its return to Brussels.

Maritime Institute AGM

The annual general meeting of the Maritime Institute of Ireland, which operates the National Maritime Museum at Dun Laoghaire, has re-elected Joe Varley as its President.

Elected to the board: David Curtis, Conor Doyle, Peadar Ward.

"Everything is going well with good footfall at the Museum," the President said. "We are pleased to be rapidly getting back to normal operations after our and everybody's experiences with Covid."

The Library is open for researchers on Tuesdays and answering many and interesting queries mainly by email. The address for library and research queries is library.archive@mariner.ie

The Museum is open seven days a week from 11am to 6pm. Intending visitors can check on phone 01-2800969 or via Email: reception@mariner.ie as functions are occasionally held.

A New Mayo Reef?

The MV Shingle, white-hulled but with increasing rusting evident, has been in Dublin Port for nearly ten years. It has been there ever since it was seized by Gardai and Customs officers in 2014 in a smuggling prevention operation. The vessel is now being considered for the creation of an artificial reef by sinking it in Killala Bay on the West Coast between Mayo and Sligo.

The Revenue Commissioners offered it free-of-charge, presumably to get it off their hands and the Grainne Uaile Sub-Aqua Club in Ballina has expressed interest to use it as an artificial reef that would attract marine life and divers. But they would need €80,000 for the project, to get it towed to the western coastline, permission from the Department of the Marine to sink it and support from Mayo and Sligo County Councils.

Latest news about the ship is that it has been moved to New Ross, apparently for some work to be done on it.

Fishermen Can Join World Maritime Institute

The Nautical Institute, the international organisation for maritime professionals, has announced that it will be admitting fishermen to membership. Headquartered in the United Kingdom, it was established in 1971 it has over 7,000 members in more than 100 countries.

"As part of our drive to increase the scope and engagement of the Institute as the most reliable voice in all professional maritime operations and communities, we have extended our formal membership criteria to include professional fishers,

"The fishing community is important to all mariners and the wider global industry so we will be working to understand how we can improve safety and effectiveness in this sector."



Hear about our plans to connect renewable energy off the south coast

EirGrid is leading plans to connect offshore wind to the electricity grid on the south coast. Find out what it means for you by coming along and talking to our team at our Information Days.

Wexford	Date	Time
St Mary's Community Hall, Fethard, Co. Wexford	12 June 2023	12pm to 6pm
Cork	Date	Time
Garryvoe Hotel, Garryvoe	7 June 2023	12pm to 8pm
Walter Raleigh Hotel, Youghal	14 June 2023	12pm to 8pm
Cobh Community Centre, Cobh	20 June 2023	12pm to 8pm
Waterford	Date	Time
The Park Hotel, Dungarvan	6 June 2023	12pm to 8pm
The Majestic Hotel, Tramore	15 June 2023	12pm to 8pm



[EirGrid.ie/offshore](https://eirgrid.ie/offshore)

Aquaculture Resources Need Consideration in Budget 2024



In her monthly column IFA Aquaculture Executive Teresa Morrissey says that the Aquaculture industry needs the support of the Government and all State agencies through the coherence of strategic policy in order to achieve priorities outlined in National and EU policy documents.

IFA Aquaculture

Budget 2024 deliberations have been to the forefront of Government rhetoric over the past few weeks. Numerous organisations, interest groups and Government Departments will make submissions for funding priorities which should be included in the next Budget presented in October 2023.

While the cost-of-living and housing crises will, quite rightly, dominate Exchequer spending for 2024 – serious consideration must be given towards ensuring the economic potential and sustainable future of the Irish Aquaculture industry being realised.

Resources for Services to the industry

Prioritising immediate action to implement a functioning aquaculture licensing system must be a key priority for any future development of the Irish Aquaculture industry, including appropriate legislative changes required to facilitate this. Sufficient funding, adequate and appropriate resources must be allocated to facilitate implementation of all recommendations of the Independent Aquaculture Licensing Review, as well as the provision of core work programmes and statutory monitoring programmes within the remit of DAFM and its State Agencies. Such programmes are essential for food safety control and support of the Irish aquaculture industry and must be allocated the appropriate resources in order to maintain the high-level provision of vital support services to the industry.

Shellfish Water Quality

There are 64 designated shellfish areas in Ireland as part of the EU Water Framework Directive which requires all Member States to designate waters that need protection in order to support shellfish life and growth. There are physical, chemical, and microbiological requirements that designated shellfish waters must either comply with or try to improve, as well as the establishment of pollution reduction programmes where required. In recent years, mismanagement of discharge into designated shellfish areas has compromised the water quality in shellfish producing bays across the country. Adequate funding and resources be made available to ensure tertiary treatment must be rolled out for all coastal Wastewater Treatment plants (WWTP) - specifically WWTP's adjacent to bays and harbours

where shellfish production is carried out to sustain food safety, rural jobs and enterprise. Further, funding and resources must be allocated to the relevant bodies for the establishment of pollution reduction programmes where required, in compliance with the EU Water Framework Directive (formerly EU Shellfish Waters Directive).

Brexit Adjustment Reserve funding must be extended

The Seafood Task Force report recommended funding for initiatives in the Irish Aquaculture sector required to overcome the impact of Brexit – this represented an opportunity to invest in developing the Irish Aquaculture industry and accordingly offers mitigation against the negative impacts that have occurred in other sectors of the seafood industry due to Brexit. The resulting schemes relating to Aquaculture (Brexit Aquaculture Growth Scheme & Brexit Blue Economy Development Scheme) are primarily funded using the Brexit Adjustment Reserve fund which is due to close on December 31st. Increasing the grant rates and extending the timeline of both schemes should be facilitated to allow the maximum number applicants avail of the funding available under the Brexit Adjustment Reserve fund. Applicants seeking to access capital grant aid under the Brexit Aquaculture Growth Scheme are finding difficulties with lead times and availability of capital equipment eligible as part of the scheme – some capital equipment may not be manufactured or available to purchase until mid-2024 at the earliest, which would fall outside the timeline of 31st Dec 2023. ALL schemes funded under the Brexit Adjustment Reserve fund must be extended beyond the deadline of 31st Dec 2023.

Further consideration should also be given by Government to activating the 'Temporary Crisis Scheme' made available by the European Commission to assist Irish Aquaculture operators affected by these severe cost increases- this would allow for financial compensation to operators in the aquaculture sector for their income forgone and additional costs incurred.

The Aquaculture industry needs the support of the Government and all State agencies through the coherence of strategic policy in order to achieve priorities outlined in National and EU policy documents – appropriate funding and resources should also be prioritised by government to facilitate DAFM and its State Agencies to meaningfully achieve these strategic priorities.

BIM's 2023 Aquatech Innovation Studio Programme Now Open for Applicants

Applications are being sought for the BIM Aquatech Innovation Studio Programme, 2023. This year's programme is open to both Irish and EU projects involved in the aquaculture technology arena including, startups looking to improve their investor readiness, established companies seeking to increase market access and companies with technology applicable to the aquaculture sector.



The programme, which will be delivered by aquaculture accelerator Hatch Blue, is now in its fifth year and has already seen 39 companies pass through its doors.

The Studio supports the ambitious goals set out in the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marines' Food Vision 2030 Strategy, namely to 'promote Ireland as a knowledge base for aquaculture technology and research and attract external investment into the sector'.

Richard Donnelly, BIM, who manages the project said, "According to the Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO), global consumption of seafood has increased at a rate almost twice that of annual world population growth. In addition, aquaculture production in 2020 accounted for 49 percent of seafood production, representing major growth from its 4 percent share in the 1950's and 20 percent in the 1990's. Aquaculture is a growing sector and the technology required to support this growth is an equally exciting business space."

Niall O'Rahelly, Ireland Aquaculture

Community Manager with Hatch explained, "The BIM Aquatech Innovation studio is a unique opportunity to validate your aquatech against a global network of aquaculture industry experts and to further scale your business. When I say aquatech, I mean a piece of technology that solves a problem or adds value to the aquaculture supply chain anywhere from farm to plate. During this programme, we have worked with a wide range of technologies such as sensor development, alternative seafood and water and pathogen management solutions."

Acceptance onto the programme will provide you with experienced mentors to further develop your business strategy, product or service. Moreover, you will have access to a global network of aquaculture technical experts. The Innovation Hub will take place at the RDI Hub in Killorglin, Co. Kerry from 9-20 October 2023.

For further information, or to apply visit <https://www.hatch.blue/innovation-studios#ireland>

Sustainable Fisheries Part B Scheme Reopens for Applications

BIM has reopened the Sustainable Fisheries (Part B) scheme.

The scheme is funded under European, Maritime and Fisheries Fund Operational Programme and supports specific listed capital investment items on board fishing vessels under one of the following areas:

- o Improvement in hygiene, health or working conditions
- o Improvement in the quality of fishery products or adds value to fishery products
- o Elimination of discards or dealing with unwanted catches
- o Improvement in size or species selectivity
- o Reduction in the impact of fishing gear on the ecosystem including the seabed or on non-target species
- o Equipment to prevent by-catch of mammals and birds.

Details about the scheme can be found by visiting BIM.ie

The deadline for applications is 15 June, 2023.

Endorse your Certificate of Competency with BIM

Bord Iascaigh Mhara (BIM), Ireland's Seafood Development Agency, is urging all skippers of vessels of 15 metres in length and above that hold a Second Hand Limited (SHL) certificate to ensure their Certificate of Competency is endorsed for service as Second Hand Special.

BIM is an approved provider of maritime training on behalf of the Marine Survey Office.

To apply to endorse your certificate of competency please contact BIM to discuss and book any training you need. Contact details for BIM's two colleges are detailed below:

Castletownbere College

National Fisheries College of Ireland,
Castletownbere, Co. Cork

Della O'Sullivan, College Administrator

T: + 353 27 7 1220

E: della.osullivan@bim.ie

Greencastle College

National Fisheries College of Ireland,
Greencastle, Co. Donegal

Maria McCarron, College Administrator

T: + 353 74 938 1068

E: maria.mccarron@bim.ie



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On the front cover of last month's Marine Times we had a close up shot of the Kate Marie heading back to Dingle. This month we highlight how vast the seas look for such smaller vessels as they bring you the freshest of seafood in all kinds of weather. Their efforts and bravery should be acknowledged by all. Photo: Donal Healy

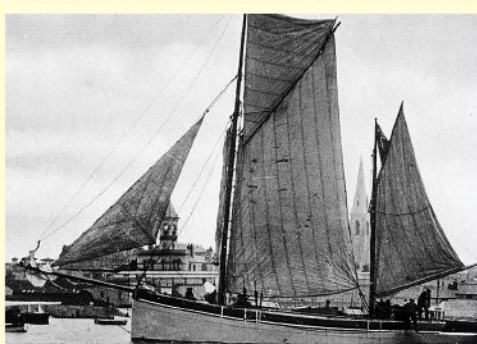
MARITIME IRELAND JOURNAL

A QUARTERLY MARINE TIMES SUPPLEMENT

Our purpose in this supplement is to broaden interest and widen readership about Ireland's maritime sphere, its history, development, tradition and culture. By doing so all sectors of the marine sphere can be drawn together.



Preserving maritime tradition at Baltimore is so important as wooden boats are an essential part of Ireland's maritime culture.



Saoirse leaving on 1923 voyage from Dun Laoghaire. Photo www.ilen.ie



Saoirse - Photo: Kevin O'Farrell

IRISH MARITIME HISTORY SHOULD BE INCLUDED IN THE EDUCATION SYSTEM

The centenary this year of the legendary Foynes Islander Conor O'Brien's circumnavigation of the world in a boat built in the Baltimore Fisheries School could be the foundation on which to build the introduction of the marine sphere into the Irish education curriculum system.

That suggestion has come from the Baltimore Wooden Boat Festival in the West Cork village with which O'Brien's world voyaging is indelibly linked as part of Ireland's maritime history. The Festival last month commemorated the centenary of his circumnavigation of the world, the first Irishman to do so.

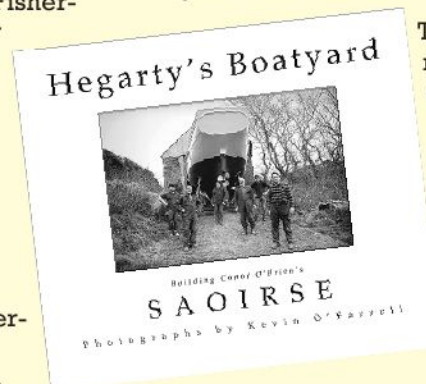
Conor O'Brien made his pioneering circumnavigation in *Saoirse* a vessel that was 42 feet in length overall, just 38 feet on the waterline, a beam of 12 feet and drawing six feet in depth. Converted to metres from those 1923 original measurements, *Saoirse* was 12.8 metres long, 11.5 on the waterline, 3.6 metres width (beam) and 1.8 metres depth. She was built by master shipwright in Baltimore Fisheries School, Tom Moynihan and his men. While her accommodation was modern in layout, reflecting her owner's architectural skills, the outward appearance was described as 'old-fashioned,' which O'Brien said was because he trusted then proven construction techniques for the voyage.

Saoirse was the first vessel to sail around the world flying the Irish Tricolour. It was sold on in 1941 and wrecked in a storm off Jamaica in June 1980. Hegarty's Boatyard at Oldcourt near Skibberreen has built a new *Saoirse* for Fred Kinmonth.

The Auxiliary Ketch *Ilen*, the last of Ireland's traditional wooden sailing ships was also designed by Limerick man Conor O'Brien from Foynes Island and built in Baltimore in 1926, from where she was sailed to the Falkland Islands by O'Brien and Cape Clear Island fishermen and was a local services vessel there for 70 years before being returned to Ireland and restored at Hegarty's yard. She has been suc-

cessfully back sailing over the past few years in Irish and overseas waters through the AK ILEN company of Limerick.

"Conor O'Brien's iconic voyage could be the start of including Irish maritime history in the schools, a good start to a definite approach to bringing marine into the school curriculum. Marine education and history has been neglected," said Mary Jordan of the Baltimore festival organising committee. "What better way to focus on maritime education at all levels, with at least a first module about what he achieved? One of the reasons that we are so pleased there is interest growing in wooden boats is that we really feel our maritime history could and should be included in our education system. The festival was honoured to launch the new *Saoirse* to the public, built on the lines of the original in Hegarty's Boatyard, which also built her sister ship *Ilen*. We are doing our bit to maintain the tradition, culture and history of the wooden boats."



The festival which had been held annually for seventeen years from 2002 came to a halt in 2019 with the arrival of Covid. It was revived this year.

- It took Conor O'Brien two years to circumnavigate the globe, because he made several stops.
- Documentary Photographer Kevin O'Farrell's book about the building of the new *Saoirse* at Hegarty's Boatyard is published by *Ilen River Press*

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THE MARINE TIMES INTERVIEW

BORN TO SAIL, BUT FORCED TO WORK

Former fisherman Jakub Ziemkiewicz is building his own yacht to sail the world for 400 days. He tells Tom MacSweeney that he was “born to sail,” but his toughest job was fishing!



