

MARINE TIMES

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IRELAND'S LEADING MARITIME NEWSPAPER



Katie Grace arriving at Ardglass port after a few day on the prawns- Photo: Christopher Feenan



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Inshore and Island Fishermen Refute Minister's Claims That Herring Management Policy Changes Will Help Inshore Fishermen Page 3

Time For the Government to Stand Up to the EU and Demand Common Fisheries Policy Changes Special Report on Page 16

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

New Broom

I always believed that if things go wrong the worst possible thing to do is to ignore the fact or facts as they may be. Our Industry has been hit by a number of unsatisfactory things in the past year.

Our Licensing System has clogged up with overload of work and I fear over-management. Our Regulations on the Manning of the Fleet have become almost impossible to comply with. The costs of Fuel have increased beyond anyone's anticipation and the relief of reduced prices at the start of the Summer is disappearing again as prices creep back up.

Markets have become difficult in the traditional core markets with lack of demand and lower prices. Interest Rates have risen more than they really should have done due

in part to the regular increases in the ECB Rates.

I want to spend a few minutes on the Interest Rates being charged to borrowers both home loan borrowers and business borrowers.

While fully accepting that a business (and remember that a Bank is a Business) must make profit there must be an element of transparency and fair play.

When the Banks are calculating the Rate being charged to borrowers they use as the

Base Rate what they describe as the cost of Funds.

On 13th August Samantha McCaughren writing in the Sunday Indo Business Section described the unfairness of the current practice of basing the Cost of Funds on the ECB Rates. In the past year or so the ECB did increase the Rates but almost none of the increases were passed to the Depositors. However the full ECB Rate was used in calculating the final Interest rate being charged to Borrowers. So the Borrower is now paying 3% MORE on loans than last year while the Depositor has received almost NO INCREASE.

In simple terms the Banks are clearing an extra 2/3 % on every Euro lent.

This is simply not fair lads and if we were taking about hotels we would be describing this as PRICE GOUGING.

If you have increased costs certainly pass them on - but if your cost base remains the same how can you justify not funding - and pricing - the Loan Book against the Deposit Book which you have practically FREE.

I appeal to the Banks to recognize that you have the potential to starve business to death.

That is of course if the Business managed to get a Loan Approved - and drawn which has become a nightmare as the Banks continue to provide a feeding trough for the Legal Sector.

To refer to the Business Section in the Sunday Indo again - Adrian Weckler in the edition on 6th August headlined his article with the banner "Banks don't realize that once all their customers are gone, they're gone".

Think about it Lads.

The public don't have as many options as they should - but they will again. I firmly believe that.

One last message for the Lenders: Lads you will be offering concessions to the Agri Sector to ease the burdens created by the bad weather on their ability to manage the collection of their Crops. Recent difficulties experienced by the Fishermen are EXACTLY THE SAME!

Maybe offer them some help also

The Licensing and Registration systems have been under pressure for a while now and I know that the overall process is being "looked at". We currently have to engage with 3 different Government Agencies to get a fishing vessel registered and licensing. In the UK the same process can be more or less completed at a counter with the fisheries people.

Problems in the marketing and sale of our catches might be more satisfactory if a concentrated central marketing agency (Like Board Bia who will have a larger client base abroad than BIM or any single Co Op) in cooperation with all of the Co Ops and Sales organizations sought out fresh markets.

Just a thought lads but to survive an industry must adapt and follow the markets.

In any business when things become difficult very often changes in approach and management can make a difference even if deep-seeded practices and assumptions have to be disturbed.

We don't have a facility within our system for Quota Swapping under an ITQ system. I could be hanged for suggesting that the ITQ system needs to be considered again.

Whatever Rules are agreed can be composed to prevent any one party owning too much of the License / Quota. I think that other countries have overcome this difficulty.

It must make sense for consenting parties to pool their quotas which can be caught using maybe one vessel instead of two.

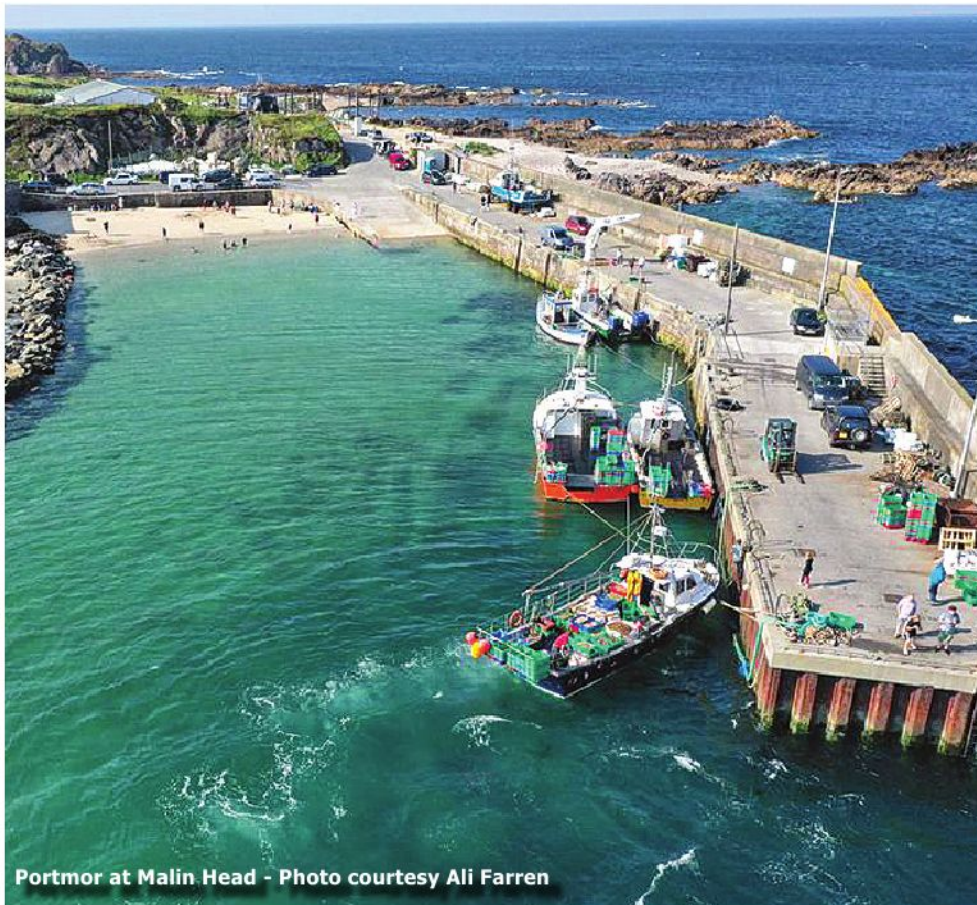
I have been managing the financing of fishing vessels since 1987 and base my beliefs on what I have seen over the years.

One of the most enduring qualities of the fishing sector has been its ability to overcome difficulty and adapt to changing circumstances.

The changes are coming faster than before and I believe that we need someone at a senior level in the Department to review the sector and maybe look seriously at the effects of decisions made in the past

New Broom etc.

Stay safe everyone!!!!



Portmor at Malin Head - Photo courtesy Ali Farren

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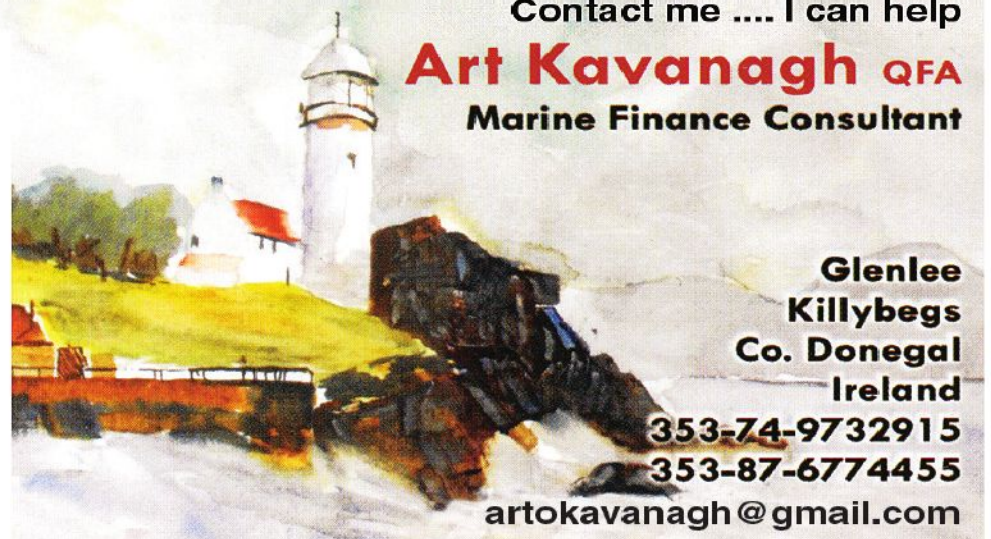
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Inshore and Island Fishermen Refute Minister's Claims That Herring Management Policy Changes Will Help Inshore Fishermen

“This policy change will improve fishing opportunities for inshore fishing families that are the lynchpin of rural coastal communities,” said Marine Minister Charlie McConalogue when he announced changes to the 2012 Herring Management Policy in relation to the Herring 6a South quota for non-ring-fenced vessels.

The NIFA states that; While any extra fish being made available to the inshore sector is to be welcomed Minister McConalogue has failed to address the main points highlighted when the (NIFF/NRIFF) requested a policy review.

Seamus Bonner, Secretary IIMRO says that; “Recent changes announced by Minister McConalogue to Northwest herring allocations following a “limited review” fall far short of what is required for the long-term sustainability of both herring stocks and island and coastal community fisheries. IIMRO has consistently made the case for a more equitable allocation of fishing opportunities”

The Minister has set a minimum allocation of Herring 6a South quota for non-ring-fenced vessels under 20 metres in length overall when Ireland’s quota for the stock falls below a certain threshold.

“This decision was made following a full public consultation earlier this year, which attracted almost 90 submissions,” the Department of the Marine stated. “The Minister examined the issues raised during the public consultation process and decided that a set quantity of the Herring 6A South quota should be allocated for non-ring-fenced vessels when Ireland’s quota for the stock is low.”

The NIFA say that; The 350 tons allocated may seem like a lot of fish to some, but when divided across a sector that now makes up more than 90% of the fleet it amounts to kgs per vessel and, as the quota increases, the fleet will be back to the original 5% so as the saying goes **“The more things change the more they stay the same”**.

IIMRO has consistently made the case for a more equitable allocation of fishing opportunities and has proposed a number of measures in the Minister’s public consultation. These proposals would allow the traditional seasonal herring fishery to be carried out with a move away from commodity pricing and the redevelopment of high-value, short supply chain markets. This is entirely within the power of the Minister to adopt and will have significant positive impacts in the 6a herring fishery.

A change in fishing opportunity allocation is more than a number; it represents tradition, economy, and identity and will enable the age-old seasonal herring fishery tradition to thrive.

Scientific advice from the International Council for the Exploration of the Seas (ICES) was that both Herring stocks in the North-West (6a South and 6a North) could be managed as commercial stocks in 2023, following a scientific fishery only from 2016-2022. The public consultation carried out by the Minister related to the southern North-West Herring stock (Herring 6a South and 7bc) only. Ireland’s quota for this stock for 2023 is set at 1,720 tonnes.

“The Minister’s Herring Management Policy of 2012 sets aside 5% of the 6a South quota for vessels under 20 metres in length overall that did not have a qualifying track record for the fishery,” the Department statement said. “However, Minister McConalogue has now decided that where Ireland’s North-West Herring quota (6a South & 7bc) in the annual Total Allowable Catch (TAC) and Quota Regulation is less than 7,000 tonnes, for 2023 and future years, the 2012 Herring Policy will be modified, and a set quantity of herring will be made avail-



Greencastle harbour - Photo: Catherine Turner

able for non-ringfenced vessels (vessels less than 20 metres in length overall), at a level of 350 tonnes.”

Minister McConalogue said that this change would “improve fishing opportunities for the inshore fishing families that are the lynchpin of rural coastal communities. The new policy will allocate 95% of the set quantity of herring to vessels less than 15 metres in length overall, and 5% to vessels equal to or greater than 15 metres in length overall. Any adjustments (swaps, carry-over/deductions as provided by EU Regulation) will not be taken into account for establishing this threshold.

“I appreciate fully the strong support given by fishers for these conservation measures and for the advice received from the North-West Herring Stakeholder Group during the scientific fishery. This new policy provides certainty to non-ringfenced inshore vessels regarding their Herring quota in Area 6A South.”

There are two separate herring stocks off the North-West coast of Ireland. Ireland has a quota for both stocks. The first herring stock is found in Zone 6aS 1, 7b, 7c (Divisions 6.a South of 56°00’N and West of 07°00’W and 7.b-c (North-West and West

of Ireland)) (‘6A South’ quota). The second herring stock is found in Zone 6b and 6aN; United Kingdom, and international waters of 5b2 (Division 6.a (North), autumn spawners (West of Scotland)) (‘6A North’ quota).

The Herring stock in 6A South is of more importance and interest to Ireland, given that Ireland has the majority share of the Total Allowable Catch (TAC) of herring in 6A South. Furthermore, from a geographical perspective, the area 6A South has contact with the Irish coastline in the North-West of Ireland, whereas the area 6A North does not. The main stock of interest for the inshore fishers is the 6A South herring stock. Under the 2012 Herring Management Policy, vessels under 10 metres do not have access to an allocation of quota for the herring stock in 6A North.

In accordance with the 2012 Herring Management Policy, the North-West Herring fishery has a ringfenced group for vessels of 10 metres and over, who have established the necessary track record in the years 2006-2010.

For further comment on this situation from the NIFA see page 10 and from the IIMRO see page 17



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Scaling Up Production at Keohane Seafoods

Keohane Seafoods in Cork is scaling up salmon processing and reducing its environmental footprint with help from the Brexit Processing Capital Support Scheme.



Colman and Brian Keohane, Keohane Seafoods

The Bantry-based business is one of 44 projects to share in a €26.8 million investment from the Seafood Processing Capital Support Scheme administered through BIM. The scheme, which will deliver up to €45 million in funding to the seafood processing sector, is funded by the European Union under the Brexit Adjustment Reserve.

Colman Keohane, Managing Director, said the grant aid is helping the business make a €1.2 million investment in innovative equipment, helping it to overcome the challenges posed by Brexit.

“Brexit had a huge impact on our business in several ways such as the delivery of salmon and transport of finished goods,” said Colman. “But by far the biggest impact was the loss of the fresh fish business in the UK due to logistical delays that reduced the shelf life of our products.

“Keohane Seafoods has always had a strong focus on innovation and new product development. To mitigate the impact of Brexit on our business, we knew that we needed to look for new overseas markets and make changes to the way we process salmon.

“The grant aid we received from the Brexit Seafood Processing Capital Support Scheme has allowed us to invest in innovative processing and packaging technologies, making our business more competitive and environmentally sustainable.”

New machines including an ingredient mixer, pouch thermoformer packaging machine, salmon portioning machine and smart grader have transformed salmon production, helping minimise waste and increase yields. An upgraded enterprise resource planning software is also giving the business greater control and visibility of its operations.

“For example, the new pouch thermoformer means we can increase the number of frozen salmon products being processed by around 50 per cent, allowing us to be competitive in the US and German frozen markets,” said Colman. “Our most popular export product in the last 18 months is our infused product range and this innovative technology ensures consistency across that product line.

“The thermoformer unit is also reducing our electricity consumption while the new fillet portioner will help us minimise food waste.”

Keohane Seafoods is a family business run by Michael Keohane and his sons, Colman and Brian. The family established the business in 2010 after spotting a gap in the market for added value seafood. It employs 230 people with processing plants in Bantry and Cork City. The business supplies fresh and frozen seafood to the retail and foodservice markets in Ireland and overseas.



Minister Welcomes European Commission Publication of an Application for A Protected Designation of Origin for Achill Island Sea Salt

Minister McConalogue has welcomed the European Commission's recent publication for a three-month Member State/third country opposition procedure of the application for a Protected Designation of Origin (PDO) for “Achill Island Sea Salt”.

“Achill Island Sea Salt” is the name given to a hand harvested sea salt from the waters around Achill Island, Co Mayo, Ireland.

Minister McConalogue said: “I am delighted that the European Commission has finalised its scrutiny of the PDO application for “Achill Island Sea Salt” and that the application has reached this stage of the procedure.

The publication is a requirement under EU rules.”

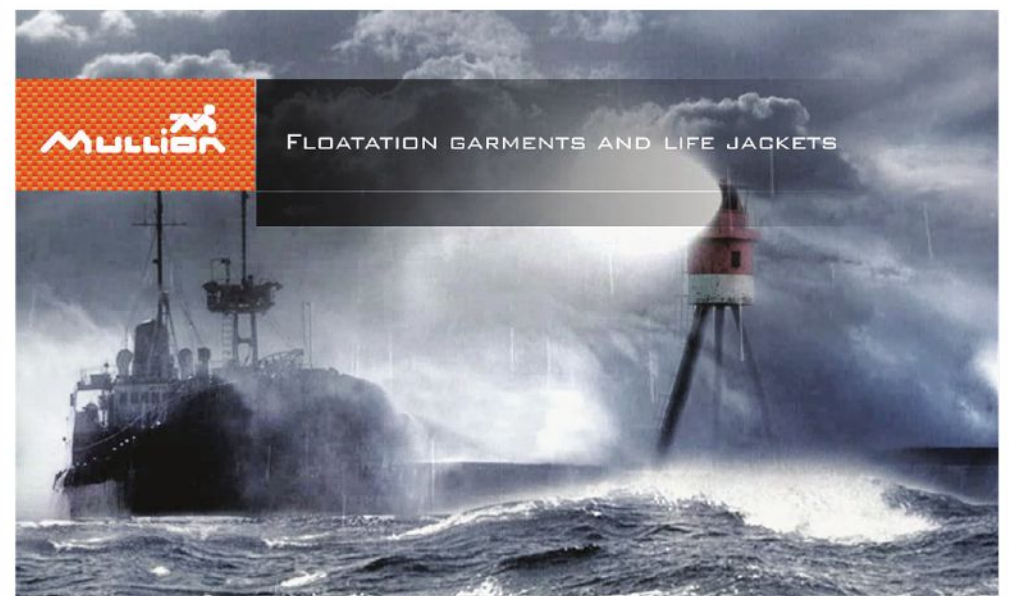
The publication of the application represents the next phase of consultation on the application for PDO status for “Achill

Island Sea Salt”. It is now open to other Member States and third countries having a legitimate interest to make submissions on

the application with the Commission, within a three-month period from the date of publication.

Minister McConalogue added: “The PDO application for “Achill Island Sea Salt” indicates the preservation of traditional

production methods, promoting heritage and supporting local economies. I commend all those who have been involved in bringing the application to this stage”.



Designed for and by fishermen

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FOUR BASES FOR NEW HELICOPTER SEARCH-AND-RESCUE SERVICE

Bristow Ireland Limited will operate six helicopters from bases in Sligo, Shannon, Waterford and Dublin's Weston Airport under a contract signed with the Department of Transport. It is to run for ten years, providing search-and-rescue services for the Coast Guard.

Environmental Monitoring, Helicopter Emergency Medical and Air Ambulance Services required by the State are also included and the Department said that the Coast Guard would also have fixed-wing aircraft capability.

"The Coast Guard's aviation service will have fixed-wing aircraft capability available on a 24/7 basis to support the delivery of essential services. Two King Air fixed-wing aircraft based at Shannon Airport will provide support for Coast Guard search and rescue operations and environmental monitoring."

Service under the new contract will be introduced by Bristow Ireland gradually on a phased basis and will be fully operational by July 2025, according to the Department.

The contract includes a provision for the possibility of the Air Corps assuming responsibility for the fixed-wing element of the service after five years

THE GALWAY GIRL IS LAUNCHED

Seafaring brothers, Tommy and Patrick Connolly, have launched Galway Girl Cruises, the newest boat tour offering on Galway Bay "more than just a sightseeing experience," they say.

Patrick Connolly, Skipper and traditional boat builder, says the tours "are not just a boat trip, but about sharing cultural heritage, stories and music of ancestors. Our family has always been tied to the sea and we are honoured to share this legacy and love of the ocean with others."

Tommy Connolly says they have created "a 90-minute experience that resonates with the heartbeat of Ireland on the Galway coast in a maritime experience captivated by traditional Irish music."

SCRAPPING THE NAOMH ÉANNA

The former Aran Islands passenger/freight ferry, M.V. Naomh Éanna, is being scrapped after several attempts to save the vessel failed.

It sailed from Galway to the Aran Islands for thirty years, but had lain in Dublin's Grand Canal Dock for many years, rusting away until it became necessary to remove it.

Several plans, including using it as a hotel and restaurant, or basing it in Galway, were not successful. It was originally built and launched at Dublin's Liffey Dockyard in 1958.

Where To Now?

When the fleet has been gutted and well-filleted



Kevin Flannery writes

Suggestions on a way forward for an industry which needs young entrants and much more national support to develop a sustainable, positive future.

As we come to the end of the BAR (Brexit Adjustment Reserve Fund) and the Seafood Task Force recommendations, and with a new TAC to be agreed, the fleet has been gutted and well-filleted and we have been told ever so politely that a review of the Common Fisheries Policy is a non-starter.

So, where to now?

Some fishermen held on, in the belief that increased quotas are on the way, due to the Decommissioning - and as the European elections are on the way. We hear chirping from our MEPS.

It was with green eyed envy that I noted the Minister for Higher Education announce an education scheme for young farmers to develop their education and management skills via their collages. We wish them the best of luck.

Time to Consider Young Entrants

Is it not time now for the various groups, State bodies and POs (Producer Organisations) to sit down, without the quota agenda and develop a policy for future fishermen, for young entrants?

For far too long in this country, the privilege of education was for the sons and daughters of the merchant princes and big farmers. The only option for the rest was the "Bád Ban to Holyhead - or out the harbour" until Donagh O Malley brought in free education in the Sixties.

But nothing changed in our industry.

Fishing Deserves More and Higher Education

The two BIM schools are brilliant at what they do and are run by excellent people. But can we not now ask to develop a Third Degree Course within fisheries?

We have a Maritime College, we have the Marine Institute, we have Regional Universities, we have huge knowledge that needs to be transferred to a new young generation, if we are going to main-

tain some form of a fishing industry in Ireland.

I would challenge anyone with a Third Degree of education to go on board any of our modern Irish trawlers and take it out successfully fishing, week-in-week-out, making a living and success of it, as a business.

Does this industry not deserve a higher education standard and award even on current course level. What is wrong with giving young fishermen the knowledge of "how stocks are accessed" or how "litigation of the EU and Ireland is enacted and enforced in Europe" of Food Science, Marine Science, to name but a few management skills, so that fishing and fisheries careers will be put on the Leaving Certificate where people would see it as a career for their sons and daughters, where young entrants would see a ladder of opportunity as they develop in the industry?

Why Are There No Young Fishermen's Grants?

At this point in time we have no young fishermen's grants or aid of any sort. All spare tonnage and quotas are swallowed up and are now gone forever.

Can we not get some national body - BIM, UDARAS, any development agency to buy tonnage from our own national finances, for a Starter Programme For Young Entrants?

Can we not have the retirement incentive that is given to farmers?

I know ... "EU rules etc., etc...", but surely to God we must have some leeway in keeping and buying retired tonnage for future young fishermen.

A Policy for the Future

Can the Producer Organisations now sit up and develop a future policy for the industry, with the Higher Education Authority, BIM, et al, because "Knowledge is Power" and by developing a career path for fishing, we might still have a light into the future.

