

MARINE TIMES

IRELAND'S LEADING MARITIME NEWSPAPER - JULY 2020 - PRICE €3.00



Negotiating Ardglass - Photo by Christopher Feenan



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Marine Times Opinion

GOVERNMENT DISCRIMINATION!

As the MARINE TIMES returns to publication after three months of enforced suspension due to Covid 19 it is necessary, as Ireland's leading maritime newspaper, to highlight State discrimination against the fishing industry and the aquaculture sector.

To "discriminate" is to "constitute, set up, observe, distinguish, create a difference."

The Government approved a €50 million support scheme for beef farmers affected by the pandemic, designed to cover price losses incurred as a result of the collapse in the market due to Covid-19 and other factors, including Brexit. This was declared by Government to be an entirely State-funded scheme, without EU financial involvement.

The Government followed this with a €25 million package to support the Arts and Culture sector recover from the Covid-19 emergency.

The fishing industry sought assistance in a support package because of the effects of Covid 19. It put forward proposals which were rejected by the Marine Minister and his Department.

The aquaculture sector has put forward six different proposals for assistance to fish farmers. No support has, so

far, been offered to it by the State.

EU funding via the EMFF was available.

The Minister for the Marine told fishing industry representative organisations during discussions that there was no State money available to assist fishing.

By comparison with the €50m made available to beef farmers, the Department of the Marine has not been able to quantify how much will be spent on the temporary tie-up scheme offered to the fishing industry. However, on the basis of take-up so far, industry sources maintain that the total spend may be as little as €250,000.

That agriculture and the arts succeeded in getting aid, where fishing did not, is not a source of resentment against those sectors by the fishing industry.

But it is, this paper says, a discriminatory decision by Government against the fishing industry and aquaculture.



the fine Art of Marine Finance

by Art Kavanagh

The Beatings Will Continue Until Moral Improves

Looks like we are heading for the end of the 'Lockdown' lads and maybe life can regain some level of normality - although I wonder if we will ever get fully back to where we were.

As usual the fishing sector is battling its way through the crisis with no real assistance from Central Government while many other industries are getting grants to resume business. I don't know lads but you continue to amaze me in your sheer resilience and optimism.

We appear to have a problem in the prawn markets though and I cannot understand why the EU at the suggestion of our Department has not declared the entire Porcupine Bank closed and completely Out of Bounds.

Every prawn taken in the Porcupine

is adding to the ever increasing "Prawn Mountain".

If this was Milk or Agri Product we would be getting a Subsidy for it.

I see that the issue of weighing the pelagic catches on the pier is back in play and really wonder if anyone is thinking straight at all.

Are they trying to drive the pelagic fleet - both Irish and Non-Irish away and starve the factories of raw material. Would Financial Suicide be an appropriate expression to cover this kind of situation?

A good friend of mine recently in describing the overregulation of many sectors in Ireland suggested that **"The beatings will continue until moral improves"**.

I have always held with the belief that you can in fact manage a business to death and that by constantly discussing issues and basically procrastinating a business or indeed a good idea can be made to wither, starve or simply suffocate.

The secret is that if something is to be successful make sure you can associate your name with it. But, if there is the slightest possibility that it will go wrong **MAKE SURE YOU CAN'T BE BLAMED !!!!!**

I hope that you have all availed of the 'Payment Holidays' being offered by the Banks although I am hearing that the process is and has not been quite as seamless as first suggested.

It is like watching someone drowning and deciding to let him go under twice before pulling him out when all of the fight has been drained from him. I think there is a law against false or misleading advertising ????

I am glad to see a level of co-operation between the POs which is a credit to you all and which can only lead to further co operation for the benefit of everyone.

I believe as a sector we need to up our game on the PR front even if it means engaging with PR professionals. We are losing the PR battle hands down lads.

I hear that Michael Keatinge is about to retire from BIM and I wish him well. He has been a good friend to me and to you all - probably more than you realise as often happens.

It is hard not to worry about the Brexit affair and we must hope that the overall strength of the EU will protect us all in the months ahead.

I am calling again however for a Root and Branch report on the sector to best decide how to make it better for everyone - not least the state. We are all over the place in trying to manage the quotas we have and divide them amongst too many players while all along we have the SFPA yapping at our heels.

Maybe we need some form of Decommissioning to make those remaining more viable.

You are managing to survive through your own bravery, but effort used in this way is wasted effort and could and should be used more profitably.

"Do not judge me by my success Judge me by how many times I fell down and got up again"

Nelson Mandela



Calm night in Balbriggan harbour - Photo by Richard Guildea

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Where Is the Fishing Industry in the Scheme of Things?

Asks Hugo Boyle, Chief Executive of the Irish South and East Fish Producers' Organisation



We have a lot of difficulties at the moment. Covid 19 has presented marketing and other difficulties and there is the Brexit situation where the UK attitude seems to have toughened. It is a very tough time for the fishing industry. First and foremost what we need to get sorted out is the government attitude towards the industry.

€50m was given to the beef farmers, from the Exchequer. We don't begrudge them that, but the Minister for the Marine, who is also the Minister for Agriculture, indicated to the industry organisations during discussions about assistance that there was absolutely no way he could dig into Exchequer funds for an aid package for the fishing industry. Yet the Government was able to bail out the beef farmers and turn to the Arts and give them €25m, so where is the fishing industry in the scheme of things for the Government?

Now a new Programme for Government has been published and the agriculture and food sector gets 14 pages and there is a bit thrown in at the end for the marine element, a token response that there is nothing new in, It was already all in the public domain and I would consider it political whitewash.

That is the status we are held in, unfortunately.

We still have not got the aid we requested. We have contacted the Minister by letter on a couple of occasions since he wrote to us outlining why there would not be more assistance. They made a big deal of the tie-up scheme which wasn't fit for purpose as far as we are concerned and the low take-up indicates that. We have contacted Minister Creed by letter on a couple of occasions since to seek further meetings to amend the scheme and to include other elements which are allowed by the EU's amendment of the EMFF funding which allows for State assistance. But the Department told us they couldn't do that, but they could do it for the beef farmers.

At the present level of take-up of the scheme from the Department, if it continues like it has in June, that total scheme would cost just over a quarter-of-a-million which is far from the €75m given to farmers and the arts.



Endeavour off Dunmore East - Photo by William Power

The tie-up scheme doesn't come anywhere near that. It is a disgrace.

We have Brexit coming, with a much tougher and harder line coming from the UK at the moment. We are still fighting very hard and sent a letter of support to Michel Barnier (European Commission's Head of Task Force for Relations with the United Kingdom) this particular week to continue with relating access to trade with the UK to the fishing negotiations. That is very important as far as the Irish industry is concerned because we depend a lot on access to UK waters.

What I would like to see happening is a dedicated Department of the Marine and a Minister for the Marine, covering all aspects of the marine sector, including the fishing industry. The marine is spread across so many departments that it is not properly dealt with or recognised for its importance.

We need dedicated, committed attention to the marine sector and that it is not spread over so many departments.

• Marine Times in discussion with Hugo Boyle



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For information on course content and applications please contact:

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A Lot of Promises – But Are They Political Whitewash?

Report by Deputy Editor, Tom MacSweeney

At a time when this paper questions the discriminatory attitude of government towards the fishing industry, when it allocated €75m in total to beef farmers and the arts and culture, but only a quarter-of-a-million Euro to the fishing industry and nothing to aquaculture, it is not, therefore, surprising that we would also question the proposals in what was described as a 'Green New Deal' for the marine sector, including fishing, in the joint document of Fianna Fáil, Fine Gael and the Green party for Coalition government.



Ballycotton - Photo Brian Motyer

"We are committed to prioritising the development of the marine," it said, a bold statement, but can it be believed?

"As an island nation, Ireland has a special relationship with the ocean." This statement is factual.

"Everything must be done to protect marine biodiversity and to secure a sustainable future for the fisheries sector while supporting coastal communities." This statement is welcome

But – and there is a very large but, do politicians really care about the maritime sphere or do they just utter sentiments that are nice to hear and read, but are unlikely to be delivered upon?

The welcome point is that the document contained detailed references to the marine, which we publish here. But there are cynics who have said there is nothing new in them, that they are "cut-and-paste" from previous political party statements when intent on getting into power.

Our information is that the Green Party did push, during Coalition negotiations, for a dedicated Department of the Marine, but that was rejected by Fianna Fáil and Fine Gael. There has been no formal comment from any party on this.

The document is a strategy, containing no financial provisions. None were promised until Budgetary decisions would be made. It suggested that the Taoiseach's Department would oversee marine matters,

In this edition of the MARINE TIMES, as well as our front-page Opinion piece about government discrimination, there are other voices – questioning where the marine sector stands in governmental structures? As the 'poor relation' is one opinion.

It would be nice, even surprising, to see that change. Hope lives eternal and has been living in the maritime sector for a long time.

The importance for the nation of having a dedicated marine department, the economic potential it could provide if all sectors were united under the one dedicated and determined department, rather than being divided and dissipated across several, has been highlighted previously. That State administrative structure has enabled those without appreciation of the maritime sector, to deny the marine its proper place in this "island nation."

Those of a "shorebound mentality" in government – politicians and civil servants – as well as other 'opinion influencers' in the business world, the national media

and the public, should remember that the maritime sphere was critical to keeping the country supplied during the Covid pandemic and that the fishing industry kept food supplies going, without proper support from government.

Regrettably, there are too many with their minds and eyes fixed on Foreign Direct Investment, rather than the maritime economic resource which is on our doorstep and within Ireland's ownership.

The joint proposals of Fianna Fáil, Fine Gael and the Green party for Coalition government. Under the 'Marine' heading, the document states:

"We are committed to prioritising the development of the marine. As an island nation, Ireland has a special relationship with the ocean. Everything must be done to protect marine biodiversity and to secure a sustainable future for the fisheries sector while supporting coastal communities.

"We will:

- Develop a new integrated marine sustainable development plan, as a successor to Harnessing Our Ocean Wealth, focusing on all aspects of the marine, with a greater focus on sustainability and stakeholder engagement and centrally co-ordinated by the Department of the Taoiseach to

be implemented over the life of the Government.

- Ensure protection of the interests of the Irish Fishing industry by insisting that a Fisheries Agreement with the UK is concluded as an integral part of an overall EU Free Trade Agreement with the UK.

- Recognise that the critical issue in these negotiations for the Irish industry is continued access to UK waters and quota share and the danger of displacement of the EU fleet into Irish territorial waters.

- Seek EU Commission contingency supports and market disturbance funding for the fisheries sector to mitigate against the impact of Covid-19 and Brexit.

- Ensure that inshore waters continue to be protected for smaller fishing vessels and recreational fishers and that pair trawling will be prohibited inside the six-mile limit.

- Support the inshore fishing fleet in generating greater marketing and promotional capacity by facilitating the establishment of a Producer Organisation for these smaller fishing vessels, thereby providing additional opportunity for the island and coastal communities involved in the inshore sector.

- Aggressively tackle the issue of waste, ghost nets and illegal dumping in

the marine environment through rigorous implementation of the Port Reception Facilities Directives and by requiring all Irish fishing trawlers to participate in the Clean Oceans Initiative, ensuring that plastic fished up at sea is brought ashore.

- Continue to invest in coastline communities through the Fisheries Local Area Group (FLAG) programme, providing support for innovative projects to boost economic growth and job creation.

- Invest strategically in harbour infrastructure to attract increased landings into Ireland of sustainably caught fish in our waters, driving the development of the seafood processing sector and the blue economy in coastal communities.

- Work to develop the aquaculture sector in a sustainable way, including shellfish aquaculture using native species, and implement the recommendations of the report of the Independent Aquaculture Licensing Review Group, to ensure that feed products for aquaculture are sourced and produced in the most sustainable manner possible.

- Progress a national policy on coastal erosion and flooding having regard to climate change.

On the Common Fisheries Policy

“We are fully committed to the environmental objectives of the CFP, which has introduced measures aimed at sustaining fish stocks, through the ending of discards, quotas based on science and the internationally recognised concept of Maximum Sustainable Yield (MSY). We will actively promote setting annual quotas in line with MSY principles; Promote the introduction

of constructive technical measures that promote sustainability, decrease by-catch and protect fish stocks for the future;

Protect Ireland’s interests in the future review of the Common Fisheries Policy;

Work to eliminate illegal fishing and promote a culture of compliance by all EU vessels in our 200-mile zone, in order to protect the fish stocks on which the Irish Fishing industry depends; Implement the Sea Fisheries Protection Authority (SFPA) capability review with a view to enhancing governance issues and consider any other measures that may be necessary; Implement a fair EU points system in order to protect fish stocks and ensure the release of suspended EU funding; Work to retain factory weighing of pelagic fish in the context of negotiations on the new EU control regulation; Support the completion of the new Fisheries Control Regulation to increase the effectiveness of existing control measures and agree rules that will ensure a level playing field for all EU vessels; Increasing the level of transparency and access to information in regards to infringements within Irish waters will be key to measuring the effectiveness of the new system.

Marine Protected Areas

“Support the principles and ambition of the EU Biodiversity Strategy and develop comprehensive legislation for the identification, designation and management of Marine Protected Areas (MPAs) in Irish territorial waters. We will realise our outstanding target of 10% under the Marine Strategy Framework Directive as soon as is practical and aim for 30% of marine protected areas

by 2030. This will be done on the basis of scientific expertise and in close consultation with all stakeholders, in particular the fishing industry as well as environmental and community representatives. This consultation process will begin in the first 100 days of Government. We will examine the establishment of an offshore maritime area as Ireland’s seventh national park. This would form part of the expanded MPAs and allow for a learning experience in the maritime environment.”

Marine Planning

Government “will prioritise the passage of a balanced and Aarhus Convention compliant Marine and Planning and Development Management Bill through the Oireachtas”. We will publish Ireland’s first ever marine spatial planning policy setting out a clear vision for the future development of our marine planning system. The development of this policy will involve a full public and stakeholder consultation. Following completion of this, we will bring forward Ireland’s first ever National Marine Planning Framework. This will introduce a planning system for the development of Ireland’s maritime area in the same way that the National Planning Framework fulfils this function on land.”

Project Ireland Marine 2040

“Our long-term overarching strategy to manage Ireland’s seas for the benefit of all its people. A marine planning oversight delivery board on the same model as the Project Ireland 2040 Delivery Board will

be established to provide leadership and oversight to the implementation of these policies. We will task the Marine Institute with a collaborative EU-wide research initiative, aimed at investigating the climate change mitigation potential of blue carbon, working towards a means of creating a validated inventory that will in the future assist the EU in meeting our climate change objectives.

“Government will defend the interests of Irish fisheries among other strong export sectors and the wider economy, achieving the best possible deal for the Irish fishing industry in relation to access conditions, quota shares and the traditional activity of the EU fleet while insisting that fisheries issues are dealt with as part of an overall trade deal”.

The document also proposed a “major drive to realise the immense potential of Ireland’s offshore renewables” and to “evaluate and implement plans to realise the carbon sink potential of our marine environment based on the introduction of Marine Protection Areas”.

- Continue and expand the Clean Oceans Initiative to collect, reduce and reuse marine litter and clean up our marine environment.

- Work with the Northern Ireland Executive to deliver the flagship cross-border Ulster Canal Project in order to restore the all-island inland water system as a premier tourism attraction.



Designed for and by fishermen

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MFV Kittiwake off the Aran Islands - Photos courtesy Tommy Dirrane



Killala Coast Guard Unit Stood Down

Coast Guard “undergoing an extensive change programme”

Report by Tom MacSweeney

The entire Killala Unit of the Coast Guard in County Mayo has been “stood down”. Personnel issues have also been reported in the past few weeks in Units at Dunmore East in County Waterford and Crosshaven in County Cork.

“The Coast Guard will not be commenting on individual cases,” the Department of Transport, Tourism and Sport, which is responsible for the Coast Guard, told the *Marine Times* in response to our queries which involved OIC positions in Waterford and Cork.

It also told the *Marine Times*: “The Coast Guard is undergoing an extensive change programme. Coast Guard has engaged in an Information Technology modernisation programme which is bringing significant efficiencies to Coast Guard Units and how they are managed.”

“There are system failures in the Coast Guard. There are management and personnel issues, there are several investigations underway and there will be future issues,” this paper was told by a Coast Guard source.

Volunteers were reluctant to be quoted directly, pointing to regulations in the service.