The toughest job Jakub ever did was fishing out of Union Hall in West Cork. It was, he says, an extraordinary experience, once spending 48 hours non-stop working.

Having come from Poland, with the experience of training at that country's maritime school, he thought he could do well enough in fishing, but it was very tough. However, he liked being at sea, because it was the place, the environment in which he wanted to be.

“I feel safer on a boat than in the street. It is where I am meant to be,” he says in Aghada, a village on the north-east corner of Cork Harbour where he lives and is building a small yacht in which he intends to race around the world.

The race he is going to compete in is the ‘Mini Globe Race’ the first-ever solo around-the-world for minis, (meaning small), one-design yachts of 19 feet length called the Class Globe 5.80, self-built by amateurs. Don McIntyre, also the person behind the Golden Globe and Ocean Globe Races, is the organiser.



Jakub following the building plans and main photo above working on the yacht.

At the age of 50 and from Poland, Jakub outlines how he first came to Ireland on a Polish tall ship from their maritime academy. It was difficult to get a job at sea that he wanted under the Communist regime at the time, but when it was removed Poles could get passports “and we could travel without restrictions for the first time.” Ireland was his choice and he has lived here for over 20 years. He left fishing to get married and start a business, but is divorced and also from his own business which he had run.

So he is preparing at the age of 50 for the “race of my life” and proudly shows the plans of *SV Bibi* and how far he has progressed. It has a 2.2 metres beam and will have 1.2 metres headroom. It has had to be constructed to a strict design, with similar controls on the equipment. “Built to be light,” he says, “strong, marine ply on timber frames and laminated epoxy. The size doesn't worry him, “every boat seems small in a big sea,” but these are designed to be tough and to survive what the oceans will throw at him. Nor is he concerned about being alone for up to 400 days at sea. “I like being on my own.”

“I can't remember when I started sailing, but it was with my father in dinghies. He loved sailing. My dreams were always on the far seas waves.” He has sailed extensively on the South Coast and delivered yachts. “I grew up by the waters of Zalew Szczecinski near the second biggest lake in Poland, Dabie. From my early days, sailing small craft made by my dad and his friend, I was experiencing adventures, storms and lonely escapades. Next was marine college, with the hope to get some job on the sea, but instead the brutal reality of early '90s put me off. The political and economic situation in a post-Communist country, meant without connections, political or commercial, a career in the marine industry was just not possible and I had to make a landsman's career.

“When I first read about the Mini Globe Race, I got gooseflesh all over my body. When I found out that the appointed designer for the 5.80 boat was Janusz Mader-ski, a professional yacht designer as well as a great sailor from my home land, I realised I've no more excuses. It was exactly what I was waiting for.”

He hopes to launch *SV Bibi* by August and must also complete a 500-nautical mile qualification challenge to qualify for the race which will start in November 24 from Portugal, with six legs around the world. It is not a non-stop race.

“I'm looking forward to getting it into the water and sailing it. I've got great support and encouragement from the community here. There's plenty to do yet and I must also find sponsorship because my budget cost is about €50,000 to do the race. But for me, it's what I want. As I said, I was born to sail....”

Jakub's website is: svbibi.com where you can see the building work ongoing.

HISTORIC ARKLOW TRADING VESSEL TO BE DEMOLISHED IN LIVERPOOL

The *De Wadden*, the historic schooner which sailed out of Arklow, the County Wicklow town once described by Dr. John deCourcy Ireland as the “most maritime town in Ireland” is to be demolished at the Merseyside Maritime Museum in Liverpool. The renowned three-masted auxiliary schooner is the last of its kind to operate on the Irish Sea. The Museum bought the ship in 1984 and it has been dry-docked in Canning Graving Docks since. Though regular conservation work was carried out, exposed to the weather and other conditions, it has deteriorated beyond sustainable cost.



“We understand there may be people who find this decision upsetting, but disposal is an essential part of healthy collection management. These decisions are not always easy. We know not everyone will agree,” a Museum statement said. “We are reviewing what elements might be suitable to retain.” The Museum said it had carried out a year-long consultation and feasibility study and had received several expressions of interest from individuals and organisations, but none was suitable. “Dismantling is the only option.”

De Wadden was built for the Netherlands Steamship Company in 1917. After World War One she was sold to Richard Hall from Arklow and used as part of his merchant sail vessel fleet until 1961, carrying bulk cargo from Liverpool to various Irish ports. She was captained for 20 years by Richard's son, Victor, before being sold for use as a leisure charter fishing vessel in Scotland. After being sold to Arklow, *De Wadden* carried bulk cargoes - grain, china clay, mineral ores and coal from Liverpool and the River Mersey to various Irish ports. During the Second World War, she provided a vital lifeline carrying supplies to Ireland.

Her historical significance is an example of an Irish Sea trading vessel. Measuring 116 feet in length with a steel hull and a single deck, she was built along with two sister ships to take advantage of trading conditions created by Dutch neutrality in the First World War. She operated in the European short-sea trades till the early 1920s.

HONOURING DUBLIN DOCKERS

Part of our maritime history



The Dublin Dock Workers' Preservation society was set up in 2011 by former dock workers to preserve the industrial history of Dublin Docks and the dockland communities surrounding it, from where its labour force was drawn.



For many years it has been campaigning for a Museum to be established and dedicated to the history of the port and its dockers.

Port operations have changed in modern times and the traditional role of dock workers has also changed. From previous years, ports are now intensively operated by modern technology, with depleted dock labour workforces. The Preservation Society has amassed a resource of thousands of photographs of Dublin Port and the workforce.

The Society has also been campaigning for three particular dockers to be honoured and the Port Company has agreed to do so.

Declan Byrne and John 'Miley' Walsh, two of the Society's leaders, tell the story of three Dublin deep-sea dockers who they wanted to see publicly honoured for their "unique contributions to national, social and economic history." Many dockers were proud to be known by their nicknames. The three dockers for whom they are seeking recognition are:

Michael 'The Bishop' Donnelly - He joined the Irish Citizen Army at a very young age and fought against British occupation in Ireland during the 1916 uprising as part of the Stephen's Green Battalion. In May 1920, using his influence as a deep-sea docker to oppose British rule during the War of Independence, he initiated the embargo or 'blacking' of munitions coming into the country for the British Army. In September 2020, An Post issued a commemorative stamp about the dock labour opposition but did not mention him.

Patrick 'Fats' Currie - During the Second World War (1939-1945), trade in Dublin port evaporated and dockers who depended on it for their employment felt that they had no choice but to join the British Army. One such docker was Patrick 'Fats' Currie. He joined the East Surrey Regiment on September 30th, 1940. While fighting in Singapore, Currie was captured by Japanese soldiers on February 15th, 1942. Japanese records show his address as 13 Nixon Street, North Wall, Dublin and his previous em-



ployment as 'Dock Labourer'. What followed were three years of hell during which he was held in prisoner of war camps and worked on the infamous Burma Railway. His records also show that he endured physical injuries at the hands of prison guards. After the war, Patrick returned to the North Wall and resumed his work as a 'button' deep-sea docker.

William Deans - Following in the footsteps of his father, William Deans became a coal docker. On November 12, 1947, he was driving a ship's crane winch on the first coal hatch of the SS *Amaso Delano*. Not long after he took up the post, gas started to emerge from the second hatch. The ship's Captain, Engineer and Bosun went into the hatch to investigate. It is suspected that the previous cargo was grain and that it had not been cleaned properly before it was loaded with coal. They collapsed from poisonous fumes. The crew and dockers abandoned ship to the safety of Sir John Rogerson's Quay, but Deans did not. Putting a handkerchief around his mouth, he climbed down the ladder into the hatch and with some difficulty carried the three officers up the ladder to safety. Rushed to hospital, they made a full recovery. In one of life's strange coincidences, in 1957 at roughly the same spot, a French sailor, suspected of being drunk, fell off the gangway of a ship into the River Liffey. Without hesitation, Deans jumped in and saved him. He is the only person in Ireland to have received two Bravery Awards from the Irish State.



Declan G McGonagle, Curator of the Art & Engagement Programme of Dublin Port, told Maritime Ireland that the Port has commissioned painted portraits by local artists in the Port area of Michael "The Bishop" Donnelly [artist - Sueann Moore]; Patrick 'Fats' Currie [artist - Tara Kearns] and William Deans [artist - Margaret M. Cullen].

"The paintings will be shown in a Port building with the actual location to be finalised shortly. This is part of Dublin Port's Port/City Integration Strategy of which the Art & Engagement Programme is a part. It has been developed by the Heritage & Communications section of Dublin Port, in which Port/City themes are explored by members of local Port communities and creative practitioners in the arts and education sectors, involving Port Archives, workshops, study groups, creative productions, publishing, public experience and participation in community and educational settings, at the Pumphouse and in other parts of the Port estate."

• Maritime Ireland Podcast/Programme reported the campaign to have the three dockers recognised in its February monthly edition which is available to hear on the archives section on maritimeirelandradioshow.ie

NEW ATLANTIC CHALLENGE FOR BANTRY

Not too far from Baltimore, in Bantry, the town's Atlantic Challenge group is working with community interests on a development project for a Bantry Marine Activities Centre. The intention is to create a "landmark community hub for marine recreation which will be accessible, welcoming to all, will increase community participation in marine recreation through collaboration with educators and will realise tourism potential."

Diarmuid Murphy of the AC group, who is Vice-Chairman of BMAC (the Bantry Marine Activities Centre) that is chaired by Eamon McCarthy, says there is strong local support for the project which has been evolving for some time and a "positive feeling that Bantry can achieve its plan and "have a sustainable legacy for future generations."

IRISH SEA PORTS PAST AND PRESENT

The Digital Repository of Ireland (DRI) has a new collection - Ports, Past and Present - funded by the European Regional Development Fund through the Ireland Wales Co-operation Programme, a collaboration between University College Cork, the University of Wales Centre for Advanced Welsh and Celtic Studies, Aberystwyth University and Wexford County Council.



Brendan Wickham playing uilleann pipes at Rosslare Harbour social club, surrounded by listeners- photo from the dri.ie repository

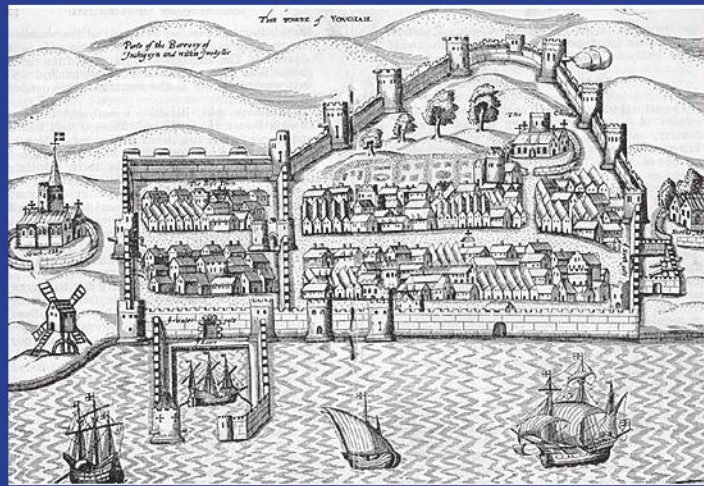
It links Irish Sea ports and communities on both sides - Dublin Port, Rosslare Harbour, Holyhead, Fishguard and Pembroke Dock - using heritage in promoting tourism and deepening a sense of shared identity through communities'. It has 200 online heritage stories, documentary films and information on community events and tourism. Overall there are 353 items and sub-collections.

Website: www.dri.ie

WHEN PIRATES DOMINATED THE SOUTH COAST OF IRELAND

Youghal frightened off English military and the Dutch were afraid of Cape Clear.

Youghal, a seaside town in East Cork, was once a main seaport on the South Coast and also a haven for pirates. Many English pirates moved to Cork in the 1600s after a decree against privateering and raiding of foreign vessels was issued by King James 1. There were eleven pirate ships and a thousand sailors in Youghal, which were an "affront to the authority" of the Vice-President of Munster, Sir Richard Moryson. So he was ordered by superiors in London in 1609 to remove "these marauders who are wreaking havoc on English and Continental ships off the South Coast."



17th Century map of Youghal

The British Admiralty regarded the South Coast of Ireland as "the well-head of pirates, their rendezvous and playground of piracy in out-of-the-way bays and harbours." That description is in a handwritten manuscript in the British Museum, which alleges the pirates had "the help of the countryside" while Naval ships could not "get into the smaller harbours" to stop piratical operations.

At that time, conditions of hunger and unemployment in Ireland drew many to support piracy. There were other attractions according to Moryson: "They have all commodities and conveniences those places afford them, including a good store of English, Scottish and Irish wench which resort onto them. These are strong attractions to draw the common sort of seaman thither." Moryson, an English soldier and politician, had previous Irish experience. He had commanded a regiment during the siege and battle of Kinsale and did not relish the task of eradicating the piracy threat. So he told his superiors that "owing to the remoteness of the place and the wildness of the people" he dared do nothing about dealing with the pirates in Youghal.

Pirates formed a 'Confederacy' where they agreed not to fight amongst themselves. In the 1600s the Dutch Government listed the South Coast of Ireland as a 'piracy area' and particularly Cape Clear. The West Cork island was described as "very much a piracy harbour." Dutch ships heading home from the Americas past the South/West were warned to keep clear.



Youghal docks look a lot different now!

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MARITIME HISTORY

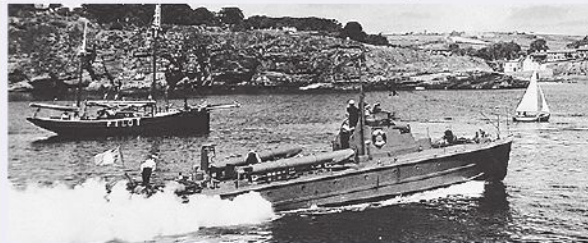
This page in each supplement will feature aspects of maritime history. There may be some items that you have heard about, there will be others that you may never have known about!

BLOWING UP A MINE - ASTOUNDED COD AND BACONLESS FRIDAY

The former New Zealand navy vessels, the latest to join the Irish Naval Service continue a line going back to the legendary Muirchu, formerly the Helga, the first of the maritime defence force. That list includes Motor Torpedo Boats (MTBs) acquired during World War Two - the 'Emergency' as it was known in Ireland.



Muirchu and the Motor Torpedo Boats



The late Norris Davidson, who became a distinguished broadcaster, provides a fascinating account of these in his book - "The Wartime Irish Marine Service" - when he was stationed at the Naval Base in Haulbowline protecting the coastline: "I was very happy in the MTBS, though they were cramped compared with my quarters in the Muirchu. The motion was decidedly uncomfortable though - something like a high-speed elevator driven by a demented attendant with no fixed purpose in life. The decks streamed with water and so did oil skins and sea boots."