Kevin Flannery is a former fisheries officer, Founder of Mara Beo Aquarium in Dingle and was a member of the Government's Seafood Task Force.



Duncannon - Photo: Brian Motyer



(Above): Daithi Carty with an orange Lobster caught on the familys boat MFV Katie C 2 based in Bundoran. The same lobster was caught and released last season around 2 Miles west on the same boat. Photo courtesy Sean Carty

(Below): John Ball of Turk Head, Cork with one of the three Red Mullet he had alive in his pots, moved on alive to the Oceanworld Aquarium in Dingle Photo courtesy Kevin Flannery



MARINE TIMES

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

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Context

A few articles in our last issue were taken out of context and criticised by a large number of people on a social media website.

We seem to be living in a social system whereby people are absorbing information by quick snippets and flashing headlines everything has to be imprinted into our subconsciousness in 280 characters or less. All semblance of context is lost in the cesspit of social media platforms in the rush to be the first, the wittiest, the most controversial, the most outspoken, the most outraged ... etc, etc.

It would be nice if people were more accepting and attempt to be more informed about the Irish fishing industry and our coastal communities by picking up a copy of the Marine Times and actually reading full articles and understanding the context of the situation around our coast. You might not agree with the content of the full article but at least you will have read it and then earned the right to criticise instead of calling us cowards and an embarrassment from the safety of your keyboards!

Limitless

From Dingle to Cape Horn, finding my true north in the earth's vastest oceans by Nuala Moore

The sea has always been a part of Nuala Moore's life: her earliest memory is of jumping off her father's fishing boat in Dingle Harbour and swimming back to shore. Since then, she's swum in some of the coldest, most remote and dangerous waters in the world, from the Bering Strait to the Drake Passage.

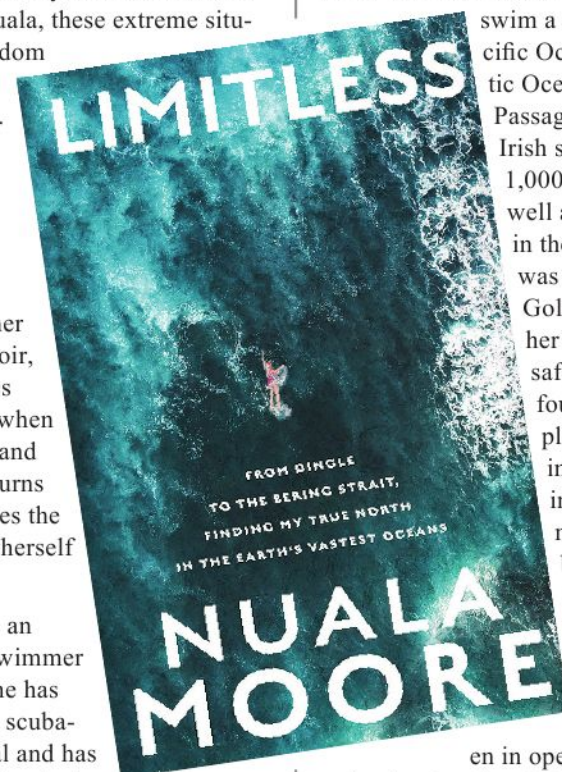
After years of marathon swimming, Nuala struggled to balance sacrifice and achievement. Her work-life balance, coupled with caring for her father, forced a change in her pathway. She turned to ice swimming. For Nuala, these extreme situations offered freedom and a chance to find her true north.

Nuala believes that everyone is capable of greatness, whatever shape that might take. *Limitless* is her breathtaking memoir, detailing what goes through her mind when she's in the water and how, when she returns home, she processes the fallout of pushing herself to the brink.

Nuala Moore is an Irish open water swimmer and adventurer. She has spent decades as a scuba-diving professional and has been involved in developing standards and procedures both in ice and channel swimming.

She holds two Guinness World Records for extreme cold-water swimming. She is

a pioneer, a cold-water safety specialist, a coach, a mentor, an event organiser and an endurance swimmer who has pushed the boundaries for women in extreme sports. She is the first swimmer in the world to



swim a mile from the Pacific Ocean to the Atlantic Ocean, in the Drake Passage, and the first Irish swimmer to swim 1,000m at 0 degrees (as well as the third woman in the world). Nuala was awarded the Frank Golden scholarship for her work on cold water safety education. She founded the Ocean Triple R, a water safety initiative for sharing information around messaging. She has been listed three times in the World Open Water Swimming Association's list of top 50 most adventurous wom-

en in open water swimming and twice shortlisted for the World Open Water Woman of the Year.

Limitless is published by Gill Books and is available in all good bookshops now.



Silver Strand at Dun Laoghaire - Photo courtesy James Grandfield

'Hands Off Our fish' - MEP Issues Warning to Nordic Countries

Fine Gael MEP Colm Markey has warned of further attempts by Nordic countries to seek greater access to Ireland's fish stock.

He made the comments following a recent meeting with the Taoiseach and representatives of the Irish fishing sector.

Markey - who sits on the European Parliament's Fisheries Committee, - said Ireland must stand its ground during negotiations on 2024 fishing opportunities, which get underway shortly.

"The main EU fishing currency is access and there are indications that some member states are leaning towards negotiating with Iceland and the Faroe Islands regarding access to EU waters. The Nordic countries are interested in valuable mackerel in Irish waters while the EU would seek cod and capelin in return. Ireland must stand firm and ensure we don't lose out", he commented.

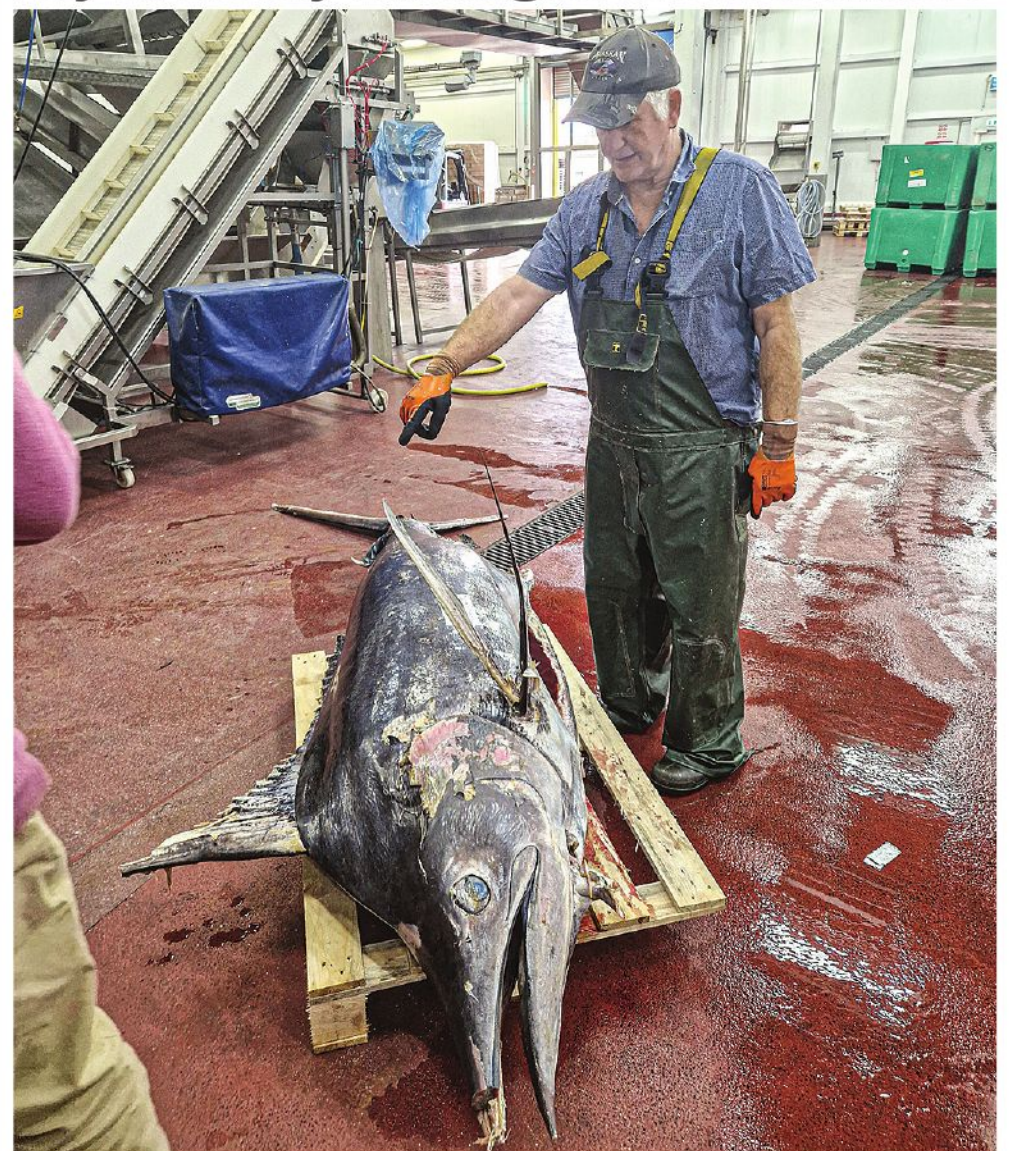
It comes after Norway unsuccessfully sought unfettered access to Ireland's blue whiting grounds.

"Earlier this year Norway behaved like a rogue state by demanding Ireland's blue whiting while doing deals with Russia. The reality is these countries are not members of the EU and Ireland is which makes it even more imperative for our voice to be heard.

"Ireland bore the brunt of quota cuts after Brexit and any further losses would be catastrophic. With recent deals between Norway and the UK, the issue of access to Irish waters is now very much back on the table. We need to be vigilant and tell the Nordic countries to keep their hands off our fish", he added.

Markey concluded, "I recently held a very productive meeting with the Taoiseach Leo Varadkar and representatives of the Irish fishing sector in which this issue was discussed. I also called for an extension to the Brexit Adjustment Reserve to allow more Irish projects to receive funding. It would be disastrous to send a cheque back to Brussels simply because of tight deadlines. The Taoiseach has committed to look into the matter and I'm grateful for his support".

Bay Of Biscay Landing At Castletownbere



Marlin were landed for the first time in many years at Castletownbere in West Cork when two local boats returned in late August from a two-month trip to the Bay of Biscay. Also in the catch landed from John D.O'Sullivan's Ronan Ross and David Minihane's Sarah were swordfish, Bluefin tuna and albacore. "It is a great example of what Irish fishermen can do when they are allowed to," said ISWFPO Chief Executive, Patrick Murphy. "We have great fishermen and there could be huge extra economic benefit if there was support to enable more processing such as canning of products like this. We need much more support for the fishing industry." John D. O'Sullivan is Chairman of the Irish South and West Fish producers' Organisation.

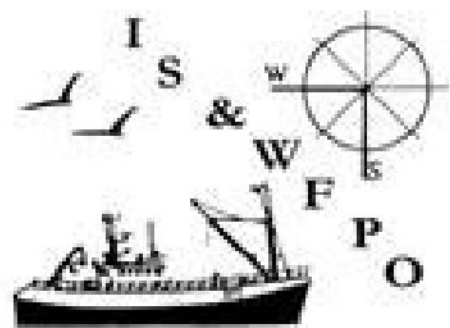
*See also ISWFPO CEO Patrick Murphy comments in CEO's Industry Comments on Page 8

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



The Lessons of a Special Landing

Patrick Murphy, CEO of the Irish South and West Fish Producers' Organisation says; "On the pier here in Castletownbere I have just seen the landing of marlin, which have not been landed here in many years, of swordfish and bluefin tuna and albacore by two boats, John D. O'Sullivan in the Ronan Ross and David Minihane in the Sarah David and their crews, who have been away for nearly two months in the Bay of Biscay and delivered a fine catch. They have been gone from their families and their community for a long time and they have got a good catch.

But more economic value could be made from their catches if we had the processing opportunity here in Ireland that there are in other countries, such as canning. We need much more support for the fishing industry and the CFP Review which the industry wants underlines our arguments that a better deal would be hugely beneficial for Ireland's economy. The tapestry of fishing has changed in the fifty years since the CFP was introduced. What was the situation then is not what it is now and the CFP has to be changed to reflect that in Ireland's favour.

While our fleet is being forced to decommission other nations can't catch the quotas they have and giving even a small percentage of what they can't catch to Ireland, which wouldn't affect what they could still catch, would not harm them and would benefit Ireland and keep our fleet in business. We should be more successful as an island nation in fishing, but we are being colonised by the effects of the CFP. The purpose is to protect coastal, fishing communities, the EU says, but it is doing the opposite and is damaging Ireland's

coastal communities. There are new species coming into Irish waters which are actually preying on the stocks species which we catch, but yet we are prevented from catching those new species.

It is crazy the way the situation is going on. The Taoiseach could take a stand and ensure that Ireland is treated properly under the CFP, by using an Irish veto to block other EU proposals in other sectors and saying he will continue to do so until Ireland gets a fair deal under the CFP. That is one way he could act and change the situation.

There are other countries building new vessels to come and fish in our waters and we are being told we can't fish enough in our own waters. Those vessels travel long distances to come here, so what about their carbon footprint?

There will be little to be handed onto future generations in the fishing industry if the Government continues to treat it as they do at present.

We have great fishermen in Ireland who show what they can do when they are allowed to go catching fish.



Happy to be home at Castletownbere after a long and successful trip to the Bay of Biscay.



Killybegs Fishermen's
ORGANISATION LTD.

CFP Review Must Be Pushed

Sean O'Donoghue, CEO of the Killybegs Fishermen's Organisation says; "There can be no let-up in highlighting the importance of a review of the CFP and improving Ireland's situation. I have pointed time and again to this and the need for the Government to take a firm stand in support of the industry. It accepted the industry's Review Report, so it must follow-through.

We need absolute commitment on this so that changes can be made. Brexit fundamentally changed the CFP. The opportunity is now and, with the EU coming back to full operation again from September, this must be grasped. If Ireland doesn't, there will not be another opportunity for ten years which is not acceptable. Support must be in action, not just words. The industry needs that from the Government. The Commission is holding to its view that there is no need for a review. We fundamentally disagree with that. There must be changes and the Government must insist on them. There can be no question of a let-up on this. It is vital that changes to benefit Ireland are achieved."

We want to ensure that our position on climate change and its impact are understood and that it is clear that we in the fishing industry appreciate the issues. Our position should not be misrepresented when we say that at present how our fishermen are not seeing the effects of climate change on mackerel as such. The KFO is fully appreciative and understanding of the challenges of climate change and when we say that it should be understood that catching fish is a scientific business in which our members

are very experienced. We are not seeing the effects on our demersal stocks as of now and the ICES advice is not saying there are major moves of the demersal stocks. There is so much going on with the environment and comments now that the position can be misrepresented or misunderstood. Our carbon footprint is really good compared with other sectors.

We need to show that catching fish is a science and our fishermen know that science and apply it in catching fish and protecting stocks.

They have proven that and continue to prove it and, as I say, there must be a change in the Common Fisheries Policy so that they have the full opportunity to fish.

It is clear and must be fully understood and applied by the Commission that Brexit has fundamentally changed the CFP. We have shown the importance of all sectors of the fleet and we have challenged ICES findings and shown where errors have been made. A lot has been done to prove the importance of our sector.

The CFP must be changed and there can be no let-up on the pressure by Ireland to achieve this.

Biggest Job Losses in Fishing – No Comment from Government

Marine Times Reporter

It was quite noticeable when Government Ministers welcomed the Labour Force Survey released in August which showed, according to Employment Minister Simon Coveney "a new record for the highest number of people employed in our country than ever before, with the monthly unemployment rate standing at just 4.3 per cent in July. It is a testament to the hard work and remarkable resilience of Irish enterprise."

It was the highest rate since records were begun to be kept in 1998. The number of people in employment increased by 88,400, or 3.5 per cent, in the second quarter of this year.

There was no comment that there was a decline of over 6 per cent in employment in the fishing industry.

This reflected what the industry has been telling Government – that the failure to get a good deal for Ireland in the Brexit Agree-

ment and the Government's failure to give sufficient support to fishing, plus its decommissioning scheme taking more boats out of the fleet would cause job losses.

"And they have not yet peaked," according to fishing industry sources.

The largest decrease of employment in Ireland was in fishing, down 6.3 per cent. There were also decreases in agriculture and forestry.



IS&EFPO - Working For The Fishermen

Dunmore East Is Very Important

John Lynch, CEO of the Irish South and East Fish Producers' Organisation says; "Through the night of 18th August and into the morning of August 19th storm "Betty" raged across the South Coast of Ireland causing severe damage, both at sea and on shore as it passed. Unfortunately for James Mason and Family their vessel "Morning Lark" was one of storm Betty's casualties when it sank while rafted at the East pier in Dunmore East. It is only by chance that neither James nor any other crew were on board at the time as the "Morning Lark" sank in just over four minutes.

What may have transpired if this were the case is a frightening thought indeed and must serve as a warning signal to all that we must advance the development of a proper safe harbour in Dunmore East. In addition to the loss of the "Morning Lark" there was some costly damage to two other vessels sheltering in Dunmore East on the same night.

Bad weather and damage caused to vessels as a result are nothing new to Dunmore and it is long known and expressed by the ISEFPO and others that the prevailing weather conditions are causing vessels to surge and run along the piers. Ropes can part without warning and this exposes crews, harbour staff and the public to an unacceptable level of danger. When the weather is bad, crews must remain on board with engines running to deal with the challenges created by the motion of the water inside of the Harbour. In the past when weather conditions became very severe fishing vessels moved up the river to Cheekpoint or Waterford port. Recent works at Cheekpoint have created a situation where fishing vessels can no longer access the pier there because of the introduction of pontoons for smaller vessels. Waterford Port has become less of an option over time due to the Port being mainly for the use of commercial shipping and the port companies plans to develop the North quays. Kilmore Quay which is a local authority harbour is over capacity with larger fishing vessels and also experiences similar treacherous conditions to Dunmore East during winter storms.

As a result of Brexit Dunmore East has become more congested where the volume of fishing vessels from other member states using the harbour to land fish and take on bunkers and stores has increased substantially. The harbour is now far too small to accommodate the size and volume of fishing vessels using it. Add to this the leisure vessels and cruise ships in summer and chaos is the only way to describe the activity on the piers.

Dunmore East is the only Fishery Harbour Centre on the South Coast, where the closest Fishery Harbours are Howth on the East Coast and Castletownbere on the Southwest Coast which are 14 and 24 hours steaming time away respectively. These are both modern and safe harbours that have

undergone major development over the years as have Irelands other Fishery Harbour Centres. All of these harbours have attracted significant funding for development, Dunmore East out of all six Fishery harbours stands alone in having no major development undertaken to ensure a safe harbour for all users and visitors.

For these reasons we believe that Dunmore East should be fast tracked for a major Harbour development. The importance of such a project on the grounds of safety alone is imperative as the frequency and severity of winter storms increases so will the risk of an incident occurring in Dunmore East involving the possible loss of both vessels and lives.

These actions are what we believe should be the next steps for Dunmore East:

- 1. An engineers study and report should be undertaken similar to the Kirk, Mc Clure, Morton consulting engineers report which suggested a possible harbour extension in 2004. This plan could be re evaluated to assess its potential.**
- 2. A study to assess the possibilities of attracting new business to increase income should also be conducted.**
- 3. The possibilities should be discussed with stakeholders, harbour users and a way forward agreed.**
- 4. Government should prioritise funding and put in action the necessary process through the Department of Agriculture Food and Marine to secure the permissions and contractors required.**

Dunmore East is a very important part of the infrastructure that supports the Irish and EU fishing fleets. There have been and are ongoing improvement projects within the harbour and these have increased the operating efficiency of the harbour, but the enduring issue remains that the harbour requires a major modernisation to bring up to par with the other Fishery harbour Centres around the coast.

The development of a modern safe harbour at Dunmore East should now be a priority for Government before tragedy follows what is a disastrous situation in which the Mason family now find themselves. All in the ISEFPO pass on their best wishes for the future to James and the Mason family.



Busy Times Ahead

Aodh O'Donnell, CEO of the Irish Fish Producers Organisation says; "We are heading into a very busy time from September right through to the December Council and a lot of our focus is going to be on the coastal states process and the sharing arrangements for the key species for Ireland: mackerel, blue whiting primarily and Atlantic herring as well.

We have to be mindful of the third countries situation as well and the push probably for fishing access as well this year. We need to draw up with the European Commission and our Department the arrangements for bi-lateral and tri-lateral negotiations with the third countries.

The other issue that is important to us is that the Brexit support measures that have been indicated, it is important that those measures relating to the pelagic sector are implemented before the year ends and for us in the sector it is important to us that the adjustment reserve, the BAR funding, is fully utilised and, if necessary, that the extension on the implementation date is de-

livered so that the fund can be drawn down and applied fully as a support measure and adjustment measure for the industry which is still continuing to suffer from the Brexit impact and will into next year.

We are all unhappy with the CFP in relation to how it is impacting on Ireland. There is a push for some form of re-negotiation and review of it. We are currently of the view that the issue of relative stability was totally flouted in the Brexit transfer and that there needs to be some form of readjustment of the valuable quotas that were transferred to the UK under the Brexit arrangements. That is a key objective for us.



(Above): Dunmore East. Photo courtesy Brian Motyer.

(Below): Adrienne off Kinsale. Photo courtesy Carroll O'Donoghue (KinsaleAngling.com)





NIFA

National Inshore
Fishermen's Association

NW Herring Allocations – 'Minister Fails to Address Main Points' NIFA

While any extra fish being made available to the inshore sector is to be welcomed Minister McConalogue has failed to address the main points highlighted when the (NIFF/NRIFF) requested a policy review.

The Minister at the time stated that a policy review was needed in 2012 to help protect the stock yet in only a few short years the fishery collapsed.

The under 10-metre fleet at the time were directly discriminated by the policy as "the lynchpin of rural local communities" was allocated a mere 5% of the available quota regardless of so-called track record.

Given the fact that herring fishing by inshore vessels predates the arrival of so-called dedicated pelagic vessels by many hundreds of years this decision was nothing more than bias against the largest sector of the fleet.

While the fishery went through a recovery phase and was limited to a scientific

quota it was the inshore sector that provided the bulk of the samples that contributed to the reopening of the fishery on a commercial basis.

None of these issues have been addressed and remain outstanding.

One must ask what kind of consultation can take place when pre-determined outcomes are already in place from the start.

The 350 tons allocated may seem like a lot of fish to some, but when divided across a sector that now makes up more than 90% of the fleet it amounts to kgs per vessel and, as the quota increases, the fleet will be back to the original 5% so as the saying goes "The more things change the more they stay the same".

SFPA Publishes First Online Guidance Document on Commercial Fishing Gear Type & Technical Measures to Promote Compliance

The Sea-Fisheries Protection Authority (SFPA) has published a Guidance Document for industry, titled 'Commercial Fishing Gear Types and Technical Measures.' This guide is the first of its type and brings together all the relevant information required for commercial fishers to comply with regulations relating to the use of fishing gear.

Commenting on the publication of the guide, an SFPA Spokesperson said; "This new online guide provides a useful

reference tool for commercial fishers. The promotion of compliance with Sea-Fisheries regulations is an important part of the SFPA's mandate and guidance documents such as this provide industry with the most comprehensive and accessible information available to support compliance.

"The purpose of this guidance document is to provide information on commercial fishing gear types and the regulated technical measures governing their use. The key areas covered in the document includes de-

scriptions of the major gear types; how the gear operates; the provision of a list of legal requirements associated with the fishing



gear; defining the different sea areas around the Irish Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) as well as describing any mandatory gear requirement in place for these areas. The document focuses on enhancing understanding

and promoting responsible fishing practices within the Irish EEZ."