The Coast Guard will not comment on individual, HR cases, but says it is “very active in supporting its volunteer Coast Guard service throughout the country.”

“With 950 volunteers, cases do arise where individuals or units fall out. Coast Guard facilitate all volunteers to work together on unit cohesion, team dynamics and to work through various inter-personal differences that may arise in units.”

The Killala Unit covered a wide coastline area in North Mayo taking in up to Mullaghmore, across Lough Conn and along the estuary of the River Moy and was designated as a search, cliff rescue and boat unit, with a RIB – rigid, inflatable boat.

It was one of the biggest Units in the country with at least 17 active members. There have been on-going internal personnel issues for over six months. Coast Guard management used an external company to conduct negotiations, but no resolution was achieved.

Other issues which have developed in the Coast Guard in the past few months included concern amongst volunteers about a management instruction issued in early April as the Covid-19 Pandemic spread. An Email instructed volunteers to reject requests for help if it required contact with anyone suffering from Covid-19 or suspected of having the virus. This was intended to protect volunteers, who are the biggest section of the Coast Guard, put at about 90 per cent of its manpower resource.

“We appreciated the concern shown for volunteer safety, but members felt they were put in a position of being helpless to assist should an emergency arise in their locality and that it had not been fully thought-through about the impact it would

have on safety. We were being removed from providing help rather than giving it when needed, which is the motive for which volunteers joined the Coast Guard,” was the response from an East Coast Unit.

It is understood that an internal advisory group, providing liaison between management and volunteers, suggested that because there was concern about breaches of Government restrictions on movements, Coast Guard coastal patrols could be helpful and the service should not withdraw during a national emergency.

“We were being removed from providing help rather than giving it when needed, which is the motive for which volunteers joined the Coast Guard”

The Department, in a short, brief statement, told the *Marine Times* that Units did respond to incidents where someone in distress might have Covid 19: “The Irish Coast Guard’s primary role is maritime Search and Rescue. SAR prevention is also a component in overall maritime safety strategy which aims to ensure an informed, responsible public. Coast Guard Search and Rescue Units do respond to incidents including incidents where persons in distress may be suspected of Covid-19. In the last number of weeks we have seen a doubling of incidents.”

Amongst other issues reported in the Coast Guard, are complaints that vehicles provided for Units are not able to carry full crews and full equipment loads to respond to an emergency. Concern has also been expressed about some boats and lifejackets.

According to statistics there are 97 officer ranks in the Coast Guard and 44 volunteer units around the coast. Volunteer rank numbers are given by the Department as “some 950 volunteer personnel.” Officers are appointed for a number of years and there is rotation for various reasons, including personnel leaving for personal reasons, according to the Department.

The *Marine Times* has reported how volunteers sought union representation over issues arising in the service and how management and Minister Shane Ross differentiated that volunteers are not employees of the Department and resisted various approaches to resolve on-going issues. These ranged from equipment to health and safety and personnel/management/volunteer relationships.

“The Coast Guard provides an essential service and has dedicated volunteers who are its major resource. Too many issues have been going on for too long,” the *Marine Times* was told by a former volunteer, one of those who left in dispute with management. “There’s a pride in giving ser-

vice to your community. It’s a blow to your morale to be sent a message that you’re no longer wanted. The Coast Guard cannot continue to lose local volunteers giving a service to their communities.”

The Department of Transport, having initially responded to the queries from the *Marine Times* in a short statement as quoted above, then sent a second longer statement:

“Coast Guard’s primary role is maritime Search and Rescue. Operationally the Coast Guard depends on search-and-rescue units from its SAR helicopter service, the RNLI lifeboat service and the 44 Coast Guard units comprising of some 950 volunteer personnel. During the ongoing Covid pandemic exercising has reduced to prevent spreading the virus, but all teams are in

a position to respond to persons in distress. Like all organisations Coast Guard are planning to return to exercising and training within the HSE/HSA guidelines. The past two weeks have seen a doubling of incidents on the coast. Media safety messaging has increased see also www.safetyonthewater.ie

“Coast Guard units provide an excellent service to their communities and are providing support to their communities and sister organisations during the Covid pandemic. Coast Guard will not comment on individual, HR cases but is very active in supporting its volunteer Coast Guard service throughout the country. With 950 volunteers, cases do arise where individuals or units fall out. Coast Guard facilitate all volunteers to work together on unit cohesion, team dynamics and to work through various inter-personal differences that may arise in units. The Coast Guard is undergoing an extensive change programme. Coast Guard has engaged in an Information Technology modernisation programme which is bringing significant efficiencies to Coast Guard Units and how they are managed.

“Regular external reviews of internal processes are carried out and findings addressed appropriately. Our Safety Management System deviation process mandates investigation and reporting of events, hence our reports to the Health and Safety Authority. As part of the change programme the IRCG partnered with the ‘Great Place To Work (GPTW) Institute’ and launched an engagement strategy called the ‘Trust Index & Culture Assessment (TCA)’ campaign with staff and the volunteer cadre. The Coast Guard was recently awarded the ‘Spirit of Ireland Award’ at the ‘Great Place to Work Ireland 2020 Awards’ in acknowledgement of the significant improvements being made to the organisation for the benefit of the service provided and Coast Guard members – both full-time and volunteer. The Irish Coast Guard continues to work on improving the service throughout the organisation.”

As the *Marine Times* went to press, we heard that there had been approaches from Coast Guard management to the Killala Unit about the issues in Mayo.

Letters to the Editor

French Boycotts

Billy Kelleher, MEP for the South at the European Parliament took up the complaints made by Castletownbere Fishermen’s Co-op about alleged attempts by French fishermen to boycott Irish fish exports in French outlets.

He writes: “For your information I am forwarding the response that we have received from the Commissioner having contacted him a couple of times on the issue of the French Markets. Unfortunately the response is not what we had hoped for.”

Dear Mr Kelleher

Thank you for your email of 11th May 2020 in which you refer to reported activities of the French fishing industry that, in your view, potentially compromise the Single Market.

The functioning of the Single Market is crucial, especially in times of a crisis such as the current COVID-19 pandemic. Therefore, the information you provided is of great interest to us and I can reassure you that we will monitor the situation on the EU markets closely.

That said, we require concrete evidence to assess potentially illegitimate activities and take action, if needed. We are currently not aware of any confirmed problematic initiatives at Member State level in this respect. Commercial practices and transactions, such as sourcing decisions, are in principle of a private nature but should of course be thoroughly examined, if they indicate a potential violation of the Single Market rules.

Let me reassure you that the Single Market is at the core of our efforts in tackling this crisis, as our recent emergency measures clearly show. We will remain vigilant as regards any developments in the context of the COVID-19 crisis.

I look forward to hearing again from you.

Yours sincerely
Virginijus Sinkevicius
Commissioner for Environment, Oceans and Fisheries

Marine Times Newspaper

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and Photos

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Trawl Through BIM Guide on Solutions to Reduce Unwanted Catches

Dr Ronan Cosgrove, Fisheries Conservation Manager, BIM

BIM recently produced an updated guide on technical solutions to reduce unwanted catches. Developed in collaboration with the Irish Fishing Industry, the document summarises the results of gear trials and survivability studies which assist with the landing obligation and boost fisheries sustainability by decreasing juvenile, over-quota and non-target catches in demersal trawl fisheries.

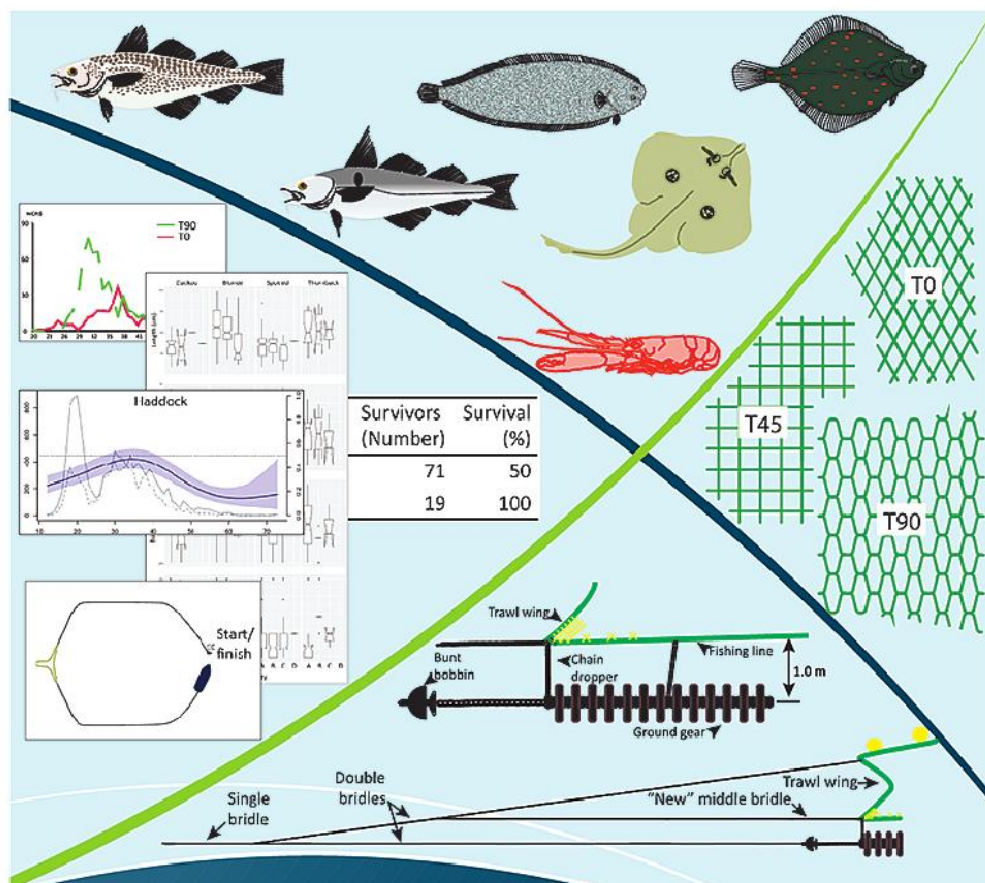
The landing obligation is primarily implemented through discard plans which specify detailed requirements for demersal fisheries in North-Western waters. These include survivability and de minimis exemptions which permit some continued discarding, and gear measures that aim to avoid unwanted catches during fishing. New gear measures are also implemented through other legislation, such as remedial measures under the annual EU Regulation on fishing opportunities.

The raised fishing line is one such measure. Vessels whose catches consist of at least 20% haddock will be required to use this gear in the Celtic Sea from the 1st June. Tested and developed in Ireland through a series of gear trials and a flume tank workshop, the gear substantially reduces cod catches resulting in avoidance of an area closure under remedial measures for cod in the Celtic Sea.

Other updates include an assessment of a 120 mm codend in the Celtic Sea leading to its inclusion in the 2020 discard plan, and sole and plaice survivability studies which will be used to apply for exemptions for these species.

The BIM Fisheries Conservation team consists of myself, Daragh Browne, Matthew McHugh and Martin Oliver. We have a busy year ahead on new gear trials and studies to deal with changing regulatory requirements. We can always find time, however, to lend a hand to vessels and crews interested in testing, tailoring and embedding appropriate gear modifications into their fisheries operations. Contact us at geartrials@bim.ie or 091 564318 for further information.

The new guide and detailed studies on reducing unwanted catches are available at www.bim.ie/our-publications/fisheries



BIM Ireland's Seafood Development Agency

Guide on Technical Solutions to Reduce Unwanted catches



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



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

The South - West View



The country's four fish producer organisations have repeated their requests to Marine Minister Michael Creed to meet them to discuss Government support for the fishing industry. The Chief Executive of the South and West Fish Producers' Organisation, Patrick Murphy, details the latest developments.

Unrepairable Damage Will Be Foisted Upon Coastal Communities

Many times fishing Industry Representatives are accused of inaction and of not speaking out for the Industry coupled with the not unreasonable assumption we are never united under one banner with one common goal.

It is no easy task to be sure, where we can find one issue that would unite all in the different metier of fishing techniques both inshore, off-shore, Aquaculture, even processors, Covid 19 has had a devastating effect on the businesses of Europe; its restaurants, food outlets and hotels all but wiped out; our markets slashing of prices for all our catches.

Responding to this we lobbied Europe, the Commission and the Parliament for help. In less than a month they stood up and put in place the changes in the regulations to empower the various Member States with the ability to assist their national fishing Industries.

This letter below is our latest pleading with Minister Michael Creed to sit down with us and review what we as fishing representatives, united, said would not work in his Tie-up scheme.

Dear Minister Creed

We, the four POs, namely the ISWPO, IFPO, KFO and ISEFPO, are seeking a further meeting with you to discuss the on-going crisis our fishing fleet both inshore and off-shore is struggling to cope with.

I know you are aware through my colleague, Mr Hugo Boyle, of communication to you dated the 2nd of June last. All Producer Organisations are united on this critical issue.

We are fully aware of the current political negotiations underway but stress our concerns must be again articulated immediately to you.

After you published details of the Tie-

up Scheme we, united, advised you it would have the reverse effect of regulating supply to meet current demand on the collapsed markets both at home and abroad and instead force vessels to go to sea knowing that by doing so they are jeopardising their futures in the Industry.

I feel it is important to add some details, Minister, to highlight why we need to meet to seek a review of current strategies.

Here is an analysis of the scheme is to date, (see table below)

This analysis, Minister, paints the picture of what we foretold - a total of 8 vessels over 18metres those fishing outside the 6-mile exclusion zone out of 170 eligible. Only 4.7% of this segment of the fleet applied - a far cry from the 66% limit set by the scheme.

The total cost of the scheme to date, excluding administration costs, is €85,050.

I would be grateful if we could get official figures ..

We advocate, Minister, if losses incurred to date, will not be recouped in the foreseeable future, due to ongoing serious difficulties in the markets which continue with no end in sight, my colleagues and I fear unrepairable damage will be foisted upon our Industry that is the backbone of many of our rural coastal communities putting them at risk.

We earnestly ask you to treat this request with gravity and meet us at the first available opportunity.

**Yours Sincerely,
Patrick Murphy**

On behalf of the four above mentioned PO's.

Size of Category	Number of vessels in Category	Accepted BIM Numbers June Tie-up	Monthly Payment	Total for June	Total for July	Total for August	Total to Date
≥ 24m	Est. 70 vessels	2 in June 2.8%	€6,000	€12,000			€12,000
18 < 24m	Est. 77 vessels	6 in June 7.8%	€4,600	€27,000			€27,000
15 < 18m	Est. 23 vessels	0 in June 0%	€2,000	€ ,000			€ ,000
12 < 15m	Est. 67 vessels	7 in June 10.4%	€1,900	€13,300			€13,300
10 < 12m	Est. 231 vessels	10 in June 4.3%	€ ,800	€8,000			€8,000
8 < 10m	Est. 365 vessels	19 in June 5.2%	€ ,750	€14,250			€14,250
6 < 8m	Est. 503 vessels	10 in June 2%	€ ,500	€5,000			€5,000
< 6	Est. 612 vessels	11 in June 1.8%	€ ,500	€5,500			€5,500

Malin Lobster Fishermen “Victims of Circumstance”

BIM says V-Notching “will start shortly” and scheme is open for applications

By Marine Times Reporter

Malin Head fishermen have continued to V-notch berried female lobsters continuing a conservation measure at their own expense, after it was suspended by Bord Iascaigh Mhara this year.



According to regulations the landing size for lobsters for Irish vessels must be no bigger than 127mm. Previous to January 2019 Irish vessels could land lobsters over 127mm for V-notching, which involves manually removing a V-shaped notch from the tail of a female lobster when first caught. These are returned to the water to breed, the V-notch a protective marking.

Malin Head Fishermen's Co-op has been to the fore in the V-notching scheme.

In 2018 it got a grant through the FLAG Programme, administered by BIM, which seeks “to encourage and enable local communities involved in fishery and aquaculture sectors to become the drivers of sustainable development in their areas.”

That grant enabled the Co-op to refurbish its system and the lobster holding tanks. From January of this year the BIM scheme was suspended.

Malin Co-op which has about 30 boats operating to it does not ship berried lobster.

After January of last year, (2019) it

offered that if their vessels were allowed to land lobster above 127mm., they would be V-notched and donate them to other ports which didn't have those size of lobsters on their grounds.

“This would be done under surveillance and would be a help to other communities, we felt,” the Co-op told the Marine Times.