Naval Exhibition 1945

He describes being called out in the early hours of a winter morning, in bad weather, to blow-up a floating wartime mine seen offshore, that was threatening shipping. The MTB crew blew it up with rifle fire: "First a dull, red flash, then a black cloud and simultaneously a tremendous roar, followed by a hot, acrid wind that shot violently throughout the whole craft. Complete silence, seas breaking silently on deafened ears. Then the souvenirs began to arrive; nasty and jagged, hissing into the sea and thumping on the deck here and there. After what seemed a long time that ceased, the cloud of smoke and vapour drifted away, the sea ceased to boil and a number of dead cod came to the surface, astounded out of their lives by the greatest shock known to cod society. Another mine had been removed. It would never more lie in the track of shipping. never foul a fisherman's nets, never drift into a bay and cause the evacuation of an entire village. The Marine Service and the Coast Watching Service

had carried out their job.

"Everyone was in good humour aboard. One more mine down and good shooting in a bad sea. More important, breakfast would be on its way from the galley. Ah, the sausages! Ah, the bacon and maybe a bit of liver saved from yesterday. It was almost worth the cold and discomfort..... Then we remembered that it was Friday..."

In the 40s the Catholic Church imposed meat abstinence. No eating of meat was allowed on Fridays!

Before he died Norris Davidson entrusted the manuscript of his book to former Naval officer and another author, Daire Brunicardi, who has set the scene of the time and provided photographs. "The Wartime Irish Marine Service" is published by The History Press.

Photos are from the book.

ST. BRENDAN IN THE CANARIES?



The Canaries consist of seven islands - Tenerife, Lanzarote, Gran Canaria, Fuerteventura, La Palma, La Gomera and El Hierro. However, stories persist of an eighth member of this archipelago - San Borondon.

Its name is the Canaries version of Saint Brendan, the Irish monk who lived around

500AD. It is believed that Irish monks reached the shores of an island off the Canaries in the Middle Ages that seemed uninhabited. As they were saying Mass, it started to move and turned out to be gigantic sea creature. How Brendan and his monks managed to extricate themselves from this predicament is unclear. In the 15th century, the story was discovered and became popular about the eighth island and known as the legend of St. Borondon. Sometimes the island was reported seen to the west of La Palma, El Hierro and La Gomera. Sailors tried but failed to reach it because, as they approached, it became covered in mist and they found nothing. This mysterious, enigma is regarded as Saint Brendan's 'living island' and called "San Borondon."

TOM CREAN'S BROTHER WAS SHOT BY THE IRA

A historical note about Tom Crean's family is recorded in the book 'Newspapers and Journalism in Cork, 1910-23,' by Alan McCarthy.

It is known that Crean, living in Kerry, did not want a lot known about his service with the Royal Navy. Perhaps that could also be accounted for by what happened to his brother, Cornelius, who had played rugby for Cork Constitution RFC, the club which was formed by staff of the then newspaper, the Cork Constitution.

The book records: "Cornelius Crean, brother of Arctic explorer Tom, was involved in detective work for the RIC. While on patrol on the road between Innishannon and Upton (in West Cork) in April 1920, he was assassinated by the IRA."

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One Person Doesn't Run a Lifeboat ..



Niamh Stephenson recalls the career of Aran Islands Coxswain John O'Donnell who has retired after 21 years lifesaving service on Western waters. "One person doesn't run a lifeboat," he tells her. "It's the whole Station."



Long-serving lifeboat Coxswain John O'Donnell retired at the end of May after 21 years saving lives at sea on the West Coast of Ireland. Born and raised on Inis Mór on the Aran Islands, John has been Coxswain at the lifeboat station since 2003. For his last exercise at the helm, the lifeboat was joined by members of the Irish Coast Guard Helicopter Rescue 115, from Shannon.

John started his working life as fishing crew on his father's boat in 1976, fishing out of Killybegs and then on both, the East and West Coasts. In 1983, he got his own fishing boat before deciding to return home to the island, to build his own home and raise his family with his wife, Nora.

While on his way over to the island from Galway in 2002, he met with members of the RNLI and on hearing he was coming home, they encouraged him to join the lifeboat crew on Inis Mór. The Coxswain, Paddy Mullen, was due to retire in the next year or two and there would be a chance to become a full-time Coxswain onboard the lifeboat. John became the Aran Island's Coxswain in 2003 and has remained in the position since.

During his time in charge, he has been on many call-outs and saved countless lives.

The call-out that stands out in his mind came during one of his earliest days on the lifeboat crew. A trawler with four crew onboard was lost. One of the crew was John's cousin and the other, his best friend. The men had all fished together and were close. Sadly all four crew were lost. John was away when the call came, but arrived into Galway a few hours later and immediately took over the search. In the days that followed, the lifeboat was out searching and John remembers lifeboat crew coming from Ballyglass and Achill to help.

Another call out he remembers was to a 24-metre trawler which nearly ran aground at the North Light lighthouse on the west side of the island. The seas were enormous and when the lifeboat arrived on the scene, the trawler was nearly up on top of the rocks. The crew had one chance to get a rope from the lifeboat to the crew of the trawler, or it would be lost. In those seas, it was hugely challenging but John's crew got the rope across to the trawler while he manoeuvred the lifeboat into position. Thankfully the lifeboat was able to tow the trawler away from the rocks and bring all

crew safely home.

Commenting on his life with the RNLI on his retirement as Coxswain, John said, 'I've spent all my working life at sea. I was never afraid; I knew what to do and I knew where to go and I never refused a call. After 21 years, I can honestly say, I'm still learning. You might think you know it all but there are no second chances with the sea and every decision you make, there are five or six lives depending on you. I will miss it but I'm also ready to retire. I've a wonderful family and my wife Nora is a huge support to me. She raised our children, and understood that when someone is in trouble, you've got to go. Having that support was everything.

"One person doesn't run a lifeboat, it's the whole Station. The team on the Aran Islands are fantastic. I have huge admiration and respect for the men and women in the Irish Coast Guard too. Here on the Aran Islands, we work closely with the team in Valentia MRSC and Rescue 115, who are based in Shannon. On a bad night, you would look up and they would be there overhead. We have a close working relationship with them and that makes all the difference when you need to make split-second decisions that could save a life. I would also like to thank my lifeboat colleagues across the Institution and in particular, the team at Galway RNLI, who we often worked with on a call-out and looked after us during a long search.'

John's son Ciaran is one of the crew of the Aran Lifeboat.

RNLI Area Lifesaving Manager Rob King said: 'John's retirement represents the end of an era. He is hugely respected and admired in the lifeboat community and it's been an honour working with him. I think anyone who is involved with the sea or search and rescue will have heard of John or met him over the years. He has put saving lives at sea to the fore and has always been a source of help and encouragement to his colleagues. He will be missed. We wish him and Nora and the family, the very best for the future.'

The Lily B Rescue Awards

A couple of weeks ago, I received a call from Helena Duggan, one of the RNLI's Assessor Trainers to ask if the Coxswain from Kilmore Quay had been in touch. This was a strange one. I know Eugene Kehoe quite well and felt at this stage, we didn't need an intermediary. I promised I'd act surprised when he'd call but to honest, as I wasn't sure what was going on, that



John O'Donnell, Aran Islands RNLI and his son Ciaran.

wouldn't be hard. The mystery was then solved, the lifeboat crew who had been involved in the rescue of the nine-person crew of the Lily B, a cargo ship carrying 4,000 tonnes of coal, were set to receive to their Vellum Certificates at a function in Kehoe's pub in Kilmore Quay and Eugene wanted me to be there.

In what, I thought was a really lovely gesture, the awardees had asked my friend, one of the RNLI's Assessor Trainers, Helena Duggan, to present their awards. The lifeboat crews involved reasoned they had made excellent use of all the training they had received through the years and a not inconsiderable amount of their own skill to save those nine lives. What struck me during Helena's speech, was that she mentioned that she had been at home on the night in question and had watched it live on Marine Traffic, following the drama and living every minute with the crews.

I had checked in with the crews that night too, but it was in snatches of phone calls, as media were looking for updates and I knew an incredible rescue was unfolding, if the crews could just hold on and keep the vessel out of harm's way, which they certainly did. It never occurred to me that people were following live online, at the edge of their seats as lifeboat crews did the impossible. It was a David-and-Goliath call-out and although the three Coxswains' involved from Rosslare, Dunmore East

and Kilmore Quay have all received their bronze medals, it is now the turn of the lifeboat crews out that night to receive their Vellum Certificates surrounded by family and friends. Dunmore East RNLI were first, then Kilmore Quay and Rosslare will have their night shortly.

While chatting to the attendees at Kehoe's, including an incredible skipper called Aileen Howlett, I was delighted to meet Kilmore Quay crew members Trevor Devereux and Michelle Hinchy who had just got married that same week. Between them, the bride and groom have over 50 years voluntary service with Kilmore Quay RNLI. Michelle, currently the Station's only female crew member, is also training to become a lifeboat navigator and Trevor is a qualified lifeboat Coxswain and Mechanic and alongside his volunteering duties, recently took up the role of Regional Resilience Coxswain Mechanic working at other lifeboat stations when needed. He was involved in the rescue of six people off Inis Mór while doing cover at the Aran Islands.

The wedding had been held on the Thursday and by Saturday evening, the couple had already done their first call-out as man-and-wife.

Huge congratulations to the three lifeboat crews involved, and Rosslare's service during Storm Ophelia will also be recognised during their awards.



Congratulations to Trevor Devereux and Michelle Hinchy, Kilmore Quay RNLI crew!

Annual Inshore Patrol Programme Will Majorly Focus on Unlicensed & Unregistered Activity in 2023

The Sea-Fisheries Protection Authority's (SFPA) has launched its annual inshore fisheries patrol programme as part of conservation measures to help protect Ireland's valuable shellfish and crustacean fisheries including crab, lobster, crayfish, and whelk.



Pictured launching the SFPA's Rigid Inflatable Boats (RIBs) into Kinsale harbour, Cork are Sean Murray; Virginia Valls and Adrian Hickey, Sea-Fisheries Protection Officers.

The SFPA's campaign will focus on unlicensed and unregistered fishing vessels along the south and west coasts. The SFPA will also monitor compliance by members of the public to ensure their fishing activities are within limits for lobster and crab fishing. The SFPA are advising that anyone found to be non-compliant with sea-fisheries or seafood safety regulations can expect to face prosecution. Regulations are in place for all commercial and casual/recreational fishers, regarding the minimum size that can be caught to ensure shellfish and crustacean species such as lobster and crab can reach maturity and reproduce to safeguard the future of stocks. The SFPA's inshore patrols will operate throughout the summer into autumn with the support of the Irish Naval Service, Air Corps, and Inland Fisheries Ireland.

In 2022, following a similar patrol programme, the SFPA's Rigid Inflatable Boats (RIBs) completed 49 inshore patrols around the coastline as part of a nationwide inshore fisheries patrol programme. 150 registered fishing vessels and numerous storage boxes were inspected resulting in:

- Non-compliances detected included the retention of undersize and v-notched lobster in storage boxes, which the SFPA seized and released.
- Several vessels fishing with expired licences were also observed and instructed to cease fishing and investigations continued into the activity of these vessels.
- Inspections were also undertaken on recreational vessels to ensure compliance with the relevant legislation.
- Further administrative checks were undertaken on commercial vessels inspected to check that accurate sales records were maintained to ensure traceability of product.

This year, the SPFA has deployed two 7.5 Metre RIBs with the capacity to winch lift and inspect lobster pots and keeps (used for holding live crustaceans prior to sale) to

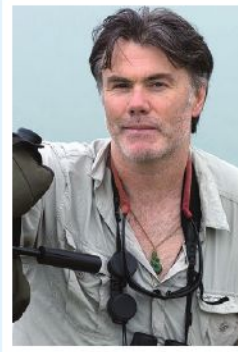
facilitate detailed inspections. The inshore monitoring programme also includes vehicle patrols to small local ports and landing places so Sea-Fisheries Protection Officers (SFPOs) can identify and monitor unlicensed and unregistered vessels which may be deployed during the summer months. These vessels will be targeted for inspection at sea during the subsequent patrols in that area.

Paschal Hayes, Executive Chairperson of the SFPA said: "Illegal fishing is unfair to the majority of inshore fishermen who fish sustainably and within regulations, as it jeopardises the future of this valuable industry. The SFPA, along with our control partners the Irish Naval Service and the Air Corps, is committed to creating a level playing field. Our targeted inshore compliance strategy aims to support the sustainable management of these fisheries and will help to safeguard their future for the benefit of consumers, producers and, importantly, our coastal communities.

"The RIB patrols are important to ensure the long-term viability of an industry on which many coastal communities rely on for a living. Illegal fishing also poses a risk to public health as the seafood may not be stored or handled in accordance with food safety regulations and could potentially damage the excellent reputation Irish seafood enjoys both at home and abroad.

"As we commence our inshore patrols programme over the next few months, we would ask anyone who has questions or would like our Sea-Fisheries Protection Officers to focus on particular issues or areas to contact your local SFPA port office or use our Confidential Line Channels."

If you have any concerns regarding fisheries control, seafood fraud and/ or seafood safety please contact the SFPA through their Confidential Line channels. Call the Confidential Line on 1800 76 76 76. Send an email to confidential@sfpa.ie. Alternatively, complete the Confidential Report form on sfpa.ie



IRISH WHALE AND DOLPHIN GROUP IWDG NEWS

Pádraig Whooley, Sightings Officer at the Irish Whale & Dolphin Group, writes about the importance of respecting marine wildlife and highlights what he described as "reckless behaviour" in West Cork when a humpback whale arrived.

Poor Track Record on Respecting Marine Wildlife

Images appearing on Social Media towards the end of last month showed some truly reckless behaviour by some individuals regarding a humpback whale who had been in the Tragumna Bay area of West Cork since the start of May.

Given the timing and location of the arrival of this individual, known to the Irish Whale & Dolphin Group as #HBIRL82, this is likely to be its first opportunity to feed since departing from whichever of the two known tropical breeding grounds it visited last winter/spring, in either the Cabo Verde or Caribbean. While these breeding areas offer much by way of safety from predation and warmth in clear waters for newborn calves and their nursing mothers, one thing they can't provide is whale food, as the sort of small pelagic shoaling fish that large whales feed on is found in the greatest abundance in colder waters, such as those of Southwest Ireland and at higher latitudes. On top of this you need to add a long 4,000km-migration North, during which time snacking isn't much of an option, as feeding opportunities along their migration route are few and far between.

So by the time HBIRL82 took up local residence in the waters between Toe Head, the Stags and Goleen Point, where it clearly found sufficient sprat and sandeels to justify staying in the area, it was likely to be at best - hungry, and at worst- starving. Some whale biologists believe that species such as the grey whale can lose as much as 30% of their body weight during the 4-5 months they are on and travelling to and from the breeding grounds. This has been well documented by IWDG as it is quite common in the early part of our season to see quite thin specimens with visible rib cages or shoulder bones almost protruding their skin. This is why Irish coastal waters are so important to the humpbacks and indeed minke and fin whales who seek out this rich feeding area.

The whales' residency coincided with the prolonged period of settled weather courtesy of the recent Azores High and so as the word got out, there was always the risk that this event had the potential to turn into another "Wally the Walrus" circus; something which predictably came to pass.