The guidance document can be viewed online via the SFPA website sfpa.ie

For further details on the guidance document, please contact: sfpafood&fisheries-support@sfpa.ie

Naval Service Reduces Operations to Two Ships

Report by Tom MacSweeney

Tánaiste and Minister for Defence, Micheál Martin, has admitted he is deeply concerned about the Naval Service operational decision to reduce ship patrols to two vessels until the end of this year.



The ships behind the wire at the Naval Base at Haulbowline.

So, what is going to be done by the Government to deal with what has been an evolving situation, over many years, of lack of personnel. At present it is 350 under strength?

A more "radical" approach to recruitment is needed, Minister Martin has suggested. "Direct entry without constraints" is another, he suggested, which would possibly be aimed particularly at 'specialists' of which there are serious personnel shortages aboard ships.

Thirty-seven new personnel were recruited so far this year.

"I am not happy with the situation and have spoken to officials in my Department about the issues," the Minister said when commenting on the Naval Service operational decision. "A more radical approach to recruitment will have to be taken, direct entry without constraints will have to be actively considered."

The reduction of operations is understood to have been decided upon at a meeting of senior officers and high-level Department of Defence officials at the Naval Base on Haulbowline Island.

Just two patrol vessels of the Naval Service will be available to go to sea for the rest of this year. The reduction of operations might continue into next year.

LE Samuel Beckett and LE William Butler Yeats will be the two sea-going vessels. Crews of other vessels - LE James Joyce and LE Bernard Shaw - have been told that their ships are being placed "in reserve."

This raises questions about the decision to spend €25m on two former New Zealand

inshore patrol vessels, which brought the Navy's fleet to eight ships, of which it can operate only two. In previous years it had a fleet of nine ships.

Mr. Martin spoke of the high level of employment in Ireland as a cause of insufficient interest in joining the Naval Service where, he maintained, there had been considerable improvements provided in salaries and conditions.

Maritime surveillance and fisheries patrols in Irish coastal waters and the Irish Naval Service Fisheries Monitoring Centre in Haulbowline continued to monitor vessels in the Irish Exclusive Economic Zone EEZ on a 24 hour basis, Mr. Martin said. He added that this was further augmented by Air Corps maritime patrol aircraft.

Naval Service personnel recruitment policies in years past, with 'constraints' as Mr. Martin referred to, have not helped the present situation which evolved without correction. Government neglect of the Navy is a cause. Warnings about conditions and salaries were not responded to. But there was also criticism of the Navy's own approach to recruitment and selection.

RACO, the Representative Association of Commissioned Officers, said: "This is disappointing but not surprising. It's a recognition by Naval management of the current situation and the inability to attract and retain suitably personnel.

"The reasons for this are well known; failure to implement safe and fair working conditions, failure to pay adequate allowances for hours worked, and an inability to match policy with resources."

WANTED!

News from Your Coastal Community - Readers Photos
- Letters to the Editor - Your Opinion

The Marine Times Newspaper is Your Newspaper

Dedicated to the Irish Fishing Industry and Coastal Communities

Contact us at editor@marinetimes.ie or WhatsApp on 087 7989582

Upcoming Courses 2023

NFCI Castletownbere

- GMDSS General Operators Certificate
28 August - 08 September 2023
06 November - 17 November 2023
- Commercial Scuba Diving Operations
25 September - 27 October 2023
- Three Day Basic Safety Training
12 September - 14 September 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
- Advanced Firefighting
02 October - 06 October 2023
- Navigation Control Course
09 October - 20 October 2023
- Passenger Boat Proficiency
18 September - 22 September 2023
23 October - 27 October 2023
27 November - 01 December 2023
- Surface Supplied Diving Operations
06 November - 01 December 2023
- STCW Fire Prevention and Firefighting
21 November - 23 November 2023
18 December - 20 December 2023
- STCW Medical Care Aboard Ship
27 November - 01 December 2023
- STCW Medical First Aid
05 September - 07 September 2023
13 December - 15 December 2023

NFCI Greencastle

- Fishing Vessel Engineer
16 October 2023 - 02 February 2024
- Three Day Basic Safety Training
23 October - 25 October 2023
13 November - 15 November 2023
04 December - 06 December 2023
- Enhanced Safety Training
16 November 2023
- STCW Medical Care Aboard Ship
20 November - 24 November 2023
- Advanced Firefighting
27 November - 01 December 2023
- STCW Fire Prevention and Firefighting
13 December - 15 December 2023

Coastal Training Unit 1

West Coast

- Three Day Basic Safety Training
12 September - 14 September 2023, Newport, Co. Mayo
26 September - 28 September 2023, Newport, Co. Mayo
03 October - 05 October 2023, Rossaveal, Co. Galway
10 October - 12 October 2023, Rossaveal, Co. Galway
28 November - 30 November 2023, Carrigaholt, Co. Clare
19 December - 21 December 2023, Dingle, Co. Kerry

- GMDSS Short Range Certificate
19 September - 21 September 2023, Newport, Co. Mayo
17 October - 19 October 2023, Rossaveal, Co. Galway
21 November - 23 November 2023, Carrigaholt, Co. Clare
12 December - 14 December 2023, Dingle, Co. Kerry
- Enhanced Safety Training
22 September 2023, Newport, Co. Mayo
25 October 2023, Rossaveal, Co. Galway
15 November 2023, Carrigaholt, Co. Clare
6 December 2023, Dingle, Co. Kerry

Coastal Training Unit 2

East Coast

- GMDSS Short Range Certificate
19 September - 21 September 2023, Clogherhead, Co. Louth
17 October - 19 October, Howth, Co. Dublin
- Three Day Basic Safety Training
12 September - 14 September, Clogherhead, Co. Louth
26 September - 28 September, Howth, Co. Dublin
10 October - 12 October, Howth, Co. Dublin
24 October - 26 October, Howth, Co. Dublin

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Rialtas na hÉireann
Government of Ireland





An Industry With No One At The Wheel

Reflecting on Marine Governance Cormac Burke, Chairman of the Irish Fishing & Seafood Alliance says that the direction for the industry instead of being 'Constructive' - is sadly 'Destructive'



Glancing through the latest copy of Marine Times Newspaper I noticed the recurring theme throughout - the number of industry voices complaining of a lack of 'joined up thinking' in the political and civil service management of the Irish fishing industry.

The most noticeable of the points made was Tom MacSweeney's shocking report that the biggest reform of marine governance in the history of this State does not include the Marine Department.

In Tom's own words "how is it that the Government of an island nation, dependent on the marine, gives responsibility

for maritime development to the Department with the worst reputation for failure in the effort to resolve the major national problem on land - housing?"

What does national maritime development off the Irish coast have to do with the Department for Housing?

So why is this obvious dilution of the Department of Agriculture, Food & Marine (DAFM) happening, and curiously, if not suspiciously, it appears that the answer lies in that the Department of Housing will now have full control over offshore and fore-shore licensing.

A chart of Ireland's maritime agency issued by the Maritime Area Regulatory Authority (MARA) shows that a substantial sea area will now come under full control of the Department of Housing - and, as also reported by Marine Times, the Chairman of MARA is one Mark Mellett who has previously predicted that there will be 2,500 wind turbines on the south, west and east coasts.

Worryingly for this industry, according to Marine Times, not one single TD in Dáil Éireann has thus far challenged or even questioned this move.

Sell-out

Once upon a time this nation had a Department for Fisheries - later thrown in or just tagged on as an afterthought with other Departments such as Communications (under Minister Noel Dempsey) - to where we are now under the Department of Agriculture, Food & Marine (DAFM) - - but not content with shrinking the importance of this department to the industry and the coastal communities, our Government is now quietly diluting the control of the marine and maritime sector itself by giving one of the most important parts within this realm to, unbelievably, the Department of Housing who have already proudly issued a statement to say that they "would have a key role to play in the streamlined consenting system for the maritime area".

"Streamlined consenting".... - - let's call



a spade a spade here - this is clearly all about licensing offshore wind farms and there has been and continues to be obvious and justified resistance within the fishing industry nationwide, so political thought is let's

just move the wind farm licensing issue completely out of the marine department - out of their hands, out of their power, and out of the line of debate from the fishing industry.

This stunt and other recent ones such as the Heritage Department setting forward proposals for a special protection area (SPA) in the Irish Sea without Government even having the manners to inform, never mind discuss, the plans with the industry producer organisations first, is what makes a complete farce of these politicians' press statements where they always claim to have had "constructive talks" with the industry.

It's clear that no sooner are they finished a meeting with the industry, they're getting ready to stab them in the back once again.

Ask any fisherman in any part of Ireland and they'll tell you that there is NOTHING genuinely constructive happening in the fishing industry and it is clear to see that

the word 'destructive' would be a far more suitable term to use when talking about the progress, or lack thereof, that is being made in this sector.

Leo Varadkar, and to some extent Charlie McConalogue, must learn that leadership is not about ability - it is about responsibility....

.... the responsibility to support and defend Irish people in the Irish marine sector, the responsibility to stand by your promises made during election time and, as Irish citizens themselves, the responsibility not to sell out Irish marine resources to get the benefit of a quick buck or political kudos

but in doing so sacrifice generations of fishermen, their families and entire coastal communities.

Never mind the political chess games in moving things around and manoeuvring situations to make political gains - - shouldn't these people be more concerned that they are flushing Ireland's fishing industry down the pan while the rest of Europe is developing and strengthening theirs?

Additional thoughts: So from now on if the Irish fishing industry wants to challenge a decision on the licensing of an offshore wind farm then the Minister for the Department of Agriculture, Food and THE MARINE Charlie McConalogue will shrug his shoulders and say "nothing to do with me, you'll need to speak to the Department for Housing Minister Daragh O'Brien ..."

And if the fishing industry wants to challenge the operations of Inland Fisheries Ireland (IFI) then the DAFM MARINE Minister can shrug his shoulders and say "nothing to do with me, you'll need to speak to the person in charge of Inland Fisheries in Ireland - - Environment, Climate and Communications Minister Eamon Ryan" - by the way who is also Minister for Transport.....

YOUR INDUSTRY NEEDS YOU!

The Irish Fishing & Seafood Alliance (IFSA) continues to lead the fight for justice for Ireland's fishing industry and the coastal communities who rely on it.

The IFSA is a non-profit organisation that receives no funding from any source other than the generous support from fishing vessels, processors, ancillary service companies and individuals.

YOUR support would be greatly appreciated and annual subscription rates are only €20 for an individual, €100 for an inshore vessel or sole trader and a modest rising scale for larger vessels and companies (email ifsacormac@gmail.com for further details on this).

If you want the IFSA motto of 'Your Voice in Our Industry' to continue to put pressure on this Government and the marine minister to stop neglecting our marine resources then please play your part by making your subscription.

Bank details below and when you make a payment, please email IFSA ifsacormac@gmail.com and a formal receipt will be issued for your files.

Account name: Irish Fishing and Seafood Alliance
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 Sort Code (NSC): 904907 IBAN: IE29 BOFI 9049 0765 6037 42 BIC: BOFIE2D

Thank you for your support and for becoming a part in this industry's rapidly growing fight for justice.



Cormac Burke,
Chairman,
Irish Fishing & Seafood Alliance (IFSA)
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Email: ifsacormac@gmail.com
www.irishfishingseafoodalliance.org

Marine Casualty Investigation Board Highlights the Essential Importance of Contact Ashore

Report into An Portán Oir accident involving Skipper fishing lobster pots alone

The Marine Casualty Investigation Board has stressed the “essential importance” of having a designated person ashore when operating a boat alone in its report on the fishing vessel, An Portán Óir, accident in Dingle Bay on Friday, October 14, last year. It also highlighted the lack of a Personal Locator Beacon (PLB) as a contributory factor when the Skipper spent four hours with his leg trapped during a fishing voyage to lift, bait and shoot lobster pots in Dingle Bay.

“The skipper was shooting the final string of 30 lobster pots, with ten pots in the water, when his leg became entangled in the pot ropes. The boat was in gear to stretch the string, and the rope tightened around the skipper’s leg, and he was pulled aft. He grabbed the rope between the pots and tied it to the handrail to avoid being pulled overboard. He was unable to free himself as the rope around his leg was under tension, and remained stuck in this position until he was rescued around four hours later,” the MCIB report says, noting that “the Skipper normally had a knife tied to the rails aft, but this had been removed during painting and had not been replaced. This was a major factor



in the skipper in being unable to free himself”, It also noted that he was not wearing an approved personal flotation device/lifejacket. “If he had he would have been able to activate the PLB and get assistance as soon as the incident occurred. He sustained a serious leg injury and survived severe pain.

“Having a designated person ashore to raise the alarm if the vessel was overdue proved “invaluable”, the MCIB says.

The alarm was raised when the boat failed to return, and a search was initiated with the Dingle lifeboat, local vessels and Coast Guard rescue helicopters. The Skipper was treated in hospital for “severe” muscle and nerve injuries which prevented him from returning to work for some time.

“The Skipper always had a designated person ashore who was aware of his voyage and his expected return time. This proved to be invaluable. When the alarm was raised, and the rescue services were tasked, there was also an excellent response from the local community, and even though the skipper suffered serious injuries, without the rapid response, the outcome may have been far more serious,” it says.

French Should Test and Verify Automatic Emergency Electrical Systems

Report into the ‘Bikain’ incident damage to Dingle Fishery Harbour

An incorrectly designed electrical system on a French-registered fishing vessel was identified by the Marine Casualty Investigation Board as the main cause of a collision with a pontoon in Dingle Harbour which caused extensive damage last November.

The MCIB has recommended that the French authorities should test and verify the automatic operation of emergency electrical systems during surveys of fishing vessels following its inquiry into the incident on November 25 last when the French-vessel, Bikain, was preparing to go to sea to resume fishing.

The MCIB report says that the collision caused serious damage to the pontoons and the support piles and serious damage to boats moored on the pontoons at the time. No injuries were reported.

The vessel was crewed by a Spanish skipper and Spanish crew. The Skipper had extensive experience and had been sailing on fishing vessels since he went to sea around 41 years ago, according to the MCIB. Senior crew also had Spanish certificates endorsed for sailing on French-flagged vessels and were all suitably experienced for this type of vessel which had been fishing off the West Coast and took shelter in Dingle Fishery Harbour Centre from forecast bad weather, two days before the collision. As it prepared to leave, the main engine was started, and checks for sailing were carried out when the controllable pitch propellers (CPP) went to the full astern position.

“The Skipper tried to stop the main engine with the emergency stop button on the wheelhouse console, but this failed. The mooring ropes holding the vessel parted, and it went quickly astern and made heavy contact with the southern boat marina pontoon causing extensive damage to the pontoon and to several boats that were secured there at the time. The main engine was eventually stopped by shutting off the fuel, and the vessel drifted across the harbour basin.



“The FV Danny Finn cast off from the western side of the pier and rushed to assist by going alongside the FV Bikain and connecting ropes to assist the vessel and tow her back to the main quay wall where she was then tied up safely,” the MCIB report says.

Dingle Harbour Master activated the port emergency response plan to secure the drifting and damaged boats and pontoon sections. Divers were mobilised, as well as boats, to tow the damaged boats and secure them to safer moorings. A clean-up operation was also carried out to collect debris from damaged boats, and some were lifted out to the slipway.

“There were no injuries and no pollution, but extensive damage was caused to the southern pontoon and moored boats. As this was a French-flagged vessel, the Director of the Bureau d’enquêtes sur les événements de mer (BEAmer) (French Marine Casualties Investigation Office of the Ministry of the Sea) also decided to investigate jointly,” MCIB reported.

MCIB has made a number of recommendations, after concluding that the electrical system was incorrectly designed on the vessel and this was the cause of the casualty.

“The design of this system necessitated that the emergency batteries were required to be in use at all times for the operation of the vessel, but the emergency batteries should only be used for emergency situations when the main power supply fails. Previous failure of the charging system was not identified as a critical failure and should have instigated a full investigation to identify why these failures were occurring. This investigation should have identified the design faults and prevented this casualty event.

The MCIB also reported that there were “no written procedures for the test and maintenance of “this critical system onboard the vessel.”

• The full reports can be read and downloaded from the MCIB website: <https://mcib.ie>

MCIB Annual Report Highlights Safety Concerns About the Fishing Industry

Tom MacSweeney Reports

The Marine Casualty Investigation Board says it is not being told about many incidents happening aboard fishing vessels, even though this is required under maritime legislation.

The Chairperson of the Board, Claire Callanan, says the fishing vessel sector accounts for a significant proportion of all maritime fatalities and that working alone and fatigue are major contributing factors.



In the Board’s annual report for last year she puts the issues that are concerning the Board quite bluntly: “It is clear that many incidents on fishing vessels are not reported to the MCIB as required by legislation.

“Even from the limited information available to the MCIB from Coast Guard situation reports it appears that many incidents could have been avoided by safety assessment and planning and by proper training of crew.

“In 2022, the MCIB continued to see incidents involving fatalities and injuries to crew members on fishing vessels where there are common themes of the lack of safety planning and regimes, lack of training and contributory factors due to language barriers and poor communications, and fatigue.

“As noted in MCIB Report No. 302/2022, the Maritime Safety Strategy identified that the fishing vessel sector accounts for a significant proportion of all maritime fatalities, and that fishing vessels less than 15 metres in length make up 90% of the Irish fishing fleet in numbers.

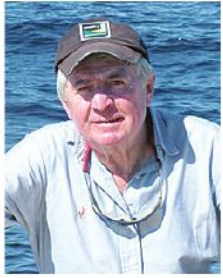
“Fishing vessel safety, particularly in relation to the small and medium fishing vessels is a particular concern. Among the key factors contributing to loss of life in the fishing sector is working alone and fatigue.”

This is one of are two very specific sectors highlighted in the annual report of the MCIB. The other sector is watersports and recreational activities.

The Board Chairperson recalls the recommendations made in their 2021 report about incidents associated with watersports and recreational activities and says: “The MCIB urges those bodies to whom recommendations have been addressed in these recent reports to take steps to improve much needed safety regimes.”

The MCIB has made extensive recommendations to the Minister, to Water Safety Ireland and to Canoeing Ireland and Sport Ireland.

The full MCIB report for 2022 is available on the MCIB website: www.mcib.ie



Tom MacSweeney's Maritime Diary

“The sea floor is a unique habitat and we’re only just starting to learn about it”

I was impressed by those words written by Michael O’Neill in an opinion article from West Cork on the internationally-respected, online platform for the aquaculture industry, *The Fish Site*.



Michael O’Neill (wearing glasses) and staff member at Pure Ocean Algae

He started commercial fishing in 1990 and bought his first fishing vessel in 1992. Twelve years later, in 2004, he left the fishing industry to become an Enterprise Development Officer, but returned to the seafood sector in 2007. He is Chief Executive of Pure Ocean Algae at Cahermore, near Allihies, on the Beara Peninsula. It produces seaweed and algae products from 40 hectares of licensed, multi-species seaweed growing sites and 20,000 sq.ft hatchery and processing facility.

Michael O’Neill expressed strong views on the importance of conservation of the seabed in his article which was responding to suggestions made internationally by scientists and environmentalists that seaweed could be grown primarily to be sunk in deep water as a carbon removal strategy.

“I can understand the reasoning - seaweed stores carbon in its blades instead of exporting it to the seabed,” he wrote, “but dumping anything in the deep ocean cannot be construed as being environmentally friendly or ethically conscionable when we have little or no understanding of the long-term effects of these actions. At the moment, I don’t think we understand what the seaweed would be dumped onto. The sea floor is a unique habitat and we’re only just starting to learn about it.”

That is an important contribution to discussions about the future of seaweed which is increasingly being viewed as an important sustainable raw material, with substances of considerable human benefit. Bord Iascaigh Mhara’s

‘*Macro-Algal Cultivation Strategy to 2030*’ is a plan for the development of a sustainable and profitable Irish seaweed aquaculture sector, which Pure Ocean Algae has welcomed.

“The seaweed industry has the highest potential for growth in the Irish aquaculture sector,” according to Michael O’Neill. “Ireland has always been a supplier of high-quality seaweeds for various uses, but there have been limitations to date on the scalability of the industry. Advances in cultivation technology and processing, leaves Ireland extremely well-positioned to become a major player in the international seaweed industry, with the demand for seaweed biomass and seaweed-based products outstripping supply for the foreseeable future.”

There are 25 licenced seaweed farms in Ireland, located along the North/West, West and South/West coastlines. Seaweeds are grown on ropes and nets. Farming it is in its infancy in Ireland.

O’Neill had already created Abalone Ireland and Irish Atlantic Salt Ltd. when he started Pure Ocean Algae, focused on becoming a vertically-integrated algae-based, biotechnology company.

“The ultimate Green credentials, based on raw material that is 100% environmentally sustainable and ultimately carbon-negative, producing products that are at a premium in the pharmaceutical and food/vegetable protein sectors,” the company says.

BIM and Marine Institute Collaborate with Pelagic Sector to Capture Northeast Atlantic Mackerel Data

Irish pelagic fishers and processors are joining an international scientific initiative to provide vital information which helps inform the management of Northeast Atlantic mackerel, one of Ireland’s most valuable species.

BIM is working in collaboration with the Marine Institute and pelagic fishers and processors to install mackerel scanners in processing plants in Killybegs, Co Donegal. Two units have been installed with further units to be fitted in factories over the next two years, with grant aid from the European Maritime, Fisheries and Aquaculture Fund (EMFAF).

“Mackerel remains Ireland’s most valuable wild caught export, valued at €95m in 2022 said Dr Michael Gallagher, Pelagic Sector Manager, BIM; “Given the importance of mackerel to the Irish seafood industry, it is critical that we collaborate to collect the best quality data for this valuable resource.

“BIM and the Marine Institute work closely together and we saw a real opportunity to reach out to fishers and processors to progress this initiative. Dr Edward Farrell of Killybegs Fishermen’s Organisation has also played a central role in coordinating the installation and set-up of the scanners.”

Dr Andrew Campbell, Pelagic Fisheries team lead, Marine Institute, highlighted the importance of robust scientific data; “In addition to annual scientific surveys and the triennial mackerel egg survey, tag-return data from this type of study also yields invaluable stock structure and age composition insights,” said Dr Campbell. “This data feeds into assessments to allow meaningful catch limits to be set for sustainable management.”

Two tagging units installed in Killybegs at the end of last year are already capturing important data. “In total, 66 tagged fish have been detected to date and we are hopeful that more valuable tag return data will be generated from the Irish mackerel fishery as more scanning units are installed in cooperation with the pelagic industry,” said Dr Campbell.

Up to 2011, mackerel were tagged by inserting small metal tags into the abdomen of the fish before release, which were then picked up by metal detectors at processing plants when the tagged fish were caught. This labor intensive, manual process meant workers had to sift through the mackerel to pick out the tagged fish each time they heard the metal detector ping on processing lines.

“The international tagging programme has actually been in operation for over 55 years,” said Dr Edward Farrell, Chief Scientific and Sustainability Officer, KFO.

“Over 40,000 fish have been tagged annually, which is done simply by jigging for mackerel on surveys in the North Sea and off the west coast of Ireland and west of Scotland. In 2011, Radio Frequency Identification (RFID) replaced these metal tags and now when the tagged fish pass through the scanners in processing plants, valuable data is automatically collected without any need to touch the fish.”

BIM is hosting a pelagic information session on 29 September at KFO offices in Killybegs where this project and other topics will be shared. To register for this in person and online event, please visit: www.eventbrite.ie

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Update 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 either a Second Hand Limited (SHL) or Second Hand Full (SHF) certificate to ensure their Certificate of Competency is upgraded for service as Skipper on a fishing vessel.