This offer was refused. Brexit negotiations were amongst the reasons mentioned. “Despite this any lobster over 127mm taken by our fishermen in their pots were V-notched at sea and returned to the water.”

At the start of this year Malin Co-op “started as normal with the V-notching and had berried lobsters in a separate tank,” waiting for BIM to send their representative under what had previously been the operational system to approve the V-notching and subsequent release of those lobsters back into the water.

But, with 300 kilos of lobsters ready for V-notching, the Co-op says it was told by BIM that the scheme was not being put into

effect, with Covid 19 and the marketing situation mentioned as difficulties. There would be no funding payments for V-notching.

While understanding that there would not be a continuance of the scheme, Malin felt that it had become a “victim of circumstances” and it was holding 300 kilos. BIM's apparent view was that there was no point in allowing lobsters to be fished just for V-notching.

“Fair enough point, but we are caught here because we have 300 kilos of lobsters in our tank ready for V-notching and all of a sudden we became a victim of circumstances,” the Marine Times was told by the Co-op.

It was decided to V-notch them at the Co-op's expense and return them to the water. “Every week now, we are V-notching and releasing at our own expense. A ton-and-a-half we have V-notched.”

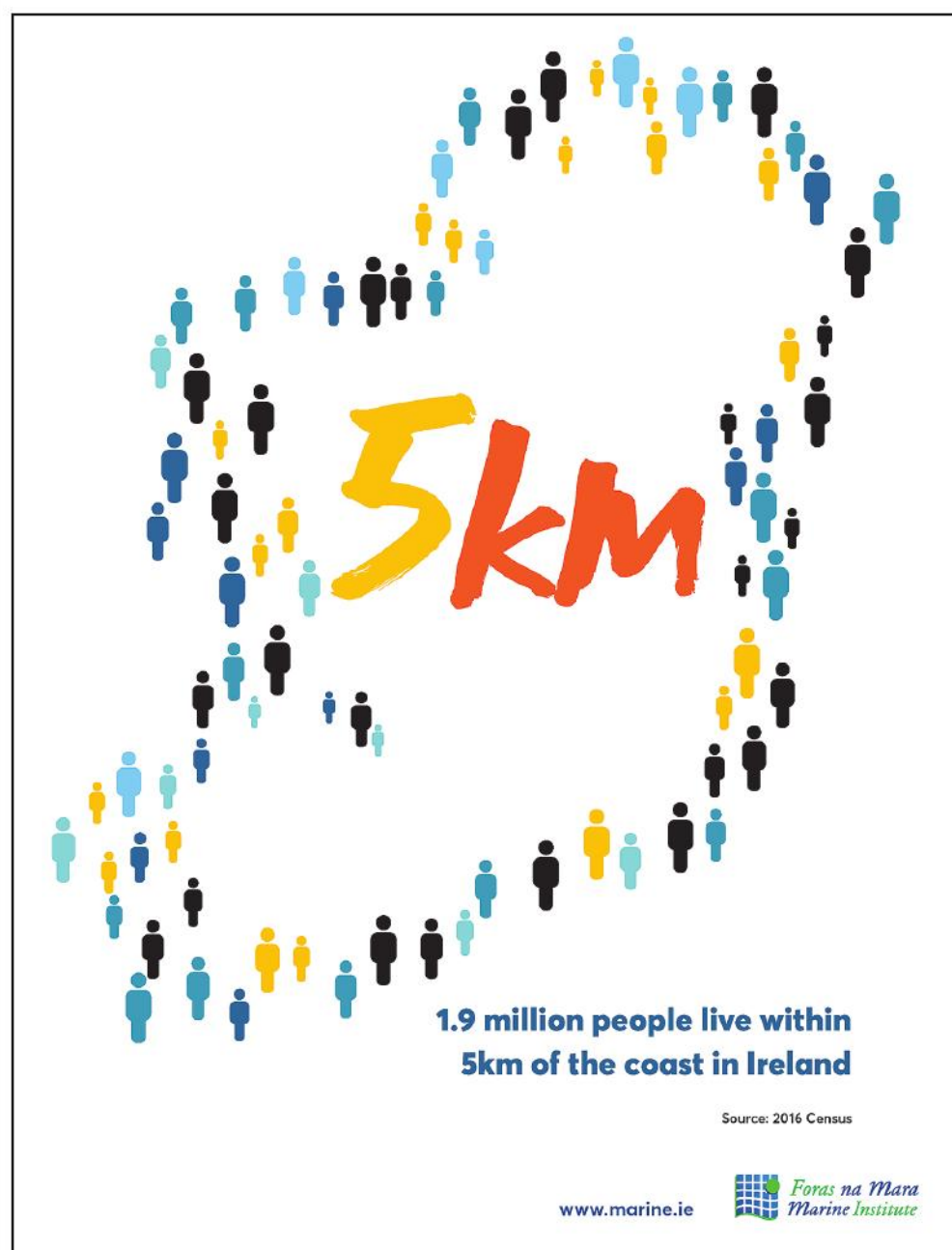
The Co-op told this paper they did not want to be overly critical of BIM with which they have had good relations, but the understanding had been that funding would be available for V-notching. The Co-op is featured in a BIM promotional video about the importance and benefits of the V-notching scheme.

BIM told the Marine Times that its V-notching scheme will start shortly and is open for applications: “BIM's V-Notching scheme, funded under the European Maritime and Fisheries Fund, is a conservation measure to protect spawning stock of female lobsters. Its purpose is to improve the sustainability of Ireland's lobster stocks by allowing female lobsters to breed a number of times. The scheme is open for applications and it is anticipated that V-notching will start shortly, consistent with government guidelines. A substantial volume of applications have been received so far. BIM recommend that people get their applications in as soon as possible. Contact your regional BIM Officer for more information or get further information at this link <http://www.bim.ie/schemes/>

It is important to make the point that V-notching needs to be done in the early summer to be of maximum benefit.

“There is no point in V-notching later in the year when the lobster is shedding their berries. It must be done in the early summer,” according to Malin Co-op.

The restrictions on Irish fishermen are different to those in the UK. British fishermen can land the larger lobsters into UK ports.



Challenging Times for Irish Aquaculture

IFA Aquaculture has submitted no fewer than 6 submissions to DAFM seeking support and has yet to receive any meaningful response.



Teresa Morrissey, IFA Aquaculture Executive joins our columnists, writing about the latest developments in the Aquaculture sector

Irish Aquaculture & Covid-19 Crisis

Irish aquaculture is experiencing a severe and unexpected impact due to the COVID-19 pandemic with market closures and disturbances having an unprecedented level of disruption. The negative impacts of this situation have been potentially devastating for the Irish aquaculture industry, particularly the shellfish sector, with impediments to carrying out normal production activity, a drastic reduction in demand from the markets, difficulties in receiving supplies and for distributing finalised products as well as increasing transport costs particularly for airfreight.

IFA Aquaculture lobbied at EU level for amendments to rules for the European Maritime and Fisheries Fund (EMFF), which now have been introduced, and allows for support measures to be implemented for aquaculture producers. These measures allow for redirecting of available EMFF funds allowing for financial compensation to be granted to aquaculture farmers and processing enterprises for the temporary suspension and the reduction of production and sales, or for the additional storage costs, occurred between 1 February and 31 December 2020, as a consequence of the COVID-19 outbreak.

IFA Aquaculture is continuing to lobby DAFM and BIM regarding the adoption of these urgent, powerful and extraordinary measures in order to prevent the COVID-19 emergency from having irreversible negative impacts on the normal operation of Irish aquaculture. At the time of writing IFA Aquaculture has submitted no fewer than 6 submissions to DAFM seeking support and has yet to receive any meaningful response.

Food production has never been more important and the current Covid-19 crisis has shown the value of sustainable food production systems. There is now a significant opportunity for aquaculture in light of the increasing global demand for seafood, more sustainable food sources and carbon-efficient food production. These growing demands along with the recently-announced 'EU Green Deal' and 'Farm to Fork Strategy', provide a real opportunity for the aquaculture sector to position itself as part of the solution to these growing demands and acknowledging the role Aquaculture has to play in sustainable food production and the Covid-19 recovery plan.

Programme for Government & Irish Aquaculture

Details relating to aquaculture in the Programme for Government fails to recognise the significant opportunity for Irish aquaculture. There is no clear recognition of the place Irish aquaculture has to play in

relation to the 'EU Green Deal' and 'Farm to Fork Strategy', which can provide a real opportunity for the Irish aquaculture sector to position itself as part of the solution to growing demands and as part of the Covid-19 recovery plan. While all sectors would note the document is largely aspirational and non-committal, and also has been noted by all interest groups that there is no reference to costings or budgets; highlighting the lack of certainty around funding to implement commitments.

However, IFA Aquaculture welcomes the commitment of the next Government to implement ALL recommendations of the Independent Aquaculture Licensing Review. We have continuously sought a clear commitment from the Government with regard to an implementation plan that prioritises and gives clear timelines for each of the recommendations outlined in the review – such an implementation plan is long overdue. The Irish Aquaculture sector needs the support of policy in order to achieve any realistic sustainable development of the industry. IFA Aquaculture also welcomes the inclusion of an assessment of 'blue carbon' potential and seeks appropriate recognition and remuneration for the Irish aquaculture sector in its carbon sequestration services.

A functioning aquaculture licensing system continues to be a key priority to unlocking any future potential of the Irish aquaculture industry. Development opportunities for Irish aquaculture must be facilitated through appropriate legislative reform – it's widely acknowledged that the Irish Aquaculture sector needs the support of policy to allow for sustainable development of the industry. **NOW** is the time to ensure that Irish aquaculture is taken seriously and doesn't miss the biggest opportunity, during a time of the greatest need for sustainable food production, for the development of sustainable Irish aquaculture.

To sign up for IFA Aquaculture newsletter - <https://www.ifa.ie/sign-up-for-ifa-updates/>

Killala Company Takes Over Dublin Seafood Producer

Carr & Sons Seafood Ltd., of Killala, County Mayo, have acquired the Dublin company, HJ Nolan, whose products will be produced in Mayo. Both are now part of the Swedish Mondi Group which took over Carr six years ago.



Carr and Sons Seafood, established in 1946, hold a Grade A BRC and are located on the Wild Atlantic way in the idyllic fishing village of Killala, Co Mayo. This Grade A accreditation offers assurance to food retailers and all of our loyal customers and consumers that Carr and Sons Seafood adhere to the highest quality standards within the food processing industry. The Killala based company have always focused on craftsmanship and quality, which is reflected in their premium ready to eat seafood range. Nolan customers can expect the same high quality which has always

been associated with their prestigious brand for over 100 years. Nolans Quality Seafood Ltd. was founded in 1912 and run as a family run business until its acquisition by Carr & Sons. George Nolan said that its "loyal customers can be assured of continuity of this brand which goes back over a hundred years." Mondi Group AB was founded in 1980. Its owner and founder, Erling Charleson, said "this is a very exciting chapter for our Irish company and this acquisition will make Carr and Sons one of the strongest seafood companies in Ireland."

Recruitment Underway for 2020 Irish Aquaculture Accelerator Programme

Recruitment is underway for this year's Aquaculture Accelerator programme. The two-week programme, managed by aquaculture accelerator Hatch and funded under the European Maritime and Fisheries Fund, is taking place in the RDI (Research, Development, Innovation) Hub in Killorglin, Co Kerry this October.

Richard Donnelly, Development and Innovation Manager, BIM said: "Last year's aquaculture workshop, held in Dublin, resulted in 3 of the participating Irish businesses receiving significant capital investment and going on to join the Hatch Global Accelerator programme in Hawaii. It's clear that many more concepts and ideas await discovery and development in Ireland given the right environment, investment and focus."

Like most accelerators, the BIM Aquaculture Accelerator offers access to investors, fin-tech and other specialists, but this programme is specifically tailored to the aquaculture sector. This is the third such BIM aquaculture accelerator to take place since 2018. Start-ups on the programmes are diverse. Previous years' businesses have included innovative technologies in salmon cage manufacturing to online trading platforms for aquaculture products.

Wayne Murphy, Co-Founder and COO, Hatch said: "We are excited to partner with BIM once again to create and drive more opportunity and innovation within the aquaculture sector in Ireland. The ultimate aim

with this initiative is to grow, develop and support more early stage ideas and talent in what is the fastest growing food sector in the world right now (\$230B)."

Ten start-up businesses from Ireland will have the opportunity to work directly with and receive mentorship from a global team of experts from aquaculture, fin-tech and marketing disciplines in October.

Commenting on the announcement of the recruitment drive, Helen Rea, Programme Manager with RDI Hub, said: "We are excited to welcome BIM and Hatch to Kerry later this year. The purpose of RDI Hub is to catalyse innovation and create high skilled ICT jobs and achieving these objectives is accelerated through cross-fertilisation of ideas and solutions across sectors. Consequently, partnering with BIM and Hatch on this important initiative is a natural fit for RDI Hub."

The BIM aquaculture accelerator programme is taking place from the 5th until the 16th of October in the RDI Hub, Killorglin, Co Kerry. For details on how to apply, please go to www.hatch.blue

We Feel Aggrieved, But Brexit Could Cause Chaos On The Seas



Sean O'Donoghue, Chief Executive of the Killybegs Fishermen's Organisation, says the fishing industry is aggrieved over the way it has been treated and is concerned about the chaos which Brexit could cause.

The KFO view is that we have been proven correct about the temporary cessation scheme which Minister Creed brought in for the fleet, that it is unworkable because there has been less than one per cent take-up from the different segments from my view.

We feel aggrieved to say the least that other sectors have been accommodated in being given Covid supports, but for us there are no specific measures for the actual vessels themselves to try to keep them afloat until we get to the other side of the Covid.

We in the KFO and our PO (Producer Organisations) colleagues put forward what was a very workable scheme in that we would try and keep the markets open by having 50 per cent of the vessels going to sea and those that stayed ashore would get a percentage of their gross income. There was no fortune being made, it was just making sure that the vessels that weren't at sea were getting something for staying ashore and the market was not being flooded.

The industry was to the forefront in making sure that we would keep the sustainable food supply going in terms of fish on the Irish and European markets. We expected that we would be treated better, but we haven't got anything specific for the fleet and haven't been treated as well as other sectors have. We were also promised that we would get storage aid and that fell by the wayside as well.

We have a botched tie-up scheme which in theory is there, but in fact it is useless. The bottom line is that there are no specifics. The specifics are there for all the other sectors that have been helped by govern-

ment.

We want a specific measure for the fleet. The industry has been badly hit all around Ireland, so we do feel aggrieved.

On Brexit the situation is getting more difficult.

While I am critical of the Minister on the Covid situation, on Brexit I have to say that the government, Taoiseach, Tanaiste and Minister have been at one with us in terms of making sure the mandate that Michel Barnier got that fisheries was directly linked to trade access is maintained. He has not deviated from the mandate. It is crucial that we maintain what we have now and vice versa for the UK fleet in our waters.

The UK are being extremely intransigent and opposed to the view that fisheries should be linked to the upper areas even though Boris Johnson signed up in the withdrawal that that would be the case.

It is clear that there will not be an agreement without the fisheries being sorted out. There will not be an overall trade deal without that. We could be hit with a second tsunami after Covid in a no-deal Brexit situation on the first of January and if that happens, there will be chaos on the seas.

• In interview with the Marine Times

How Much Will Minister Creed's Tie-Up Scheme Cost? Department of the Marine Says "Cost will not be known until August"

To maintain editorial balance on the question of how much the State will spend on the Temporary Tie-Up Scheme for the fishing fleet, the MARINE TIMES asked the Minister, through a Press/Media question to his Department: "Could you advise please, what is the correct total of funding allocation from the Department for this Scheme for the fishing industry and the breakdown between Irish Government and EU/EMFF funding?"

This is the Department's reply: "As part of its Coronavirus Response Investment Initiative, the European Union amended its European Maritime and Fisheries Fund Regulation (508/2014) to modify some key EMFF interventions to address the impacts of the Covid-19 Pandemic on the EU seafood sector. These legislative changes have provided Member States with the legal basis to provide supports such as temporary cessation of fishing, storage aid and aid to aquaculture enterprises for reduced production and loss of sales, but crucially have provided no additional EU funds to implement these measures. Member States must fund any interventions from within their EMFF Programmes. Given the timing of the Pandemic, Ireland like many other Member States has allocated all of its EMFF Programme funds to existing Schemes with high demand from the industry and has committed most of those allocated funds. Minister Creed is working closely with BIM to identify any savings to fund any Covid-19 interventions that are appropriate, that complement the income supports from Government and that are consistent with the Government's over-riding policy of maintaining the food supply during the Pandemic.