This was the perfect excuse for people to launch their private boats and a plethora of smaller craft. I mean it's not every day that you can say with confidence that you know pretty much exactly where to find one of the planet's most charismatic mammal species. As the time passed, social media platforms became inundated with images and videos from land, sea and air. But things were going to get worse, a lot worse, as drones and Go Pros flew countless sorties above and below the whale for that Instagram moment

and maximum social media reach, culminating in some instances with the whale being so squeezed for space that sea kayakers were struck on at least one occasion. Other images show a woman swimming within metres of this 35-40 tonne whale, no doubt in search of a "cosmic" experience, blithely unaware of the risks posed by this selfish act.

In such situations, especially when the animal is so close to land, IWDG actively encourage members of the public to enjoy these opportunities, but from the safety of the shore using binoculars. If you feel the urge to watch this humpback, or indeed any cetacean species, from a boat or other small craft, it is your responsibility to become familiar with the guidelines laid out in Marine Notice No. 15, 2005, written by the Irish Maritime Safety Directorate, which are intended to offer best practice to be followed in cases of interactions between small craft and large marine mammals and they apply equally to all boats (commercial & private). As a Statutory Instrument they are also enforceable by law. Among other things, they strictly prohibit swimming with whales. The law is there to protect whales from wilful interference and people from themselves.

The IWDG's Code of Conduct illustrates how NOT to behave around large whales. It's about having a little respect for our wildlife, which in an ideal world would be more important than your social media reach!

September Whale Watching Course

Having just delivered the first of our summer series of residential weekend Whale Watching courses at the CECAS Ctr. in Leap, West Cork in glorious sunshine with plenty of offshore whale sightings, we are delighted to announce that our next course Sept. 22-24th is open for bookings on Eventbrite link below. Among the topics covered over the weekend are how to whale watch safely, and species identification of the more frequently recorded species in Irish waters. Over the weekend course participants will also join a series of land based watches as well as a pelagic boat trip in offshore waters (weather permitting).

www.eventbrite.ie/e/iwdg-residential-whale-watching-weekend-course-september-2023-tickets-556046749797

Minister Ryan Blocks Barryroe Exploration on Cork Coast

Minister Opposes LNG Development on the Shannon, But Not in Cork

Report by Tom MacSweeney, Deputy Editor

Minister for the Environment Eamon Ryan has refused Barryroe Offshore Energy permission to continue exploration off the Cork coast.

His Department wrote to the company stating that he was turning down its application for a lease as he was not satisfied with its financial capabilities.

This, even though it is backed by wealthy Irish businessmen - Larry Goodman and a number of high profile shareholders have provided €40 million for drilling in what is known as the Celtic Sea prospect.

The technical perspective of the licence application was, it is understood, satisfactory, but the Minister disagreed with the investment cover criteria.

Interestingly Minister Ryan, who is also Transport Minister, was on hand in Cork Port to be shown through its Master Plan to 2050 which includes a proposal for LNG bunkering and a Floating Storage Regasification Unit with the addition, in the short-to-medium term, of a jetty and berth for a permanent vessel at Corkbeg Bay. He was not reported to have voiced any objection to this aspect of the plan, though he has opposed LNG development on the Shannon Estuary.



Minister for Finance Michael McGrath TD, Eoin McGettigan, Chief Executive Officer, Port of Cork Company, and Eamon Ryan T.D. Minister for Environment, Climate and Communications and Minister for Transport, pictured at Cork Container Terminal, at the launch of the Port of Cork Masterplan 2050. Supporting the accelerated growth of the fixed Offshore Renewable Energy (ORE) sector is a key component of the Port of Cork Company (PoCC) Masterplan, which outlines the ports plans and ambitions over the next three decades and provides an integrated framework for the port to strategically plan and adapt to meet the needs of Ireland's future social, economic and environmental development.

Dunmore East RNLI's Open Water Swim Makes A Splash For The Charity That Saves Lives At Sea

Hundreds of swimmers ranging from beginners to experienced athletes, fearlessly took on the challenge of the Dunmore East RNLI Open Water Swim on Sunday 28th May.

The event garnered an impressive response with 360 registered swimmers, all driven by a shared purpose: supporting the invaluable work of Dunmore East RNLI. Participants from around the country and beyond attended the event, promoting a sense of positivity, energy, and personal fulfilment, while collecting necessary funds for the lifeboat station.

The event featured three swim options, offering distances of 1,600m, 800m, and 500m, thereby providing opportunities for individuals of all skill levels to test their mettle in the invigorating open water. Regrettably, the 1,600m swim had to be cancelled due to safety concerns arising from a strong north easterly wind. Nonetheless, participant safety remained the utmost priority, and a dedicated team of kayakers, safety boats, and the state-of-the-art Shannon Class RNLI lifeboat, William & Agnes Wray, expertly escorted the swimmers throughout the event.

Carol McGeary from Dunmore East RNLI's Open Water Swim committee praised all involved with the event: 'The inspiring community support and each participant's contribution were remarkable. The funds raised will power our volunteer crew's lifesaving work at sea. We are proud and grateful for this collective success, enhancing water safety and support.'

'The event highlighted the spirit of charity and volunteerism while emphasising water safety. Heartfelt appreciation goes out to everyone involved in creating this memorable day. The team eagerly look forward to the next event, continuing the tradition of community spirit and support for the Dunmore East RNLI.'

Dunmore East RNLI extends its sincere gratitude to the event's lead sponsors, Energia Renewables and Activate Waterford, for their generous support in bringing the swim to fruition. Gratitude is also extended to additional supporters, including Brendan Walsh Fruit & Veg, Strand Hotel, Powers Centra, Dunmore East Coastguard, Costcutter, Clem Jacob Hire, Dunmore East Fire Brigade, Order of Malta, The Fitness Beach Bum, Geoff Harris, Kellog's, and Lidl. Their contributions played an instrumental role in ensuring a memorable day for all.

The organising committee extends special thanks to Barry McConnell, Commodore of Waterford Harbour Sailing Club, Deirdre Lane, Harbour Master, and Karen Harris, Dunmore Adventure Centre, for their invaluable assistance in arranging and hosting the event. Their cooperation and flexibility in accommodating the event alongside their own activities are greatly appreciated.



(Above): Swimmers embark with Dunmore East All Weather Lifeboat William & Agnes Wray keeping watch.

(Below): Swim participants: Linda Murphy, Sylvie Le Coz Kennedy, RNLI's Stormy Stan, Lisa Walsh, Brona Clancy.



Rock Dodger launched at Ardglass ready for the crab season - Photo courtesy Christopher Feenan

news from Castletownbere

Helen Riddell



The O'Neill family's new vessel 'Sparkling Star' pictured arriving home to Castletownbere - Photo courtesy Anne Marie Cronin Photography

New Trawler

Congratulations are extended to the O'Neill family Castletownbere on the arrival of their new trawler the Sparkling Star which arrived into the port on Saturday May 27th.

Castletownbere Coast Guard

The Castletownbere Coast Guard Team had a busy May. On May 8th the team were called out following reports that a man in his 60s and a female relative were out on the hill above Urhan, on the north side of the peninsula, when he started feeling unwell. After they had failed to return home, family members went looking for them, located the pair and contacted the emergency services. Upon arriving at the scene, the Coast Guard team brought the casualty down off the hill in the team's Polaris all-terrain vehicle. The casualty was then transferred into an ambulance and taken to hospital for further treatment.

On May 14th the team were called out following reports that a young American man who had been working for a farmer near Trafask, Adrigole, was reported missing since the previous night, and there was concern for his wellbeing. On arrival at the scene, the Coast Guard team split into several search parties and started combing the area while the Shannon-based Coast Guard helicopter Rescue 115 undertook searches from the air. Approximately one and a half hours after the search began Gardai at the scene received information of a possible sighting by a neighbour. The casualty was

located soon afterwards on rough terrain, suffering from exposure and dehydration, but was otherwise in good health. The Coast Guard team stretchered him back to the road where he was met by an ambulance and taken to hospital for further treatment.

Congratulations were extended to Coast Guard team members Aoife O'Neill and Peter Deegan on successful passing their SAR crew skills and national powerboat course.

Castletownbere Rowing Club

Castletownbere Rowing Club will run a six week Introduction to Rowing course for adults starting on Friday June 9th at 7.30pm. The cost is €50 and after the six weeks, for those who decide to become members of the club the €50 will towards membership costs. For further details contact Ctbropro@gmail.com

Cruise Ship Visit

The cruise ship Sylvia Earle docked in Berehaven Harbour on Saturday May 20th. Passengers were greeted by a display of Irish dancing from Scoil Rince Carney on the pier in Castletownbere and enjoyed tours of Castletownbere and Bere Island during their visit. A local delegation presented a plaque to the ship's captain to mark the visit.

Training Courses

The Cork College of Further Education and Training Berea has a number of courses starting in September in visual art, textiles, horticulture, Irish for primary school parents and office skills. For further details and to book contact Noreen on 086 8239147.

Berehaven Golf Club

Berehaven Golf Club will hold a fundraising golf classic in aid of its past captain and club member Keith Hegarty. The classic will take place from June 15th to 18th. The entry fee is €200 per team, for details and to book contact 027 70700.

Darkness into Light

Castletownbere held their annual Darkness Into Light Walk on May 4th which saw over 172 people registered for the event which raised €4,000 through sign-up and sponsorship. The organisers extended their thanks to all those who took part and who helped out on the morning.

Heritage Funding for Beara

Bere Island Projects Group and the Cork Ogham Project are two Beara heritage projects which will benefit from €93,309 of funding announced under Cork County Heritage and Commemorations Grant Schemes. Bere Island Projects Group will hold a Military Heritage Festival on the island later this year which will conclude

their programme of events for the Decade of Centenaries and celebrate the island's military heritage and its role during the War of Independence. Nora White and Gary Dempsey of the Cork Ogham Project have been documenting and digitising ogham stones throughout Cork County, the funding will allow them to target the six ogham stones on the Beara Peninsula. This project aims to achieve greater access to, awareness of and engagement with the ogham stones in the county through digitisation. Congratulating the recipients, Mayor of the County of Cork, Cllr. Danny Collins said, "The applications submitted under the Commemorations Scheme were of a very high standard and cover a wide range of commemorative undertakings ranging from monuments and plays to video productions, publications, and festivals. The Heritage Scheme will support a variety of Heritage Week Projects, as well as video documentaries, conservation reports for important local heritage buildings, exhibitions, heritage festivals and natural heritage projects to further highlight the wonderful heritage of Cork County."

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BIM Reopens Scheme to Help Ireland's Inshore Sector Adjust to Post-Brexit Trading Conditions

A scheme to support Ireland's inshore fishing sector to adjust their business to the post-Brexit market has reopened for applications.

Ireland's inshore fishing sector is made up of some 1,800 vessels, that catch a range of fish and shellfish species while typically operating in waters close to the coast. The sector had exported up to 90% of its catch, however, the advent of Brexit and associated new fishing agreements, have had an impact on export trends, as accessing or transiting through the UK market is now more complex.

The scheme is based on recommendations contained within the final report of the Seafood Taskforce that was established by Minister McConalogue. The new scheme is being administered by Bord Iascaigh Mhara (BIM) as recommended in the report.

Under the scheme, depending on the size of their boat, grant aid of between €2,700 and €4,000 is available for fishing vessel owners on completion of a tailored training programme.

Under the scheme, fishing vessel owners with boats up to 8 metres in length can apply for grant aid up to €2,700, while those with fishing vessels up to 18 metres

in length can apply for grant aid of up to €4,000. For vessel owners to be eligible, they must show that they were actively fishing between January and December 2022.

To receive their grant, applicants must complete the BIM inshore census. Doing so will allow BIM to collect detailed information on the inshore sector and its contribution to coastal communities, enabling state agencies to better direct supports to the sector through grant aid and training. It will also help facilitate the inshore sector to advocate more effectively on its behalf.

Applicants must also complete at least one of five online training courses designed to provide the sector with skills to adapt to the new market realities post-Brexit. These short courses are designed to support vessel owners in areas including how to strengthen your seafood business, how to care for your catch, how to master the live holding of shellfish, and how to use social media to reach new customers.

The scheme is open for applications until July 13th, 2023.

SFPA Reminds the Public of Protected Status of Angelsharks Following Galway Sighting

The Sea-Fisheries Protection Authority (SFPA), have issued a reminder to the public regarding the reported sighting of an Angelshark off the West Coast of Ireland.



Angelshark (*Squatina squatina*). Photo: Declan Quigley, SFPA

Angelshark is designated a Prohibited Species for all EU and third country vessels in EU waters (EU Regulation 2019/1241). It is prohibited to target; retain; tranship and land the species. The most common sanctions imposed for breaching this regulation include criminal cases for landing prohibited species, points for serious infringements, and so on.

Any commercial fisher who encounters them must release them safely back into the sea as soon as possible, and they are strongly encouraged to record them as bycatch in their logsheet. Some commercial vessels have tagged them over the past decade. These details help with the assessment of the angelshark populations.

Angelsharks (*Squatina squatina*) are

among Ireland's rarest native (as opposed to migrant) fish. They are critically endangered worldwide. They have been reduced to a couple of areas in Irish waters – Tralee Bay being the most notable. Only between one and a few are seen in Irish Waters in any year. The only place in European Waters where they are found in any significant numbers are in the Canary Islands.

They are a flattened shark that looks more like a skate or ray than a "typical" shark. Females can grow to a maximum length of 2.4 m, and the males to 1.8 m.

The ban on nets in Tralee Bay and a large area off the Galway and Mayo coast protects endangered species such as Angelsharks, as well as Crawfish.



(Above): In the wheelhouse of the new 'Sparkling Star' are Alan, Donal, Kieran O'Neill (Below): Peggy O'Neill officially launching the 'Sparkling Star' at Castletownbere.



(Above): Dierdre, Alan, Donal, Peggy and Kieran with Killian and Luke O'Neill. (Below): Eimear, Kieran, Peggy, Donal, Claire, Lorna and Alan O'Neill. All photos courtesy Anne Marie Cronin Photography



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Research Shows the Impact of Climate Change Is Already Evident in Irish Marine Waters

Marine Institute's Irish Ocean Climate and Ecosystem Status Report 2023

The Marine Institute's Irish Ocean Climate and Ecosystem Status Report 2023 has been launched. The 2023 report provides important and timely updates on national observations and recommendations previously presented by the Marine Institute.

The report notes the following key findings; Sea-level rises of between 2-3 mm per annum since the 1990s; A rise of ~0.5C in sea surface temperatures on Ireland's north coast over the past ten years; Identification of surface water acidification and year-round presence of harmful algal species.

Speaking at a special as part of the report launch in Buswells Hotel, Dublin, Minister McConalogue said "It is critical that both scientists and policy makers are equipped with pertinent and high-quality evidence in relation to the changing state of our seas. This begins with the collection and observation of essential ocean

variables from ships, buoys, and robotic platforms in our territorial seas and beyond, measuring ocean temperature, salinity, sea level, ocean carbon, plankton and fish species. This information enables marine scientists to analyse the array of data to gain insights into the nature of some of the changes we are observing. We also need to predict or project what will happen to our oceans in the future using climate models. Based on this evidence, we have set out ambitious climate action targets that include an annual reduction in greenhouse gas emissions.