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

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Time For the Government to Stand Up to the EU and Demand Common Fisheries Policy Changes

Brexit has fundamentally changed CFP impact on Ireland so CFP changes must be made

Special report by Tom MacSweeney, Deputy Editor

September is the month when the EU resumes work after the summer holidays and it is a time when the Common Fisheries Policy must be made a major issue by the Government to achieve changes which will benefit the Irish fishing industry.



Fleet protest in Dublin in 2021 - banner on the 'Kennedy' says "The Government want to scrap 25% of this fleet to pay for Brexit"

That is the clear view of industry leaders and Irish fishermen who believe they have been sacrificed in the post-Brexit trade deal between the United Kingdom and the European Union, which hit Ireland hardest. Promises that there would be equal burden sharing have never materialised, calling into question the relative stability basis of the CFP and the Commission's responsibility to treat all Member States equally.

Minister says there must be "Comprehensive Review" of CFP

A comprehensive review of the CFP must be carried out that would support changes to deliver "a fair and equitable policy."

That was what the Minister for the Marine said about the current Common Fisheries Policy when he presented the Final Report of the CFP Review Group to the Government at its Cabinet meeting on October 4 last year.

"The seafood sector has faced unprecedented challenges over the last number of years. I have consistently made clear that the substantial changes in fisheries policy resulting from the adoption of the EU-UK Trade and Co-operation Agreement require that, internally within the EU, a comprehensive review of the CFP be carried out that would support changes to deliver a fair and equitable policy. The report of the Review Group demonstrates clearly that there is a need for

legislative changes in the current policy to address the disproportionate impacts of the TCA and in the context of the new environmental challenges we are all facing," his own Department reported Minister Charlie McConalogue, in an official media release, as telling his Ministerial colleagues.

He established the Review Group of industry stakeholders to advise him on strategies most likely to influence the European Commission's review of the CFP which is, without doubt, the over-arching, negative, restrictive and most preventative policy which disadvantages and is basically unfair to the Irish fishing industry.

The Cabinet accepted the Review Group's conclusions that there is a need for legislative change in the CFP to address the impacts of Brexit and the EU-UK Trade and Co-operation Agreement and that there

are socio-economic imbalances within EU fisheries, which are directly attributable to the current CFP. The Review Group Report also highlighted the need to support environmental sustainability and develop the Aquaculture sector.

Very quickly after the Cabinet meeting adopted it, Minister McConalogue forwarded a copy of the Final Report of the CFP Review Group to the EU Fisheries

Commissioner, Virginijus Sinkevičius, for consideration of how the report's findings and recommendations could support what the Minister described as "a fair and balanced Common Fisheries Policy for Irish

fishers for the next decade."

That clearly meant that the current CFP fails in that regard.

Commissioner Sinkevičius had been to visit Irish fishing ports and meet industry representatives in his role of responsibility for the CFP Review.

Commission claims CFP 'Fit for Purpose'

The Commission produced its report on the CFP in February this year.

The Commission's 'CFP Communication' declared that the current CFP legal framework was "fit for purpose" and that no reform was required, but rather "further implementation" was needed.

This was a 'cop out' by the Commission, refusing concessions to Ireland, probably because reaction from stronger EU fisheries-country members would be negative if it did offer changes to Ireland. These might affect the huge benefits those nations gain from their larger held quotas in Irish waters by the Commission's allocations, than the Irish fleet has.

"We totally disagree with this," says Sean O'Donoghue, Chief Executive of the

Killybegs Fishermen's Organisation, who says there must be "no let-up" on pressure exerted by the Government on the Commission for changes in the CFP.

"There is an urgent need for a full review of the CFP. The KFO was very much party to the CFP Review Group recommendations and we are demanding that the Minister and the Government follow through on their endorsement of the CFP Review Group recommendations.

Changes Needed Now

"There must be changes obtained now, otherwise it will be 2033, ten years before there can be any attempt to change the situation again."

Sean O'Donoghue argues that the impact of Brexit on the Irish fishing industry fundamentally changed the CFP and, therefore, it is logical to expect changes to be made in it to be fair to Ireland.

"It is all very well to have lots of talk and expressions of commitment, but the industry has been clear in its Review Report which was accepted by the Government so it must follow-through on that. The Commission is holding to its view that there is no need for a review. We fundamentally

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disagree with that. There must be changes and the Government must insist on them. There can be no question of a let-up on this. It is vital that changes to benefit Ireland are achieved.”

The Commission’s prevarications about fairness and equality towards all regions of the EU were cast away in a cavalier disregard of Ireland and the extremely severe effects of the Brexit Agreement on the Irish industry.

EU must give hope to Irish fishing industry

John Nolan, Managing Director of Castletownbere Fishermen’s Co-op has repeatedly made clear his view that the Irish industry “has to be given some hope by the European Union. I implore our leaders, our politicians in Ireland and in Europe to treat Ireland more fairly.”

Insiders at the EU Commission, who will not comment publicly because of their position, do acknowledge privately that Ireland has a strong case for concessions to be made to it because of the impacts of the Brexit trade deal. However, they indicated that, at the higher levels of the Commission it is regarded that arrangements such as the BAR adjustments have given enough help to Ireland. “Quotas and other concessions will be resisted because the more powerful nations won’t concede anything in Irish waters. Look at what was said officially in February in the ‘Communication on the functioning of the CFP.’”

I check that statement. It said: “Fishers, civil society, Member States and the scientific community have contributed to the recovery of many fish stocks in the EU sea basins in recent years. However, more effort is needed to fully implement the CFP. This will contribute to a healthier marine environment and will maintain the profitability of the sector in the coming decades. Along with other priorities, it is crucial to support the revitalisation of coastal communities and improve their economic prospects with more innovation and technology.”

EU Commission is endangering the future of coastal communities

The final sentence of that statement is highlighted by Patrick Murphy, Chief Executive of the Irish South and West Fish Producers’ Organisation. He believes that the Commission is endangering the future of Irish coastal communities, not helping them. Talking to him after two Castletownbere boats had landed marlin, swordfish, Bluefin and albacore tuna, from a two-month trip to the Bay of Biscay, he made the point that additional economic value could be achieved if there was a canning plant to handle that fish.

This was the first time marlin had been landed in Castletownbere for many years, but it was the last landing of the season, in late August.

The CFP has failed, according to Patrick Murphy, who says that if an industry with the resources of the richest waters in Europe on its doorstep is declining, then there is something wrong with a policy which supports that. The CFP, he says, does that by giving bigger rights to other nations in Irish waters while the coastal communities dependent on the Irish industry are suffer-

ing, with the fleet being reduced by Government policy because it has not enough quota under the quota allocations made by the EU.

“Clearly that is wrong, there has to be something wrong with that policy which has been applied for fifty years. It is wrong and it should be changed.”

But the reality is that the Minister for the Marine will find it very hard to change that with a single vote at the European Fisheries Council.

So, what can be done?

Taoiseach could use Veto to force CFP changes

Patrick Murphy has a suggestion: “The Taoiseach must act. He can veto EU proposals and should do that and make it clear that, because we haven’t a fair deal under the CFP, then Ireland won’t agree other policies, just block them until the Commission sees that we have had enough of being pushed around. The Taoiseach can do that. Ireland can do it, so why doesn’t the Government stand squarely, clearly and in support of the fishing industry?”

“It is crazy that as a nation we are still allowing the Commission to treat Ireland in this way. We have been wronged. It is time to correct that. It can be done. The Commission could allocate to Ireland the percentage of quota catches which other nations don’t catch for the quotas they have. That can be done without any effects on other nations, but would benefit Ireland. Boats are being driven out of the Irish fleet while other nations are building new boats to come and fish in Irish waters where we don’t have enough quotas. That is ridiculous. Coastal communities are being wiped out and there is no future being left in fishing for the next generation. The Government cannot continue to accept a policy which does that, which is what the CFP is doing.”

There has to be readjustment in Ireland’s favour

“All of us are unhappy with the CFP,” says the CEO of the IFPO, Aodh O’Donnell.

He also points to the changes in Ireland’s situation caused by Brexit and that there has to be a re-negotiation, a readjustment to take account of the effects on Ireland.

“There is a push for change to benefit Ireland and that is important. The Review Report made the situation very clear and that was accepted by Government, so there has to be some readjustment in Ireland’s favour. There has to be some form of readjustment for the valuable quotas that were transferred to the UK in the Brexit adjustment That is a clear objective priority for us,” he said.

CONCLUSION: CFP Has Been Bad for Ireland

There can be little disagreement with the general view in the industry that Ireland has been unfairly treated and, as a result, badly disadvantaged, by the Common Fisheries Policy and it is time this was changed and the CFP reviewed to correct its discrimination against the Irish fishing industry.



The importance of fishing, seafood and the marine to the fabric of island communities cannot be overstated says Seamus Bonner, but the national policy for the offshore islands was disappointing for island fisheries.

Herring Changes Fall Short of What Is Required

Report by Seamus Bonner, Secretary IIMRO

Recent changes announced by Minister McConalogue to Northwest herring allocations following a “limited review” fall far short of what is required for the long-term sustainability of both herring stocks and island and coastal community fisheries.

IIMRO has consistently made the case for a more equitable allocation of fishing opportunities and has proposed a number of measures in the Minister’s public consultation:

IIMRO’s Stand: Proposing a Sea Change

Redefining Quota Policy: IIMRO calls for an overhaul of the current herring quota policy, especially for ICES Area 6a South, urging alignment with Article 17 of the Common Fisheries Policy.

Prioritising Small-Scale Vessels: IIMRO requests that at least 50% of the overall herring Total Allowable Catch (TAC) be reserved for small-scale low-impact vessels in ICES Area 6a South.

Addressing Systemic Issues: The on-going issues with the Sea Fisheries Protection Authority (SFPA) sales notes system are highlighted, with an urgent call for resolution to ensure effective management measures.

Reframing Management Protocols: IIMRO is firm on ‘no-management by track record,’ emphasising that public fishery resources should not be cornered by just a handful of larger vessels. Furthermore, access to the herring fishery must be retained for vessels on the polyvalent general vessel register.

Prioritising the Small-Scale Fleet:

There’s a renewed call for policy preference for under 12 metre vessels using non-towed gear.

Migratory Considerations: IIMRO points out that any management system should account for the migratory nature of herring, considering their seasonal presence across different areas.

History of Compliance: An emphasis is placed on adhering to CFP Article 17, Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated (IUU) fishing, and control and enforcement regulations when determining quotas and opportunities.

Encouraging New Blood: To ensure the future of the low-impact herring fishery, IIMRO proposes a system that welcomes and encourages new entrants, fostering generational renewal.

These proposals would allow the traditional seasonal herring fishery to be carried out with a move away from commodity pricing and the redevelopment of high-value, short supply chain markets. This is entirely within the power of the Minister to adopt and will have significant positive impacts in the 6a herring fishery.

A change in fishing opportunity allocation is more than a number; it represents tradition, economy, and identity and will enable the age-old seasonal herring fishery tradition to thrive.

IIMRO will continue to advocate for these changes with the Minister, at various national fora and at EU level with our European partners.

• **IIMRO’s full submission can be found at: <https://bit.ly/iimronwherringdfrm>**



Inis Oirr fleet - Photo © IIMRO

Times are Changing – Focus Must Be on Resources to Support the Irish Aquaculture Industry



In her monthly column IFA Aquaculture Executive Teresa Morrissey says that if those with responsibility, on behalf of the State, for the future development of the Irish Aquaculture industry wish to effect change, they must seek adequate funding and appropriate resources from their Minister in order to do so.

IFA Aquaculture

As we close in on Budget 2024, which will be unveiled in October, numerous organisations, interest groups and Government Departments have been making submissions and proposals for funding priorities in the past few weeks and months.

These next few weeks will be where final decisions will be made regarding Government priorities and 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.

Appropriate funding and resources must

also be made available to implement objectives and specific actions outlined in the draft National Strategic Plan for Sustainable Aquaculture Development 2030 and the EMFAF Operational Programme.

One such initiative in relation to training and skills, must be the provision of an incentive for succession/new entrants into the Irish aquaculture industry – initiation of a Blue Cert' incentive similar to the 'Green Cert' available in the agriculture sector.

Times Are Changing

Times are changing across the Government Departments and State agencies responsible for sustainable aquaculture development and regulation. In recent months, there have been new appointments in DAFM Seafood administration in Clonakilty, a new BIM CEO appointed and a soon-to-be appointed new CEO of the Marine Institute.

These personnel changes across a range of significant services and decision makers with high level responsibility for implementation of Irish Aquaculture government policy have the potential to kick-start a new era for the sustainable development of Irish Aquaculture over the next few months and years.

If those with responsibility, on behalf of the State, for the future development of the Irish Aquaculture industry wish to effect change they must seek the adequate funding and appropriate resources from their Minister in order to do so – sufficient resources must be top of their list of funding priorities for Budget 2024.

Five Upgrades and Fifteen Downgrades as the SFPA Publishes Its Annual Classification List of Ireland's Shellfish Production Areas

The Sea-Fisheries Protection Authority (SFPA) has published the annual classification list for commercial shellfish (bivalve mollusc) production areas across Ireland, assessing 134 classifications in 60 production areas against strict safety requirements for human consumption.

During this year's 2023 annual review of classifications, five production areas received 'upgrades' to their classifications, and fifteen production areas received 'downgrades'. The breakdown of these downgraded areas was as follows: six production areas changed from an A classification to Seasonal A classification; one production area moved from a Seasonal A to a B classification and eight production areas decreased in seasonality (i.e., shortening in seasonal length). One production area was declared as dormant due to inactivity over the last twelve months and limited monitoring data is available.

Live shellfish can only be harvested from production areas which meet strict classification requirements for human consumption, as set out under European and Irish Food laws. The SFPA, in collaboration with the shellfish industry, conducts regular shellfish sampling in all production areas, monitoring the levels of bacterial contamination of shellfish to determine the risk and classification status. Each production area is designated a rating that determines the conditions, if any, which need to be observed before shellfish can be sold for human consumption.

Ireland produced an estimated 29,000 tonnes of shellfish in 2022 - including mussels (both rope and bottom culture), oysters, clams, cockles, and scallops - from classified production areas annually, and an additional 2,200 tonnes of scallops are landed from offshore sites. The Irish aquaculture farmed shellfish sector is worth an estimated €71 million annually (up 10% on last year's figures) which was reported in the BIM report on The Business of Seafood 2022. Around 90% of shellfish produced in Ireland is exported, principally to European and Asian markets, and Ireland is the second largest producer of oysters in Europe after France.

Paschal Hayes, Executive Chairperson of the SFPA said that Ireland's shellfish monitoring programme was important for both

consumers and commercial producers.

"One of the principal remits of the SFPA is to ensure that Irish and international consumers can be assured of the quality and safety of fish and seafood harvested here.

"Shellfish production is an important industry in many coastal communities around Ireland and it is essential that the highest standards of food safety are maintained at all times. The SFPA works in collaboration with industry and other state agencies to ensure that production areas are of the highest possible standard and meet rigorous assessment criteria to ensure that the safety and quality of the shellfish placed on the market is not compromised in any manner.

"This work is an important pillar in both preserving and further enhancing Ireland's global reputation for quality, safe and delicious seafood. It is incumbent upon all working in the industry to remain vigilant to any risks which have the potential to impact our seafood production areas and that we adopt a collective approach throughout with a focus on quality and sustainable seafood."

Sinéad Keaveney, Team Leader, Shellfish Microbiology, Marine Institute said: "The publication of the classification list is the annual culmination of the ongoing partnership between the Marine Institute and the SFPA in the microbiological monitoring of shellfish production areas in Ireland. As the National Reference Laboratory for monitoring *E. coli* contamination in bivalve shellfish, the Marine Institute oversees the national *E. coli* testing programme ensuring high quality test results produced by the laboratories. This contributes significantly to the assessment of the risk of microbiological contamination in shellfish production areas and the overall classification status of individual production areas."

The 2023/24 List of Classified live Bivalve Mollusc Production areas in Ireland can be viewed at www.sfpa.ie



This supplement highlights Ireland's diverse, wide-ranging marine sector, its culture, history, tradition and development.

In this, the second edition, we highlight an issue which deserves more attention and discussion – the impact of climate change on cultural heritage, particularly in the marine sphere.

We have a focus on shipping in two features, on Pages 2 and 3.

On Page 2 there is the story of the return of the ship's bell from the S.S. Dundalk to the capital of County Louth on the Castletown River which flows into Dundalk Bay on the East Coast and how that means so much to the people of the town.

It is one of the examples of the brutality of war.

Another is told on Page 3, from the headstones in the Old Church Cemetery, high above Cork Harbour, close to the town of Cobh, recalling how the Second Officer of a ship under submarine attack in the waters off the harbour took over from the Captain who had just been killed, in order to get it to safety. It was a son who crawled over the dead body of his father to save the ship. The story of the Anglo-Californian which is not often heard about.

As the war in Ukraine continues, on Page 4 is the story of Irish soldiers leaving the Port of Cork to fight in Crimea, under the supposed protection of a saint and a dragon and we recall the centenary commemoration of Conor O'Brien in Madeira, Portugal.



Irish maritime history and tradition has unusual and unexpected turns.

Tom MacSweeney



Scattery Island in the Shannon Estuary

CULTURAL HERITAGE AND CLIMATE CHANGE

The State has offered €500,000 for international research – why not more money devoted specifically to Ireland?

Should the Government establish a fund of sufficient resource to fully assess the impact of climate change on coastal and river sites of cultural and historical importance, to recognise and, where necessary, develop maintenance and protection systems for maritime areas of the country which have special importance to national heritage?

How to protect our cultural heritage from the impacts of climate change is an emerging issue which is wider than just the maritime sector, but particularly relevant in the marine sphere, with the predicted impact of rising sea levels, coastal erosion and flooding.

In July the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage and the Environmental Protection Agency announced they were partnering to co-fund a €500,000 research fund “to mobilise researchers across Europe and more widely to engage in collaborative research projects that would address three complementary themes of which the impact of climate change on cultural heritage is one. The others are ‘Cultural Heritage as a Resource for Climate Mitigation and Adaptation’ and ‘Sustainable Solutions for Cultural Heritage.’

The fund is not specific to or limited to Ireland and was described by the Department and the EPA as “...a sign of our commitment... Cultural heritage is vulnerable to climate change but also can play an active role in the transition towards a more sustainable and resilient future.”

It is a start, but should there not be more specific concentration on Ireland?

The Office of Public Works (OPW), once called the “Board of Works,” was established by an Act of Parliament in 1831. It has 780 heritage sites and 1,000 national monuments in its care, as well as quite a large inventory of historic parks, gardens and buildings. There is the inevita-

bility of necessary decision-making about them because, in reality, not everything can be saved.

The Royal Irish Academy held a conference “Exploring climate change and culture and heritage” where the impact of climate change on culture and heritage was discussed. The point was made that cultural heritage had not been sufficiently included in climate change discussions and debates.

The OPW describes its “core focus” as to manage, maintain and preserve Ireland’s historic buildings and Heritage.

Scattery Island in the Shannon Estuary is one of its featured sites.



On-going conservation works on the island, which is State-owned, are relevant. It has a round tower, six church ruins, a lighthouse and cottages. An early Christian settlement, once the target of Viking attacks, the 19th century pier which provides access has been identified as one vulnerable point of importance, like many piers on islands around the nation.

Scattery Island, finally vacated by residents in the 70s, ancient name Inis Cathaigh, has been documented by the Scattery Heritage Group, founded in 2012.



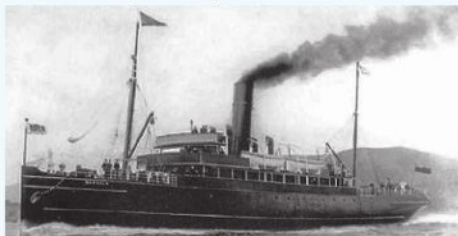
A SHIP'S BELL IS A SPECIAL PART OF A SHIP

After a century the SS Dundalk's Bell is returned to the County Louth maritime town

"A ship's bell is a special part of any ship, and when a vessel is tragically lost returning the bell to home is a poignant moment."

So it was in the Louth County Museum on Jocelyn Street in Dundalk when the bell of the S.S. Dundalk, which had lain on the seabed off the Isle of Man for over a hundred years, was returned to the people of the town.

The SS Dundalk was built in Glasgow in 1899 at a cost of £40,000 as a flagship for the Dundalk and Newry Steam Packet Company. Her main trade was carrying cattle and produce from Dundalk to Liverpool and passengers, with other goods on the return journey.



Her Captain was Hugh O'Neill from Killowen in County Down, a very experienced mariner. Despite considerable loss of shipping from attacks by German submarines in the Irish Sea during World War One, the SS Dundalk made the journey weekly.

She had survived a submarine attack in December of 1917 when Captain O'Neill outwitted the German attacker by zig-zag manoeuvres, avoiding all but one of 52 shells which were reported to have been fired at it. One hit the ship and destroyed a lifeboat. Captain O'Neill and his crew were commended for their bravery.

But nearly a year later the same U-boat tracked and attacked the SS Dundalk again. It was equipped with one defensive gun, which was not effective against the submarine which attacked without warning at 11 p.m. on October 14, 1918.

Captain O'Neill was on the bridge when a torpedo struck amidships. A number of the crew below deck were killed in the explosion and the ship began to sink almost immediately. Captain O'Neill went down with it. Twenty lives were lost - nineteen men

and one woman - only twelve aboard survived.

"The submarine came to the surface, stayed for about five minutes but made no attempt to rescue anyone," the survivors reported.

The shipwreck lies 25 miles south of the Isle of Man, 62 metres down in the Irish Sea. The ship's bell was found by technical diver Rik Waring on July 7, 2019 on a dive organised by Discover Diving based in Port St Mary, Isle of Man. But a lift bag taking it to the surface failed and it fell back to the seabed. It was later recovered by a dive team of Steve Cowley, Michelle Haywood and Kathryn Fowler and it has been returned to Dundalk.

Marking the centenary in 2018 the SS Dundalk Centenary Committee visited the Isle of Man and met local groups, discussing the commemoration of the tragedy.

"It was a wonderful community experience and the return of the bell was a very emotional occasion because there are so many people still living in Dundalk with close family connections to the tragedy and many memories of it," said Marie Agnew, Secretary of the Committee.

Michelle Haywood one of the divers who found the bell, said: "Due to the depth and distance the site is not frequently visited. The seabed is 62 metres, so this wreck is beyond safe scuba diving limits. On July 9, 2019, a dive team of Steve Cowley, Kathryn Fowler and myself, using rebreathers with helium gas mixes returned to the wreck to hunt for the bell and recover it. The wrought iron bell hanger was still attached and we successfully lifted both to the surface. The boat crew worked hard to recover the lift bag from the water due to the weight and length of the combined hanger and bell. They were only ex-

pecting a bell, not the hanger as well! On July 16, a larger group of divers from the Discover Diving club dived the wreck again and recovered a port hole and a beautiful, intact porcelain wash basin from one of the six passenger cabins. The wreck sits upright on the seabed, but over the years the metal structures have started to decay, revealing new parts of the ship.

"All the items were brought back to the Isle of Man to remove the marine life and for conservation. The wrought iron swan-necked bell hanger spent nearly 6 months undergoing reverse electrolysis to remove the salt and stabilise the metal, before being dried out over a 2-week period. The Isle of Man Receiver of Wrecks was informed about the finds."

Michelle and Steve, husband-and-wife, brought the bell to Dundalk: "A ship's bell is a special part of any ship, and when a vessel is tragically lost returning the bell to home is a poignant moment," said Michelle. "We are delighted to be able to bring the bell of the SS Dundalk home after over a century since it was lost. We understand how important this moment is for the

relatives of the crew and how much this means to them and the town."