"At the request of fishing representatives, Minister Creed has introduced a Temporary Fleet Tie-up Scheme for the polyvalent, Beam Trawl and Specific Segments for the 3 months June to August. The Scheme, which is implemented under Ireland's

EMFF Programme and administered by BIM, was not intended as a mechanism to replace income from fishing. It was designed as a safety net scheme to support the fixed costs of fishing vessel owners who choose to tie-up for one month periods due to the market disruption caused by the Covid-19 Pandemic. The Scheme provides participants with 100% of the fixed costs for various vessel sizes identified in data compiled by BIM as part of the EU Data Collection Scheme.

"As the Tie-up Scheme is a voluntary scheme, it is very much demand-led and its ultimate cost will not be known until August 2020, the final month of the Scheme. Markets across Europe and Asia are continuing to improve as various countries ease the restrictions in their territories and if this continues, it is likely that many fishermen will choose to fish rather than tie-up. This would be welcomed by all involved in the industry. The Tie-up Scheme is co-funded 75% from Ireland's EU EMFF allocation for the 2014-20 period and 25% by the Government of Ireland. However, the scheme must be 100% funded in the first instance with national exchequer voted funding for 2020."

As reported elsewhere in this issue, the fishing industry's Producer Organisations have described the scheme as "botched" and "unfit for purpose" and rejected it. Their alternative proposals were rejected by the Minister.

"If Covid 19 Has Done Anything It Has Taught Us That We Have Fantastic Seafood" Achill Oysters Urge Restaurants to Source Irish Seafood to Aid Recovery

Achill Oysters in County Mayo, a successful oyster producer, has urged restaurants to include local oysters and seafood on their menus to help offset the economic impact of COVID-19.

Hugh O'Malley (pictured), owner and farmer of Achill Oysters, producing Irish

rock oysters for the domestic and international market, said that, pre COVID-19,



their international business was thriving.

"We were exporting over two tonnes of oysters to China every week on top of orders to Singapore, Taiwan, the UK, Iceland and the Netherlands. We have seen a 80% drop in our export sales but I am confident we and the rest of the industry, will recover. Until then, we have an opportunity to work with restaurants to grow the domestic oyster market and in doing so, directly and indirectly support Irish businesses"

The majority of Irish oysters grown around our coast are exported to meet international demand. The domestic market for seafood is growing year-on-year with the latest figures estimating the sector to be worth €496 million in 2019. The main growth is in the food service sector with seafood becoming increasingly popular in our restaurants and gastro pubs.

Five generations of O'Malley's have made a living from the sea in Achill.

Following a successful career running his own technology firm, Hugh has used his IT and entrepreneurial skills, to develop the business. After only six years of trading, he has grown the business from 50kg of stock arriving on the farm in 2014 to a farm ten times the size, a processing facility in Ennis, Co. Clare and an e-commerce solution to sell his oysters online.

"Our oysters take three-and-a-half years to reach market size. We couldn't have a better location than Achill Island. We are proud to be part of this community employing local people on our farm. We are also very grateful to our Irish customers and fishmongers who have continued to support us. In fact, our online sales increased twentyfold during the lockdown.

"If COVID-19 has taught us anything, it is to continue to appreciate what we have in this country including fantastic seafood right on our doorstep"

Nurturing Green Shoots in the Irish Sea

Dr Ronán Cosgrove, Fisheries Conservation Manager, BIM

As the Irish Fishing Industry continues to deal with the fall-out from the Covid-19 crisis, it is essential that landings are tailored to available markets, and catches are optimised to make best use of available resources.



While Nephrops exports remain hampered due to the Italian market collapse, sales of demersal fish species are faring slightly better. As Industry reliance on such species increases, it is imperative that unwanted catches - formerly known as discards - are minimised to boost fish stock sustainability and to maximise economic returns on available quotas.

As outlined in BIM's recent 'The Business of Seafood 2019', the Celtic Sea is the stronghold for Irish demersal fish landings. Following a steady decline since the 1980's, there are signs of green shoots in the Irish Sea where haddock is the most important commercial fish species. The Marine Institute stock book shows that average haddock landings of 513 t from 2013 to 2015 increased by 75% to 898 t from 2016 to 2018. This is likely linked to a substantial 56% reduction in the haddock discard rate over the same period. Whiting discards also dropped by 48% so a pattern emerges:

Most discarding traditionally occurred in the Nephrops fishery in the Irish Sea. In 2014, BIM and Industry demonstrated significant 70% and 52% reductions in haddock and whiting catches with an enlarged 300 mm square-mesh escape panel. This led to comprehensive uptake of this measure in the Irish Sea from 2016 onwards and it looks like the benefits are starting to accrue.

While the Nephrops fleet can take a bow, the directed haddock fishery which accounts for around 70% of Irish Sea haddock landings is the main beneficiary from the success of this conservation measure. The directed fishery stands to gain even more if a new proposed gear measure is implemented. Irish vessels currently use a 120 mm

diamond-mesh codend to target haddock in the Irish Sea. Previous work by BIM and Industry demonstrated the benefits of using 100 mm T90 mesh for haddock in the Celtic Sea so it made sense to examine if similar findings would apply in the Irish Sea.

Led by BIM's Martin Oliver, a trial was conducted in the Irish Sea in March 2020 to compare catches between these gears. The T90 codend reduced undersize haddock by 41% and retained similar small quantities of whiting and cod compared with the 120 mm codend. A reduction in quantities and value of small market sized haddock was offset by increased catches of plaice and other prime species in the T90 codend. A simple economic analysis demonstrated a 64% increase in total catch value with the T90 before the monthly haddock quota was fully utilised. Large grade haddock were scarce on the grounds during the trial. We know from previous work that T90 codends consistently catch more large grade haddock when they are available. T90 also improves catch quality and further Industry-led testing is planned to demonstrate the benefits of this gear first-hand. In the meantime, an application has been submitted to the European Commission to permit use of this gear in the Irish Sea. If successful, Industry uptake of the T90 codend would further boost stock sustainability and economic returns in the increasingly important Irish Sea haddock fishery.

BIM would like to thank the owner and crew of the trial vessel for a fruitful collaboration. Their names are excluded due to use of economic data. A full trial report is available at www.bim.ie/our-publications/fisheries

Go Domhain san Fhuil - Deep in the Blood

Two Part Documentary Starts Monday 29th June at 10pm, BBC2

Fishing is an inter-generational activity in many Gaeltacht communities, including Magheraroarty in West Donegal. It's a small horseshoe shaped bay, with a stone pier facing out towards Inis Bó Finne, a small island with a strong link to the mainland.



Because of government restrictions on fishing for salmon, and on the issuing of new fishing licences, very few boats now operate out of Machaire Rabhartaigh. The O'Brien family owns all three of the remaining full time boats, fishing for crab behind Toraigh Island, and off towards the Scottish coast. It's tough, unrelenting work, involving lifting, clearing, baiting and re-setting up to 3000 pots on a single trip that lasts between 36 and 48 hours. There's little time for chat, and not a lot of time for breaks or for sleep, as the pots are hauled in and returned, often in difficult conditions.

Three boats feature in this two part documentary series. John O'Brien skippers the *Handa Isle*, operating with a crew of three, including his son Seán. They fish for crab behind Toraigh as often as the weather allows, spending 36 hours at sea on a single trip. John's son Colm skippers the *Aoibh Áine*, a recently purchased crabber. It goes out on two day trips to Stanton Bank, off the Scottish coast. As the price of crabs is falling, the pressure is on to spend longer at sea, setting extra pots, just to remain in business and have a reasonable standard of living.

The third, smaller boat belongs to Peadar Coll, who has a licence to fish for lobster and crab around the Donegal coast, and who also does a bit of net fishing for pollock and wrasse - but as a pastime rather than a means to make a living wage.

The locals recall the fishing season of old, when boats could switch from seasonal fishing of salmon to fishing for lobster and crab, as well as mackerel and white fish - when stocks had a chance to survive and replenish, and there was decent money to be made.



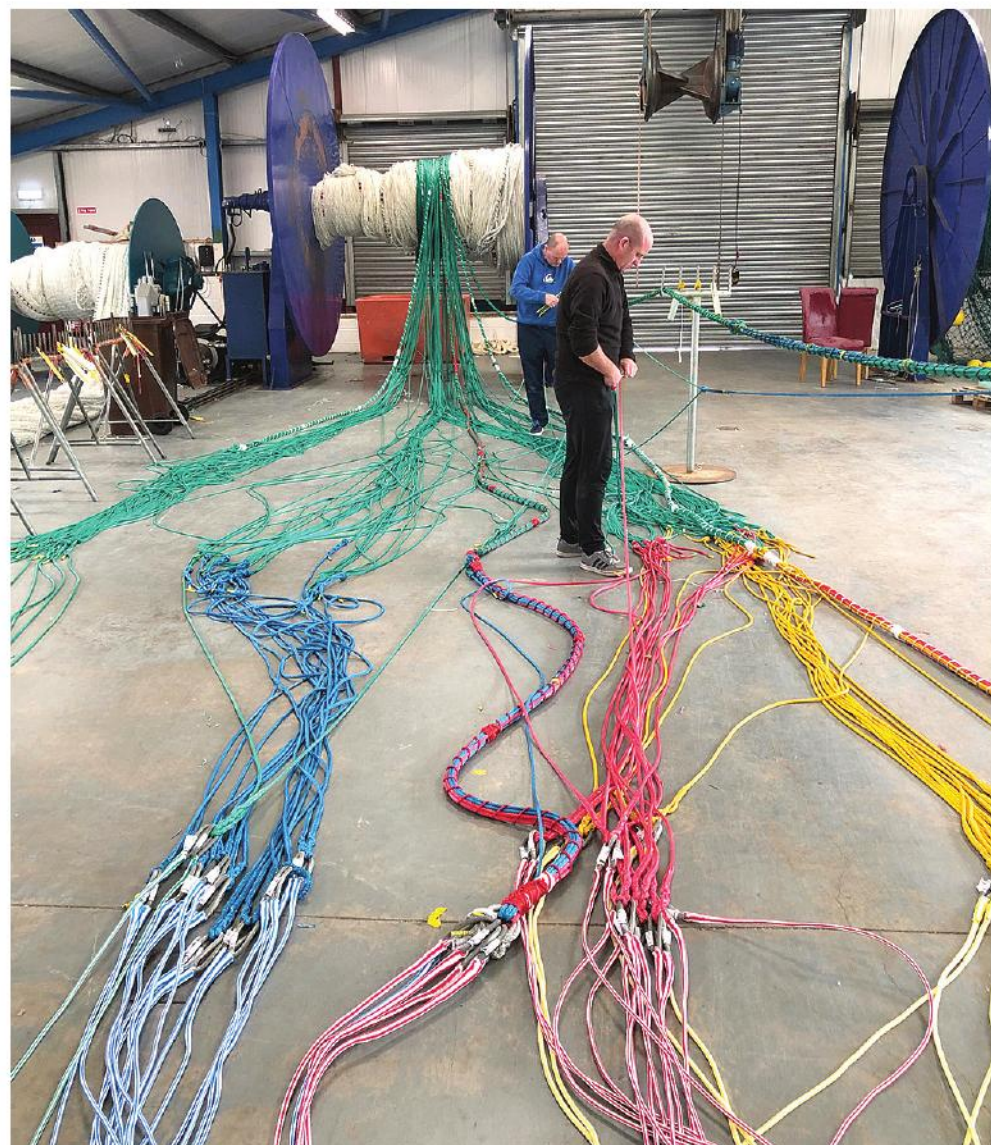
The banning of salmon fishing in 2007 was the beginning of the end for many Gaeltacht fishing communities all over the country, and the ending of a traditional way of life that had lasted for generations. With

fewer opportunities, the young people of the Gaeltacht find work elsewhere, and traditional fishing skills are lost, a vicious circle of neglect and decline that makes it hard to imagine a future for fishing in this most marginal of communities. While the decline in the number of boats fishing locally is impossible to deny, what's harder to shake is what's 'in the blood', the generational instinct to fish the Atlantic, whatever the circumstances.



'Gearing Up' for the Tuna Season

Following on from the success that customers of Swan-Net Gundry (SNG) have already had in the pelagic fisheries of herring, mackerel and horse mackerel (scad), with the company's new design concept of incorporating more meshing into the side wing panels of the trawls, the feedback from customers has been extremely positive.



These innovative trawls are designed to reduce the possibility of fish escaping through the sides

These innovative trawls are designed to reduce the possibility of fish escaping through the sides of the trawls as, with current traditional designs the fish can escape through the side gaps but by now incorporating the extra meshing in the wings means closing this exit route and, importantly, this process does not alter the opening of the trawl.

At present the gaps in the side wing area can vary in length, but can range from 30m up to 250m and SNG have addressed this problem with the design of two versions using the new 'closed sides' concept - one for pair trawling and the other for single boat trawling.

When vessels are working as a team (pair trawling), the SNG trawls are designed with the side wing panels filled out with extra meshing and finish with a short side rope which still allows the trawl to have the standard conventional finish.

And similarly, for single trawling, SNG

have filled out the side wing panels with the extra meshing but also with the wing-end finish on the trawls built to incorporate attaching two extra bridles - which changes the bridle arrangement from the standard four bridles to an eight-bridle setup (four per side).

This arrangement, by incorporating the extra bridles, closes the sides of the trawls all the way along which reduces the area of potential escape for fish.

The two options above can be used in either single or pairing as pair trawl teams can see the benefits with using the extra bridles in their standard setup will still remain user-friendly when passing over the lug ends of the bridles from one vessel to the other.

With this year's Albacore tuna season to start soon, SNG will have a combination of new trawls and modified trawls with this new design concept. SNG believes fishermen will see significant improvements in the trawl performance and catch success rates.



New 'Tougher' Thyboron Trawl Doors for the Achieve

Killybegs-based trawler *Achieve* has recently taken delivery of a new 'beefed-up' type of trawl door from renowned Danish manufacturers Thyboron Trawl Doors.

The TYPE 16 'Rockall' model is a customized model of the normal TYPE 16 oval trawl door and has been designed in co-operation with the fishermen operating in and around the Rockall grounds.

Well known for having some of the roughest seabed conditions anywhere in Western Europe, working the Rockall grounds has always been very hard on fishing gear.

And, due to the various powers and the gear-type used by the vessels that fish in this area, the trawl gear arrangement was always limited by weight of the trawl doors - which encouraged the Thyboron Trawl Door company to come up with a design that could spread the gear to its maximum potential whilst still withstanding the rugged seabed conditions of these grounds.

The TYPE 16 can be customized to any size or weight that the customer needs and, obviously, the higher the weight, the stronger the door and the 'Rockall' model is made with adjustable frontside towing brackets; strengthened backside chains; reinforced HARDOX main-plates (which are reinforced at weld and stress points); Duplex plates at crucial spots; Manganese wear shoes; strengthened plates in the vents for a stronger overall construction and these plates also stops the problem of stones getting stuck in the vents.

It was with these features in mind that long-time Thyboron Trawl Door customer Sean Conneely, owner of the trawler *Achieve*, skippered by Sean's son Mark,

ordered a pair of Type 16 'Rockall' doors for the seasonal squid and other fisheries.

"We often work on very hard grounds such as Rockall and the wear & tear on the gear is a constant factor and anything we can do to 'toughen up' our gear whilst maintaining maximum catch potential is essential," explained Sean, adding that *Achieve's* previous Thyboron doors were 5 sq. m. in size and weighed 1,500kg and the new ones are 5.5 sq. m. and have increased weight to 1,800kg.

"We've been customers of Thyboron Trawl Doors for many years and I'm confident of their design capabilities and that these new type of doors, particularly with the strengthened shoes, will give us continued good fishing with reduced wear on our trawl gear," he said.

Henrik Andreassen, Thyboron's Area Sales Manager says that previous to the recent introduction of the 'Rockall' version, the TYPE 16 is already considered a 'good old-fashioned' oval shape bottom door and the performance of this design has been known as solidly reliable for years with Irish vessels including Tom Kennedy's *Fiona K III* also using this model.

"We also manufacture other designs for Rockall fishing with, for example, the *Foyle Warrior* (Patrick McClenaghan) and *Northern Celt* (Adrian McClenaghan) using a reinforced model of our THYson trawldoor," he said.