"Tackling emissions will help Ireland address rising sea levels, ocean warming and acidification, along with coastal inundation. Ireland's climate is dominated by the influence of the Atlantic Ocean. As this report outlines and as most of us are already aware, the ocean and the atmosphere are a tightly coupled system, with heat, momentum and mass continuously exchanged between the two. Heat transfer from the ocean to the atmosphere provides one of the main energy sources for atmospheric motion" Minister McConalogue added.

Paul Connolly, Chief Executive of the Marine Institute, said "scientific evidence is critical to informing marine climate adaptation in Ireland: Local authorities require ev-

idence to formulate action plans in line with national legislation. Changes in the ocean affect seafood, transport and biodiversity. Excess nutrients primarily from land-based activities, can lead to eutrophication and adversely impact marine life. The oceans provide 50 per cent of the oxygen we breathe. They are a critical element of the global climate system in their role to regulate atmospheric processes and for distributing heat, salt, and organisms. This research shows the impact of climate change is already evident in Irish marine waters with patterns of harmful algal blooms changing. The ocean off the southwest coast will likely become warmer and less salty by the year 2035," he warns.

The report mainly focuses on Irish waters with findings put into context with wider international climate change efforts such as the International Panel on Climate Change's 6th assessment report. In thematic layout it summarises key changes in marine conditions, and examines changing atmospheric conditions (ocean circulation, chemistry, plankton, fisheries and seabirds), and examines the link between freshwater catchments and the ocean. Model predictions and marine infrastructures critical to understanding Ireland's changing marine climate are also considered.

The report represents a collaboration between marine researchers within the Marine Institute and others based in Ireland's higher education institutes and public bodies. It includes authors from Met Éireann, Maynooth University, the University of Galway, the Atlantic Technological University, National Parks and Wildlife, Birdwatch Ireland, Trinity College Dublin, University College Dublin, Inland Fisheries Ireland, The National Water Forum, the Environmental Protection Agency, and the Dundalk Institute of Technology.



Skates and Rays of Ireland Guide Launched

The SFPA have launched their guide, Skates and Rays of Ireland 2023. There are 16 species of skates and rays that are regularly caught in Irish waters, some of which can be fished commercially under quota restrictions while others are partially or totally prohibited. Skates and rays are required to be fished in accordance with Irish and EU regulations and this ensures the long-term sustainability of these stocks. The guide details how to identify these species, and what three letter codes to use to record all these species.



Pictured onboard the Eblana, in Howth, at the launch of SFPA's Skates and Rays of Ireland Guide, are Gary Hannon, Sea-Fisheries Protection Officer, SFPA and John Lynch, CEO, Irish South and East Fish Producers Organisation.

The key features to help identify each skate or ray are shown in red, including key characteristics of a particular species. The guide is currently being distributed to fishers who may encounter skates and/or rays, and fish buyers who may handle skates or rays. These waterproof guides can be used for reference by fishers and fish buyers' on-board vessels or in the processing/receiving areas of fish buyers' premises.

Commenting on the launch of the guide, SFPA Chairperson Paschal Hayes said; "Since January 2009, it has been a legal requirement that catches of various species of ray including cuckoo ray, thornback ray, blonde ray, spotted ray, sandy and shagreen ray are reported separately. Some fishers are logging all skates or rays, irrespective of what species they are, as one species, such as blonde rays. Additionally, some fish buyers are recording all their catches as another species, such as thornback rays. Such discrepancies result in errors in SFPA's automated cross-check system VALID, which requires follow-up by Sea-Fisheries Protection Officers (SFPOs). All species over 50kg, whether they are a quota species or not, must be logged, recorded, or reported using the correct species-specific code.

"Failure to record species correctly can result in inaccurate stock assessments and may result in reduced quotas. For this reason, the guide will endeavour to help improve the accuracy of the identification of species and their subsequent correct recording.

"We are pleased that John Lynch, CEO, Irish South and East Fish Producers Organisation and current Chair of the joint North Western Waters Advisory Council and North Sea Advisory Council focus group on skates and rays who have been advising that identification guides of this type are in place to ensure the correct identification of the different species of skates and rays in the logbook data, is supporting the promotion of this Guide.

"This is an easy-to-use guide to help identify the various species common to Irish waters, to ensure the long-term sustainability of these skate and ray stocks within the wider healthy marine ecosystems. It is essential that they are fished in strict accordance with Irish and EU regulations. Accurately recording the species of skates and rays that are caught enables more accurate stock assessments which provide clear scientific advice. By working together, we can phase out the use of the catch-all species codes and ensure that everyone across the country is using the correct codes to record all species of skates and rays."

Fishers and fish buyers that require help in identifying any of the species of skates and rays are encouraged to contact their local SFPO and/or SFPA office and they will assist in identifying the species, as well as how to use the guide. Photographs of species caught by fishers will also assist in identifying species and these can be sent to the local SFPOs, or SFPA Port Office. Further details can be accessed on the SFPA website sfpa.ie

Ballan Wrasse (*Labrus bergylta*) Colour-Morphs in Irish Waters: A Reflection of Insipient Speciation?

Report by Declan Quigley

The Ballan Wrasse (*Labrus bergylta*) [USB] is confined to coastal waters of the NE Atlantic, ranging from Norway (Rana: 66.3117°N, 13.5216°W) southwards to NW Africa (Mogador Island, off Essaouira, Morocco: 31.4972°N, 9.7867°W), including the offshore Macaronesian Islands: Azores, Madeira and Canaries (25°N, 17°W).

The Ballan Wrasse is the largest of the 6 species of wrasse known to occur in Irish waters. It is commonly found in rocky inshore areas and offshore reefs with dense algal cover, usually found at depths of 1-50 m, and occasionally down to 113 m. Adults may be either solitary or occur in small variably coloured groups.

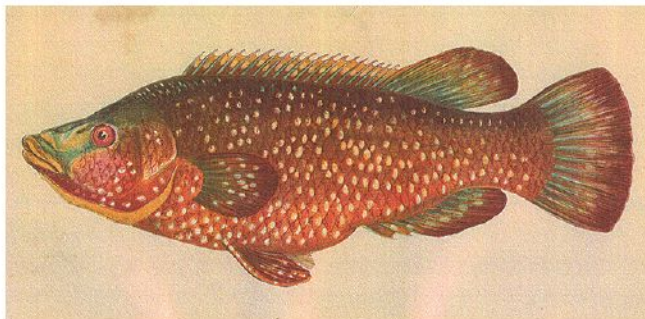
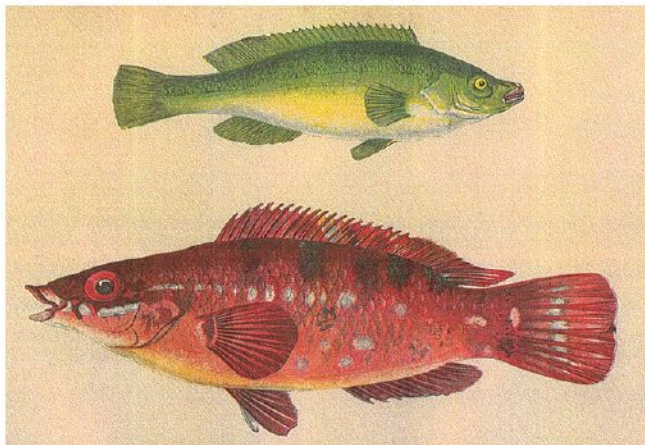


Figure 1. 'Spotted' Ballan Wrasse (as *Labrus maculatus*) [Couch, 1864]

Figure 2. Green and red Ballan Wrasse colour-morphs (as *Labrus lineatus* & *L. donovani*) [Couch, 1864]



The Ballan Wrasse is one of the few species of fish to build a nest. The dominant polygamous male controlling a harem of smaller females, constructs a loose agglomeration of fine seaweed bound with mucus threads wedged in a rock crevice. In NW European waters spawning takes place between April and August, peaking in May.

Ballan Wrasse are monandric protogynous hermaphrodites. They are all born as females, mature as females when 2 years old (16-18 cm), but eventually undergo sex-inversion to become functional males when they are 5-14 years old. No males have been reported before age 6. A slow-growing species, the maximum reported age for males and females in NW European waters is 29 and 25 years respectively.

Although Ballan Wrasse are not considered to be a highly prized food fish in Ireland today, some of our ancestors were clearly not so fussy. The remains of Ballan Wrasse have been found at several Early Christian (400-1000 AD) and Medieval (1150-1550 AD) coastal monastic archaeological sites e.g. Illaunloughan (Portmagee, Co Kerry), Ferriters Cove (Dingle Peninsula, Co Kerry), Galway City, Doonloughan (Mannin, Co Galway), Omev Island (off Claddaghduff, Co Galway), Gráinne Mhaol's Castle (Carrickildavnet, Achill Island, Co Mayo), and Staad Abbey

(Agharrow, Co Sligo). Indeed, the plethora of colloquial Gaelic and Anglicised names for Ballan Wrasse around the Irish coast, suggests that the species has been exploited by local fishing communities for millennia.

Unknown quantities of adult-size Ballan Wrasse are landed each year as a by-catch by small inshore commercial gill-net vessels and are generally used as lobster bait. However, in recent years there has been a growing demand for various species of live wrasse which are used as cleaner fish to control external parasites in salmon farms.

Ballan Wrasse Colour-Morphs

The colouration of Ballan Wrasse is highly variable, ranging from greenish, to greeny-brown, to reddish, and various permutations thereof, but unlike other protogynous wrasses, colouration is not related to the sex of the individuals. During the 18th and 19th centuries, the wide range of colour-morphs led to significant taxonomic confusion as naturalists described at least 10 different species, sub-species and varieties of wrasse all of which are now generally considered to represent synonyms of *Labrus bergylta* (Figs. 1-4).



Figure 3. Green and red Ballan Wrasse colour-morphs (Saddle Head, Achill Island, Co Mayo (Photo Josh Lavelle, 09.09.2022))

Figure 4. Juvenile green Ballan Wrasse (Baldoye, Co Dublin, 16.07.2022) [Photo Declan MacGabhann]



However, recent research has shown that the two main Ballan Wrasse colour-morphs ('plain' & 'spotted') that co-exist in sympatry in Galician waters (NW Spain) exhibit significant differences both in terms of life history traits and genetics and may represent two different species or insipient speciation (Villegas *et al.* 2013; Quintela *et al.*

2016). Both colour-morphs have long been commercially differentiated in Galician fish markets where 'spotted' individuals achieve a higher price (Figs. 5-6). Since both colour-morphs have also been confirmed from the Azores, France, UK, and Norway, it is not surprising that they also occur in Irish waters (see below).



Figure 5. Plain and spotted Ballan Wrasse from Galicia, NW Spain (17.10.2015) [Photo Rafa Banon Diaz]

Figure 6. Spotted Ballan Wrasse colour morphs from Galicia, NW Spain (Photo Rafa Banon Diaz)



The 'spotted' colour-morphs display a dark orange or reddish body patterned with white spots, whereas the 'plain' colour-morphs are characterised by a uniform, although variable body colour, mainly greenish, brownish, or reddish, darker on the back and whitish on the abdomen. Although males and 'spotted' individuals attained larger sizes than females and 'plain' individuals respectively, the age distributions of both colour-morphs completely overlapped. The maximum recorded TL and age for 'plain' and 'spotted' Galician Ballan Wrasse was 48 and 57 cm, and 22 and 21 years respectively.

Specimen rod-caught Ballan Wrasse

Ballan Wrasse are frequently captured by sea anglers. Since 1960, a total of 523 rod-caught specimen-size Ballan Wrasse weighing ≥ 2.154 kg and measuring ≥ 48 cm TL have been recorded by the *Irish Specimen Fish Committee* (ISFC).



Figure 7. Irish & World Record Ballan Wrasse (4.3kg, 65.9cm TL, Clogher Head, Co Kerry, 20.08.1983, Dr Bertrand Kron)['plain' colour-morph]

The current Irish and IGFA World Record weighing 4.3 kg and measuring 65.9 cm TL was captured by Bertrand Kron (France) off Clogher Head, Co Kerry on 20 August 1983 (Fig 7). Only 18 specimens (3.5%) weighed ≥ 3 kg. The current UK record, also weighing 4.3 kg, was captured off Jersey (Channel Islands) during 1999. It is interesting

Figure 11. Length vs Weight Relationship of specimen Ballan Wrasse (N=77)

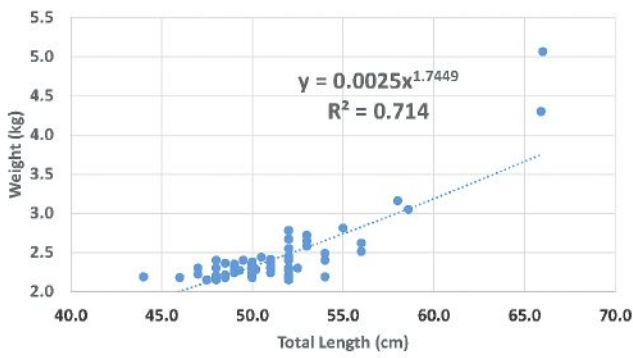


Figure 12. Average Monthly Condition Index of Specimen Ballan Wrasse (N=76)

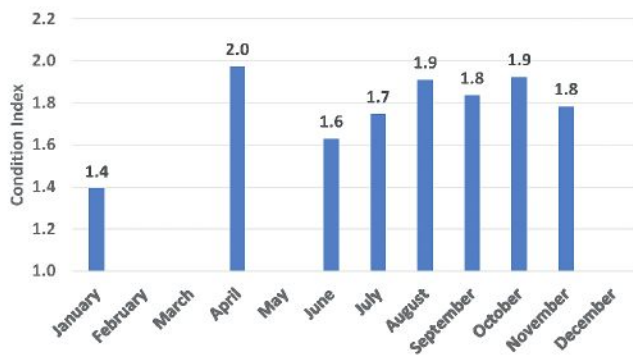


Figure 13. Annual number of specimen Ballan Wrasse (≥2.154 kg or ≥48 cm TL) recorded 1960-2022 (N=523)

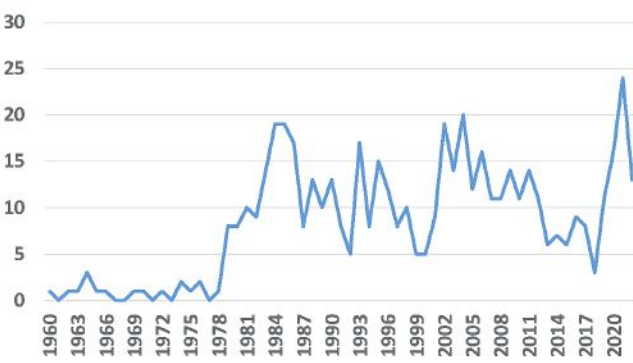
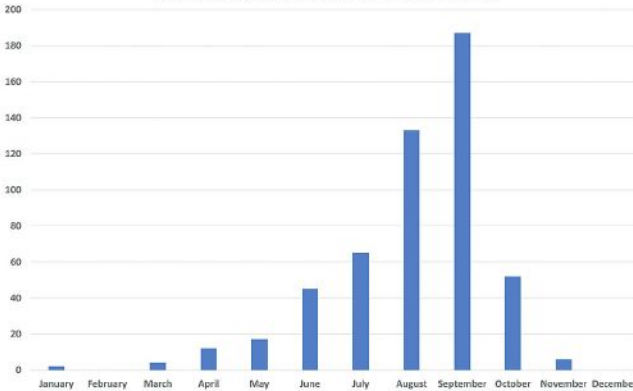


Figure 14. Monthly distribution of specimen Ballan Wrasse (N=523)



to note that the current Irish record appears to have been a 'plain' colour-morph, whereas an exceptionally large specimen weighing 4kg from UK waters was clearly 'spotted' (Fig. 8). An exceptionally large 24 year old 'spotted' male weighing 5.065 kg (11.1 lbs) and measuring 66 cm TL was caught by a spear-fisher near La Coruna during May 2019 (Villegas-Rios *et al.* 2021). The weight of the latter specimen lends some credence to the former (but now unaccepted) UK rod-caught record weighing 5.78 kg captured during 1912.