"They were surprised when there was a very big turn-out for the occasion," said Marie Agnew. "It was such an important occasion for so many people with so many memories and there was a lot of emotion about this very special occasion for a town which has such a strong maritime history."



(Above): The bell and its hanger as recovered from the wreck of the SS Dundalk. (Below): Unveiling the wash basin from a passenger's cabin from the SS Dundalk as it was presented to the museum in Dundalk.



(Above): Relatives of Captain Hugh O'Neill in the Dundalk Museum. (Below): The dive team who recovered the bell with Brian Walsh at the return of the bell.



THE MASTER WHO WOULD NOT GIVE UP HIS SHIP

Gravestones tell the story of the first Merchant Navy Captain to be awarded the Victoria Cross

Standing at the grave of Frederick Barslow in the Old Cemetery at Cobh, the words on his gravestone are clearly those of a mariner who fought a battle: "At the going down of the sun and in the morning we will remember them" recall the true story of what happened off Cork Harbour on a Summer's day one hundred and eight years ago.

This is the story of the *Anglo-Californian* which is not often heard about, but which is one of heroism in the face of wartime brutality. The gravestone in the Old Cemetery at Cobh records that Frederick Daniel Parslow who was the first Merchant Navy Captain to receive the Victoria Cross, the highest British military honour "for valour in the presence of the enemy."

Even though the story happened off Cork Harbour, the *Anglo-Californian* was not heading for Cork Harbour. It was on passage from Montreal to Avonmouth, a port near Bristol in the UK and was a British horse transport. It was carrying 927 horses destined to be sent from there to France and the Western Front for use in World War One action against Germany.

The "enemy" was in the waters south of Cork Harbour on Sunday, July 4, 1915. That was in the presence of German submarine, U-39, commanded by Kapitänleutnant Walter Forstmann, who spotted and decided to attack the unarmed ship and opened fire as his U-boat closed on the vessel.

59-year-old Parlow, Master of the *Anglo-Californian* would not give up his ship easily, which he believed would be sunk by the German submarine with its entire cargo of horses drowning as it sank. So he ordered full speed from his engine-room, began a zig-zagging course in an attempt to avoid the shelling and called for help from the Royal Navy based in Queenstown, as Cobh was then known under British administration.

Told that help was being sent, he took over steering the ship himself, attempting to keep it stern-on to the submarine to make its aim as difficult as possible. His son, Frederick Jnr., was Second Mate officer aboard and on the bridge with his father. The U-boat's gunners hit the ship a number of times and, with the crew suffering casualties, Parlow decided it would have to be abandoned. But on the point of ordering abandonment, a wireless message from the Naval vessels making top speed towards him from Cobh urged him to continue to evade the U-boat. So he changed his mind and, now lying flat on the bridge, continued to steer the *Anglo-Californian*, hoping to reach safety in Queenstown with the help of the Navy racing towards his vessel and sending messages not to give in to the German attack.

Having to lift his head above the shattered front of

the ship's bridge to continue zig-zagging with shells bursting around the *Anglo-Californian* as the U-boat commander determined to sink it, he was not going to reach safety himself.

One of the shells made a direct hit on the bridge and killed Parlow. His son, also lying on the floor, crawled over what was left of his father's body, grabbed the steering wheel and continued steering the ship, forcing the submarine to adjust its attack. Angered by its refusal to stop, Forstmann pressed his submarine attack's harder. As it got closer to the ship he had his sailors start rifle fire at it and any crew that could be seen.

Three hours had passed, by which the submarine had closed to within 50 yards when the smoke of ap-

proaching British destroyers heading towards the *Anglo-Californian* was spotted. Forstmann decided to abort his attempt to sink it and ordered his submarine to dive and make its escape.

Assisted by naval rescuers the damaged horse transport was towed into Cork Harbour and docked at

the Deepwater Quay where the bodies of the Captain and eight crewmen were removed.

Though being a civilian and not of military or naval personnel, the British Government decided that Captain Parslow's heroism should be recognised and he was retrospectively commissioned as a Lieutenant in the Royal Naval Reserve so that the Victoria Cross could be awarded to him. His son became a Sub-Lieutenant in the Reserve and was awarded the Distinguished Service Cross. Chief Engineer James Crawford was also awarded the DSC.

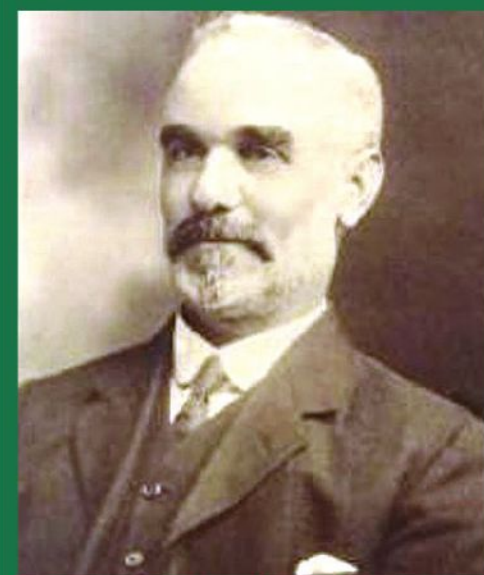
The VC insignia is carved into the headstone at his grave in the Old Church Cemetery. Nearby are the graves of crewmen who were killed.

Captain Barlow and the wartime action off Cork Harbour is also remembered in a memorial stone to him at a memorial in North London. This is at Islington where he was born in 1856. The memorial is in Merchant Navy colours.

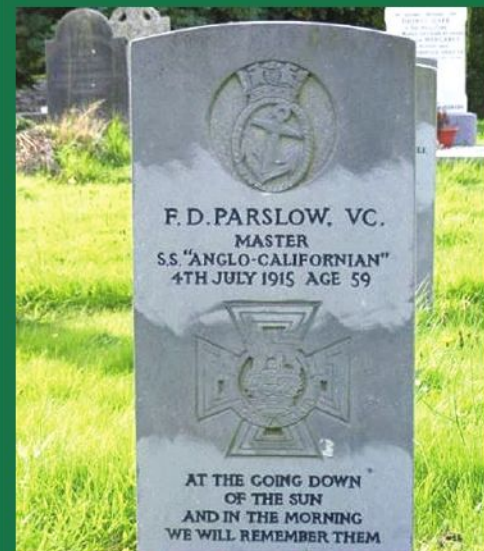
Records of the time are sparse about what happened to the ship after it was brought into Queenstown in a badly damaged condition. There are indications that most of the horses aboard escaped serious injury.

Young Frederick Barslow continued at sea and was reported lost in the disappearance without trace of the 5,456-ton *Anglo Australian* off the Azores in 1938.

Forstmann became one of what the German Navy described as their "most successful U-boat commanders" and was one of the most highly decorated U-boat commanders during World War I. He died in November 1973 at the age of 90.



Captain Frederick Daniel Parslow



Captain Parslow's headstone in Cobh Old Cemetery



Frederick Barslow Jnr, who crawled over his Father's dead body to continue to save the *Anglo-Californian*



U39 COMMANDER Kapitänleutnant Walter Forstmann

The 'Saoirse Rally'

The international 'Saoirse Rally' was the first of several events commemorating one hundred years since Irish sailor Conor O'Brien, from Foynes on the Shannon Estuary, Co. Limerick, set off for a two-year circumnavigation of the world aboard the 42-foot ketch, *Saoirse*, built in Baltimore, West Cork and followed by the *Ilen*, also built in Cork, for the Falkland Islands, whose residents were impressed by *Saoirse* when O'Brien put in there on his circumnavigation.



The Port of Funchal, Madeira, Portugal, was O'Brien's first port-of-call after departing from Dun Laoghaire, Co. Dublin, Ireland on June 20, 1923. This journey, which began in 1923, took him two years to complete and covered over 40,000 nautical miles. He was the first sailor to circumnavigate the world via the '3 Great Capes' in a yacht. His journey inspired other sailors. He is celebrated as a pioneer in the world of sailing.

The international 'Saoirse Rally' was organised by the Irish Cruising Club. Twenty-eight boats from various locations, Ireland, Western Europe and the Atlantic Islands, took part. Madeira and its sister island, Porto Santo, where the boats made their land-fall, Clube Naval de Funchal, Madeira Tourism Board and the Harbour Authority, hosted the international gathering.

The AK *Ilen*, the last surviving Irish schooner, refurbished by Hegarty's Boatyard, Skibberreen, close to where it was first

originally built, added poignancy to the commemoration. It was a poignant way to commemorate the great achievements of Conor O'Brien. The AK *Ilen* was commissioned by Conor O'Brien after his return to Ireland on behalf of the Falkland Islands government. She served as a workboat in the Falkland Islands for 70 years before being returned to Ireland and is now a sailing charity, providing development programmes.

Conor O'Brien was also an accomplished mountaineer, patriot, architect and author, writing several books on his sailing adventures, including "Across Three Oceans, recently been republished by the ICC.



Grand nieces and Grand nephew of legendary Irish Sailor Conor O'Brien with their children on board the AK *Ilen* as the historic Irish vessel prepared to depart Dun Laoghaire harbour for Funchal, Madeira as part of the international 'Saoirse Rally'.

A SAINT, A DRAGON, A WAR AND IRISH SOLDIERS GOING TO FIGHT IN CRIMEA

By Antoin O'Callaghan

Statio Bene Fida Carinis – a safe haven for ships, is the Cork motto. But how many people realise that Cork is also safe from dragons?



Modern shipping in Cork Port is different to when soldiers went to fight in Crimea - Photo Bob Bateman

Well – at the eastern end of the River Lee's north channel on Penrose Quay, stands Penrose House, on top of which is a statue of St George, mounted on his steed, in the act of slaying a dragon and ready to face any other that may attempt to enter the city from the east to terrorise the citizens. Historically, from the 14th century English soldiers going into battle were placed under the protection of St George. Each wore an emblem of the saint and eventually his cross, red on a white background, formed part of the Union Jack flag of Great Britain.

Penrose House dates to the 1820s and was for many years the headquarters of the St George Steam Packet Company – subsequently the City of Cork Steam Packet Company. For decades this was one place of departure for passengers and goods that were part of the life blood of the Port of Cork.

During the 1850s it was from Penrose Quay that troops departed for that troubled area of Europe far to the east – Crimea. With St George mounted above the Steam Packet Offices, one can imagine that departing troops, felt a sense of security at the sight of their Patron protector, as they left for war. On Thursday 14 December 1854 five companies of the 72nd highlanders arrived by train from Buttevant, marched to Penrose Quay and boarded the river steamers *Prince* and *Royal Alice* to bring them to ships at Queenstown. Huge crowds gathered and as the troops made their way aboard, another steamer the *Princess*, fully laden with troops of the 91st regiment, passed and there was great cheering and handkerchief waving as the soldiers greeted each other. All the while the regimental band played a series of Scottish airs. There was a carnival atmosphere but some on the quayside wept openly knowing that many of these young men would never again see the waters of the Lee. For them St George's raised arm was a farewell gesture to those journeying to the East ..and eternity....

Cork was a thriving port from the middle of the 18th century, being a world centre for butter exports as well as livestock, tanning products and

other cargoes. To the quaysides here also, as the 19th century advanced, came imports of timber, luxury goods, and the coal that kept the railways and businesses of the country operating. Some of the ships operating were built in Cork at Pike's yard in Water Street among them the *SS Gannet*, *Pelican*, *Cormorant*. The *SS Ibis* was lost at sea in December 1865 at Ballycreegan Bay, not far from Ballycotton with the loss of three crew members.

Other famous ship names of the company are well remembered in the Maritime Lore of Cork – the *Sirius*, first steamer to cross the Atlantic in 1838 and lost in Ballycotton Bay in 1847. From 1896, a number of ships carried the name *Innisfallen*, which, during the 1950s and 60s carried thousands of emigrants from the quayside.

The Company suffered heavily during the First World War, including the loss of the first *Innisfallen* – which had been built in 1896 - to a German u boat on 23 May 1918.

War again impacted when on the night in November 1940 the *SS Ardmore* set sail from Penrose Quay bound for Fishguard, a journey that she never completed. On that fateful night she had a crew of 24 souls, 16 of them from the city of Cork. She was sighted off Ballycotton at 10.20pm - her last sighting. Over the following days wreckage was washed up on the Welsh coast. In December the bodies of Captain Thomas Forde, Seaman Frank O'Shea and cattleman Michael Raymond were recovered on the Pembrokeshire coast. No other bodies were ever recovered. Back in Cork, the offices of the Steamship Company were visited daily by distraught relatives seeking any information on their missing loved ones. Much later a postman walking on a strand not far from Wexford harbour found a bottle with a scribbled note inside.

It simply said "Goodbye to all at home. Send help. Ship sinking fast. Forde. Ardmore. Cork."

• Antoin O'Callaghan is the author of "Read All About It" – the story of sculptures and monuments in Cork City – and several other books about the history of Leeside.

200 Years of the RNLI



Niamh Stephenson tells us about a very special anniversary and an interesting and poignant way to mark it via podcasts



The RNLI is 200 years old next year, in March to be exact. Two centuries of initially saving lives at sea and then saving lives everywhere, on inland waters and internationally.

The two oldest stations are Courtmacsherry and Arklow, who arrived a year and two later but the youngest will celebrate too, at Lough Ree and Union Hall.

There will be events planned to mark the occasion and more on them anon, as they say, but one worth sharing is the RNLI's Podcast, 200 Voices. For the 200 days, up to the day the RNLI was established there will be a Podcast-a-day with an interview featuring someone who has a connection with the RNLI.



Based as the charity is, in Ireland and in the UK, these voices will be coming from all over, with some international ones too. It will come as no surprise to learn there is a fair representation of voices from this island on it. We are still in the early days but three Irish voices landed closely together and they are wonderful interviews from three very different perspectives.

First is Niamh Fitzpatrick, psychologist and author, who speaks about the loss of her sister, Captain Dara Fitzpatrick. Dara was a crew member of Rescue 116. And along with her colleagues - Capt Mark Duffy; Winch Operator Paul Ormsby and Winch Man Ciarán Smith, she was lost in March 2017 when the helicopter crashed off the West Coast of Ireland. Much has been said about this awful accident, but Niamh's interview talks about her relationship with the Achill lifeboat crew, who recovered her sister's body. It's an exploration of grief and also of what Search and Rescue crews do, both for each other and us.

This was followed by Fr. Tom Dalton, who was lifeboat crew in Courtown RNLI until he moved parish. He still remains an active volunteer, serving in a different role now. Fr. Tom, (we all still struggle with

calling him just Tom, and that's not changing any time soon), speaks about how he deals with difficult call-outs and speaking to the families, using his Pastoral experience.

The third Irish interview is former Coxswain of Baltimore Lifeboat, Kieran Cotter. Kieran recounts being a young lifeboat volunteer on the night of the Fastnet disaster in 1979. I could listen to KC speak for hours. He has an encyclopaedic knowledge and his recounting of his experiences is also fascinating to hear. Thankfully we still have that knowledge as he moved on retirement into the role of a Deputy Launch Authority.

Future contributors are former President, Mary McAleese, Phil Coulter, (who composed Home from the Sea) and a member of this parish, journalist Tom MacSweeney, as well as many more. Find it wherever you find your podcasts or at <https://podfollow.com/rnli-200-voices>

Last month I mentioned a long rescue by Courtmacsherry lifeboat crew, so I would usually look further afield for another RNLI story but all roads are leading back there for the moment. We are on the verge of naming the station's new Shannon class lifeboat 'Val Adnams', in the presence of the lady who so generously gave us her name for it, being the main donor. Former station mechanic Micheál Hurley is also launching his book on the station's history called 'Home from the Sea'again.'

I remember Micheál telling me that he was a member of a small group in the station who were travelling to all 238 stations in the Institution. Last I heard they were due to Donaghadee in County Down. I texted the station's Lifeboat Press Officer to give them fair warning!

Regarding the crew's long 'shout,' I had the pleasure of speaking to the skipper who was rescued. He was in great form and said seeing the lifeboat coming for him, so far out to sea, was something he'd never forget. He had taken it all in his stride, but his gratitude was lovely to hear. I thanked him for his comments on local radio and that the crew really appreciated them. It's lovely to have these chats after all is well and everyone is safe home. It was his flares being seen by a nearby vessel that ensured the Coast Guard were alerted and could request the launch.

Another one of those small things that made the difference. The new Shannon Class boat did well and made its long journey easily.

Val Adnams has made her mark.



Shannon-class RNLB Val Adnams making its way into Courtmacsherry which will be officially named soon. Photo by Martin Walsh.

Fethard RNLI Mark Over 25 Years' Service of Retiring Doctor

Volunteer lifeboat crew and management at Fethard RNLI gathered to pay tribute and mark the retirement of Dr. John Cox from his role as volunteer Lifeboat Medical Advisor.

Doctor Cox took up the role of medical advisor in 1996 when Fethard station reopened, looking after our volunteers and their regular medical certifications. His service to Fethard was preceded by many years of service to Dun Laoghaire RNLI station.

Owen Medland, Area Lifesaving Manager for the South East, presented Dr. John with a framed print of Fethard's D-Class *Noamh Dubhan* on a chart of Ballyteige Bay, Fethard's operational area. Owen acknowledged his voluntary commitment to the

cause of saving lives at sea and his career long commitment to the RNLI. He wished the doctor well for the future.



In response to his presentation, Dr. Cox said: "While Fethard has done a lot for the Lifeboat by providing crews to man our D-Class lifeboat, the Lifeboat has done a lot for our community, not just in the high-profile activities of saving lives at sea, but also is providing

somewhere where people feel they belong and most of all that they feel they are doing something special and are appreciated."



International Fishing and Maritime News

Three Agreements Reached Between EU and UK

The EU-UK Specialised Committee on Fisheries (SCF) announced in August that it had reached three agreements for better fisheries management between the EU and UK and listed them as including a mechanism for voluntary transfers of fishing opportunities between the EU and UK; common guidelines for notifying management measures to the other party and improvements to the management of four shared stocks - lemon sole, witch, turbot and brill.

The Commissioner for Environment, Oceans and Fisheries, Virginijus Sinkevičius, issued a statement in which he said that the agreements demonstrated “that the EU and UK can work effectively together under the framework of the EU-UK Trade and Cooperation Agreement. These agreements will improve the sustainable management of our shared fishing stocks and support both our fleets. It demonstrates the success of our work together to normalise our new fisheries relationship and sets a strong basis for continued cooperation on shared management challenges.”

An EU Commission explanatory statement said that the establishment of a mechanism for voluntary in-year transfers of fishing opportunities between the EU and UK will help fleets on both sides accommodate the distribution of their fishing opportunities to their specific operational needs. This mechanism will allow for several rounds of in-year transfers based on proposals from the industry. The mechanism is based on the principles of the interim system for quota exchanges in place since 2021, which has proven to

work well for both parties. This agreement is unique among the EU’s relations with external fisheries partners, and follows the principles applied for quota swaps internally within the EU.

European Commission Should Consider Climate Changes in Catch Composition

“On climate change, the setting of fishing opportunities should consider possible changes in catch composition due to stock migration and new species arriving in North Western Waters”, the NWW Advisory Council has told the European Commission.

NWWAC has said that it is continuing to examine “the progress of achieving sustainable fishing in the EU, the state of the EU fleet, the social-economic performance of the sector in the aftermath of COVID-19 and in the light of rising fuel costs in relation to the Russian invasion of Ukraine.”

It is also considering the Landing Obligation, 2024 fishing opportunities proposals as a consequence of Brexit and bilateral negotiations with the UK and formulating its comments on 2024 advice from ICES. “Given that ICES will issue advice for a number of stocks in Autumn, the NWWAC will consider options on how to discuss the remaining stocks and complete these recommendations. NWWAC advises that the Commission makes use of all available scientific information on ecosystem-based management when preparing for a mandate for the bilateral consultation with the UK and when proposing TACs for 2024 to the Council. In particular, DG MARE should consider the definitions of ecosystem-based management provided by ICES and by the Food and Agriculture Organisation, which take into account the human, socio-economic dimension of this approach and involves strong stakeholder participation.”

Mowi Records Highest Ever Revenue and is Suing Norwegian Government Over Tax

Mowi has recorded its highest ever revenue of €1,365 million in the second quarter of 2023, an increase of nearly 11% over the same period last year. The record results were driven by strong operational performance in all business areas in addition to good prices.



Mowi CEO Ivan Vindheim said: “Strong volumes, good salmon prices and, most importantly, excellent operational performance by my 11,500 colleagues across the world, resulted in a new record-breaking quarter for Mowi. I am very pleased to see continuous improvement over time throughout the value chain.”

Vandheim announced that Mowi is to sue the Norwegian government over its decision to introduce a ‘salmon ground rent tax.’ He said the company plans to file a case against the State through the Oslo District Court because it believes the tax to be discriminatory.

Vindheim was one of the most outspoken campaigners against the tax, among salmon farm CEOs, since it was unveiled 11 months ago. “We believe the bottom deduction linked to the salmon tax is discriminatory and in breach of the EEA rules and the four freedoms, including the free flow of capital. The Government has been very clear in its rhetoric that it is the five big salmon companies that they want to hit.

“We already had a ground rent tax model in Norway that worked excellently and was neutral when it came to the size of the companies. Now the government has introduced a system that is discriminatory. We demand equality before the law.”

Despite controversy over a salmon tax, the Norwegian Seafood Council published figures showing record exports of Euros £6

bn. for the first six months of this year.

June export overseas sales were worth just over £1 bn. Euros, an increase of 21% over June of last year. Main markets were Poland and Denmark, two countries with their own large salmon processing sectors, followed by France.

Salmon Recovery Programme in USA

The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration in the USA which is responsible for managing and conserving America’s coastal and marine resources has proposed a \$106 million (€97m. Euros) salmon recovery programme for the USA West Coast.

Funding for 16 new and continuing projects will support conservation efforts in California, Oregon, Washington, Idaho and Alaska, it says, to support US West Coast salmon and steelhead populations.

Chilling Salmon Situation in Chile

The salmon harvest for the first half of the year in Chile has been down by 15 per cent on last year.



The decline was mainly due to lower Atlantic salmon harvests, according to reports. Salmoes Camanchaca, one of Chile’s largest salmon farming companies, reported a 35% drop in its second quarter operating revenues.

Training Future Fishermen in the UK

The UK is taking the need to train future fishing industry leaders seriously. A “Future Leaders” skills programme has been launched, described as a “new initiative which will seek to underscore the commitment to develop UK’s next generation of leaders to drive sustainable growth and excellence.



Aimed at fostering leadership and innovation within the UK’s seafood processing cluster, the Grimsby Seafood Cluster has launched the new programme, saying the initiative will “underscore the industry’s commitment to developing the next generation of leaders to drive sustainable growth and excellence.”



Belgian beam trawler landing and unloading their catch at the Port of Cork. Photo: Brian Motyer

news from Castletownbere

Helen Riddell



Castletownbere - Photo courtesy Catherine Turner

Fishermen's Skills Competition

The winners of the Fishermen's Skills Competition which was held during the Castletownbere Festival of the Sea are as follows: Line throwing sponsored by Twomey's Ivy Bar, first William Power, second Peter Lynch, third Dion Murphy Kelly. Fish filleting sponsored by Castletownbere Fishermen's Co-Op, first Sean Power, second David Kelly, third Anne Marie O'Boyle. Net mending sponsored by Swan Net Gundrys, first Philip O'Driscoll, second Peter Lynch, third Brendan Lynch. Survival suit competition sponsored by Jason Sheehan Fishing Company, first Philip O'Driscoll, second Dion Murphy Kelly, third William Power. Splicing sponsored by the O'Shea and Healy family, first Danny O'Boyle, second Peter Lynch, third Brendan Lynch. Overall fishermen of the year 2023 sponsored by the Skipper was Peter Lynch.