For further information see www.thyboron-trawldoor.dk





SNG
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Swan Net Gundry are proud to have been chosen to supply fishing equipment for this fine vessel - RACHEL JAY

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Rachel Jay - TRANSFORMED!

When one looks at the 'before and after' photographs below of the Irish trawler Rachel Jay it is hard to believe that this is the same hull. Following a lengthy rebuilding project in Spain the original boat – a good servant in its time – has been more than just 'upgraded' but has the feel of a completely new vessel, both inside and out.

Owner / skipper Johnny Walsh has been through the long, and sometimes stressful, project that building a vessel can be and, in this case, perhaps made more difficult when you're trying to fit a new design into the space of an existing hull.

But the results speak for themselves and the 'new' Rachel Jay is certainly an impressive craft to rival any of its modern-day compatriots in the polyvalent sector (i.e. vessel with licence to fish both demersal and pelagic quotas).

Originally built in 1991 at the Scottish McCrindles boatyard in Adrossan as the 26m x 7.8m x 3.3m Spes Mellor, the

vessel first came to Ireland in 2005 and was purchased by Kinsale, Co. Cork fisherman Johnny Walsh five years later.

After several smaller upgrade projects, it was in early 2018 that Johnny began to look in earnest at an almost total 're-build' project and, with the assistance of the team at the Co. Donegal based marine design company Atlantek Marine that the actual concept was put down on paper.

Heading off to the Aviles yard in Spain in April last year, few could have envisaged the total transformation that Rachel Jay would undergo and,

with practically every piece of equipment in

the vessel, aside from the main engine, being renewed, this is indeed to all intensive purposes, a new trawler.

The Project

To describe this rebuilding job a 'big task' doesn't do it justice as the work started practically stripping the hull back to the lower deck level and reconstructed the craft

to the fine standard that exists today.

An entirely new interior design meant the restructuring of the engine room compartment to accommodate the two new 5-cylinder Scania auxiliary engines to complement the existing Caterpillar 3512 main engine for which the entire bedding and all associated pipework was replaced.



Johnny Walsh and Evin Howell in the wheelhouse of the transformed Rachel Jay.

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Congratulations and continued success to Johnny Walsh, family and crew with the Rachel Jay



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Rachel Jay on her way into Ardglass and unloading her catch earlier this year under the watch of Johnny Walsh (inset picture).

A new Rjentes WAF850 5:1 gearbox was also installed and, along with a new Deutz shore generator, completes the new power and propulsion package for the vessel which also included the supply and installation of the entire power system by another Donegal company, GEMS Ltd.

And, whilst re-designing this deck level, an entire new suite of accommodation cabins were also laid out – as was the next deck level up which resulted in a new stainless-steel galley, comfortable mess area and various washrooms, toilets and a tool workshop section.

Equipment

It is, however, in the layout of Rachel Jay's operating systems where the biggest changes have taken place. Replacing the old wheelhouse with a much higher-standing one has transformed the vessel's entire layout and, one would expect, greatly improve her stability and sea-keeping qualities when

fully loaded with fish.

Now more in line with many of today's pelagic and demersal trawlers, Rachel Jay's port & starboard Bopp winches are now set in the enclosed area under the stern deck upper level, with the middle winch, for the clump when demersal twin rigging, now



set directly aft of the wheelhouse and just forward of the pair of Bopp netdrums.

With plans to get Thyboron Trawl Doors, Rachel Jay will use twin rig demersal trawls for whitefish and prawns from

Swan Net Gundry (SNG) and pelagic trawls from both KT Nets and SNG. And, for the pelagic fishing season, a 14" Sea Quest fish pump has been installed.

Although pelagic pumping of fish will be done over the transom, the bags of whitefish and prawns will be hauled to the landing cradle forward on the starboard side – leading down from the deck hopper to a completely new fish handling area that includes blast freezing facilities for prawns.

Technology

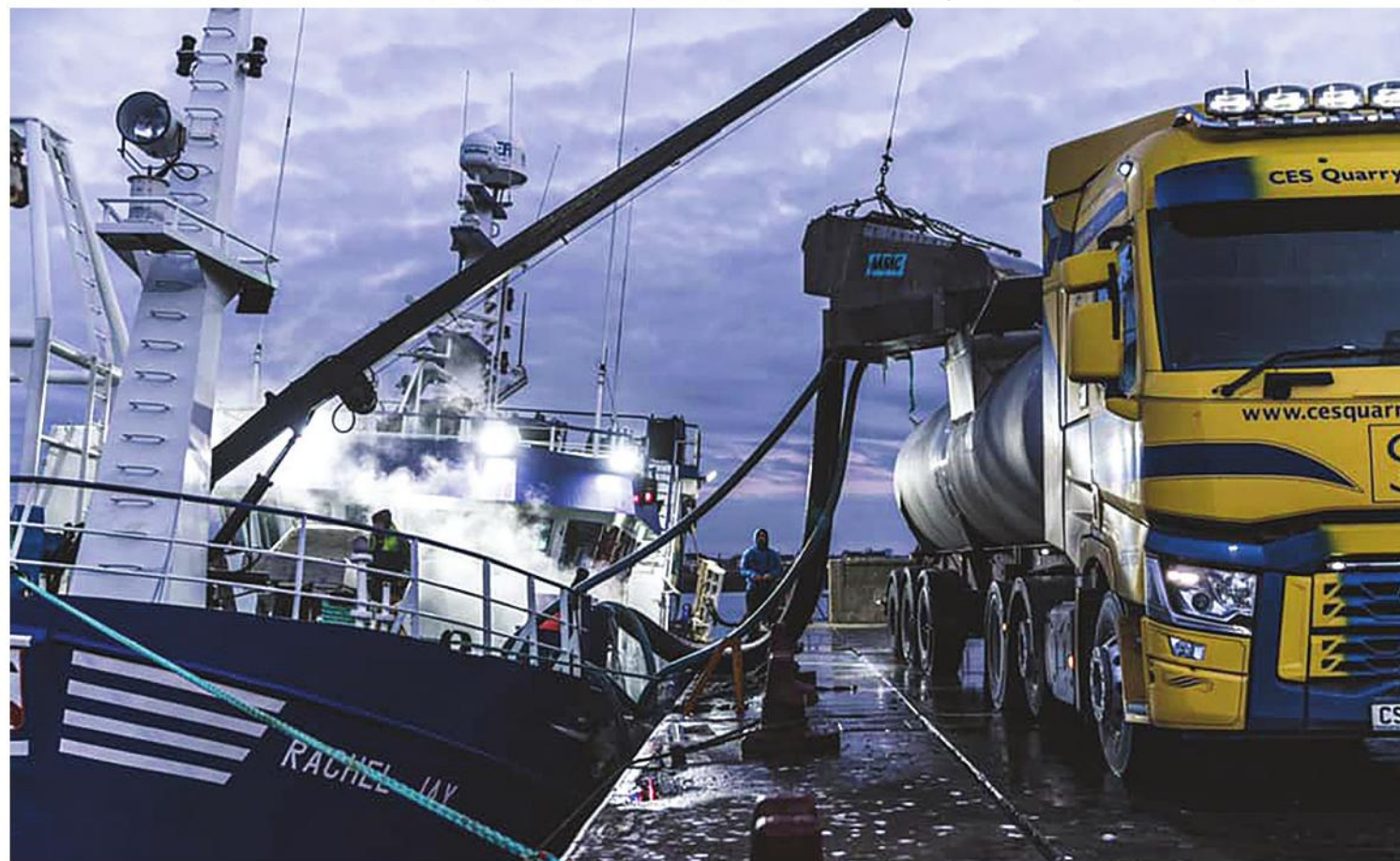
All of this new equipment has combined to produce a completely new Rachel Jay but none so great as the trawl monitoring system in the wheelhouse, says Johnny Walsh.

"I'm a big fan of Scanmar and of the quality of their products – which is why, when drawing up the list of items that had to go into the new boat, the Scanbas365 system was high in priority," he said.

Johnny has always used Scanmar in one form or another, including the RS4000 system, but the provision of Scanmar sensors for: Doors (door to door and door-clump-door), Catch, Tunnel and Sounder – all combining their reported data under the state-of-the-art Scanbas365 system will be the most advanced Rachel Jay has ever been in terms of high quality trawl monitoring systems.

Best wishes to Johnny and all his family, joint skipper Evin Howell and the crew of Rachel Jay.

Photos courtesy Ross Boat Photos, Chris Feenan, FishComm and John Cunningham



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The management and staff at KT NETS extend congratulations and continued success to Johnny Walsh & crew with the RACHEL JAY. Thank you for your business

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Best wishes to Johnny Walsh and crew with the Rachel Jay

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I'm always interested to hear your stories, comments.

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Tom MacSweeney's

This Island Nation

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WORKING FOR THE MARITIME COMMUNITY OF IRELAND



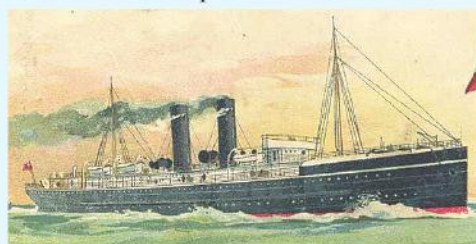
A Marine Scribe's Diary

About the culture, history, tradition and developments in MARITIME IRELAND

There have been a lot of things happening on the maritime scene since I last wrote this column. The news developments and current issues in the fishing and maritime sectors are covered elsewhere in this edition of the MARINE TIMES as we resume printing. So this column is a summary to bring you up-to-date on some developments I found interesting and which you may not have seen or heard about in the general national media whose coverage of maritime issues is still rather depressingly low. Hence the importance of having publications such as the MARINE TIMES.

MEMORIAL TO RMS LEINSTER

The sinking of the *RMS Leinster* by a German submarine in October 1918 resulted in the greatest-ever loss of life in the Irish Sea and the highest-ever casualty rate on an Irish-owned ship. The RMS Leinster Memorial Committee has submitted a plan to Indecon Economic Consultants, who are carrying out an evaluation of Dun Laoghaire Harbour's future. It was from there that the RMS Leinster sailed. The Committee has proposed the inclusion of a Memorial naming all those lost on *RMS Leinster* in future plans for the harbour.



"We ask that Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown County Council allocates the site requested (which is shown in the photo on this page) and we will organise the fundraising necessary to build the project," the Committee's Secretary, Joe Ryan, told me.



"The site proposed is between the two entrances to the Carlisle Pier which has historical significance. It is a requirement that the site be allocated by DLRCC who took over the harbour in 2018. They need to do this so that the RMS Leinster Memorial Committee can begin fundraising. The Memorial will act as a link between the harbour and the town. It is of national/international significance. Once built, the Memorial will need very little maintenance except for caring for the garden area. There is huge support for this Memorial which is long overdue."

The Committee has asked for public support to be conveyed to Indecon and Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown County Council.

REMEMBERING THE WEST

A photo of a wooden boat moored at Killary Bay, Connemara, Co. Galway, taken 130 years ago in 1890 attracted my attention when I saw it on social media in the course of looking through Twitter and Facebook.

The boat is possibly a Nobby or Zulu type craft and the image came from 'The Days of the MV Naomh Éanna' group, which describes itself as: "A link to the past, from the days the *MV Naomh Éanna* sailed off the West Coast of Ireland..."

I remember sailing aboard that renowned vessel when our young family holidayed regularly on the Aran Islands. The collection of photos and videos, in black-and-white and colour is fascinating. The pictures here are from the Facebook page "for people to share and post their photos and memories of the Aran Islands, Connemara and County Galway."



The crowd of onlookers so close to the water's edge was taken in Salthill in the 50s and is titled "Memories of An Tóstal in days gone by..." That festival was a major national occasion. The photo caption says that it shows:

"Crews of two of racing currachs resting at the shore in front of many spectators. One crew includes the famous Joyce cousins (John Bhabín Seoighe, Máirtín Coilín Seoighe and John William Seoighe) from Inis Bearachain, Lettermore, who were an invincible force to be up against and who won many titles in the All-Ireland currach rowing championships in the 1950s and early 1960s and also won a record four All-Ireland titles."

Definitely, memories are made of this!



EXAMINING SMALL HARBOURS

Another interesting development I noted was the announcement by UCD Library of the launch of the new @UCDDigital Minor Harbours collection, a project examining the evolution of maritime engineering in small harbours in Ireland from the 17th century to the present. It includes images of the areas, site surveys and exhibition posters and can be accessed at: <https://digital.ucd.ie/view/ucdlib:255666>

THE MARINE TIMES INTERVIEW

“The Success of Marine Protected Areas Will Depend on Involving Fishermen”



Kevin Flannery is one of the most respected maritime voices in Ireland. A Marine Biologist, former Fisheries Officer, Founder of Dingle Oceanworld Aquarium, he has been involved in the maritime world for over 50 years and is one of its most respected and authoritative voices. On our weekly Podcast he spoke to Tom MacSweeney about Marine Protected Areas, making the point that fishermen should be accorded the same supports as farmers get for conservation, which would encourage and reward them as is done for farmers. This, Kevin maintained, would bring better results than too many regulatory controls.

“They are coming in one way or another. The EU are going to demand a number of MPAs in every country. What I’m talking about is that this has to be done in conjunction with the fishermen. Drawing a line on the map and saying this is an MPA and doing nothing with the fishermen is not going to work,” Kevin Flannery was quite direct and blunt when we discussed MPAs.

“We’ve had so much of fishermen banned – from bass fishing to dogfish to salmon to tuna and it’s just – ‘oh, ban the fishermen’ – whereas I want a consultation process. We now have enough organisations in the fishing industry, maybe one too many, but at least you have consultation with them and it is time the EMFF funding was used to put a programme into it for this. When the current EMFF is finished there will be a new programme – the European Maritime, Aquaculture and Fisheries Fund. Within that there will be a specific programme, like the way the SFPA got a huge volume of the last EMFF money for their fishery protection, the Marine Institute got theirs, BIM had a series of programme inside in it.

“I want one for marine conservation encapsulating fishermen. Much like the farmers get their single farm payment they get for protecting the Red Kite, the Callows in the Shannon, there are hundreds of farmers getting payment each year for conservation methods and the same should be for fishermen that, if there’s a suspension on their fishing for crayfish, for example, what is wanted for them to do is that nobody would be netting in the specific area. They can fish away with pots, they can dredge for oysters, but they can’t use any nets in the area, so that you allow the species of sharks, rays, skates and the other whole lot – indigenous and those unique to

Ireland that come into these bays, that they are allowed to move freely in and out. Any person that doesn’t comply or come in with it won’t get the single conservation payment once a year.”

To me that seems a reasonable, sensible approach to conservation, that fishermen should be given similar treatment to that accorded to farmers. On what does he base that proposal, I asked?

“For fifty years I’ve been collecting stats and data and working with academics and all the organisations and local fishermen and we know the times and the dates on and about all these species. What I am saying is that in relation to the new EU which is coming out that conservation for these marine protected areas that are going to be put in place, that fishermen be included in it with this approach of a single payment once a year, a decent payment, rather than drawing a line and saying – ‘oh you can’t fish there, or you’re banned from this fishing or that.’

“The fishing industry has had enough of that, fishermen have had enough and the funding that is being made available from Europe is there and it’s for the whole lot involved to wake up to that, the organisations, the Department of the Marine, the Marine Institute. If they intend to bring in these marine protected areas then they must put in an account for it into the Maritime Fisheries Fund to which I’ve referred and get the funding to subsidise the fishermen.

“If you bring the fishermen with you, then you won’t have illegal activity because if money is put in their pockets once a year, like as done with the farming fraternity where they get their cheque coming up to Christmas, fishermen will guarantee and mind those areas and they won’t allow the system to be blackguarded.”

Kevin says that this is a better approach, with more all-round support and effective-

ness than the introduction of more regulations and handing another situation over to the SFPA, with possible consequential difficulties. The approach is a co-operative one he suggests:

“What you have with this new Commission is that they have said this is going to be an environmental commission and they are offering this funding being made available. The fisheries protection people took €60-€80m of the previous fund. The fishing organisations have to stand up and say that if fishermen are going to be closed off from areas they have to be given support. They have to make their views known.”

He references the V-notch lobster programme and its successful implementation by fishermen and says that it shows that fishermen’s participation is an essential part of conservation and that they should be rewarded for doing so.