Figure 8. 'Spotted' Ballan Wrasse weighing 4kg captured by Les Hannington off Weymouth, Dorset, UK (March 2012)

Although the Irish specimens included both 'plain' and 'spotted' colour-morphs (Figs. 9-10), it is unclear what proportion of each are represented in the overall ISFC database. Based on the comparative length frequency distributions presented in the Galician research, it is clear that 'spotted' colour-morphs accounted for the vast majority of fish exceeding 48 cm TL. An assessment of the photographic evidence supporting the ratification of the ISFC specimens would be of interest. Furthermore, tissue samples may provide genetic evidence as to whether or not the various colour-morphs represent two (or more) species.



Figure 9. 'Plain' Ballan Wrasse (Fenit, Co Kerry, 30cm TL, 01.07.1999) [Photo T. Ostergaard]

Although the sample size is relatively small (N=77), specimen Ballan Wrasse exhibited considerable variation in weight at any given length (Fig. 11) which may be a reflection of seasonal variations in condition index (Fig. 12). It is interesting to note that the average condition index was highest during April (CF=2.0) just prior to the main spawning period in May. The average TL and weight of the

specimens was 50.7 cm (range: 44.0-65.9 cm) and 2.4 kg (range: 2.2-4.3 kg) respectively.

The annual number of specimens recorded has fluctuated widely from year to year, characterised by a series of cyclical trends since the early 1980s (Fig. 13). Due to their sedentary behaviour, often frequenting the same inshore breeding areas throughout their lifetime, Ballan Wrasse are particularly vulnerable to over-exploitation. Specimen size Ballan Wrasse most likely represent the single dominant male in any particular group. The large-scale cropping of mature males is likely to have a negative impact on the reproductive capacity of sexually skewed isolated populations which may take years to recover. It is not clear how long it takes for a female within the group to undergo sex inversion in order to replace a deceased dominant male, or if an opportunistic dominant male from a nearby group expands his harem. In an attempt to address this issue, the ISFC introduced an alternative length-based rule (≥48 cm TL) supported by high quality photographic evidence during 2018. This new length-based rule facilitates sustainable catch & release practices. Specimens no longer need to be weighed on certified scales, a process that may contributed to unnecessary mortality in the past.

The vast majority of specimen Ballan Wrasse (83.5%) were captured during July, August, September and October (Fig. 14) which apart from coinciding with the main angling season, may be related to sea water temperatures and greater post-spawning feeding activity. In Northern European waters, Ballan Wrasse are generally inactive at temperatures <10°C (*i.e.* during winter & spring), and appear to be particularly vulnerable to unusually cold conditions. Indeed, high mortality levels have occasionally been recorded during cold winters and following severe storms. During an Arctic spell in February-March 1947, large number of dead and dying Ballan Wrasse were washed up in Dun Laoghaire Harbour (Co Dublin). A similar mass mortality was reported from Kilkieran Bay (Co Galway) during the exceptionally severe winter of 1962-63.

Although Ballan Wrasse are widely distributed around the Irish coast, the majority of rod-caught specimens were captured off the south-west and south-east, with Counties Kerry (28.9%), Wexford (21.6%), Cork (10.3%), Donegal (9.8%), Clare (8.6%) and Antrim (7.1%) accounting for over 86% of the total.

Ballan Wrasse primarily feed on brachyuran crabs and other crustaceans, gastropods, bivalves and ophiuroids, with algae, polychaetes and bryozoans being of secondary importance. Over 65% of the rod-caught specimens were captured on crab (39.4%) and ragworm (26.2%) baits.

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



Figure 10. 'Spotted' Ballan Wrasse (Killybegs, 02.09.2022) [Photo Declan MacGabhann]

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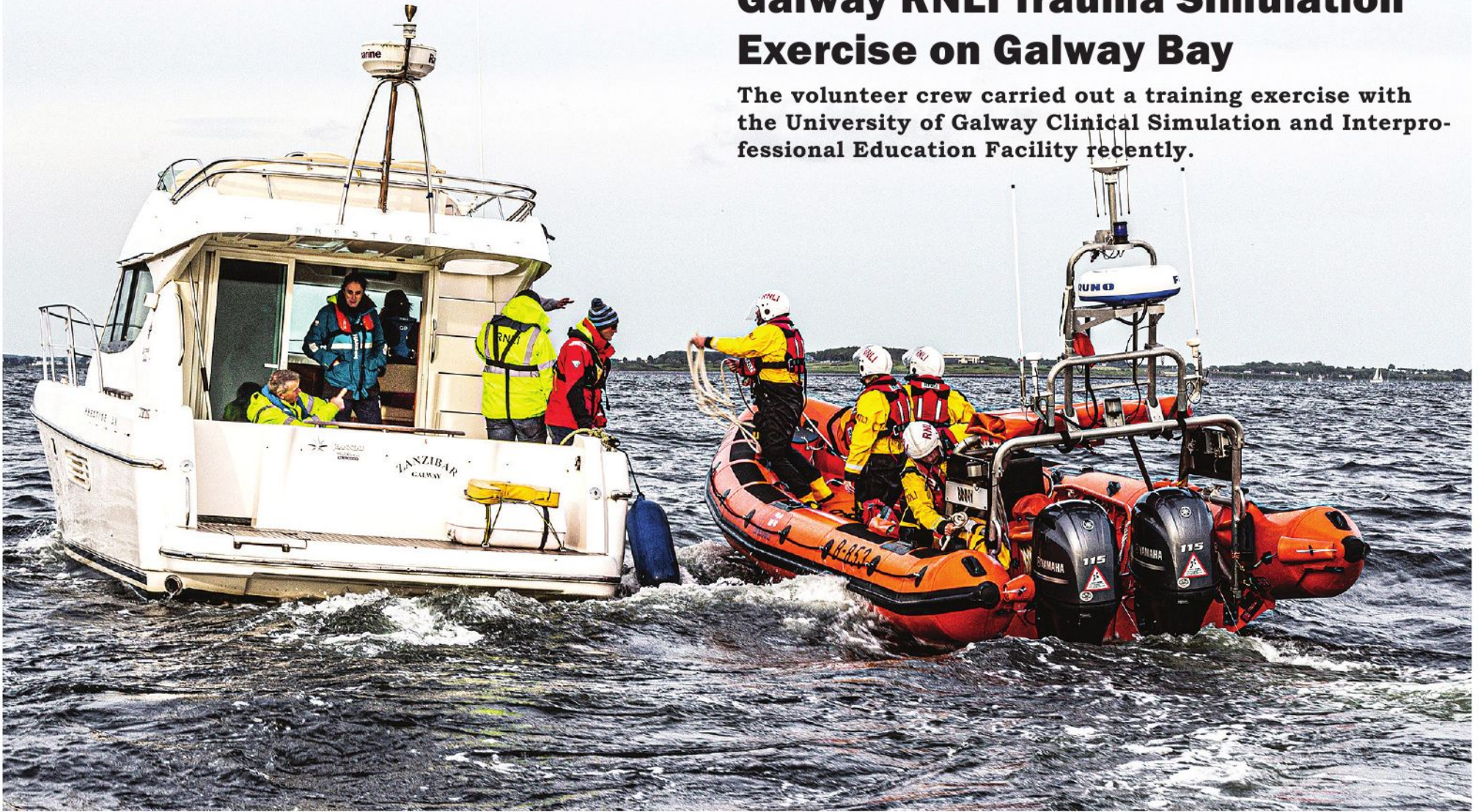
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Galway RNLI Trauma Simulation Exercise on Galway Bay

The volunteer crew carried out a training exercise with the University of Galway Clinical Simulation and Interprofessional Education Facility recently.



The exercise took place on a calm evening and involved the lifeboat crew being called to a cruiser where a member of the lifeboat crew played the part of the casualty with a traumatic leg fracture.



Departing the lifeboat station at Galway Port, the crew on board the inshore lifeboat 'Binny', travelled to the cruiser where they came aboard, assessed and stabilised the 'patient' using their casualty care check cards. The crew were observed by Professor Aidan Devitt, Consultant Orthopaedic Surgeon and Mr Mike Smith, Senior Technical Officer Skills and Simulation, College of Medicine, Nursing and Health Sciences, University of Galway. After returning to the lifeboat station, Mr Alan Hussey, Consultant Plastic Surgeon gave a briefing on managing burns and other traumatic injuries such as amputation or avulsion of limbs and digits.



The exercise also required the lifeboat crew to transfer the patient in a stretcher to the lifeboat. In a real-life situation, the lifeboat crew would have transported the casualty back to Galway Port for transfer to an ambulance.



The simulation exercise was part of ongoing engagement between the University's College of Medicine, Nursing and Health Sciences and the RNLI crew and had been arranged by Prof Dara Byrne, Professor of Simulation Education, University of Galway who said: 'We are delighted to continue our work with the RNLI team and support them in their valuable work. The management of trauma and burns in the very early stages can improve patient outcomes so it is important to get it right. The expertise provided by the two surgeons today during the simulation will make a difference to both the crew and their casualties. The Simulation Team and I are looking forward to our next educational session with the crew and to working with them in the state-of-the-art Simulation Facility at the University of Galway.'

Olivia Byrne, volunteer RNLI crew said: 'On behalf of the entire crew, I'd like to thank Professor Byrne for arranging for the consultants from Galway University Hospitals to take part in this exercise this evening. In the event of a call out that involves the rescue of a patient with a fracture, burn or other traumatic injury, the patient will be brought to hospital in Galway to be treated by these doctors and their teams. Getting their insights into how patients are treated for these injuries helps us to appreciate the relevance of our first aid training and the importance of doing training exercises to put our learning into practice.'

For Galway RNLI Crew, Every Day Is a Learning Day

University of Galway Clinical Simulation and Interprofessional Education Facility visit to the Galway Lifeboat Station

The volunteer lifeboat crew welcomed Prof Dara Byrne, Philip Parakal Augusthinose and Mike Smith to the station to see first hand how the RNLI station operates and how clinical simulation can enhance casualty care and first aid training. The visit was part of ongoing engagement between the University's College of Medicine, Nursing and Health Sciences and the RNLI crew.

Earlier this year volunteer crew member Olivia Byrne, who is also a nurse and helps deliver some of the first aid training to her fellow crew members, spent a half day in the University's Clinical Simulation and Interprofessional Education Facility putting skills learned into practice. Olivia said: 'The technology in use at the University for learning is incredible. I was able to practise resuscitation techniques on full-body manikins which were programmed to simulate the very specific conditions that casualties that we rescue are exposed to such as water and cold. The manikins reacted to treatment as close to a real-life patient experience as is possible.'

'I was delighted to be able to show Prof Byrne and colleagues around our station and give them an insight into the work we do and how our training is used in practice.'

During their visit they met with the crew and were even able to see how we prepare for and launch our inshore lifeboat which was out on the water as part of our continual training and crew assessment.

‘I look forward to further collaboration with the University and am very grateful for the expertise they shared, the time that they dedicated to our RNLI crew and for a very generous donation of medical supplies. There are only three simulation centres of this type in Ireland with the newest and most advanced here in Galway. We are very fortunate to be based so close to this incredible facility.’

Professor Dara Byrne, Professor of Simulation, College of Medicine, Nursing and Health Sciences said: ‘We are delighted to support our friends and colleagues in the RNLI with simulation equipment and education. They are a dedicated and crucial part of the healthcare family providing essential emergency service and care.’

‘They work as a team and interface with other emergency services so simulation can support their technical and non-technical skill requirements as part of their training programme. We are excited to begin a series of trauma talks and other activities with them and will be seeing them in the inter-professional simulation facility soon. A very exciting collaboration for us all and one that recognises the value and importance of the RNLI team and the support that they provide for our community.’

Mike Swan, Galway RNLI Lifeboat Operations Manager added: ‘Lifeboat volunteers need and deserve the very best training and equipment to keep them safe when they launch to a rescue. Crews don’t just learn boathandling skills – they learn everything from navigation and engine repair to first aid and sea survival. We provide them with comprehensive training and recognised qualifications. Our mission is to save lives at sea and we can only do that with the support of our community here in Galway. The University of Galway is an important part of our community and we appreciate the valuable support of the College of Medicine, Nursing and Health Sciences.’

RNLI receives €5,000 donation from Galway Shipping Company to fund lifeboat charity’s lifesaving work

Representatives from the City of Galway Shipping company visited Galway RNLI during their weekly training session, to present the charity with a donation of €5,000. The company, which has been in operation since 1947, is based a short distance from the Galway lifeboat station, at New Docks. This donation brings the amount raised for the charity in Galway this year, to €100,000, with a recent legacy and a donation from the Marine Institute.



(Above): RNLI crew with Mike Smith, Prof Dara Byrne and Philip Parakal Augusthinose from the University of Galway Clinical Simulation and Interprofessional Education Facility during a recent visit to the Galway Lifeboat Station. Back row from left: Mike Smith, Sean McLoughlin, Philip Parakal Augusthinose, David McGrath, Mike Cummins, Mike Swan Lifeboat Operations Manager, Dr Dan Murphy and James Rattigan. Standing from left: Ian Claxton, Helena Duggan RNLI Staff, Olivia Byrne and Prof Dara Byrne.

(Below) Representatives from the City of Galway Shipping company visited Galway RNLI to present the charity with a donation of €5,000. In the boat, from left: Galway RNLI volunteer crew Frankie Leonard, David McGrath, James Corballis and James Rattigan. Standing, from left: Paul Carey, Galway RNLI; Tom McElwain, City of Galway Shipping; Pat Lavelle, Galway RNLI Fundraising; John Coyle, City of Galway Shipping company board member and RNLI Vice-President; Stefanie Carr, Galway RNLI; Dr John Killeen, City of Galway Shipping company board member and RNLI Trustee; Pierce Purcell, Galway Maritime; Mike Cummins, Galway RNLI and Seán Óg Leydon, Galway RNLI.