RNLI

Castletownbere RNLI lifeboat was launched in gale force winds on August 19th during Storm Betty to go to the assistance of two sailors whose yacht had got into difficulties on the northern shore of Kenmare Bay. The 31-foot ketch had been anchored off Dromquinna, and as the storm became increasingly strong, the vessel dragged its anchor and became stuck fast on a rock.

The sailors were concerned and raised the alarm with the Irish Coast Guard's Marine Research Coordination Centre in Valentia.

Castletownbere's RNLI lifeboat, 'Annette Hutton', was tasked at 3.22am and launched at 3.21am under the command of Coxswain Dave Fenton, mechanic Marney O'Donoghue with crew Seamus Harrington, John William O'Donoghue, Joe Cronin, Donagh Murphy and Will Power. The Shannon based Irish Coast Guard Helicopter Rescue 115 was also tasked to assist in the rescue.

On leaving the harbour, Castletownbere lifeboat faced a three-hour trip to Dromquinna. Coxswain Fenton described driving rain, strong winds and a large sea swell as the lifeboat travelled westwards, then up the Dursey Sound and across Kenmare Bay.

The yacht was subsequently located at 6.08am on a rock south of Dromquinna but, with the rising tide, volunteer lifeboat crew were able to attach a tow rope and pull the vessel clear. The yacht was undamaged and both sailors were found to be safe and well. It was then decided to tow the yacht to Castletownbere.

Paul Stevens, Lifeboat Operations Manager at Castletownbere RNLI, complimented the coxswain and crew for their swift response and effective rescue. He added: 'The crew spent over ten hours at sea in challenging conditions – demonstrating

their very strong commitment to the lifeboat service'.

Castletownbere Coast Guard

Castletownbere Coast Guard were on hand to assist at various local events over the summer. The team provided support for the annual Ardgroom swim, the water sports event at the Castletownbere Festival of the Sea and the Glengarriff swim. In late August, the group were called to Pallas Pier, Ardgroom to a young male who had been injured onboard a local vessel. The HSE air ambulance attended along with Dr Jason van der Velde from West Cork Rapid Response and local Gardai. The casualty was flown to hospital for further treatment.

Tour de Beara

The annual Tour de Beara cycle takes place on Saturday September the 9th. Participants can take part in a 90k, 120k or 160k route. All funds raised from the event will go directly to local charities and associations in Beara. To sign up see www.tourdebeara.ie

Beara FET Open Day

The Beara College of Further Education and Training will hold an open day at their premises at the North Road, Castletownbere on Tuesday September 5th from 11.00am

to 2.00pm. Courses available at the centre over the coming months include art, textiles, sewing, food and nutrition, Irish and English classes, horticulture, environmental sustainability, computers and digital literacy. All are welcome to come along and hear about the courses on offer which included both certified and non-certified options. A number of tutors will also be in attendance on the day. For further information contact Noreen on 086 8239147.

Bere Island Military Heritage Festival

The Bere Island Military Heritage Festival will take place on Saturday 16th and Sunday 17th September exploring all aspects of the island's military heritage, with exhibitions, guided walks and talks. For further details see www.bereisland.net

Ardgroom Men's Group

Ardgroom men's group recently launched a Currach which the group had built themselves. The group were supported in the project by David Nolan, a traditional wooden boat builder, and the project was funded through the Cork ETB. A large turnout attended the launch at Glenbeg Lake on August 20th. Men's groups in Ardgroom, Lauragh and Adrigole will reconvene at the end of September. New members are always welcome, for further information contact The Caha Centre on 027 60909.

THE MARINE TIMES INTERVIEW

The Inland Waterways Are Changing

Paddy Harkin, Inspector of Navigation, Waterways Ireland

Our monthly interview feature highlights different aspects of Ireland's marine sector, to bring the widest maritime coverage to readers. This month Deputy Editor Tom MacSweeney talks to Paddy Harkin, Inspector of Navigation at Waterways Ireland, who is leading an extensive public consultation process to revise Byelaws governing the usage of the inland waterways.

I had not realised that there are nearly 17,000 boats using Ireland's inland waterways, nor the number of harbours. For example, between Belturbet and Limerick there are 52, until I talked to Paddy Harkin.

He is Inspector of Navigation at Waterways Ireland, leading the review of Byelaws for the Shannon Navigation, Shannon-Erne Waterway and the Grand & Royal Canals and the Barrow Navigation. Waterways Ireland is a North/South cross-Border body, set up under the Good Friday Agreement. It manages the inland waterways in Northern Ireland and the Republic.

There are 9,000 boats registered on the Shannon, 7,000 on the Erne and there are 600 boats on the canals. One of the developments, which would not have been in the minds of those who drafted the original Byelaws, or indeed the general public at the time, over 40 years ago, was that there would be people living in boats on the canals. Times have changed and the pressure on housing is evident in that about 150 of the boats on the canals are now liveaboards, because of the housing shortage problems in Dublin.

This is among developments which necessitate new Byelaws. There have been quite a few other changes along the waterways, greenways have brought more public usage of walkways and there has been a considerable increase in boat ownership.

Safety aboard boats, moorings, management of harbours, all of these come within the ambience of Paddy Harkin's responsibilities.

"We have three sets of Byelaws – the Erne Byelaws, the Shannon Byelaws from 1992 and in the Canals, the Royal, the Grand and the Barrow the Byelaws are from 1988 so those Byelaws need to be updated. Things have moved on, particularly in the usage of the canals. There is a lot of development of houseboats in the Dublin area - Sallins, Castleknock, Maynooth, Leixlip and into Dublin City centre so we have to legislate for these houseboats. That's not in the 1988 Byelaws. That is a particularly hot topic that we must solve in the new Byelaws."

That, I suggest shows a lot of increased



interest in diverse ways in the country's waterways.

There is a great lot of interest indeed, Paddy tells me, recounting the number of boats, closing on nearly 17,000 – a pretty big responsibility.

and views."

Updating the Byelaws will focus on measures to increase accessibility, less congestion, better management through annual registration fees and permits, better water quality, limiting biodiversity loss, health and safety and further development of the waterways.



(Above): Royal Cana at Moyvalley. (Below): Shannon Erne Waterway



Houseboats are being used either full-time or during the week, by students at College for example and also for full-time living. In the Dublin area where accommodation can be difficult to find and quite expensive, this has been a noticeable development.

The Shannon has a different set of challenges to deal with. It is particularly important in tourism, of considerable economic and employment value. Each year there are about 45,000 lock passages on the Shannon.

"A lot of boating," says Paddy, "which we need to manage with the right and effective Byelaws. There is a lot of tourism which comes into areas along the Shannon through the waterways. This is money and jobs into the economy and that is very important to bear in mind and what the implications might be in changes of Byelaws, so we are consulting widely to get opinions

Public consultation opened on June 19 about draft changes to the Byelaws which Waterways Ireland has prepared and continues until October 2, a period of 16 weeks. Development of these drafts included an in-depth review of the current legislation and a long-term Waterways Ireland plan, taking into consideration the objective of growing recreational usage and future developments.

"There has been a lot of development, a lot of changes during past years, all of which needs to be attended to. We will look at the public feedback and then make a presentation to the Department and the Minister on updating the Byelaws which have not been amended for a long time.

"We need to take it slowly and get it right. It is important for the future of the waterways. We welcome all submissions. The more submissions we get the more informed we will be in relation to having Byelaws which will see the waterways through many years to come," says Paddy Harkin.

A number of public consultation meetings have been held. There is a Public Consultation Form online at Waterways Ireland website: www.waterwaysireland.org which can be used to make a submission and Emailed to: corporate@waterwaysireland.org (include Byelaw consultation in the subject line).

The draft Byelaws are also available to be seen on the website. Submissions can also be posted to: Waterways Ireland Inspectorate, The Docks, Athlone, Co. Westmeath.

news from the **Northwest**
 editor@marinetimes.ie



Killybegs harbour - Photo courtesy Alan Hennigan / Mooney Boats

Norway Accused of IUU-style Fisheries

The EU must actively oppose Norway's setting of inflated and unilateral mackerel quotas because it impacts the long-term sustainability of this valuable European fish stock and quota. This call comes from the Irish Fish Producers Organisation, who contend that Norway trades some of this inflated quota with other countries, so they can dramatically increase their catch in other parties' waters.

"Norway set their own mackerel quota well above the scientifically recommended limits needed to preserve stocks," says IFPO chief executive, Aodh O'Donnell. "Then they trade some of this inflated quota with non-EU or Third Countries, like the UK."

The UK and Norway - as Coastal States - entered into a landmark agreement on June 8th on the management of Mackerel in the Northeast Atlantic. This included Norway transferring 24,635 of its inflated mackerel to the UK valued at €38 Million. In return, they gained access to UK waters to catch 165,141 tonnes of its mackerel quota.

"Using inflated quotas to secure trade deals is unsustainable, and the EU must take a firmer stance against such practices. We acknowledge that as Norway and the UK are non-EU countries, such bi-lateral arrangements do not fall directly under the EU's remit," says Mr O'Donnell. "But the EU does have huge bargaining power with both Norway and the UK, and they must rely on measures such as EU market access to secure fair coastal sharing arrangements. We need to re-establish responsible binding agreements to provide for the equitable sharing of fisheries resources that migrate between or occur in the various economic fishing zones.

"The UK, by its recent agreement, has clearly endorsed Norway's unjustifiably high national unilateral quota. It is palpable nonsense for the UK and Norway to state that their unprecedented joint arrangements for 2023 do not prejudice the prospect of agreeing a responsible and sustainable Coastal States quota sharing arrangement".

O'Donnell says Norway's irresponsible quota allocation process "is consistent with Illegal, Unreported and Un-

regulated (IUU) fishing practices. The recent UK-Norway arrangement ignores the Coastal States (CS) undertaking in Dec 2022 to set national quotas for 2023 'at levels which would contribute to a conducive environment for the conclusion of CS consultations.' The UK-Norway bilateral arrangement demonstrates that sustainability considerations are being ignored."

Brendan Byrne, chief executive of the Irish Fish Processors and Exporters Association agrees. "Norway's assertion of 'their determination to cooperate in reducing the fishing pressure on the stock' does not stand up to scrutiny. With this new deal, the UK is also essentially agreeing that Norway can fix its national quota as high as it likes, without any consequences. Meantime, these countries that are setting artificially high quotas are desperate to get access to fish these stocks in other countries waters. This is simply not sustainable."

"The Norway-UK bilateral arrangement prejudices EU fishing rights on this stock, and Ireland's in particular. What is the point of the EU/UK Brexit arrangements under the Trade & Cooperation Agreement, if the UK ignores our legitimate interests and fails to consult the EU. It's like printing currency - Norway has used their self-awarded quota to pay for access to the UK waters. It is obvious that they are really challenged to catch this prized stock in their own waters, in direct contradiction with their inflated quotas".

Aodh O'Donnell described the UK-Norway agreement as "a further challenge to the sustainable approach of the EU. The EU must take decisive action to re-establish our mackerel fishing interests and rights. They must deal decisively with the latest mackerel provocation by Norway, and the UK. We support the recent call by Colm Markey MEP, a member of the European Parliament's Fisheries Committee, that Ireland must stand its ground during negotiations on 2024 fishing opportunities. We share his concern Nordic countries will seek greater access to Ireland's fish stock in these negotiations."

"Being passive and giving 'free' access to Norway in EU waters and getting nothing in return must cease in the coming year. We must use our voice to improve our share of sustainable quotas and protect our rich waters in the long term and resist unreasonable Third Country access demands".

Mac Lochlainn Says Irish Fishing Industry Must Be Defended in EU Commission Proposals for 2024 Fishing Opportunities

Sinn Féin Chief Whip and spokesperson on Fisheries and the Marine, Pádraig Mac Lochlainn TD, has written to the Taoiseach and Minister for Agriculture in advance of negotiations between the EU Commission and the Nordic States outside the EU (Norway, Iceland and the Faroe Islands) on proposals for fishing opportunities for 2024, which are due to commence shortly.

These negotiations will result in allocation of fishing quotas to countries for 2024 at EU council meetings in October and December this year.

Teachta Mac Lochlainn said: "I have written to An Taoiseach, Leo Varadkar TD, and the Minister for Agriculture, Food and the Marine Charlie Mc Conalogue TD, outlining that the Irish fishing industry must be defended in these negotiations. I note with interest and welcome a recent meeting between An Taoiseach Leo Varadkar TD, Fine Gael MEP Colm Markey and representatives of the Irish fishing industry where this topic was a priority on the agenda. Colm Markey MEP, who was present at the meeting, has since said in a press statement that 'Ireland must stand its ground during negotiations on 2024 fishing opportunities, which get underway shortly, and Ireland must stand firm and ensure we don't lose out'.

"I welcome this strong intervention from Colm Markey MEP and it is now over to The Taoiseach, Minister for Agriculture and Marine and their department officials to negotiate the best possible outcome for Ireland.

"We cannot have a situation like in previous years where unfettered access to Irish fishing waters is being offered to non-EU member states, particularly at a time when Ireland is still trying to recover its industry after the devastating losses and the decommissioning of 57 vessels, due to Brexit. I strongly reiterate that Ireland must not be left behind again on the back of a bad fishing deal agreed by the Irish Government in Europe."

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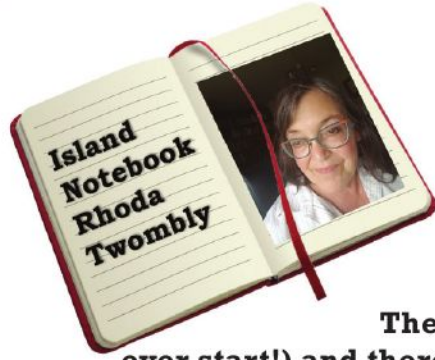
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The latest developments on the offshore islands reported by Rhoda Twombly, Secretary Comhdháil Oileán na hÉireann, the Islands' Federation.

Lots of Living on the Islands!

The summer isn't over yet (although there are many who wonder did it ever start!) and there are plenty of activities on the islands for visitors and locals alike.

Comhdháil Oileán na hÉireann is holding their AGM on Inishturk this year, the 17-18th of September. There will be a welcoming dinner with music and dancing to follow. The recently released Government document "Our Living Islands" and the corresponding action plan are to be discussed on the 18th with senior officials from the Islands Division of DRCD. Additionally, the AGM conference will present the report on the housing survey of the offshore islands.

Like all of Ireland's offshore islands, Inishturk faces challenges to their sustainability. Their ability to maintain their population – and indeed increase it – is affected by a lack of housing and employment opportunities to name just two factors. The community has already held the first set of workshops on "Visualising Futures" and will now carry ideas and information from those workshops into this second phase of discussing possible Inishturk 2050 futures.

The upcoming workshops and discussions will be important in "informing the Inishturk 2050 consultation report which will be used to raise awareness of Inishturk's 2050 ambitions, support existing/planned capital funding applications and

be used to unlock additional funding for an Inishturk 2050 Masterplan."

The organisers stress that all are welcome to participate and can do so either in person on Friday 15th Sept 8pm, at the Inishturk Community Club or online on the 20th of September with the link: <https://us06web.zoom.us/j/86786674007>.

On a lighter note, Inishturk is holding the annual Rams Fair, Sheep Show and Sale – Saturday 9th Sept at 1pm. This is always a lively, fun event so put it in your calendar. See Inishturk's Facebook page for more details.

Bofin Swim!

Inishbofin is host to a swim event to benefit Down Syndrome Galway on Saturday 16th September. The scenery at East End Bay is inspiring, a perfect place to support a very worthy cause. Not to mention the music, food and craic to be had afterward. Please see <https://downsyndromegalway.ie/bofin-swim-2023/> for more information.

Inishbofin welcomes the return of the island's food festival for the first time since 2019. Always popular, this festival concentrates on all things local – crafts, food, and arts. The festival runs from the 22nd – 24th

of Sept and has a wide range of activities: cooking demonstrations, workshops for kids, wine and whiskey tasting, crafts – the list goes on. And that's not all - Inishbofin Set Dancing & Trad Weekend 2023 is set for 29th Sept – 1 October. Make a note in your diary for this wonderful weekend of dance, song and workshops. See www.inishbofin.com for details.

Bere Island Arts and Heritage, ESIN AGM

Bere Island has three particularly interesting events in September. As part of Heritage week, the island highlights their military history and role in the War of Independence. Organised by Bere Island Projects Group, the Military Heritage Festival runs from 16-17 of September. It is hoped that this will become an annual event which celebrates the island's military heritage from the late 1700s up to the presence of the British Admiralty and US Navy during WWI and the War of Independence. See www.bereisland.net/heritage-events/ for more information on this festival and more events during Heritage week.

Next is the Bere Island Arts Festival, 21-24 of September. This festival has some-

thing for everyone – from art exhibits of local and mainland artists, writing and photography workshops, theatre, traditional music and more. Not to be missed!

Hot on the heels of the festival is the ESIN (European Small Islands) AGM which opens 26th of September, closing on the 29th. As Ireland is a founder member of the organisation and holds the current Secretariat – not to mention that John Walsh of Bere Island, is its Chair, there is interest in this meeting across the offshore islands. The key topics of discussion will be island energy transition, reskilling for energy transition, the blue economy and the islands, as well as presentations from ESIN Federations "Current challenges & opportunities" facing the individual islands. All with an interest in the future of our offshore islands are welcome to attend.

Clare Island Folk Festival

The second annual Clare Island Folk Festival will take place the 8-10th of September. This is billed as one of the most unique festivals in the country and has a line-up that promises to fulfil that claim. The "Foxford Session," Niamh Dunne, Karan Casey, Padraig Jack and several others will perform on the beautiful Clare Island – and you can be sure there will be powerful sessions in the pub as well. Go to www.clareislandfolkfestival.com for information and tickets.

This is only a sampling of what's on offer on our offshore islands. Be sure to check the websites and Facebook pages of individual islands for even more activities. We look forward to seeing you!

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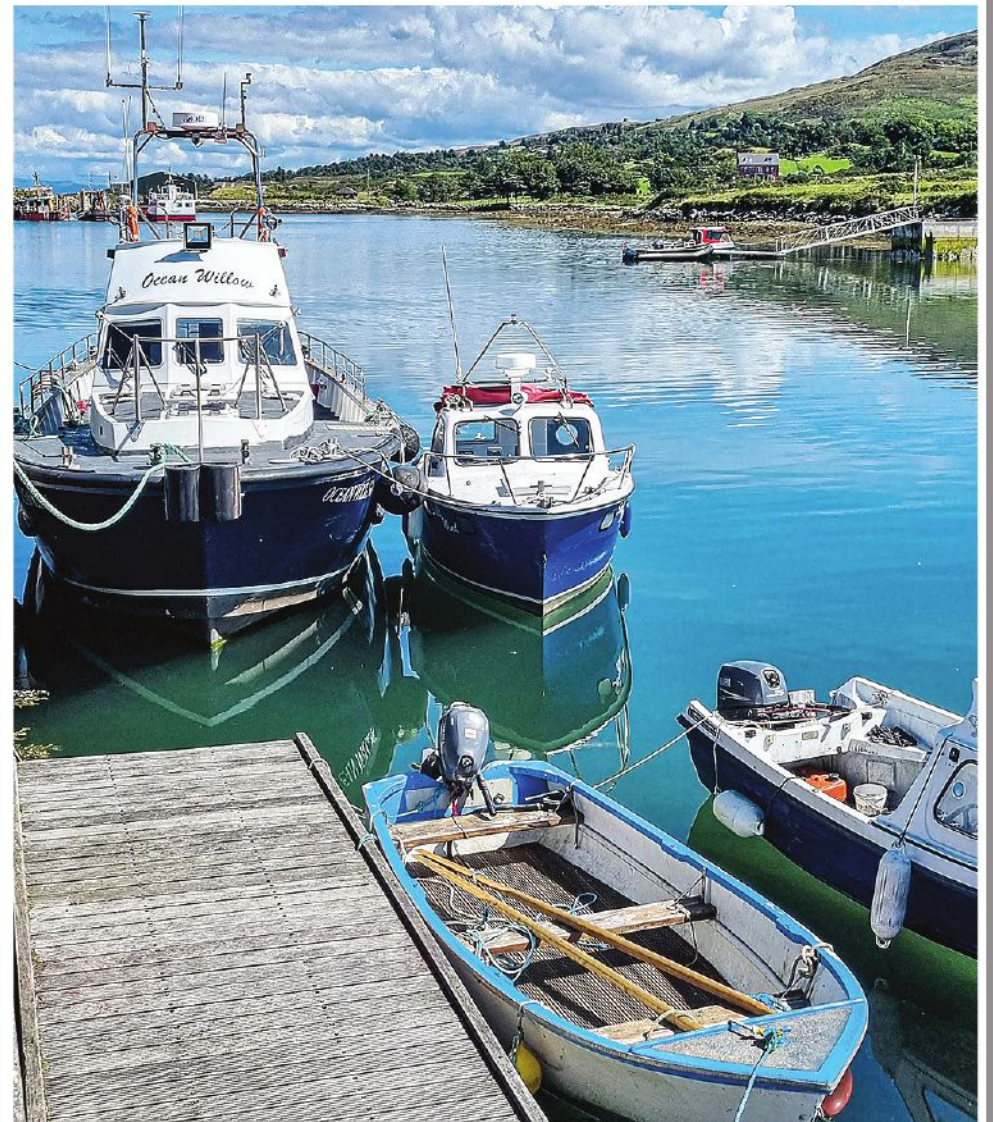
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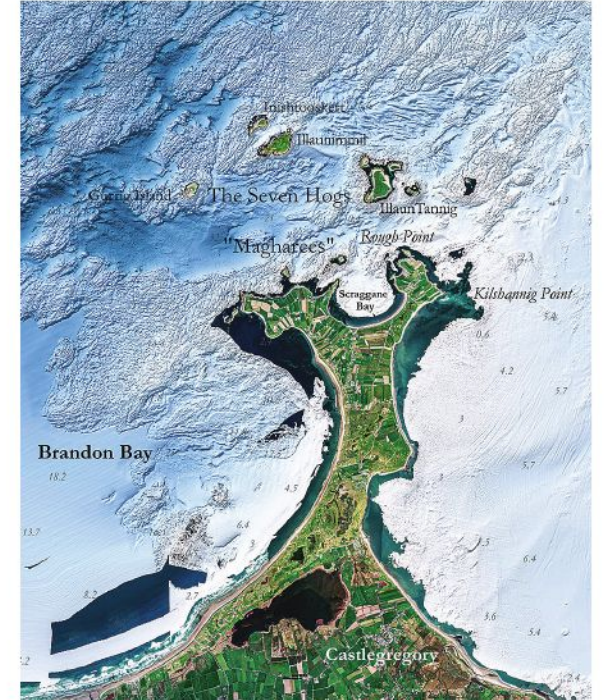
Pier at Derrycreeveen, Bere Island. Photo courtesy Catherine Turner

INFOMAR Launches Blue Scale Map Series Showcasing Ireland's Coastal Depths in Unprecedented Detail

INFOMAR (Integrated Mapping for the Sustainable Development of Ireland's Marine Resource) has launched the Blue Scale Map Series; a collection of 18 high-resolution bathymetric maps of Ireland's coastal waters. Developed by a dedicated team of hydrographers, data processors and cartographers, the maps highlight the topography of the coast in unprecedented detail.