“That is the only way to be successful. We have had enough of the approach that this fishery is closed off and that fishery is closed – salmon, tuna, bass – they’ve

been closed off and fishermen are being pushed into a corner. That kind of approach only gives rise to illegal activity. What I am saying is that when you bring fishermen with you and you encourage and reward them, that is their future and that is the way to go.”

Tralee Bay is a vitally important area for various species says Kevin, drawing on his vast experience, “you have the whole lot, the high level of plankton coming down off the Shannon, so they accumulate, the rays, the juvenile sprat, the herring, the mackerel, so they are all coming into Tralee Bay and “it is vitally important in that sense and we don’t want to lose species.”

He makes the point that “there is no one stopping pot fishing or dredging for oysters and concludes our interview saying: “Everybody is pointing the finger at fishermen and the fishermen are not the ones responsible, but they have to be encouraged and rewarded if they are going to help out. That must be the way forward.”

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NEWSMAKERS of the Month



Ro-Ro Cargo Ship Victorine crew members and Captain Andrey Shevchuk, receiving care packs from Dublin Port Harbour Master Michael McKenna, with Rev. William Black and Rose Kearney of the Dublin Port Seafarers' Centre. Dublin Port Company is distributing 500 care packs to seafarers in gratitude for their service during the global pandemic. Reverend William Black, Port Chaplain from the Mission to Seafarers said; "Looking after seafarers and their basic needs is a huge part of what we do at the centre and we are blessed to be given the opportunity to assist them. They are the essential worker that we all rely on, but not everyone gets the opportunity to see. Today, we wish them well on their homeward journeys and thank them for their service after what has been a difficult time for so many." Rose Kearney, manager of the Seafarers' Centre said; "It is our pleasure to look after these crew members in any way we can. It is a tough world for seafarers, and they have now been away from their families and loved ones for even longer than expected because of the coronavirus. Anything we can do to make their lives a little easier is no problem at all, we are very grateful to them. We hope the packs can give them a bit of comfort before they make their way home."



Mooney Boats are delighted to announce that their latest build is nearly ready for towing to her home-port of Killybegs where Mooney Boats Ltd will oversee the full construction and fit-out of the vessel. This vessel is under construction for Atlantic Dawn Group also based in Killybegs, and is great news for the entire town, ensuring jobs for multiple businesses during the build and hopefully beyond. The team at Killybegs are currently busy completing the fitout on the Ocean Challenge which will be completed and delivered to the Shetland Islands by end of August and ... Mooney Boats are excited to announce two new build projects, B50 Eilean Croine for Eric Murphy, and B51 Sparking Star for Donal O'Neill. The principle construction is to take place in Killybegs, which is more great news for the town and the busy onshore service industries.

Plaice Survival in the Irish Seine Net Fishery Estimated 87% Survival Rate Obtained

Dr Ronán Cosgrove, Fisheries Conservation Manager, BIM

Bord Iascaigh Mhara (BIM), Ireland's Seafood Development Agency, recently completed a plaice survival study in collaboration with Damien Turner and crew on board bottom seine net vessel, MFV Róise Ca-tríona. Led by BIM's Martin Oliver, the trial was conducted around 5 hours steaming south of Castletownbere in October 2019. The condition of plaice caught under normal fishing operations was assessed using well established fish vitality/movement and injury assessment protocols.



Most of the plaice were in excellent condition with vigorous body movement. Scale and mucus loss were the predominant injuries. Applying observed plaice survival rates from a Danish seine net study conducted in the Skagerrak inferred a survival estimate of 87% for plaice in the Irish fishery. Directly observed survival rates were not possible in the Irish study due to logistical constraints but survival rates inferred from other fisheries have previously been used by the European Commission (EC) to grant exemptions from the landing obligation. For example, the Skagerrak study results were used to infer plaice survival rates and grant an exemption in a seine net fishery in the English Channel.

The Irish study results will be used to apply for a survival exemption for seine caught plaice off Ireland's south-west and west coasts where there are risks of choking under the landing obligation due to restrictive plaice quotas of less than 60 t in 2020. Given the specialised nature of the fishery, seine net vessels are limited in their options to avoid unwanted plaice capture. They are generally restricted to targeting mixed demersal fish species, and incapable of switching to Nephrops and benefitting from the suite of selective gears available in that fishery. Also, Irish fishing grounds suited to bottom seining are mainly located off the south-west and west coasts so relocation to

areas with more quota availability is not an option.

A previous Irish application for a plaice survival exemption for otter trawlers off the south west coast was rejected on the basis that survival of around 40% would not lead to a sufficient reduction in fishing mortality in a depleted stock. While there are no guarantees, the seine net application will hopefully fare better given a substantially higher survival estimate and superior fish condition in seines compared with trawls.



Underwater camera observations have shown that the majority of fish herded by seine ropes enter the belly and codend sections in the closing phase of the hauling operation. Hence, the actual fishing time may be as

short as 15 minutes with fish subject to physical stressors in the codend for much shorter periods compared with trawling. This is corroborated in the Skagerrak study where a substantially higher plaice survival rate of 78% was found in a seine net fishery compared with 44% in a bottom trawl fishery in the same area and time of year off the Danish coast.

BIM would like to thank Damien Turner and the crew of MFV Róise Ca-tríona for a productive collaboration, and Shane Murphy for assistance with on board sampling. A full report on this work is available at www.bim.ie/our-publications/fisheries

Strange Catches - Unusual White Angler Fish and Xanthochromic Haddock

On 2 March 2020, the 26 meter MFV Kiloran (G209) [Skipper: Aonghus Donohue] landed an unusual Angler Fish (*Lophius sp.*) into Rossaveal, Co Galway. The 200g and 25 cm TL specimen was captured west of the Aran Islands, Co Galway (53° 08'N, 11° 57'W). In addition to the aberrant white colouration, both of the eyes appeared to be either missing or rudimentary which suggests that the specimen may also have been blind.



Since both eyes were either missing or rudimentary, the abnormal white body colouration cannot be strictly categorized as 'albinism' (anomalously white body colouration with abnormally pink eyes) or 'leucism' (anomalously white body colour with normal dark coloured eyes). Consequently, the combined ocular and colour abnormality is provisionally classified as 'leuc-albinism'. Since 2003, a total of nine *Lophius* specimens exhibiting 'leuc-albinism' have been recorded from Irish waters, including six White-bellied Angler Fish (*L. piscatorius*) and three Black-bellied Angler Fish (*L. budegassa*).

On 7 March 2020, the 23.65 metre Atlantic Fisher (T116) [Skipper: Johnny O'Connor] landed an unusual golden or xanthochromic Haddock (*Melanogrammus aeglefinus*) into Dingle. The 58 cm TL specimen was captured in a demersal gill net 72 km SW of the Skellig Lighthouse (51°46.108' N, 10°32.519' W), Co Kerry, off SW Ireland.



Declan Quigley told the Marine Times, "Xanthochromism is thought to be caused by a recessive genetic mutation. Although at least 14 xanthochromic Haddock have been recorded from Irish waters since 1896, the incidence of this colour aberration would appear to be relatively rare. It is possible that their conspicuous golden colouration may expose them to greater predation than normally coloured con-specifics.

Declan would be grateful for details on any further specimens captured in Irish waters. Contact Declan on Mob: 087-6458485; Email: declanquigley@eircom.net

Hydraulic / Lube Oils - Need to Make Sure it is Reliable!

Hydraulic systems are very important to make sure you get your catch hauled. If your hydraulics fail and you can't haul, you don't get paid. So how do you try to maintain the hydraulic system reliable. Once again, the CJC filtration can help you. To reduce wear and tear, it is important to keep your hydraulic oil, clean, dry and cooled.

Unfortunately, I am sure most of you have tried to have a hydraulic failure, when you had to use the hydraulic system. Why did it fail and why now, questions you might have asked yourself. The hydraulics system is very important to fishing operations and therefore should be dealt with as an extremely important part of the fishing vessel. The engine will bring you out at sea, and back home, but your hydraulic will bring in the catch, to pay your bills. Therefore a reliable hydraulic system is essential for all. New oil is not clean, and new oil in an old tank is certainly not clean, says Jan Foged, C.C. JENSEN filtration expert and Technical Advisor / MLA I&II in Ireland.

Keep it clean, dry and cooled. I can't say this enough times. 70% of all hydraulics failures are due to contamination. Water, particles or varnish, are all contamination in the oil that can cause a break down. But how do they get into the system. New oil is not clean oil, so some contamination will come from the oil supplied, some was built into the tanks from the beginning, almost impossible to prevent that. And some will enter over the years, through breathers or work being done on the system. Some is

generated in the system, especially varnish (by products of oil breaking down, mostly to high temp.) but wear and tear happens over the years, which will lead to more wear on the pumps, valves or cylinders.

"These particles accelerate wear and tear, which leads to failure in pressure because of pumps wearing out, or valves no longer opening or closing properly, often resulting in reduced reliability. Water gets in via failing seals on fish pump, coolers or condensation. That water will quickly lead to oil break down, rust and extra wear, because lubrication is no longer there. Most inline filters will not be able to remove the very small particles or the water," says Jan Foged.

Varnish is becoming a bigger and bigger issue for oil, sticky valves is a clear sign of high varnish levels in your oil. Failure to get the right pressure, could also be a sign. Because the oil volume usually is smaller, they are stressed more, and often overheated, which lead to varnish build up. And varnish will stick to surfaces inside the system, and reduce lubrication, which again will increase the wear. Bad circle of life, you want to be in a good circle of life

What can be done?

Instead of changing chemically good oil, you just need to maintain it. A lot of oil changes are a waste, because the chemical condition of the oil is often still good, but just needs to be cleaned or dried. So always take samples of your oil, understand the report, not just the green, yellow or red square. Look at the comments given and get advice on it, if needed. Good sampling is extremely important to a good report, which you can take action on. Poor sampling will lead to wrong maintenance and could cost you a lot of money. Contact Jan Foged for free advice on your oil report, on 086 82 71 508.

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CJC has for over 65 years, proven efficient filtration, will lead to savings. Simply by maintaining the hydraulic oil, CLEAN, DRY and cooled, you will then have a reliable hydraulic system.

Other systems like stern tubes, gear boxes and thrusters are also important to keep reliable.

For further information contact CC Jensen Ireland at 086 82 71 508; Email: jfp@cjc.dk or visit the website www.ccjensen.ie



Wasn't all sunshine during the lockdown - Balbriggan getting a battering during one of the severe winds witnessed around the coast in the past few months - also note the errant diesel tanks loose in the harbour! Photo courtesy R Guildea

Engine reliability



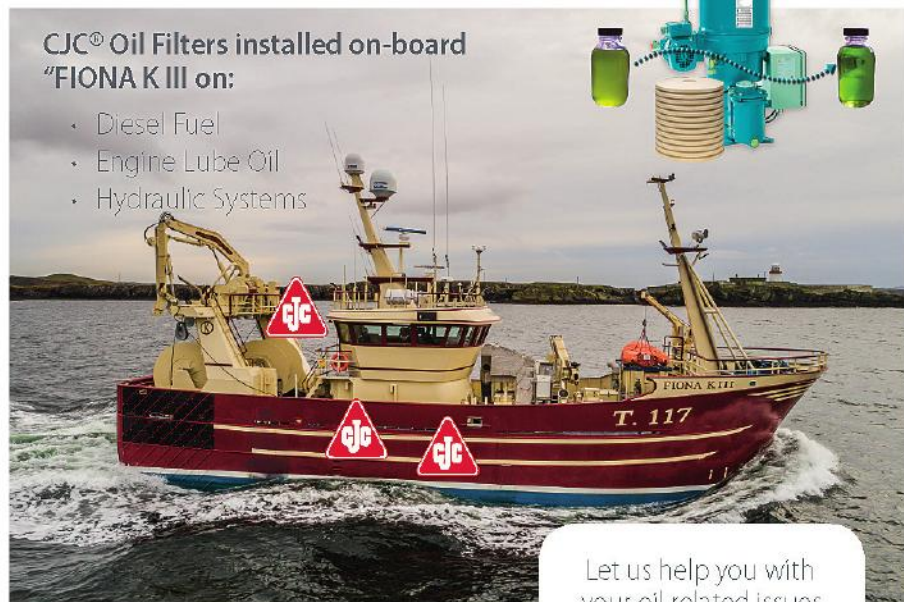
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SNG Now Stockists for Leading Workboot

SwanNet Gundry are pleased to announce that they have been appointed sole Irish agents for the marine sector for the world-renowned Techno Boot range.

Manufactured in Turkey, the *Techno Thermo -50°C UltraGrip* and the *Techno -30°C Troya UltraGrip* have revolutionised work foot wear for even the most challenging of environments and naturally, due to the harsh conditions of the fishing and seafood sector, have become extremely popular with fishermen the world over.

The boot is resistant to oils, fats, organic solvents and chemicals. The UltraGrip SRC outsole offers superior safety in all conditions. The manufacturers believe that it is thanks to the best BASF polyurethane raw material that this is the world's most comfortable thermo boot.

"Lightweight, strong, flexible and with a durability of up to four times longer compared to the traditional PVC and rubber boots. The superior durability offers important cost savings," the Techno Boot company states, adding that the orthopaedic remov-

able footbeds with arch support give the wearer the comfort needed during long work sessions and means no more heavy or tired legs after a hard day working.

For extremely cold and harsh working conditions the *Techno Thermo -50°C UltraGrip* (RRP €85.00) offers all the solid ruggedness of a solid work boot without compromising on the comfort of a cushioned interior sole and, for more general workwear but still with thermal protection to -30°C the *Troya UltraGrip* (RRP €55.00) is slightly lighter but still high strength and with all the features of the *Thermo UltraGrip* version.

Pictured are the *Techno THERMO - 50 °C orange* and *Techno Troya -30 °C boot*

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Gundry's Marine division www.sng.ie/fishing/inshore





They start young on Bere Island, Quinlan Daly helping with the pots!



Liamí Ronan with a 2kg Crayfish on the Arkh Angell



On a visit to Inishbofin one year old Saoirse Mae Zanella from Denver Colorado made sure she picked up a copy of her favourite paper. Photo by Saoirse May's grandmother Emma Day

Win a €50 Voucher for your favourite Fish Monger or Fish & Chip Shop

To be in with a chance to win a €50 voucher to use in either your favourite fish mongers or fish and chip shop simply nominate your favourite and answer a small question below to help us improve the future content of the Marine Times Newspaper

Fish Mongers Name:

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Location: _____

Location: _____

Please name one thing you would like to see more of in future issues of the Marine Times Newspaper:

Nominated by: _____

Address: _____

Email: _____

Return To: The Editor, Marine Times Newspaper, Cranny Road, Inver, Co. Donegal.

* Nominations only accepted on official form from printed copy of the Marine Times Newspaper - photocopies, etc not accepted.
** Final closing date for nominations will be Friday 24th July.
*** All entries will be entered into a draw with two separate prizes of €50 awarded from all entries, first draw will be for fish monger voucher with second draw for fish and chip shop.



(Above): Liamí Ronan & Paddy Rath on the Arkh Angell in the English Channel
(Below): Conor Clohessy clearing nets aboard the Golden Rule



Noel Fanning showing his grandson Tom Fanning how to splice as he showed his own son Alan when he was young. Noel does all the shore work for keeping the gear and ropes all up to date for Alan's 'Lily Tom III'. Oh and they are getting valuable help / hindrance from Blackie the dog.



Danny and Robbie O'Callaghan in their uncle's Jamie O Callaghan's boat, Primrose at Dinish, Castletownbere - Good to see two young boys boat crazy.



Two year old Kyle Dirrane onboard the MFV Kittiwake having a chat on the VHF.



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International Fishing and Maritime News

Too Much Red Tape in EU Fisheries Regulations

Fishermen are generally of the opinion that there is too much 'red tape' about EU fisheries regulations, a view that was expressed strongly by the Chairman of the European Parliament Fisheries Committee before the Covid19 Pandemic shut down debate on general issues and forced concentration on fisheries survival.

40-year-old Pierre Karleskind is a French oceanographer and politician who was elected to the European Parliament for the first time last year.



"I don't think there is a sector that has to face as many regulations as fishermen do. Professionals almost need a PhD to become a fisherman," is his view. "There is a need to reduce red tape and to make the European Maritime and Fisheries Regulation simpler, reducing the administrative burden."

Interestingly, the EMFF was strongly referred to by the Irish fishing industry when it sought Government assistance to cope with the effects of the Pandemic. The Irish government as represented by the Department of the Marine, noted for its heavy-handed regulation of the Irish industry, did not appear to view the EMFF with the same level of support as the industry.