Before the volunteer lifeboat crew went out on their training exercise, Galway Shipping’s General Manager Tom McElwain and board members John Coyle and Dr John Killeen met with Galway RNLI Lifeboat Operations Manager Mike Swan and some of the team based at the lifeboat station, to present the €5,000 donation.

The City of Galway Shipping Company have made the donation in support of the lifesaving work of the RNLI, which will next year be celebrating 200 years of search and rescue. The company’s board members are all successors of the founders and are admirers of the work of the lifeboats. John Coyle is also a former Chairperson of the

RNLI’s Irish Council and Trustee of the RNLI, while Dr John Killeen is the current Chairperson of the Irish Council and a Trustee of the charity.

Speaking at the cheque presentation, John Coyle said: ‘With Galway Shipping based a short distance from the lifeboat station, we have all seen first-hand, the volunteers launching, in all weathers and at all hours of the day and night, to rescue people. The lifeboat crew based here and at the stations around the country do a fantastic job and the shareholders are proud to give this donation to the charity for their lifesaving work. With the RNLI celebrating its 200th anniversary next year, I hope there will be

many such occasions in the future.’

Galway RNLI Lifeboat Operations Manager Mike Swan added: ‘We are delighted to receive this donation on behalf of the RNLI. The investment in our lifeboat, the kit our volunteers wear and the training everyone must undertake, can be seen every time we launch. We have a great bunch of people who volunteer their time to help others. Behind the crew is a strong team that supports the lifesaving on the water. Our volunteers all work in different jobs in the community but are united in a common goal, to save lives. We are extremely grateful for the generosity of our donors that supports us in doing this.’

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Greencastle - Photo courtesy Catherine Turner

Good News Time

Congratulations to KT Nets based just outside Killybegs who are celebrating 20 years in business. Best wishes to Danny, DJ and Anthony and here's to many more years providing top class net manufacturing, supplies and repairs (fishing and sports) along with stocking all your marine chandlery needs.

Best wishes to Seabound Engineering in Greencastle who have joined up with Poleson Marine and JCF Marine Ltd to provide new build boats for the fishing, work & pleasure sectors in the UK & Ireland! Exciting times ahead for the Inishowen company based in Greencastle harbour.

Congratulations and well done to Silver Strand Rope Works based in Moville as they have been crowned Regional Winners for the Northwest in the National Enterprise Awards. Silver Strand Rope Works are well known in the industry for their ropes for the fishing / potting industry.

Well done to Donegal Fish who will transform the processing of pelagic fish and create 30 new jobs at its new €8.9 million Killybegs facility which has received funding from the Brexit Adjustment Reserve. (read more on pages 36-37)

Best wishes to Shine's Irish Tuna who have opened their new TASTING DOCK in Killybegs! They are thrilled to be open for private bookings and as a pop-up shop when cruise ships are visiting Killybegs! Interested? Contact them at shinessseafood@gmail.com

It's also great to see so much work going on at the new boat park office over beside the Blackrock Pier and the former Island House site on the quays, along with town centre Diamond works continuing it's great to see development continuing apace in the town now all we need is a few more fishermen on Irish fishing vessels bringing in a wee bit more Irish fish to put a smile on everyones face.

If your company has any good news please send it on to editor@marinetimes.ie we could all do with good news!

New Fisheries Information Notice on Spurdog Regulations for Irish Vessels Operating in North Western Waters Published

The SFPA have announced the publication of a new Fisheries Information Notice (FIN) as of May 2nd, 2023. This FIN pertains to the latest regulations for Irish vessels operating within North Western Waters and is specifically focused on commercial fishing of Spurdog. The FIN is publicly accessible on the SFPA's website sfpa.ie



This comprehensive and informative notice provides key details on Spurdog regulations, including:

- Identifying features of Spurdog.
- Removal of Spurdog from Prohibited Species List.
- Maximum Conservation Reference Size Guidelines for Spurdog, including how to measure it.
- Spurdog handling instructions.
- How the landing obligation applies to Spurdog.
- Recording Spurdog catches in the logbook.

After five years as a prohibited species, Spurdog is judged to have recovered sufficiently to again support commercial landings this year and next year. The decision is based on International Council for Exploration of the Sea (ICES) advice that Spurdog can support a sustainable fishery.

The total allowable catch (TAC) for Spurdog was set at 0 tonnes since 2011 as per ICES advice. A TAC for Spurdog has been put in place given the Spurdog's improved stock status. Irish fishing vessels may engage in a directed fishery

for Spurdog. The notice outlines that the Master of an Irish fishing vessel shall comply with catch limits set in the current Fisheries Management Notice and not target Spurdog when a vessel has exhausted its available quota.

The maximum conservation reference size for Spurdog is 100cm, a guideline established to protect stocks of mature females and the breeding stock, which are vital for the species' recovery and future sustainability. The total length of the Spurdog is taken in a straight line from the tip of the nose to the end of the tail fin.

Masters of fishing vessels that catch Spurdog over 100cm must comply with the following regulations:

- It is prohibited to retain, tranship or land Spurdog greater than 100cm in length.
- Spurdog caught over 100cm in size must be promptly returned to the sea in a way that does not harm the individual.
- All catches of Spurdog above 100cm must be recorded as PRO in the logbooks.
- Prohibited landings of Spurdog over 100cm in length aim to protect stocks of mature females and the breeding stock.

The landing obligation applies to Spurdog 100cm or less in length. Spurdog less than 100cm must be retained, recorded, and landed. When catching Spurdog in the respective EU and UK zones, the following must be adhered to for catch reporting:

- Separate catch reports (FARs) must be made for catches from respective EU and UK zones.
- Spurdog must be recorded in the logbook using the species code 'DGS'.
- The weight of any Spurdog caught must be split by retained weight (kg) and discarded weight (kg) and must be entered into the logbook.
- Any discarded Spurdog that measures greater than 100cm must be recorded as PRO.

For further information, inquiries or additional information on this FIN, please contact: sfpafood&fisheriessupport@sfpa.ie

44 Projects Secure €26.8m Investment Under Brexit Processing Capital Support Scheme

Donegal Fish, The Good Fish Company and Burren Smokehouse are among 44 projects to secure funding

Details of a €26.8 million investment in 44 seafood processing projects which are helping drive transformational change in the sector has been announced.

The Seafood Capital Processing Scheme is funded by the European Union under the Brexit Adjustment Reserve (BAR). Bord Iascaigh Mhara (BIM), Ireland's seafood development agency, administers the scheme on behalf of the Department of Agriculture Food and the Marine, which provides for up to €45 million in funding to the seafood processing sector.

Announcing details of the investment on European Maritime Day, Minister McConalogue said: "The Processing Capital Support Scheme is providing significant investment in seafood processing enterprises, which employ some 4,000 people in rural coastal communities.

"This scheme is supporting seafood processing industry to develop their enterprises, navigate the challenging trading environment and support jobs in this important sector.

"I am pleased to highlight Brexit Adjustment Reserve funding opportunities available to the Irish seafood processing sector as Europe's marine community come together on European Maritime Day."

Donegal Fish, The Good Fish Company in Carrigaline, Co Cork and the Burren Smokehouse in Lisdoonvarna, Co Clare, are among the projects funded under the scheme to date.

The scheme is based on a recommendation of the Seafood Taskforce which was established by Minister McConalogue to assess the impacts of Brexit and the Trade and Cooperation Agreement on the fishing sector and coastal communities. It is targeted at projects which are deemed as transformational capital investment in the seafood processing sector.

Minister McConalogue added: "This investment is supporting the Irish processing sector to undertake transformational change, mitigating the effects of Brexit including reduced supply and access to markets. Through the scheme, my Department through BIM is helping seafood processors build more environmentally friendly, sustainable and competitive enterprises which serve the EU and wider global markets."

Good Fish Processing in Cork will lead the way in research, development and sustainability at its new €8.9 million processing facility which has received funding from the Brexit Adjustment Reserve.

The bespoke green facility at Shanbally in Cork Harbour is one of the 44 projects to secure €26.8 million investment from the Seafood Processing Capital Support Scheme administered through BIM.

The family business, which employs more than 100 people in Cork, also plans to create more local jobs and upskill their workforce.

"The grant aid received through the Seafood Processing Capital Support Scheme means we can progress what otherwise would have taken six years in just 12 to 18 months. It also allows us to explore cutting edge equipment and increase investment in sustainable initiatives," said Donagh Good, Managing Director.

The new Good Fish facility, which is set to open in 2024, will be strategically located next to Cork Container Terminal to facilitate immediate export. It will also provide quick access to the M28 and Ireland's motorway network. The project will deliver additional capacity for the company, increasing its current operating floor space three-fold.

The new building will have a specific focus on energy efficiency measures, while continuing to deliver on sustainability requirements as a Bord Bia Origin Green and Fishery Improvements Project member. It will include a

dedicated research and development area, with the latest state-of-the-art technology installed as part of the upgrade. The additional space will also allow the company to use larger-scale and more effective production machinery.

"Our new facility will be a leading development of its kind and will allow us to use the very latest in sustainable technologies to produce the highest-quality Irish seafood for our clients, here at home and overseas," said Donagh Good.

"This investment is the result of key strategic decisions we made to ensure we are leading the way in terms of research, development, and creating a sustainable way forward for our business within the industry.

"We are very much looking forward to the busy times ahead both for the Good Fish family and the local Shanbally area through the increase of direct and indirect employment."

An increasing demand for high-quality frozen seafood products in Europe and further afield means the company will immediately be able to leverage the benefits of its newly fitted value added technology and packaging capacity to deliver cost effective, premium seafood products to retail customers in Ireland and worldwide. The company also secured additional funding for a breeding line which will provide additional capacity to meeting existing and future business demands.

Good Fish Processing supplies major Irish and European retailers and food service operators with the business placing a key focus on using respected seafood sources and sustainable practices.

Founded by Denis Good in 1988 and now celebrating its 35th year, the company currently operates out of two processing facilities in Carrigaline and has four other retail locations across the county in Douglas, Kinsale, Carrigaline and Ballincollig.



Cu na Mara towing - Photo courtesy Donal Healy

The Burren Smokehouse in Lisdoonvarna, Co. Clare will invest in new technologies and improve their energy efficiency after receiving funding from the Brexit Adjustment Reserve.

Founder Birgitta Hedin-Curtin is constantly looking for new ways to be more efficient with this €56,000 investment to benefit their business operations and their energy use.

“The grant aid that we’re receiving through the Seafood Processing Capital Support Scheme allows us to take opportunities to improve standards and reduce costs which is critical for an SME like us,” said Birgitta.

The Burren Smokehouse is investing in infrastructure and environmental efficiency, which will enhance its digital capability, processing efficiency and reduce its environmental impact.

New digital equipment including a digital control panel for the fish smoker will make the processing operation easier for staff to manage and allow greater control of costs. It will provide further digitisation including scannable stocktaking facility, integration of the website orders to improve speed of order management, fulfilment and traceability. An additional vacuum packer will increase capacity and future proof continued processing.

“The incentive of getting grant aid really pushes us to take opportunities to make improvements to our business that we otherwise might have held back on or not taken,” said Birgitta.

“Businesses like ours need to innovate and make improvements on a continuous basis but we also need to watch every cent. The funding from the Brexit Adjustment Reserve means we can take these opportunities to future proof our business and keep efficiencies high, which is essential in an environment where costs are rising.

“The support we’ve received from BIM has been

incredible including great communication and proactive assistance. We’ve had great help with the application process when we needed it which had made it a smooth process.”

Established in 1989 by Birgitta and her husband Peter, the couple use organic farmed salmon to make their top-quality smoked products. The purpose-built smokehouse produced 60 tonnes of smoked fish in 2022, with Christmas orders accounting for around half of that.

The Burren Smokehouse is also home to the popular Taste the Atlantic Irish Salmon Visitor Experience, which attracts around 40,000 people each year.

Donegal Fish will transform the processing of pelagic fish and create 30 new jobs at its new €8.9 million Killybegs facility which has received funding from the Brexit Adjustment Reserve.

The family business, Donegal Fish will use automation and technology, along with a newly skilled workforce, to process and add value to raw materials on-site at a state-of-the-art facility, which will open this October. This marks a huge shift for the Irish pelagic sector which has previously largely exported whole fish in bulk for reprocessing in countries such as China and Vietnam.

“This facility will transform how the Ward Fish Group and Donegal Fish Ltd processes pelagic seafood products,” said Kenny Ward, Operations Manager, Donegal Fish. “It will move the company from a seasonal operation to a year-round production operation, and it will allow us to add value to top quality pelagic fish landed in Killybegs.

“This project will mean that reprocessing of pelagic fish, which traditionally takes place in China and Vietnam in quite a manual fashion, can be brought home. Production can take place here in Killybegs, via a highly skilled local workforce, in conjunction with new technology and

automation on a more sustainable basis.

“We’re also pleased to be offering stable, year-round employment in a peripheral coastal community with some 30 new roles to be created.”

Fish including mackerel and horse mackerel will be defrosted, filleted, pin-boned, portioned, dipped or salt brined, individually frozen and packaged for the consumer retail market for export abroad. The business plans to deliver six new product offerings to Japanese retail and foodservice customers.

“At a time when the wholesale market for pelagic fish products is becoming increasingly competitive, we believe that this facility, combined with a new skilled workforce, and advanced machinery will allow us to turn out exceptional high value products on a year-round basis,” said Kenny.

The project has a strong environmental focus with solar panels and new energy efficient equipment using heat recovery equipment to transfer and re-use heat generated throughout the processing line.

“The Seafood Processing Capital Support Scheme and support from BIM was a very influential factor in the decision to proceed with this project which had been on the drawing board for some time,” said Kenny. “Especially at a time when costs are rising across the board, the support through this scheme was vital to ensure this project was completed.”

The company was established by Sean Ward Senior in the 90s and has grown successfully since then, and has now passed to his family, Sean Og Ward, Liam Ward and Elaine Ward.

“Our family are proud to continue the business and are hopeful that this investment will help the business flourish into the future,” said Sean Og Ward.



Velvet Cord II heading out out sea- Photo courtesy Anne Marie Cronin Photography

International Fishing and Maritime News

Green Party Identified as Extremists Opposed to Scottish Fishing Industry

Scotland's largest political party the SNP (Scottish National Party) in Coalition with the Green Party is engaged in a major battle against the united fishing and marine sectors over the imposition of HPMAs in waters around Scotland.

The Scottish Government has been accused of turning its back on fishermen and coastal communities. The Green Party has been described as “extremists” opposed to the fishing industry.

In Parliamentary debates at Holyrood, the seat of government, three former SNP Ministers refused to support the Government when the Coalition won a vote to impose the controversial HPMAs by 61-55.

Processors, the aquaculture industry and fishing vessel owners in the Scottish Fishermen's Federation, the Communities Inshore Fisheries Alliance united in a joint statement against the HPMAs which they described as “lacking proper evidence base” and with “no clarity about what the government is aiming to achieve. We call on the Scottish Government to rethink these proposals which many people around Scotland's coastline don't support.”