In 2006, the INFOMAR programme was established and is currently one of the world's largest and leading seabed mapping programmes. The programme, funded by the Department of the Environment, Climate and Communications, is a joint venture by the Marine Institute and Geological Survey Ireland and aims to map Ireland's seabed and deliver a comprehensive baseline bathymetry dataset to underpin the future management of Ireland's marine resource.

Ireland's coastline is 3,171km in length and boasts some of the most unique & dynamic environments in Europe. This new Blue Scale Map Series is the culmination of over a decade of work and highlights the intricate landscapes that lie beneath the waves. Each map is carefully drawn to include the latest high resolution INFOMAR bathymetry data.



Starting this week, and for the next 18 weeks, INFOMAR will be releasing a new map of a different section of the Irish coastline. As with all INFOMAR data these high-resolution maps are available for all to download for free. The first in the series is the bluescale bathymetric map of Galway Bay followed by the Clare coastline and Tralee Bay.

As we go to press with this issue of the Marine Times Iveragh and Dingle Peninsula will be available to download from infomar.ie followed by Bantry Bay; Mizen Head; Roaringwater Bay; Seven Heads; Cork Harbour; Youghal Bay; Tramore Bay; Hook Head; Carnsore Point; Wicklow Head; Dublin Bay; Donegal Bay; Aran Islands followed on a weekly basis.

Marine Institute Selling Celtic Voyager

The research vessel which had an essential role in fisheries scientific research and a vital role in seabed mapping in Irish waters is being sold after 25 years' service with the Marine Institute, the RV Celtic Voyager is being sold.



She was brought into service in 1997 as Ireland's first custom-built multi-purpose research vessel.

"The Celtic Voyager has been central to our work and research, enabling us as a nation to engage in high quality marine science and to actively contribute to international research programmes," the Marine Institute said when announcing the sale. "The vessel has served us well over the past quarter-of-a century, providing marine scientists, researchers and crew members with many years of experience at sea, and enabling us to deepen our ocean knowledge."

The ship was a major part of the INFO-MAR programme, the seabed mapping of Irish waters. 200 shipwrecks around the coast of Ireland have been mapped by the Celtic Voyager. In 2007, a survey of Galway Bay revealed for the first time a detailed seafloor and geology of the bay, confirming the location of the Galway Bay Fault.

ICES New App On Fishing Opportunities

The International Council for the Exploration of the Sea (ICES) has issued a new app which it says is designed to allow the user to quickly visualise and access the data used for the advice on fishing opportunities.

AdviceXplorer app has direct links to fishing opportunity advice sheets published in the ICES library, which contain official advice. Users can search for advice on over 200 fish stocks by using an interactive map of ICES eco-regions.

ICES says the app is fully integrated with its databases and services and has additional options of annual assessments, stock code and species. Data displayed in each graph can be downloaded with a button located in the top-right corner of each graph.

The Council, in a statement announcing availability of the app, says it only displays published fishing opportunity advice. Expert groups contribute directly to AdviceXplorer by uploading their stock information to its databases. Once a fish stock is selected, the trends over time, advice values, and catch scenarios are displayed through interactive plots and tables."

Louth Company Making Waves in Production of World's First Deep Sea Liquid Magnesium Health Supplements with Support from BIM

When Brian Fitzpatrick and his business partner John Delany began production of premium sea salt in Port Oriel, Clogherhead, Co. Louth, ten years ago, little did they think today they would be making waves globally in the harvesting of nutrient rich minerals crucial to good health.

What started as a sea salt harvesting business in 2013 now sees Oriel Sea Salt positioned as the only company in the world reaping magnesium, minerals and trace elements from deep sea water for use in health, well-being and skin care products.

In mid 2022, Oriel launched their magnesium-based liquid food supplements through their online store www.magnesium-store.com. This was followed earlier this year with a launch into health food stores in Ireland and Northern Ireland.

The response has been so strong that in September the range will be launched online to the USA, Canadian and Middle Eastern markets, giving consumers across the world access to an innovative product vital to good health.

The journey to becoming a global leader in liquid magnesium production came when the company discovered that mineral by-products from its sea salt production had exceptional qualities and benefits for health and nutrition.

"This led us to develop patented technology to uncover and extract the rare and powerful nutrients of deepsea water, with support from various agencies including Bord Iascaigh Mhara (BIM). We use a unique sealed pressurised system in our harvesting, meaning all the goodness is retained," said Brian.

To date Oriel has received a total of €168,000 in grants implemented by BIM – two amounts under the Fisheries Local Action Group and more recently two under the Brexit Blue Economy Enterprise Development Schemes. These grants have been a great support to Oriel in acquiring specialised equipment vital to seeing the business grow.

Oriel has invested in and developed technology which has now been patented in Ireland, UK, EU, USA, Canada, Australia, and New Zealand. "This is true diversification as the company evolves from being food based (sea salt) to being a supplier of products to health, wellbeing and life science sectors. We anticipate that up to 75% of our products will be exported by the end of this year," said Brian.

"When we started out our focus was on premium sea salt and the by-product was the magnesium and rich elements we extracted from that production. But things have turned full circle and now the sea salt is the by-product, while our core business is magnesium."

Oriel sea salt, harvested under water using a special process, allows for a reduction

of 25% sodium without impacting on flavour. It has many accreditations including four Blas na hEireann Awards, four Great Taste Awards and Organic Certification and Gold Standard Origin Green status for Sustainability. It is used by Ireland's top chefs and many major brands including Coca Cola, Ballymaloe, East Coast Bakehouse, Waterford Blaa and O'Donnells Crisps.

Oriel is now the only company across the globe to hold Protected Designation of Origin status (PDO) from the EU Commission for its minerals and sea salt.

Said Brian: "Magnesium connects and impacts health, immunity, sleep and energy and we are providing this in a 100 per cent natural, pure, free ion, liquid form. It is used in nutrition supplementation, medical devices and many high street skincare and cosmetic brands, as well wound care."

Blue chip clients in skincare include Neals Yard Remedies, ESPA, GOSH and Pestle & Mortar.

Oriel has worked with scientists at DCU over the last several years to develop this unique form of liquid magnesium, with research published in medical, science and skincare journals.

The US military has also completed a study on the use of the liquid magnesium to heal burns, with very positive results. "This could be a major breakthrough in using a natural product on burns rather than a drug-based product," said Brian.

Oriel employs eight people with an expectation to increase this number in the coming year.

"We are proud to be harvesting one of our country's greatest resources, the ocean, for its most precious nutrients using Irish patented technology in a sustainable, organic manner. The support we have had over the years from BIM has been immense. Supporting Oriel is ensuring that we continue to grow our products, brand, innovation and employment from our local community."

Brian added: "We now plan to upgrade many elements of our equipment to ensure we can maintain the quality and supply as we find new clients, and we are delighted that BIM is supporting us in the regard."



Making waves with the launch of the world's first liquid magnesium health supplements. Pictured are Colm Fitzpatrick, Business Development Manager of Oriel Sea Salt and Brian Fitzpatrick, CEO and co-founder of Oriel Sea Salt, pictured with their new liquid magnesium health supplements.

Green Rebel Reaches New Global Standards Milestone

Irish offshore survey company Green Rebel has been recognised by Certification Europe for reaching global standards for quality and environmental management. The new standards are in addition to certificates already received for occupational health and safety and information security.



Pictured on board the survey vessel Roman Rebel are Captain Liam Hyland, HSQE Manager, Green Rebel; Dan O’Callaghan, Senior Business Development Executive, Certification Europe; Holly Fitzpatrick, Communications & Marketing Manager, Certification Europe. The new standards for Green Rebel follow their previous achievements in securing certificates for occupational health and safety and information security.

Green Rebel is headquartered in Cork and operates a fleet of vessels, buoys and aircraft to deliver the data needed in order to build offshore wind farms. It secured the certification within two years of starting operations.

The company went through a multi-stage assessment process to secure all four certificates. They are valid for three years and will be subject to mandatory audits to ensure compliance.

Kieran Ivers, CEO of Green Rebel says, “Offshore wind has the potential to deliver vast amounts of renewable energy and help us to build a cleaner future. However, for Ireland to compete globally it’s necessary for Irish organisations to reach the required international standards. There is a high bar for companies to do business in the offshore industry, and rightly so. Having this certification will allow us to tender for an increased number of valuable tenders and it’s especially rewarding to achieve this within such a short space of time. It illustrates once again the vast skill and experience of the dedicated Green Rebel team. Reaching these industry standards reflects the high standards we set for ourselves every day, in our determination to deliver excellence for our clients.”

Kellie-Anne Heeney, Certification Services Manager with Certification Europe says, “The process of achieving these recent ISO certifications for quality and environmental management systems was rigorous, requiring a collaborative effort from the entire team at Green Rebel to implement processes and procedures that are ingrained in the company’s daily operations. Obtaining certification for a single ISO standard is an excellent accomplishment in itself, but with Green Rebel achieving four international

standards, they exemplify their unwavering dedication to delivering the highest quality service worldwide, backed by the prestigious ISO seal of approval. As we move forward, we look forward to continuing our support for Green Rebel as they continue to grow and excel in this domain.”

Green Rebel now has ISO Certification for:

- **Quality Management (ISO 9001)** which is the world’s most widely used standard. It confirms an organisation’s commitment to improving quality, delivering more efficient operations and improving customer satisfaction.
- **Environmental Management Systems (ISO 14001)** is a systematic framework used by businesses to manage the immediate and long term environmental impacts of an organisation’s products, services and processes.
- **Occupational Health and Safety (ISO 45001)** which is aimed at improving employee safety, reducing workplace risks, and creating better, safer working conditions.
- **Information Security Management (ISO 27001)** is the international standard for managing risks related to the security of information and data an organisation holds.

Green Rebel has a team of scientists, chemists, engineers, ecologists, vessel crew and business practitioners across multiple locations in Cork and Limerick. It provides the offshore wind and other sectors an end-to-end set of data services that extend from acquisition, processing, interpretations and reporting, with their fleet of purpose-built vessels, aircraft, floating LiDAR buoys and in-house team of scientists and industry experts.

Government Seeks Views from Coastal Communities in South and South East to Decide Locations for Future Offshore Wind Developments

The Department of the Environment, Climate and Communications has launched a public information and engagement period seeking the views of local South Coast communities to help determine where future offshore wind energy developments may take place.

This follows the publication of the South Coast Designated Maritime Area Plan (DMAP) Proposal last month by Minister Eamon Ryan, which puts forward an initial ‘proposed’ geographical area within which future offshore renewable energy developments could be advanced. The initial proposed geographical area is approximately 8,600 square kilometres in size.

The department is seeking all views from interested citizens and impacted stakeholders, including: local communities and community organisations, individual local participants or representative bodies from the fishing and seafood sector, environmental organisations, as well as business groups within counties Waterford, Wexford and Cork. The eight-week public information period will run until 26 September and include face-to-face public information events in a number of venues within counties Waterford, Wexford and Cork. Further information relating to these upcoming events will be updated and available on the department’s website at gov.ie/SouthCoastDMAP.

The establishment of a South Coast DMAP is part of the wider plan-led approach recently adopted by Government to ensure sustainable offshore wind development. What this means in practice is that the State, in cooperation with local communities and with consideration for other maritime activities, including fishing and seafood production, and environmental protection, will determine the appropriate location for offshore wind developments. The marine area of the DMAP proposal will be further refined following this initial eight-week period of public engagement, which will include expert environmental impact assessments and analysis, to assess its suitability for offshore renewable energy development. Following this public information period, a ‘Draft DMAP’ will then be published in autumn 2023, which will identify specific areas for future offshore renewable energy development. The Draft DMAP and accompanying environmental assessments will then undergo a further six-week statutory public consultation period in the autumn, before the Draft DMAP is presented to the Minister for Housing and both houses of the Oireachtas for approval.

Welcoming the start of the public information period, Minister for the

Environment, Climate and Communications Eamon Ryan, said: “Future offshore wind energy development has the potential to offer enormous economic opportunities for Ireland’s coastal communities, in terms of jobs growth and local community development. This rigorous plan-led approach adopted by Government will also offer the best way to protect local marine environments while also boosting local community development.

“I strongly encourage all interested citizens, local communities, and various groups involved in existing maritime activities, including fishing and seafood production, throughout the South Coast to engage in public participation opportunities that will contribute to establishment of the South Coast DMAP over the coming months.”

Further information on the South Coast Designated Maritime Area Plan (DMAP) Proposal is available on: gov.ie/SouthCoastDMAP.

Date	Location	Venue	Time
4 September	Dunmore East	Dunmore East Fishery Harbour Centre, Nymphhall, Dunmore East, Co. Waterford, X91 KX03	1.30pm-3.30pm
5 September	Tramore	Coastguard Cultural Centre, Doneraile Drive, Tramore West, Tramore, Co. Waterford, X91 HP63	1.30pm-3.30pm
6 September	An Rinn	Ionad Pobail na Rinne, An Rinn, Dún Garbhán, Co. Phort Láirge, X35 XW29	1.30pm-3.30pm
13 September	Kinsale	Sáile Kinsale Community and Sports Centre, Cappagh, Kinsale, Co. Cork, P17 WD21	1.30pm-3.30pm
14 September	Aghada	Aghada and District Community Centre, Curragh, Upper Aghada, Co. Cork, P25 C576	1.30pm-3.30pm
18 September	Kilmore Quay, Co. Wexford	Stella Maris Community Centre, Seaview, Wexford, Y35 TH9W	12pm to 8pm Please note: This is a joint event between the Department of Environment, Climate and Communications and EirGrid
19 September (Workshop)	Youghal	Walter Raleigh Hotel, Youghal, Co. Cork, P36 RX22	11am-1pm (Pre-registration required - details on how to register will be available on this page on 1 September)
20 September (Workshop)	Waterford	The Tower Hotel, The Mall, Waterford, X91 VXEO	11.00-13.00 (Pre-registration required - details on how to register will be available on this page on 1 September)

SFPA Officers Confiscate and Safely Return Live Crawfish to the Sea

Last week during a routine SFPA inshore patrol, Sea Fisheries Protection Officers, deployed along the southwest coast, confiscated 48 live undersize crawfish and returned them safely to the sea.

A file is currently being prepared for consideration by the Office of the Director of Public Prosecutions.

Crawfish, also known as European spiny lobster or Crayfish, are one of our most at risk species and are listed as vulnerable and decreasing by the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN). They are also the highest value crustacean species caught in Irish waters achieving prices of €30 - €40 per kilo on landing.

Crawfish are primarily caught in inshore waters around the south and southwest coast and are an important source of revenue for the inshore fleet during the summer months.

Protection of these valuable stocks depends on a range of legal measures enforced by the SFPA, just one of which is the 'minimum conservation reference size' (MCRS).

The MCRS for Crawfish taken from International Council for the Exploration of the Seas (ICES) sub-areas VI and VII has been established as a carapace size of 110mm.

It is prohibited for the master or person in charge of an Irish sea-fishing boat to cause or permit the boat or any person to have onboard, land, or tranship Crawfish that fall below the MCRS.

No person shall display, sell, offer for sale or store for the purposes of selling any

Crawfish that fall below MCRS.

Crawfish below MCRS must be handled with care and promptly released back into the sea alive without delay.

The intent behind the MCRS is to allow the animals to attain full sexual maturity and have a reasonable opportunity to reproduce before being harvested and consumed. By illegally removing immature animals from an already vulnerable stock is likely to result in further stock depletion.



An SFPA spokesperson commented: "Trade in undersize fish not only damages the stocks but it also impacts the communities who depend on them. Illegal fishing is unfair to the majority of inshore fishermen who fish sustainably and within

regulations. The inshore patrols undertaken by the Sea-Fisheries Protection Authority are a vital tool in our work to protect stocks.

"We encourage buyers at all stages of the food chain, restaurateurs, processors and consumers to be aware of the minimum size and please let us know if you are offered undersized fish for sale. If you have any concerns regarding fisheries control, seafood fraud and/ or seafood safety 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 our Confidential Report form on sfpa.ie"



(Above): Seánín Ned Flatherty ex owner Glór na dTonn with Victor and a Bluefin caught on the Réalt Ára. Photo is courtesy of Máirtín Éanna Ó Conghaile, owner of the Réalt Ára. (Below): Gill netter Atlantic Fisher II hard at work. Photo courtesy Reddy Whelan.



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Dublin Port Company Rows in to Sponsor New Boat for Stella Maris

Dublin Port Company (DPC) is delighted to announce its sponsorship of a new boat for Stella Maris Rowing Club. This exciting collaboration exemplifies Dublin Port Company's ongoing commitment to celebrating and supporting the local community.



The coastal rowing boat - named St Laurence II after the original St Laurence, which was built, owned and competed in by Dublin Port workers in the 1950s - represents yet another investment by DPC in promoting the sport of rowing in Dublin. It will also provide Stella Maris Rowing Club's dedicated members - which range from age 10 onwards - with state-of-the-art equipment that will enhance their training and capabilities.

This continued and long-standing partnership comes as part of DPC's wider plans for a new 'Maritime Village' within the 3FM Project. The Maritime Village will enable a modern sailing and rowing campus which will provide enhanced facilities for a range of users including sailing and rowing clubs, sea scouts, the Nautical Trust and local boat owners. The Maritime Village has been developed in consultation with local groups and will replace the current much smaller facilities as well as improving opportunities to view Port activities from the new waterside public plaza area.

As a testament to the long-established traditions of Stella Maris, the new boat was blessed by Father Ivan Tonge during a ceremony held at the Ringsend club's home on the Pigeon House Road in Dublin. This meaningful ritual, performed before launching the vessel, symbolises safe passage and protection.

DPC is dedicated to supporting initiatives that contribute to the social fabric and well-being of Dublin's residents and this latest collaboration continues to strengthen the bond between the maritime industry and the local community.

Barry O'Connell, Chief Executive, Dublin Port Company, said: "We are honoured to offer our continued support to Stella Maris Rowing Club. The values Stella embodies, such as teamwork, dedication and perseverance, align perfectly with our own ethos at Dublin Port Company."

"The new boat looks fantastic, and I can't wait to see the role it plays in empowering the next generation of the club. This commitment ties in with our wider community initiatives to come under the 3FM Project, which will see a new Maritime Village providing enhanced facilities for a range of users including sailing and rowing clubs."

Pat Kane, Chairman, Stella Maris Rowing Club, said: "Dublin Port has long been a friend to Stella Maris and we would like to thank them for their continued support. The original St Laurence served the club well for over 30 years and, thanks to Dublin Port, the St Laurence II will inspire and enable the next generation of rowers."



IRISH WHALE AND DOLPHIN GROUP

IWDG NEWS

Ireland Vulnerable to Changes in Atlantic Currents

Report by Stephen Comerford – Marine Policy Officer IWDG

July was the hottest month on record with global surface air temperatures of around 1.5°C above pre-industrial values according to the European Copernicus Programme. This comes against a background of raging wildfires across the world, a record-breaking heat dome in the US and higher than ever temperatures in the world's oceans.

Global average sea surface temperatures (SST) have been consistently higher than average this year, at 20.89°C. The global July monthly average SST was by far the highest on record with an anomaly of 0.51°C. At the time of writing, El Niño conditions are developing as predicted in the tropical Pacific; according to World Meteorological Organization Secretary General Prof Petteri Taalas "the onset of El Niño will greatly increase the likelihood of breaking temperature records and triggering more extreme heat in many parts of the world and in the ocean."

Meanwhile Ireland languishes in cold and wet conditions; another disappointing summer as the rain flattens the grass and the beaches are deserted. It was officially the wettest July on record with 215% of average rainfall recorded. This is hard to reconcile with apocalyptic scenes of mass evacuations from fatal fires and the stern predictions of climate scientists, but does demonstrate the variable effects of disorder in a complex system.

A paper published in July in the journal 'Nature Communications' about changes to the Atlantic meridional overturning circulation (AMOC) brought home in particular the dangers we face as an island nation relying as we do on the sea around us for sustenance, livelihood and climate regulation.

The AMOC is a large-scale overturning motion of water from the Southern Ocean to the northern end of the Atlantic which is driven largely by density gradients. It is often confused with the Gulf Stream, which is a shorter, wind-driven surface current from the Caribbean Sea and the Gulf of Mexico. The Gulf Stream also transports warm waters to the north Atlantic, but on a much smaller scale; the AMOC plays the biggest part in the transport of heat from the south to the waters off our coasts.

Studies from as far back as 1961 have identified that the AMOC is vulnerable to abrupt change if oceanographic conditions push it past a tipping point. These events have occurred in the past and have been identified from ice and sediment cores. The last was during the Ice Age around 12000 years ago. The current is density-driven, the salinity gradient at its northern end, forming an important part of the engine that drives the current. Meltwater from the Greenland ice sheet is reducing the salinity gradient, slowing the current, which in turn brings less salty water to the region, thus slowing the current further - a salt advection feedback.

Determining the point at which this mechanism could stop the AMOC altogether has proved difficult and contentious. Studies agree on the theoretical possibility of the AMOC stopping but they have been hampered by the lack of observational data. Direct measurements are only available since 2004 so researchers have used other available datasets as proxies to build a timeseries and look for early warning signals. Brother and sister research team Peter

and Susanne Ditlevsen re-assessed historical SST data in search of evidence of increases in variance and a slowing down of the AMOC. Their analysis predicted a tipping point causing the current to stop in mid-century under the current scenario of future greenhouse gas emissions. While this rightly grabbed the attention of the world's press, the statistical uncertainty around the predicted date indicated a startling earliest possible date of 2025.

While acknowledging the limitations of their modelling, they stated that "we have reduced the analysis to have as few and sound assumptions as possible, and given the importance of the AMOC for the climate system, we ought not to ignore such clear indicators of an imminent collapse."

Measurements show that the AMOC has weakened since the nineteenth century with a more rapid decline in recent decades. However the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) predict that while the AMOC is very likely to weaken further under current projected greenhouse gas emission scenarios, they say with medium confidence that collapse is unlikely.

Collapse of the AMOC is a worst-case scenario which would cause profound changes in our weather and climate resulting in a hotter global south and a colder north, sea level rise, disrupted monsoons and unimaginable impacts on the way humans live on the planet.

Thoughts about a dramatic cooling of Ireland's climate are contradictory after our experience of the marine heatwave of early summer when temperature anomalies of up to 5°C were recorded off our coasts. High water temperatures increase the risk of harmful algal blooms, lower oxygen levels, and disrupt zooplankton distribution causing fish to migrate away to find more suitable conditions and adequate feed. Birds and marine mammals in turn follow the fish seeking food to sustain themselves.

Broadly we are facing three scenarios in the waters off Ireland: the continuing rise in temperatures which we are already experiencing with its associated disruption of the marine ecosystem; a slowing down or possible stopping of the AMOC resulting in catastrophic cooling and a complete step-change in our climate; or finally a third way in which we succeed in a rapid decarbonisation of our society and a just transition to renewable and carbon-neutral forms of energy.

The science is clear that business-as-usual is not an option if we hope to slow or stop climate change for the benefit of ourselves, the planet we inhabit, and the generations to come.

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Kathleen and May Campaign in Youghal to Buy Historic Wooden Schooner

A group of “local enthusiasts” in Youghal, Co. Cork, says it has negotiated “a reasonable price with the current owner” to purchase the three-masted wooden schooner, Kathleen and May, which has strong connections with the East Cork seaside town.



The ship is listed on Britain's National Historic Fleet Register, which records vessels located in the UK and advises the UK Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport and other public bodies about ship preservation and funding priorities.

The connection goes back to 1908 when it was bought by a coal merchant in the town, Martin J. Fleming, who named it after his two daughters. For almost sixty years it traded between Youghal and UK ports “creating a bond that transcended commerce, adventure and romance,” the enthusiasts say. It was sold to the UK in 1931.