"We cannot separate economics from environment. We have to think food. Each time we reduce the volume of fish captured by the European fleet, we increase imports," says Pierre Karleskind. "We can be rigorous in setting high environmental standards and compliance, but not at the cost of increasing imports and lowering EU production."

Karleskind is a member of 'Renew Europe' described as "a liberal, pro-European political group, founded as the successor to the 'Alliance of Liberals and Democrats for Europe.'"

Will the Irish Department of the Marine take the same view as the EU Fisheries Committee Chairman? Will Irish MEPs support his stance?

Europeche has. It is the representative body for fishermen in the European Union, which claims to represent 45,000 vessels, both artisanal and large-scale and 80,000 fishermen. It has 16 member organisations from 10 European countries.

**UK
A Single Atlantic Cod Can Produce 1,400 Sandwich Bags!**

Fish scales, normally a by-product of food preparation, can be used to make electronic devices and food bags. Research work is successfully developing these uses rather than disposal of the scales.



In the UK Lucy Hughes, a product design graduate from the University of Sussex, has won the UK and international James Dyson Award for MarinaTex, a plastic film substitute created from fish waste and red algae, resulting in the use of fish scales in bakery bags. The strength and durability made it a viable replacement for the thin, transparent plastic used in bakery bags and sandwich packaging and it biodegrades naturally within four to six weeks in soil at the correct temperature.

Ms. Hughes said she saw an opportunity to make something from the UK's 492,000 tonnes of fish waste produced annually, experimenting with blending fish scales

with red algae using a Nutribullet blender in her kitchen. A single Atlantic cod could produce enough organic waste to produce 1,400 MarinaTex bags. Creating the bioplastic requires little energy, making it both cost and energy-efficient.

**USA
Electronic Devices from Fish Scales**

In the USA, researchers have shown how fish scales can be used instead of plastic to make future electronic devices more environmentally friendly. The American Chemical Society has revealed details of research work which found that a gelatin solution derived from the collagen in fish scales was flexible and transparent enough to be made into a film cover useful in wearable devices for monitoring health conditions in humans. The scales could make wearables and skin-worn sensors more sustainable, as researchers develop a type of scale-film comparable to plastic, the Society stated. Flexible temporary electronic displays, made from fish scales could be generally designed to be discarded after a single use, could be applied directly to human skin to monitor vital signs. There are also other possibilities. Such film from fish scales could one day become commonplace in wearable electronics and in folding displays after folding smartphones from Huawei and Samsung released in recent months suffered issues with their flexible screens, the ACS has forecast. Unlike plastic, derived from fossil fuels, the fish/scales film can also be disposed of easily or re-used. It dissolved within seconds when dropped into hot water and biodegraded within 24 days when buried in soil. Each film, created when the researchers poured the scale solution into a petri dish before letting it dry, could also be recycled into a new film.

**EU
Fishermen's Representative Body Accuses EU Of Attempting To Cast Doubt Over Rules Compliance**

Europeche, the representative body for fishermen in the EU, has accused the European Commission of using the introduction of 'mandatory control tools' such as cameras and engine power monitoring devices, strengthened sanctions and centralised weighing systems, to "cast a shadow of doubt over the compliance with and enforcement of rules" in the fisheries sector. "Fisheries management should better account for species' interactions and effects of climate change and pollution. Existing exploitation targets based on fishing mortality should not be changed. Good management of fish stocks must go hand-in-hand with sustainable seafood and food security needs," it said.

"The Commission is on a quest to cast a shadow of doubt over the compliance and enforcement of fisheries rules by the sector. However, the latest figures from the European Fisheries Control Agency show that despite the increase of inspections at sea, the actual number of infringements has been reduced to an extremely low 3%. The industry therefore wonders on the need for the introduction of costly and burdensome control tools.

"If all you have is a hammer to solve every ocean issue, everything will look like a nail," said Europeche Managing Director Daniel Voces.

**NORWAY
Fish Farmers Facing New Production Tax**

The Norwegian government has announced proposals for a new tax per kilogramme on salmon, trout and rainbow trout which is expected to produce revenues of NOK 500 million - about €47m. Euro - for local and regional municipalities, mostly in fish farming areas. The new tax will replace contributions from the current Aquaculture Fund. This appears to end the controversial proposals for a 40 per cent flat rate tax proposed by a special government-appointed committee on fish farming last November. The industry had described that proposal as a move that would drive investment out of Norway to rival countries such as Scotland, Iceland and Canada. It had also sharply divided political opinion in the country.

Overall industry reaction to the proposed new tax to be implemented from next year is not yet clear, but initial response was described as "mildly favourable," with reservations about the level per kilo which would be imposed. Geir Ove Ystmark, CEO of Seafood Norway, representing industry employers said it was a "politically-wise decision."

A new Finance Bill is expected to announce the details and a starting date of January 1 next year. Finance Minister Jan Tore Sanner said that the aquaculture industry is "large and important industry for Norway and contributes significant value and employment. We want to ensure that municipalities which contribute to facilitating aquaculture receive a share of the aquaculture income. They will receive a more stable and predictable production fee, as well as a share of future auction revenues."

Determined To Be World's Largest Cod Producer

The fish farming company Norcod has declared that it plans to become the world's largest producer of farmed cod. It released 200,000 fry to two state-of-the-art facilities at Finnangerøya, north of Trondheim on Norway's west coast. The company said that it plans another eight start-ups over the next few years, because "there is a strong market for fresh cod on a year-round basis."

**SCOTLAND
FPOs Could Be Replaced By New Arrangements For Managing Quotas**

The Scottish Government has decided to introduce a new system of quota management for Scottish fisheries which may replace the role of the FPOs. The project is intended to operate until the end of next year, establishing new Quota Management Groups.

"These organisations, which will have to be based in Scotland and administer Scottish-registered vessels, will be given responsibility for allocating quotas in a sustainable way within their group of boats," according to a Scottish Government statement. "Currently, responsibility for managing quotas rests with Fisheries Producer Organisations. The Quota Management Groups will operate alongside them until the end of 2021, at which point a full evaluation will take place."

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Scottish Fisheries Secretary Fergus Ewing said: “We are constantly looking at how we can manage our fishery resources in the most efficient and sustainable way.

Quota Management Groups will have to operate in line with Scottish Government objectives and demonstrate that they have the expertise, systems and processes in place to manage quotas effectively and sustainably on behalf of their vessels. By working closely with Marine Scotland, the Quota Management Groups will potentially increase the understanding of our sea fisheries sector. Our hope is that the trial will bring benefits to Scottish coastal communities and inform future policy.”

UNITED KINGDOM **Cuttlefish in Danger**

The Marine Conservation Society added Cuttlefish caught by trawlers in the English Channel to its “avoid list” over fears the catch is unsustainable. This follows a big increase in catches of the molluscs over the last decade, caused by a rise in prices according to the MCS which put UK landings were worth stg£14.9 million. Most of the cuttlefish caught in the English Channel are exported to other countries in Europe, but the MCS said there was a growing interest in the seafood in the UK because it tastes similar to squid. The fishery has no limits on the catch, no minimum size at which catches can be taken and there are no plans for sustainable management, according to MCS, which claims that cuttlefish have not had a chance to come inshore to breed.

Smuggler Pays for Eel Gotten Gains

In the first prosecution of its kind in the UK a trader was given a suspended two-year prison sentence for smuggling over five million European eels from Spain, through the UK, onto East Asia. Gilbert Khoo was also sentenced to undertake 240 hours of community service.

UNITED STATES **On-going Discussions About Aquaculture**

The future of aquaculture in the United States has been the subject of debate, with a Bill, the AQUAA Act, proposed in the House of Representatives to facilitate sustainable expansion of the industry. The ‘Center for American Progress,’ an independent non-partisan policy institute which describes itself as “dedicated to improving the lives of all Americans, through bold, progressive ideas, strong leadership and concerted action,” has published analysis of the industry.

“Many advocates for aquaculture see the sector as an opportunity to supply the nation with another source for resource-efficient protein without putting additional stress on wild stocks,” it says. “In the United States, where shellfish aquaculture in state-managed waters is thriving, the current policy debate centres around if and how aquaculture should be expanded to Federal waters. Furthermore, the United States could become an attractive investment opportunity for developers interested in establishing new offshore industries. Other stakeholders remain concerned about the significant environmental challenges that are associated with the specific type and location that each aquaculture

project presents.

“Currently, State waters successfully support unfed aquaculture systems, including oysters, mussels, and clams. Large fed aquaculture industries in the Pacific Northwest and New England have proved more controversial. With aquaculture poised for expansion into federal waters, policymakers must carefully consider site selection, best practices for the industry, and the differences between unfed aquaculture systems and industrial fed finfish systems.

The AQUAA Act was aimed at permitting fast industry development in Federally-managed American waters. It was strongly supported by industry and aquaculture trade groups and seafood producers, processors and large corporations.

It proposed the creation of the Office of Marine Aquaculture to facilitate development, but has been opposed by fishing and environmental groups and Congressional Democrats and has not been voted on by the full U.S. Senate or House.

CANADA **New Trawler from Turkey**



Ocean Choice International of St.John's, Newfoundland, Canada, which is amongst the biggest fishing companies of North America, took delivery of a new 74-metre LOA, 16-metre breadth factory freezer trawler with capacity for both pelagic trawling and demersal twin-rig trawling, built by the Tersan Shipyard in Turkey, despite the restrictions of the Covid 19 Pandemic. The owners flew its crew to Turkey in a chartered aircraft to take possession, It was an unusual handover. The vessel was evacuated of shipyard personnel ahead of their arrival to ensure minimum contact. Named *Calvert*, it has been built to operate under extreme conditions in what can be very challenging and cold conditions in Canadian waters. It has a factory deck for catch processing at sea and accommodation is for a crew of 39. The delivery trip was to Newfoundland.

POLAND **Herring and Sprat Midwater Trawl and Gill Net Assessment**

Kolobrzeg Fish Producers Group Limited have contracted third-party independent auditors SAI Global to undertake a full assessment of the Poland herring and sprat midwater trawl and gill net fishery. The Marine Stewardship council (MCS) says that the ‘Announcement Comment Draft Report’ is available for comment to SAI Global by any stakeholder until 5 p.m. GMT on July 31.

NEW ZEALAND **Avoiding Longline By-Catches**

New Zealand longline fishers have welcomed a government decision to approve a British-designed device to avoid snagging Albatrosses. New Zealand's Ministry of

Primary Industries approved the ‘Hookpod,’ is a UK-designed device that is said to be proven to virtually eliminate the bycatch of albatrosses whilst not affecting the target species catch-rate of surface longline fishing. The device works by covering the point and barb of the hook during line-setting, only releasing the hook at a depth of 20 metres, through a patented pressure release system, out of the diving depth of albatrosses as well as other seabirds. It has been trialled over several years and is reported to be popular for tuna fisheries where they encounter albatrosses. The New Zealand Ministry has approved Hookpod as a stand-alone alternative.

NORTH ATLANTIC **Largest Longliner**

What is described as the largest dedicated longliner in the North Atlantic region, the new *Geir* has been delivered by Vaagland Båtbyggeri and christened in its home port of Ålesund on the West Coast of Norway. Built for the fisheries company, HP Holmeset, *Geir* is a Skipsteknisk ST-156XL design and at 63 metres LOA and with a 13.50 metre beam, it is the largest dedicated longliner in the North Atlantic, according to its owners. It hauls gear through what is described as a ‘moonpool’ to supply the onboard factory deck designed to produce top-quality cod and haddock for the top of the market. “It has the lowest possible carbon footprint and the latest in hybrid propulsion with battery energy storage and the options of diesel-electric and diesel-mechanic modes,” according to H.P.Holmnest. *Geir* is the latest in a series of longliners to carry the name and the third for the company to be designed by Skipsteknisk. It has accommodation is for a crew of 22.

CHILE **Great White Shark “Historic Nursery” Discovered**

Scientists have discovered what is claimed to be a prehistoric nursery site of ‘great white sharks’. Led by University of Vienna paleontologist Jaime A. Villafañe, an international team of scientists conducted a statistical analysis of two-to-five million-year-old great white shark teeth found in several sites along the Pacific coast of Chile and Peru. The teeth are all that remain of deceased prehistoric sharks, due to the fact that the animals’ cartilaginous skeletons don’t fossilise.

RUSSIA **First Crabber**



The first crabber to be built under the Russian government's investment quotas initiative has been delivered by the Pella Shipyard of St Petersburg. Named *Rus* the 50-metre vessel has been built for Far East fishing company Antey. Construction began on the vessel in March 2018 and sea trials took place in May. The crabber was registered in Vladivostok before being delivered to the Far East. It has accommodation for up to 28 crew. It has tanks fitted with banks of cages for keeping catches in prime condition. The Pella Shipyard is building two more crab catchers under the Russian investment quotas programme.

ENGLAND **New Aquaculture Strategy**

Seafood 2040 Aquaculture Leadership Group in England has designed a programme to expand aquaculture in England over the next 20 years. Poseidon Aquatic Resource Management Ltd has been appointed to develop the strategy and will work with the Seafood Group to shape the project and the means to deliver it. The Seafood 2040 Strategic Framework was created following the establishment of a Task Force representing all sectors of the seafood sector in England in October 2015. Its focus is to shape a long-term ambition to realise the full potential of industry by 2040. The programme is facilitated by Seafish, funded by the European Maritime Fisheries Fund and supported by Defra and England's seafood industry. A report by the State agency, Seafish, four years ago said there was significant potential for the development of mussel, clam and scallop farming. This is well established in South-West England, as well as oyster growing in parts of the South-East. It also highlighted other specialist seafood farming possibilities.



Ardglass harbour - Photo by Chris Feenan



IRISH WHALE AND DOLPHIN GROUP IWDG NEWS

A Whale Called Minke

Being common means you can be overlooked, says Dr. Simon Berrow, CEO of the Irish Whale and Dolphin Group, but the Minke is an important member of the marine mammal community and a harbinger of summer.

The Minke whale is Ireland's most abundant baleen whale and heralds summer in our inshore waters, like the cuckoo or swallow does on land.



Minke Whale lung feeding off West Cork. Photo Pdraig Whooley IWDG

The Minke whale got its name from a Norwegian novice whale spotter named Meincke, who supposedly mistook a minke for a blue whale. Only after they harpooned and brought it to the boat did they realise it was a species new to science. Minke whales only grow to around 8 metres and weigh 5- 8 tonnes. They typically occur from May to October in inshore waters. Where they go during the winter was a mystery. From the recent OBSERVE study an estimated 6-7,000 occur in Irish waters during the summer with 2-4,000 during winter. This suggests Minkes occur year-round in Irish waters and perhaps calve and breed here.

During May Minkes were seen in large numbers off the South West coast. Sometimes as many as 30-40 have been reported to the IWDG. Typically they are

seen in 1s and 2s, off all coasts, appearing later further north and in the Irish Sea.

We think they are feeding on sand-eels at this time of year, but their diet can vary considerably and include crustaceans and molluscs. Small schooling fish, including sprat and herring, are their preferred prey in Ireland. There has been no study of their diet or feeding ecology in Irish waters.

Many years ago a Minke whale was found inside a salmon cage in Donegal Bay. The farm workers could see no damage to the nets nor fish eaten and suspected the whale had accidentally jumped into the cage. It was realised unharmed, along with a few hundred salmon.

Minke whales can be hard to see.

There is no visible blow on surfacing like all other baleen whales and their small

size means often very little of the body appears above water. Small whales can easily be mis-identified as dolphins, but their dorsal fin is two-thirds the way along their back. They have a triangular shaped head which often clears the water on surfacing. Up close the white band on their pectoral fins is diagnostic. Minke whales frequently breach and are inquisitive and may approach boats. Minke whales are often the first "real" whale people see in Ireland, whether from small angling boats or from land. Sometimes you hear their blow, before you see them, especially on calm days.

Minke whales were still hunted by Iceland and Norway up to very recently. They have never really been targeted in Irish waters. They do strand, sometimes alive and the IWDG have increasingly noted evidence of entanglement in pot ropes on stranded individuals. The extent of this interaction is not clear but does need to be reported to see if this is a significant pressure on Minke whales in Ireland.

Do admire Minke whales if you have the opportunity to see them. We need to understand more about their lives and habitat requirements. Being common means you can be overlooked, but the Minke is an important member of our marine mammal community and a real harbinger of summer.