MP Finlay Carson identified the Green Party as being particularly opposed to the fishing industry: “Is the Scottish Government going to seriously jeopardise a workable blue economy just to appease the Greens who, make no mistake, are the extremists behind this highly contentious back-of-a-fag packet policy commitment.”



A former Fisheries Minister, Fergus Ewing, tore up a copy of the Government's HPMa consultation document publicly at the Holyrood debate in front of the Members of Parliament.

“This is not a consultation document, it is a notice of execution. I tear it up, it is what the people of Scotland who have great affection for fishermen want to happen. It is what should happen.”

Public consultation on the HPMAs scheme has closed. A further consultation on proposed sites is not expected for some time.

UK Prime Minister Rishi Sunak has urged Scottish Ministers to reconsider its plans to introduce HPMAs to Scottish waters.

Inshore Vessel Management A Mess in UK

The introduction of I-VMS (Inshore Vessel Monitoring) for Under 12 metre fishing boats registered in England has become a fiasco of administrative bungling according to fishing organisations and representative groups after the MMO, the Marine Management Organisation, suspended one device developed for the introduction of the system.

It was described as “the latest in a lamentable and avoidable catalogue of errors over the past couple of years showing that the Government has really no idea what impact their bureaucratic actions have on fishers,” according to the Labour MP for Plymouth Sutton and Devonport, Luke Pollard, a former UK Shadow Fisheries Minister.

First WTO Agreement with EU on Fisheries Subsidies

The European Council has approved the World Trade Organization (WTO) Agreement on Fisheries Subsidies, which includes substantial limitations on subsidising what is described as “unsustainable fishing.”

The Agreement on Fisheries Subsidies is the first WTO agreement that focuses on environmental sustainability and is stated to be in line with the UN Sustainable Development Goal. It includes a strong prohibition of subsidies contributing to illegal, unregulated and unreported (IUU) fishing with unprecedented transparency provisions; an “absolute prohibition” of subsidies for fishing on the unregulated high seas; a provision on overfished stocks which is intended to create sustainability rules for subsidies regarding the most vulnerable stocks.

Norwegian Salmon Tax Changed

The Norwegian Government has been forced into agreeing a reduced rate of salmon tax, but the industry representative group, Seafood Norway, says that the overall tax burden is still too high for the coastal business community.”

The Labour-Centre party coalition government secured a deal after the Liberals (Venstre) and the single seat Patient Focus party broke ranks with the main Opposition parties and gave their approval to a reduced rate of 25%. The minority parties also secured a number of environmental concessions. The new rate is a sizeable drop from the original 40% rate announced in the Government's Budget last September. But

Seafood Norway says there are still major weaknesses with the latest plan. It has described the latest version of the country's proposed salmon tax as “disappointing.”

The organisation's CEO Geir Ove Ystmark said: “The model is bureaucratic, demanding for the companies to administer and it is a tax that is introduced retroactively.”

Plans for a major seafood expo in Amsterdam this autumn have been shelved until next year, with Norway's proposed salmon tax taking the blame. The organisers of ColdWater Seafood 2023 said in a statement last night that the postponement was justified “due to the turbulence in the seafood market caused by the introduction of a basic rent tax on Norwegian salmon production”.

First Open Ocean Farm in Aruba

The first open-ocean fish farm off Aruba has been given approval and is to produce Northern Red Snapper for the Caribbean and United States markets.

It is located five miles off the southwest coast of Aruba, which is a constituent country of the Kingdom of the Netherlands in mid-south of the Caribbean Sea, 70 miles northwest of Curaçao. The new company, Petros, has been licensed to produce 3,000 tonnes. It is supported by the US Boston-based aquaculture technology firm Innovasea.

New Iceland Salmon Farming Group

Icelandic salmon farmers have formed a new industry group. Ten initial members include Mowi's Arctic Fish; Arnarlax owned by Salmar; Samherji and Benchmark Genetics Iceland.

The group is called the Iceland Aquaculture and Oceans Forum or IAO. It has announced that its aim is to support the sustainable growth of the country's rapidly expanding aquaculture centre.

Salmon Farm Proposed for Grimsby

A stg £75m salmon farm has been proposed for Grimsby, formerly one of the biggest UK fishing ports.

AquaCultured Seafood Ltd. say the proposed farm would produce around 5,000 tonnes of high quality Atlantic salmon annually and add a “new dimension to the town's long term seafood ambition, creating around 100 jobs and bring in much-needed investment.”

Marine Fish Are Responding to Climate Change by Relocating Towards the Poles

The majority of fish populations in the sea are responding to global warming by relocating towards colder waters nearer the north and south poles, according to the latest research on the impact of climate change on our oceans.

Analysing the breadth of current worldwide data on marine fish changes in recent years, researchers from the University of Glasgow have revealed how fish populations across the Earth's oceans are respond-

ing to rising sea temperatures.

The latest study has identified that, in response to ocean warming, many marine fish populations are shifting toward the earth's poles or are moving to deeper waters – all in a bid to stay cool.

For marine life such as fish, the temperature of the surrounding water affects critical functions such as metabolism, growth and reproduction. Moreover, marine species often have a very narrow liveable temperature range making even small differences in the water impossible to cope with. As a result, marine life changes caused by global warming have been up to seven-fold faster than animal responses on land.

Over the last century, global warming has had substantial impacts on marine ecosystems, with fish species disappearing altogether from some locations. In some cases, marine fish may be able to adapt and change aspects of their biology in order to adapt to warmer conditions. In many cases, however, a change in the geographical range may be the only means of coping with rapid warming. As the current effects of global warming on marine ecosystems are predicted to increase – and with sea temperatures forecasted to continue rising – our ability to predict fish relocations will be vital to protect global ecosystems and maintain food security.

This latest study examined data on 115 species spanning all major oceanic regions, totalling 595 marine fish population responses to rising sea temperatures – the first time such a comprehensive global analysis has been undertaken.

Carolin Dahms, lead author on the study, said: “We observed a striking trend wherewith species living in areas that are warming faster are also showing the most rapid shifts in their geographical distributions. It's possible that rate of warming in some regions may be too fast for fish to adapt, and so relocating may be their best coping strategy. At the same time we see that their ability to do so is also impacted by other factors such as fishing, with commercially exploited species moving more slowly.”

Professor Shaun Killen, senior author of the study, said: “While relocation to cooler water may allow these species to persist in the short-term, it remains to be seen how food-webs and ecosystems will be affected by these changes. If the prey of these species don't also move, or if these species become an invasive disturbance in their new location, there could be serious consequences down the road.”

Moreover, the study found that how we measure and report these climate responses also matters. While current literature is biased towards northern, commercially important species, in the future more research from some of the most rapidly changing ecosystems such as in the Global South will be needed to improve our understanding of how our oceans will change.

The paper, ‘Temperature change effects on marine fish range shifts: a meta-analysis of ecological and methodological predictors’ is published in Global Change Biology.

A Wave of Explorers CPD Summer Teacher-Training Courses Approved For 2023

The Marine Institute's Explorers Education Programme is delighted to announce that six Explorers marine themed Continuing Professional Development (CPD) five-day teacher-training courses (July 3-7) have been approved by the Department of Education and Skills and are now available to book with education centres in Galway, Kerry, West Cork, Waterford, Blackrock Dublin, as well as an online course run through Mayo Education Centre (July 3 – August 18).

Cushla Dromgool-Regan, who manages the Explorers programme, said they were extremely pleased that these courses have been accepted by the Department and are delighted to be working with the education centres again: "Being able to offer teachers the opportunity to engage in different courses to learn about the ocean and the seashore helps to foster environmental awareness and ocean literacy in schools. We're also excited to provide these courses as they are perfect for enabling teachers to use marine themes to develop children's key competencies highlighted in the new Primary Curriculum Framework 2023".

"We're very pleased to be again running our seashore safari teachers training courses supported by Galway Education Centre; Tramore Education Centre, Kerry; West Cork Education Centre and Waterford Teachers Centre: **Exploring the Seashore using creative cross curricular learning and skills development.**

"These courses focus on learning about tides, exploration of the seashore, discovering the abundance of marine biodiversity on the shore, as well as exploring new ideas and activities for outdoor learning. Classes will also focus on how to bring the seashore into the classroom, completing STEM, arts and communication activities.

The seashore safari courses can be booked with the relevant education centres in each county and will be run by the Explorers outreach teams in the following locations:

- Galway - Marine Institute, Rinville, Oranmore and the local seashore in Galway city
- Tralee, Kerry - Spa National School & the local seashore
- Clonakilty, West Cork – Scoil na mBuachaillí, Clonakilty, West Cork & the local seashore
- Tramore, Waterford - Holy Cross, Tramore and the local seashore.

"This year we're delighted to be introducing a new course: 'SDGs and a healthy ocean: marine life, plastic pollution, & climate change'. We will examine

the SDGs (UN Sustainable Development Goals) and how they are connected to the ocean, as well as exploring how the SDGs and marine themes can be used to develop class and school projects, such as focussing on climate change and its impact on the ocean and us, marine biodiversity, and solutions to combat plastic pollution.

To be held at the Blackrock Education Centre, the Explorers SDG course will include fun, cross-curricular activities including creative writing, walking debates, creating visual arts through different textiles, as well co-operative games," Ms Dromgool-Regan explained.

Online Teachers Training Course:

Now in its second year, Mayo Education Centre, will be offering the **ONLINE COURSE: Explore the Seashore**. This course is delivered by pre-recording, and online support is also provided throughout the course. Teachers will get to watch a

series of *Explorers Wild about Wildlife on the Seashore* films where they can explore the seashore and complete a series of cross curricular activities, learning about some of our favourite species.

Other marine themes are also introduced where tasks can be completed at home and discussions are generated through online engagement. The online course also provides independent learning where teachers can reflect on how the ocean influences our lives and how we have an impact on the ocean.

All courses are approved for EPV certification by the Department of Education and Skills. For more information and links to the education centres booking sites see www.explorers.ie - Explorers Teachers Training courses.



Mary Paul at Kinsale. Photo courtesy Carroll O'Donoghue, Kinsale Deep Sea Angling

While Some Sing the Praises of the EU, Irish Fishermen Can Only Offer a Lament

Independent TD for Cork South-West Michael Collins has said that while Ireland has benefited in some respects from membership of the EU, it is also true to say that a full assessment of the EU's role must take into account the devastating impact of its fisheries policies on Irish fishing communities down through the decades.

Deputy Collins was speaking after he contributed to a series of statements in the Dáil to mark Europe Day-the 50th anniversary of Ireland's EU membership.

The Independent TD went on to say that "successive Irish Governments have failed on every conceivable level to protect the financial interests of the fisheries sector from negotiation processes that have wiped out or in some cases heavily diminished the quotas available to the Irish fishing fleet, while simultaneously allowing foreign vessels a free hand in our native waters.

"There are fishermen and fisherwomen out there who use the phrase 'the EU' like a curse; such is the devastation they feel it has wrought on their livelihoods and their communities," said Deputy Collins.

"They look around and see increasing levels of decommissioning of boats and

reduced or absent quotas and they wonder when they are ever going to see some of the so-called benefits of being a member of the EU."

"The history of Ireland's involvement in the EU is not entirely dark, I will be the first to accept that. But I also think that no fair analysis can avoid the fact that as time has gone on, we have moved away from the original founding vision of a collaborative economic community and towards a dominating political union where small nations like Ireland are squeezed out."

"Irish fisheries has been badly served right from the get-go of the EU project. That approach must be reversed. It is way past time for our fishermen and fisherwomen to have a share in the benefits that so many others have enjoyed for so long," Deputy Collins concluded.



David and Hannah in the wheelhouse of the Maria Magdalena. Photo Dave O'Neill.



Highland Queen off Killeel. Photo: Leslie Campbell

Brexit Off-Register Capacity Scheme Open for Application

The Brexit Off-register Capacity scheme has opened for applications. Off-register or latent capacity is fishing capacity that is licensed for use but not currently in operation for a variety of reasons such as vessels being lost at sea, damaged or in need of repair/upgrade and up for sale.

The scheme complements the Brexit Voluntary Permanent Cessation Scheme and has the aim of reducing the risk posed by re-entry to the fleet through activating off-register capacity. This would potentially jeopardise any benefits in terms of profitability for those vessels remaining in the fleet following from the removal of fishing capacity through decommissioning.

The Off-register Capacity scheme was one of the key recommendations of the Seafood Taskforce Report, established by the Minister for Agriculture, Food, and the Marine Charlie McConalogue TD. The Task Force was set up to consider measures to mitigate the impacts of the fish quota share reductions, arising from the EU/UK

Trade & Cooperation Agreement (TCA), on the Irish Fishing industry and on the coastal communities that depend on fisheries.

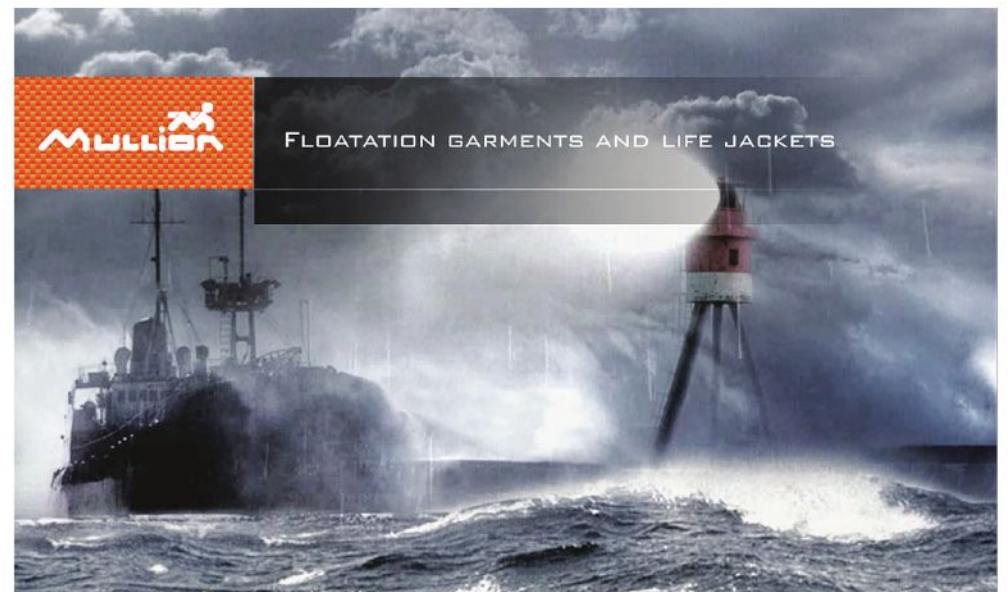
At the time of the Seafood Task Force, the level of off-register capacity was estimated at 15,500GT, 15,800kW. The scheme is targeted at polyvalent tonnage and aims to remove 10% of over 18m polyvalent capacity and half of the under 18m polyvalent capacity at market value, up to a maximum payment of €250,000.

Details about the scheme, including eligibility criteria and how to apply, can be found by visiting BIM.ie

The deadline for applications is 30th June, 2023.

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