In 1998, Devon haulage contractor Steve Clarke discovered the boat in decline in St Katherine's Dock, London and restored the craft at a lot of cost. He was awarded an OBE for his contribution to preserving maritime industry history.

However, the costs of maintenance were high and attempts to acquire it did not succeed though it has been used at maritime festivals and for film appearances. It is at present in Gloucester Docks. It has been into Youghal over past years.

A ‘Kathleen and May Information Centre’ has been opened in Youghal displaying aspects of maritime history through a collection of photos and memorabilia dealing with ships, fishing heritage, seamen and fishermen of the town.

“We want to archive, preserve and exhibit our maritime history for future generations and to repatriate the Kathleen & May. We have been working on this for several years and believe that bringing it back would benefit the town's tourism industry and promote the rich maritime history of Youghal,” according to the enthusiasts, who have launched an appeal for support.

Wexford Seafood Business to Launch Ireland's First Fish Pet Food with Support from BIM

A Co. Wexford seafood business is to eliminate the tonnes of left over fish parts it produces each week – by using it to make Ireland's first pet food made wholly from fish.

Atlantis Seafood, based in Kilmore Quay, has teamed up with Killiney, Co. Dublin based pet food company, Harley & Marley, to produce a range of nutritious, sustainable and healthy dried dog and cat food and treats from fish by-product.

The pet food, which will be sold under the Harley & Marley brand, will be available in Dunnes Stores around Ireland from the end of September as well as independent shops, pet stores, and veterinarian clinics. There are also plans for the pet food to be rolled out across Musgrave outlets.

Atlantis, which has sustainability at the heart of all it does, has been supported in the pet food venture by Bord Iascaigh Mhara (BIM) which provided mentoring and technical support. Last year Atlantis received a grant of €233,394 under the Brexit Processing Capital Support Scheme, implemented by BIM, to modernise its factory and to make it more environmentally friendly.

The petfood launch will see Atlantis advance its mission to be sustainable by dramatically reducing the 50 tonnes of by-product created from the processing of fish each week, with only half of fish catch used and processed.

“We are very excited about the launch of this new petfood product and at the fact there is now potential for the entire fish – from head to tail – to be used.” said John.

“There are pet foods in Ireland that have some fish added. But what Harley & Marley offers is a 100% natural product with fish as the main single ingredient, possibly with small amounts of oats, parsley and seaweed.”

John was inspired to develop the pet food after attending an event six years ago where Monaghan-based duck producer, Silver Duck, spoke of how every part of the duck was used to produce consumer products. “For example, the feathers were used to make pillows. No part of the duck was wasted, and I got to thinking how we could replicate that concept to the fish we processed.”

He then connected with Harley & Marley which was set up by dog-loving mums, Portia Quinn and Robin Thompson in 2019. They discovered a mutual passion to create a brand of fine Irish pet treats while walking their dogs – Harley and Marley – on Killiney Hill.

Portia Quinn, who now runs the Harley & Marley business, said: “We had a clear vision to offer top quality pet treats made with fish and sustainable ingredients – and Atlantis was the perfect partner.”

The pet food is produced through gentle air-drying, rather than cooking, meaning it doesn't lose any of its natural goodness. The production of the Harley & Marley

pet food range will be outsourced to two companies in Ireland, keeping the operation within the country and totally Irish. All products will be packed in recyclable pouches.

Said John Kenny: “This is minimal processing at its best. The pet food is junk free, and made up of fish with few added ingredients. There is no wheat, wheat gluten, unnecessary fillers, additives, artificial colours or flavours added.”

“Our focus has always been on bringing the best product to consumers. We are constantly looking at new ways of maximising the bounty of the seas around us.”

Once the pet food range launches on the Irish market the export market will be explored. “The pet food market is growing globally and there is huge potential to export,” said John.

Atlantis has been in business for 30 years and has built its reputation on delivering quality fresh fish and seafood to top chefs and retailers across Ireland. The south-east company employs around 100 people today.

Atlantis is a verified Gold Member of Bord Bia's Origin Green Programme, and BRC (British Retail Consortium standard for better food safety and the control of food products) certified – and makes every possible effort to protect the ocean environment and life for now and for future generations.



Something fishy! Managing Director of Atlantis Seafood, John Kenny, with his pet dog Pinu and the new Harley & Marley fish petfood range.



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Croagh Patrick Seafood and Tours Opens New Oyster Farm Visitor Centre

Croagh Patrick Seafood and Tours new oyster farm visitor centre was officially opened by Mr Michael Ring TD on Friday 21st July 2023. Based at the existing Gannon family oyster farm in Rosslaher near Westport, this quality tourist attraction is ideally located on both the Wild Atlantic Way and the Great Western Greenway.

Supported by South West Mayo Development Centre (SWMDC) and the Fisheries Local Action Group (FLAG), it is part of BIM's Taste the Atlantic Trail celebrating Irish seafood. Croagh Patrick Seafoods and Tours is set to become a true destination drawing tourists from far and wide.

The newly built visitor centre was designed to fit in with the existing vernacular buildings which comprised the original Gannon homestead. The welcoming centre offers an attractive self-guided oyster farming tour including a captivating aerial photograph of the site and a full size currach named 'Padraicín' after the late Paddy Gannon. Nearby is sympathetically renovated heritage farm building which was previously a milking shed. The fascinating visitor tour consists of a guided tour along the idyllic foreshore where the Grade A oysters are produced, oyster picking and an oyster shucking lesson followed by a chance to browse the self-guided tour. A delicious seafood tasting menu with oysters, mussels and smoked salmon is available and the farm shop extends the experience with an opportunity to bring the taste of the Atlantic home.

The launch itself was a glorious tribute to Padraic and the entire Gannon family as friends, neighbours and guests celebrated the new centre with warmth and enthusiasm. Only one of the nine siblings was absent; Christopher who lives in New York and it was a wonderful example of a community coming together to applaud one of their own. Speaking at the launch Mr Michael Ring TD warmly congratulated the family citing his own connections with them from his early days doing a bread round and calling to the family shop, Mulchrone's, in James Street, Westport. "Today is a special day for me as well", he planted a kiss on the cheek of Padraic's mother Annie Nora Gannon who is hale and hearty in her 90th year. He also fondly recalled her husband the late Paddy Gannon. Mr Ring went on to say, "Croagh Patrick

Seafoods is a wonderful project and a great example of what South West Mayo Development Company do to support small local communities. It is a fabulous development and will provide much needed employment in this area".

Padraic Gannon himself thanked everyone for their help and support, saying that building the new centre was "like launching a boat on a rising tide". He included the funders, his family, particularly his wife Sheila, neighbours and wider community in his thanks.

Mr Paul Gibbons, Chair of SWMDC commented that, "This venture epitomises the enthusiasm and attitude found within the community. I am very proud of the work our local team have done and are doing on this project, it is the way forward for all of us and proves that rural Ireland is indeed alive and well".

Colette Fahy spoke on behalf of FLAG, representing the Chair, Neil Cruise. She congratulated Padraic Gannon and his team, wishing them further success. Fr Jim Walsh performed an official blessing of the new centre.

Croagh Patrick Seafood and Tours is a family business run by Padraic Gannon and his son Mark producing fresh, delicious Clew Bay native oysters and award-winning Pacific oysters. For a quarter of a century the Gannon family has produced shellfish in aquaculture sites on the shores of Clew Bay near Croagh Patrick for which the company is named. Croagh Patrick Seafoods is a prime example in demonstrating how using the sea as a resource and developing this aquaculture enterprise is a real and viable alternative to land use and agriculture.

Tours are 90 minutes long and take place daily at 12 noon. They can be booked online at www.croaghpatrickseafoods.ie. Croagh Patrick Seafood and Tours is in Rosslaher, halfway between Westport and Newport and just a 5 minute cycle from the Greenway.



The launch of Croagh Patrick Seafoods & Tours visitor centre at Rosslaher, Westport. Pictured tasting the atlantic are (l-r): Eva Costello (Failte Ireland), Sue O'Toole (Development Officer at South West Mayo Development Company), Padraig Gannon (Croagh Patrick Seafoods & Tours), Mary Gavin (Fisheries Local Action Group) and Mary Hannan (An Bord Iascaigh Mhara). Photo: Michael Mc Laughlin

Marine Institute to Host 12th Shellfish Safety Workshop

The Marine Institute in conjunction with the Food Safety Authority of Ireland (FSAI), Sea-Fisheries Protection Authority (SFPA), Bord Iascaigh Mhara (BIM) and Irish Farmers Association Aquaculture (IFA) will host a Shellfish Safety Workshop at its headquarters in Rinville, County Galway, on the 17th October 2023. This will be the 12th in the series of workshops which commenced in 2000, with the last one held in October '19.

Registration is open to anyone working in the areas of shellfish aquaculture and food safety. The workshop welcomes participation from the shellfish industry, regulators, scientists, and researchers.

When describing the event, Dave Clarke, Shellfish Safety Manager at the Marine Institute said, "This is a fantastic opportunity for those working in the shellfish sector to meet and discuss the current issues, latest trends and patterns, and the latest research advances in the field."

The principle aims of this workshop are:

- To continue the strong working relationship and communication with the Irish shellfish industry and state agencies in the promotion of high quality and safe shellfish, through presentations, discussions, debates and to generate key questions and potential areas for future research.
- Review current and future direction of Marine Institute monitoring programmes and shellfish safety systems, to continually adapt to challenges to ensure the support and enhancement of aquaculture sustainability and food safety into the future.
- Continue to build a shared understanding and interpretation of food safety risks arising from biotoxin and microbi-

ological contamination, to support risk management decisions and provision of scientific advice.

- Present recent and ongoing key research which benefits and supports the shellfish aquaculture industry and regulators; and to encourage national and international scientific collaboration with industry, state agencies, researchers, and academic institutions.

The day will include **keynote presentations from international colleagues** on developments of key importance to shellfish safety in Ireland. In addition, there will be **updates and findings presented from national monitoring and research programmes** for phytoplankton, biotoxins and microbiological contamination.

This **free, in-person event** will have a poster session and exhibition stands providing an opportunity for further discussion and to meet with representatives and colleagues from a variety of state agencies, academic and research institutions, and the shellfish industry in an informal environment.

A confirmed agenda and timeline will be provided by the end of September. If you are interested in attending, please register via www.eventbrite.ie

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Smalltooth Sandtiger Shark (*Odontaspis ferox*) Stranded at Kilmore Quay, Co. Wexford

Report by Declan Quigley

On 1st April 2023, an exceptionally large dead adult female Smalltooth Sandtiger Shark (*Odontaspis ferox*) [LOO] measuring c.4.2m total length (TL) was discovered by a Swiss tourist stranded at Kilmore Quay (52.1736°N, 6.5878°W), Co Wexford, SE Ireland (Figs. 1-4).



Figure 1-3. Smalltooth Sandtiger Shark stranded at Kilmore Quay, Co. Wexford, 1st April '23



The Kilmore Quay specimen, which represents the first record of *O. ferox* from Irish waters, the eight from the European Atlantic (Table 1 on page 39), and the northernmost record from the NE Atlantic, was examined in detail and necropsied by Nick Payne, Jenny Birtoluzzi, Haley Dolton (Trinity College, Dublin), and Kevin Purves (University College Dublin).



Figure 4. Aftermath of the Kilmore Quay Smalltooth Sandtiger Shark necropsy



The first European Atlantic specimen of *O. ferox*, a small immature male measuring 141 cm TL and weighing 13 kg, was captured during January 1930 by *MFV Marie-Jacqueline* while trawling at a depth of 200-250 m in the Bay of Biscay off La Rochelle, France. Forty years later (September 1970) another small immature male measuring 121 cm TL was captured in the Gulf of Cantabria off the north coast of Spain. Fifty years later (August 2012), the third specimen, an adult male measuring 250 cm TL and weighing c. 200-300 kg, was found stranded, albeit still alive, at Agon-Coutainville, Normandy on the French side of western English Channel. The following year (September 2013), the fourth specimen, a dead adult male measuring 324 cm TL and weighing c 200 kg, was found stranded on Marescle Beach, Morbihan, Brittany, NW France (Fig. 5). During June 2022, the fifth specimen, a live adult female measuring 336 cm TL and weighing c.300 kg, was captured and released by a gill-netter in the Ria de Arousa, Galicia, NW

Spain, but shortly afterwards was found stranded nearby, albeit still alive. During 2023, two specimens were recorded from the UK side of the western English Channel, including a live specimen measuring c.200 cm TL stranded at Lepe Beach & Country Park, Exbury, Southampton, Hampshire (17 March 2023) [Fig. 6], and a dead specimen measuring c.300 cm TL found floating off Lyme Regis (early May 2023) [Figs. 7-9]. It is interesting to note that the latter two UK specimens were recorded just prior to (March) and shortly after (May) the Kilmore Quay specimen (April).



Figure 5. Smalltooth Sandtiger Shark stranded on Marescle Beach, Penestin, Morbihan, Brittany, NW France (21.09.2013) [Photo Eric Stephan, APECS]
Figure 6. Smalltooth Sandtiger Shark stranded at Exbury, Southampton, Hampshire, UK (17.03.2023)



Over the last 93 years *O. ferox* appears to have been sequentially extending its European Atlantic range northwards from NW Spain and Biscay, to the English Channel and SE Ireland. It is interesting to note that 75% (6) were reported over the last decade, including 50% (4) from the English Channel. All of the specimens recorded northwards of NW Biscay were adult-size males and females, mostly

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live stranded albeit likely moribund. Although it is possible that some of the specimens may have been captured and discarded at sea, there was no evidence of any external injuries or net marks. It is also possible that this essentially deep-water shark which is usually found in tropical and warm temperate latitudes, may have accidentally wandered into the relatively shallow waters of the English Channel where they became disorientated. There was no evidence of pollution. Hopefully the results of the Kilmore Quay necropsy may provide some definitive answers.



Figure 7-9. Smalltooth Sandtiger Shark found floating dead off Lyme Regis, Devon (Barry Trevett - 06.05.2023)

The Smalltooth Sandtiger Shark appears to have a circumglobal but patchy distribution in tropical and warm temperate waters (Fig. 10). However, due to the paucity of records (<200 worldwide), relatively little is known about

its biology and ecology. Although the species is usually found on or near the bottom on upper continental slopes and along steeply sloping insular shelves at depths down to 883 m, juveniles are generally found at depths of 200-600 m. Although adults (>200 cm TL), particularly mature females, have occasionally been observed in shallow inshore waters (<10 m), they have also been recorded from epipelagic oceanic waters (70-180 m from the surface), down to depths of 2000 m.

Male and female *O. ferox* are thought to mature at TLs of 200-250 cm and 300-350 cm respectively. The largest recorded male and female measured 344 cm and 450 cm TL respectively. The maximum verified weight is 289 kg. The species' diet appears to be mainly demersal fish, squid and prawns. Despite their large size and formidable dentition, the Smalltooth Sandtiger Shark is not known to be aggressive towards humans. Nevertheless, it would be prudent to take the utmost care when handling live specimens.

Due to its apparent rarity, very low fecundity (producing only 2 pups every 2 years), and high susceptibility to exploitation, *O. ferox* is currently listed as globally *vulnerable* in the IUCN Red List of Threatened Species, and is considered to be *critically endangered* in the Mediterranean Sea.



Figure 11. Bigeye Sandtiger Shark (Odontaspis noronhai), c.360 cm TL, pelagic longline, off eastern Florida (27.03.2008) [Photo Kerstetter & Taylor 2008]

A closely related species, the Bigeye Sandtiger Shark (*O. noronhai*) [ODH] (Fig. 11), which appears have a similar cosmopolitan disjunct distribution as *O. ferox*, has rarely been recorded. Indeed, only about 20 specimens have been

reliably documented worldwide. In the NE Atlantic, *O. noronhai* has only been reported on two occasions, both from Madeira (NW Africa), including the original holotype, taken off Camara de Lobos (near Funchal), first described during 1955. Only three specimens have been authenticated from the NW Atlantic to date, including the two from Gulf of Mexico (Texas) and one from eastern Florida.

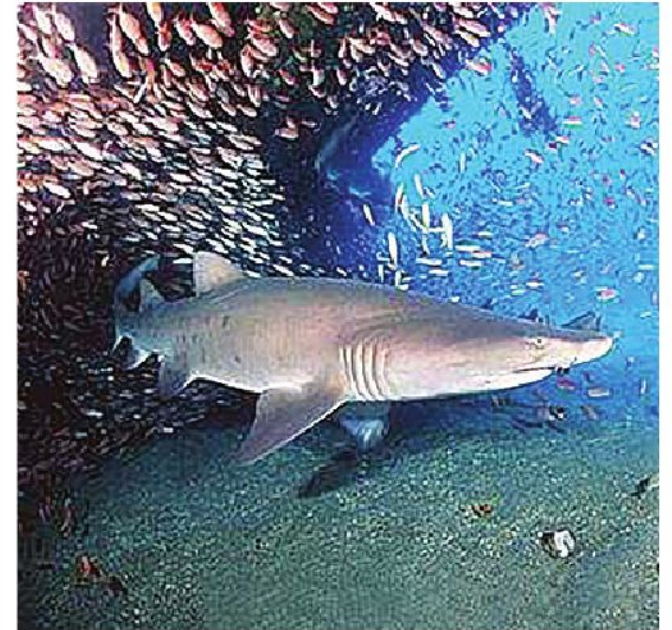


Figure 12. Sandtiger Shark (Carcharias taurus) [Photo Florida Museum]

Despite sharing a similar common name, the Sandtiger Shark (*Carcharias taurus*) [CCT] (Fig. 12), which is frequently kept in public aquaria, is not closely related to either the Smalltooth Sandtiger Shark (*O. ferox*) or Bigeye Sandtiger Shark (*O. noronhai*). Although *C. taurus* has a worldwide distribution in relatively shallow inshore (15-25 m) warm temperate and sub-tropical waters, in the NE Atlantic it has only rarely been recorded as far north as the Mediterranean Sea where it is considered to be critically endangered.

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

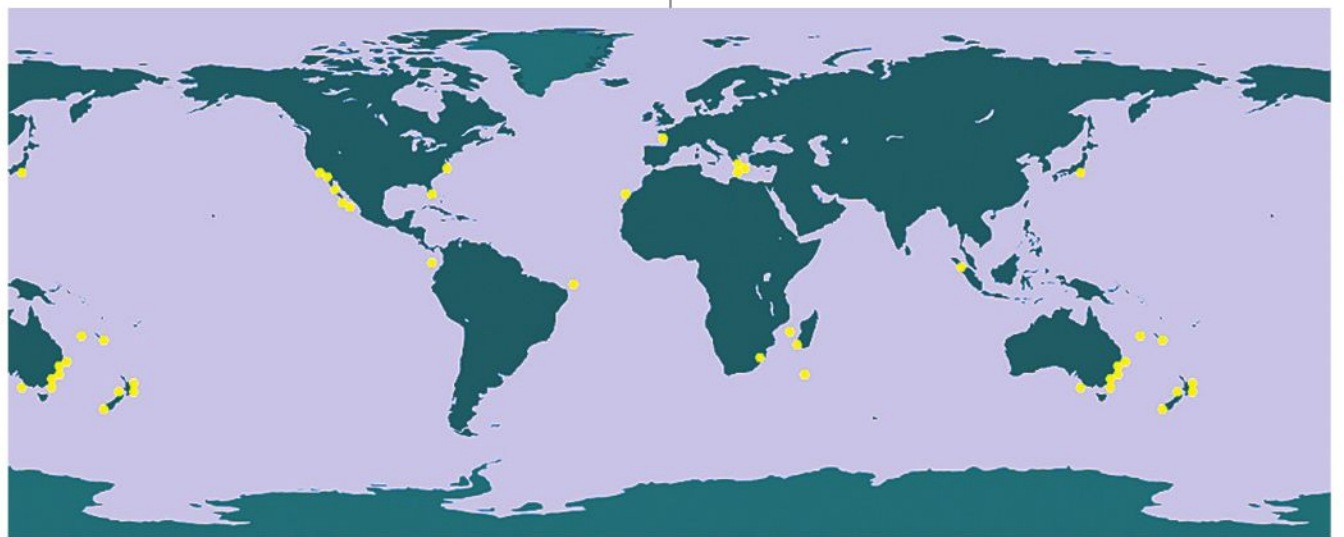


Figure 10. Global distribution of Smalltooth Sandtiger Shark (GBIF)

Table 1. European Atlantic records of Smalltooth Sandtiger Shark (*Odontaspis ferox*)

Date	Location	Latitude (°N)	Longitude	Depth (m)	Method	T.L. (cm)	Weight (kg)	Sex
10/01/1930	Bay of Biscay, off La Rochelle, SW France	46.0000	-4.0000	200-250	trawl	141	13	juvenile male
September 1970	Gulf of Cantabria (ICES Division VIIIc), N Spain	43.4628	-3.8050			121		juvenile male
13/08/2012	English Channel, Agon-Coutainville, Manche, Normandie, France	49.0405	-1.5855	0	live stranding	250	c.200-300	adult male
21/09/2013	Bay of Biscay, Maresde Beach, Penestin, Morbihan, Brittany, NW France	47.4600	-2.4860	0	live stranding	324	c.220	adult male
02/06/2022	Ria de Arousa, Galicia, NW Spain	42.5550	-8.8217	0	captured in gillnet, released & live stranded	336	c.300	adult female
17/03/2023	English Channel, Lepe Beach, Exbury, Southampton, Hampshire, UK	50.7842	-1.3532	0	live stranding	c.200		adult
01/04/2023	Kilmore Quay, Co Wexford, SE Ireland	52.1736	-6.5878	0	dead stranding	c.420		adult female
06/05/2023	English Channel, off Lyme Regis, Dorset, UK	50.7252	-2.9366	0	floating dead	c.300	c.113	adult



Faoilean Na Mara off Portmor, Malin Head - Photo courtesy Ali Farren

SFPA Publishes New Fisheries Information Notice on Fishing Vessel Logbook Requirements

The Sea-Fisheries Protection Authority (SFPA) recently published a new Fisheries Information Notice (FIN) on European logbook requirements.

Fishing vessels of 10 metres overall length or more that are engaged in commercial fishing are required to maintain a fishing logbook. The FIN summarises key requirements for vessel masters and owners under the Council Regulation (EC) 1224/2009 and the Commission Implementing Regulation (EU) 404/2011. This includes the mandatory information to be reported in the logbook and the requirements for the completion and submission of fishing logbooks.

Logbooks must be updated every day, no later than midnight, immediately after the last fishing operation has been completed, before entering port, and at the time of any inspection at sea.

Fishing vessels that are 10 metres overall length and above, up to 12 metres overall length, are required to complete a paper logbook. Vessels of 12 metres length overall and above must keep an electronic logbook. In autumn 2022, training was provided by the SFPA to owners and masters using electronic logbooks on the new version of ieCatch.

The SFPA conducted an eight-week series of engagements with fishers, rolling out enhancements to the Electronic Recording & Reporting Systems (ERS) required for fishing vessels and the provision of training on the use of the new system. Training events were held during September, October, and November 2022 at various locations across Counties Cork, Donegal, Galway, Kerry, Limerick, Meath, Waterford, and Wexford. In addition, the SFPA ran training for masters new to electronic logbooks in April 2023 at various locations across Counties Cork, Donegal, Dublin, Mayo, and Wexford.

The FIN provides information on the completion of both paper and electronic fishing logbooks. An example of a paper logsheet is provided in the FIN, along with guidance on the completion of each field. Fishing vessel masters should familiarise themselves with this FIN to ensure they are filling in their logbook correctly and submitting the logbook in a timely manner.

For further details on the FIN, please contact: sfpafood&fisheriessupport@sfpa.ie



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