While the human population was locked down in the Pandemic, life went on in our marine waters. Many species of porpoises and dolphins such as bottlenose, common or Risso's dolphins in Ireland are resident and occur all year round. Other species such as Minke and Humpback whales are seasonal, arriving in Ireland in the spring to feed in our rich and productive waters. While we don't know where Minke whales go when they leave Irish waters, we do now know where Humpbacks go. After taking 16 years to make our first match between Ireland and a known breeding ground Cabo Verde off West Africa last April, we got a second match this year also from Cabo Verde. An individual photographed of Counties Wexford and Cork in 2017 was photographed off Boavista in March.

It will be interesting to reflect in years to come the impact of Covid-19 on our whale and dolphin populations. With less activity on the water will they have more peace and space to feed and breed? Will inshore fish stocks recover a little to provide enhanced feeding opportunities? In a time of uncer-

tainty, it is reassuring to know that life in the ocean continues on regardless.

BASKING SHARKS

Basking Sharks were reported appearing in large numbers off the western seaboard from Cork to County Mayo and especially off Co. Clare this April. The basking shark, growing to 12 metres and weighing up to 4-5 tonnes is the second largest fish in the sea. Although it occurs in all oceans it is closely linked to Ireland due to its historical importance to coastal communities especially off Connemara and the well-documented fishery off Achill Island.

Kenneth McNally in his superb book "The Sunfish Hunt" recounts this history where Gaelic-speaking inhabitants of the Connacht seaboard referred to them as "liabhán chor gréine – the great fish of the sun."

Those of us who wish to learn more about these magnificent beasts dream about days at sea with oily calm waters, lapping the bow as we slowly approach a shark to tag or collect mucus from which we can extract DNA. Basking sharks were clearly in inshore Irish waters to feed. Spring blooms of zooplankton, undergoing a reverse diel migration, where they move up towards the surface during the day, especially when the sun shines, brings basking sharks to swim (bask) at the surface.

We know very little about the biology of basking sharks or how long they live, but we do know that they give birth to only 6 live young, which makes them extremely vulnerable to over-exploitation.

The Irish Basking Shark Study Group asks those encountering basking sharks at sea to please respect their space and maintain a minimum distance of 4 metres. Ideally you should admire them from the shore.

Ireland is one of the few places in the world where basking sharks occur regularly close to shore. This enables us to enjoy the incredible privilege of being close to one of Nature's gentle giants.

Irish Whale and Dolphin Group



Minke Whale stranded in Ventry, Co. Kerry. Photo Nick Massett IWDG



Basking sharks feeding off Kilkee Photo Simon Berrow IWDG

European Fishing Industry Opposes EU Biodiversity Strategy

“Greenwashing at the expense of Fisheries” says Europêche President

Europêche is challenging the EU Commission’s new biodiversity strategy. “It wants to ban fishing in 10% of waters and limit activity in 30%, as well as a ban on bottom trawling,” according to Javier Garat, President of European industry’s representative organisation.

“This is without acknowledging all the efforts and achievements in fisheries management in recent years. Instead of putting effort into improved management where needed, the policy is a ban. What will be the consequences? More destruction of companies, jobs, wealth and greater dependence on imports from third countries that have standards far below those of the EU.

“Fishing has been singled out, the industry is set binding targets, while high carbon-footprint sectors such as oil, gas, dredging, aquaculture and shipping do not even merit a mention.

“This is discriminatory treatment and window-dressing. The Commission is trying to greenwash its own image through fisheries restrictions,” he said.

Europêche is calling for the European Parliament and Member States to insist on a full revision of the policy, including the full cost of the policy in terms of impacts by the new users of space, intensification of fishing in even more limited areas, reductions in fishing pressure and food production, the proposal to eliminate trawling without a viable alternative, and impacts on exporting the EU’s environmental debt to developing countries

With the world’s population expected to top 8.5 billion by 2030, Europêche argues that the Commission’s focus should be on producing more seafood in a sustainable manner rather than further closing traditional fishing areas.

“In light of the trade disruptions created by the COVID-19 crisis, the EU cannot risk further reduction of our fisheries in exchange for more seafood supply from overseas from an environmental, social and food security point of view,” said Javier Garat.

The proposal to end demersal trawling has alarmed the European industry, considering there are numerous stocks currently exploited sustainably and for which there is no alternative fishing method. These include sole, megrim, plaice, Greenland halibut, shrimps and nephrops, all of which are fished at MSY levels in European waters.

Europêche says that, “when referring the economic benefits of MPAs, which are largely related to tourism, ocean energy and recreation, the Commission failed to mention that the economic benefits generat-

ed by these sectors have a negative impact on biodiversity, fish stocks and ecosystems. The Commission heavily relies on tourism and recreation as the main sources of new jobs and growth, two sectors that are very much struggling due to the COVID-19 pandemic,” said Europêche Managing Director, Daniel Voces.

“Closing off parts of the ocean to fishing is a policy which actually conflicts with fundamental Sustainable Development Goals such as increasing food security and reducing poverty – both of which require the use of the ocean. We are shocked to read that while fishing would be heavily restricted or closed in protected areas, offshore wind farms will be permitted and even prioritised. The Commission already tried in the past to convert the oceans into a mining extraction site and now wants to transform our seas into the new European energy engine.”

“These measures will have severe socio-economic impacts which need to be considered. According to the latest scientific figures, in the North East Atlantic there is 50% more fish in the sea in only ten years and overfishing in the EU is at an all-time low,” he said. “In addition, almost 100% of the landings from EU-regulated stocks in that area come from catches fished at the MSY levels. It also fails to recognise that fishing has the lowest carbon footprint if compared with other food production industries, since wild-caught seafood does not require being artificially fed, the use of water supply, antibiotics or pesticides.”

“Despite the recovery of the stocks and biodiversity, mitigation of environmental impacts and lower greenhouse emissions, the Commission refuses to acknowledge these achievements and uses fishing as the easy scapegoat to launch its environmental campaign,” Javier Garat said.

“We want a real strategy with proportionate, rational and achievable objectives where all industries are treated on an equal footing, not an ill-founded proposal based on stereotypes. If the strategy is not changed, the Commissioner will fail to live up to his promise not to single out any of the pillars of sustainability – social, economic and environmental – during his mandate.”



(Above): Willie Bates and crew onboard the Kilmore Quay scalloper “Chloe B”. Photo courtesy Stephen Jones (i-fish.ie)

(Below): John Paul Darba on the separator doing his thing onboard the Girl Stephanie. Photo by Tommy Dirrane



Bio-Marine Raises €5m Equity and Has More Plans for Killybegs

Bio-Marine has lodged plans for a production facility in Killybegs and has raised €5m in private equity funding.

The Sunday Times has reported that the funding has been raised from clients of Cantor Fitzgerald Ireland.

“Bio-Marine Ingredients Ireland (BII) a company backed by Killybegs Fishermen’s Organisation and Norwegian firm Biomarine Science Technology, extracts proteins, oil and calcium from fish caught in the Atlantic for use as food ingredients and in nutrition products. The cash is to be used to fund working capital and bring a state-of-the-art manufacturing facility in Co. Monaghan into production,” reports the paper.

“Cantor raised €3m for the project in late 2018. The total investment in the project is

now more than €20m.

“BII uses species such as blue whiting which does not sell in large quantities to consumers. Unlike other ingredient suppliers, Bio-Marine uses the entire fish to produce a high-quality nutritional supplement. It markets its product as the ‘whey of the sea.’

“The production facility will have the capacity to process 120,000 tonnes of fish, most of it landed by fishermen working from Killybegs. Much of the output will be exported to Asia.

“The company has lodged plans for a second larger facility in Killybegs,” *The Sunday Times* said.

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(Above): Crew of the Dermot Anne and trawls away.
(Below): Boarding the codend with Cyril Harkin keeping a watch over the catch.



(Above): A good day in the Pound; Mick Gillen and gutting the catch.
(Below): Sorting and gutting the catch aboard the Dermot Anne and Marliona off Greencastle.





The Maritime Heritage Column

Cyril Harkin and MFV Dermot Anne 1989

By Richard Mc Cormick, President Emeritus, Maritime Institute of Ireland

Emerging from the deadly shadow of Coronavirus-19 with the ever-present threat of Brexit still looming over the Irish fishing industry, it is all too easy to be nostalgic for what might be considered an earlier less complicated time in the industry. Like all compelling idyllic vistas, nothing could be further from reality, because during the 1980's and 1990's Irish fishermen were struggling to compete in whitefish fishing boats designed for another era with larger more sophisticated steel trawlers of other nations.

The 80 foot (24 Metre) wooden fishing vessel *Dermot Anne* SO 712 was built in Killybegs in 1980 for Danny Gallagher, primarily for whitefish followed by pelagic herring in winter. The advent of specialised refrigerated seawater vessels in Killybegs made it hard for her to compete as a dry hold vessel, leaving whitefish trawling as the only reliable source of earnings. In 1985 Cyril Harkin of Greencastle purchased the *Dermot Anne* and operated her from his home port for ten years.

Fishing vessels rarely evoke significant emotional attachment. Nevertheless, all trawlers suddenly spring to life with the addition of a dedicated skipper and skilled crew combining their joint endeavours and skills to transform the vessel into a reliable earner, thus sustaining their families and by extension contributing to their local coastal community in time honoured fashion.

To ensure vessels like *Dermot Anne* were profitable at year round white fishing in the stormy North Atlantic, BIM supported exploratory surveys charting new more productive fishing grounds north of Malin Head in an area littered with hundreds of shipwrecks sunk in both world wars. Because of constant net damage and expensive losses of fishing gear sustained through encounters with numerous wrecks, Greencastle fishermen named one particularly challenging fishing ground Tullyalley in honour of the Derry City car breakers and dismantlers

of that name.

The photos accompanying this article show the youthful crew of Cyril Harkin's *Dermot Anne* during one BIM exploratory voyage, namely Edward Doherty, Michael Gillen, Eamonn Doherty, Michael (Pat) Mc Laughlin, Frankie Barrons and David Phelm. Taken three decades ago, these historic photos of *Dermot Anne*'s young crew working together can rightly be classified as Irish maritime heritage. Mick Gillen has since become a well-respected and highly successful skipper of MFV *Foyle Fisher* in his own right.

With her relatively small size, 850 HP main engine and limited winch capacity for pursuing fish in deeper waters, there were limits to what a vessel like *Dermot Anne* could realistically achieve in the severe conditions of North Atlantic winters, even with twin trawls. Nevertheless, driven hard by

a determined and capable skipper, *Dermot Anne* gave of her best until eventually Cyril Harkin purchased the 29 metres long 1,000 HP Marliona in 1995, heralding yet another important phase in Greencastle's constantly evolving fisheries maritime heritage. *Dermot Anne* was then sold to Donal O'Neill in Castletownbere and was last heard of in Croatia.



**National Maritime
Museum of Ireland**

For information on the National Maritime Museum's exhibitions and events see www.mariner.ie



(Above): Shooting the Twin Rig Trawls
(Below): Hauling the Trawls.



Arklow Harbour Selected as Operations Base for Arklow Bank Wind Park

New base at Arklow's 'Old Shipyard' will be home to 80 full-time wind farm employees

Arklow Harbour has been selected by SSE Renewables as the preferred location for the Operations and Maintenance Base for its planned 520MW Arklow Bank Wind Park Phase 2 offshore wind farm. The decision was announced by the leading renewable energy firm at a virtual meeting with members of Wicklow County Council.

The new base location at Arklow Harbour's South Dock will operate as a hub for the new offshore wind farm and will be home to 80 full-time employees who will be recruited to work on its operation and maintenance. The facility will comprise new purpose-built office and warehouse buildings as well as adjacent quayside berthing for up to four crew transfer vessels. In addition, the development will support companies across the supply chain, including those involved in vessel services and site survey, hospitality, fuel, consultancy, logistics and stevedoring.

This announcement follows a detailed assessment of facilities at both Wicklow Port and Arklow Harbour over the past year to identify the optimum site for the offshore wind farm's future service base. This assessment included extensive consultation by SSE Renewables with existing marine users at each location, including commercial, fisheries and recreational interests.

SSE Renewables has entered into land option agreements at Arklow's South Dock to progress the development. These include an option to purchase an industrial yard which forms part of the site known locally as 'The Old Shipyard' on the harbour's South Dock for the development of offices and warehousing. The company has also entered into option agreements to 'step into' two existing lease agreements with Wicklow County Council for adjoining industrial land which also forms part of 'The Old Shipyard' site, as well as an area of quayside at the South Dock for vessel berthing and pontoons.

SSE Renewables is significantly progressed in plans for the next phase of Arklow Bank Wind Park. It is targeting a delivery date of 2025 to meet Ireland's interim target of 1GW of offshore wind energy in the same year, as committed to in the Irish Government's Climate Action Plan. When complete, the wind farm is expected to power around half a million homes each year with green energy, offsetting around 600,000 tonnes of carbon emissions or a 1% reduction in Ireland's annual carbon emissions.

Cllr Irene Winters, Cathaoirleach of Wicklow County Council, said: "SSE

Renewables' announcement is a great vote of confidence for County Wicklow. This project will place Ireland well on its way towards achieving its objective of generating 70% of its energy from renewable sources by 2030. It provides great opportunities to build on County Wicklow's maritime traditions by providing skilled employment opportunities, skills transfer, training and development, and spin off investment for both Wicklow and Arklow. This places us well on our way towards achieving our goal of developing County Wicklow as a Centre of Excellence for the Offshore Renewable Energy Sector."

Barry Kilcline, Director of Development at SSE Renewables, said: "We are delighted to confirm Arklow Harbour as the new home for our Operations and Maintenance Base for Arklow Bank Wind Park. The new base will play a vital role in the day-to-day running of the planned offshore wind farm. Around 80 full-time employees will be recruited in the coming years to work out of the base to operate and maintain the wind farm, ensuring we safely and reliably generate renewable energy to power half a million homes daily and meet Ireland's carbon reduction targets.

"While Arklow's South Dock has been selected as the preferred base location, both Wicklow Port and Arklow Harbour offer very attractive facilities for any offshore wind developer. We are very confident that both Wicklow and Arklow will see significant commercial uplift and urban regeneration as a result of the economic boost from our planned investment in the construction and operation of Arklow Bank Wind Park in the years ahead.

"I would like to thank Wicklow County Council which has been very progressive in its support of Ireland's emerging offshore wind energy sector. As a result, County Wicklow is in pole position to become Ireland's 'Offshore Energy Centre of Excellence'. We greatly appreciate the support and advice of Wicklow County Council in progressing our plans for our entire project, and we look forward to working with the members and officials of the local authority to bring Arklow Bank Wind Park to fruition for the benefit of the entire county."

The Tiny Island of Rockabill off Dublin Has Europe's Largest and Rarest Colony of Breeding Seabirds

Report: Niall Hatch, Development Officer



It has been a tough time over the past few months for BirdWatch Ireland as COVID-19 restrictions meant that many of our breeding bird surveys have had to be cancelled this year, and they have also impacted the running of many of our conservation projects. Social distancing and travel restrictions have made it harder than ever to carry out our vital conservation work.

We are delighted at least that our flagship Roseate Tern conservation project on Rockabill Island has been able to proceed more or less as normal. Tiny Rockabill, which is several kilometres off the coast of Skerries, Co. Dublin, must be one of the most socially isolated places in Ireland. After a period of quarantine and medical assessment our three summer wardens have been able to take up residence on the island, where they comprise the entire human population.

Rockabill is a hard place to get to at the best of times, but this summer access has had to be restricted even further. This is to ensure the safety of BirdWatch Ireland's Wardens and also to make certain that the project can continue without interruption. At the time of writing around 1,600 pairs of Roseate Terns, representing by far the largest European colony of what is Europe's rarest breeding seabird, are laying and incubating their eggs, and the first chicks are expected to hatch very soon.

The island is also home to over 2,000 pairs of Common Terns, plus a smaller number of Arctic Terns, Kittiwakes and Black Guillemots. Although physical access to this seabird haven is impossible, you can at least follow the fortunes of the birds and the Wardens, Emma, Kristy and George, via their "Rockablog" on the BirdWatch Ireland website.

Work is also going ahead on our Swift summer conservation projects. Swifts aren't seabirds, it's true, but they are birds that spend a lot of time around the coast and even out over the ocean. They are tremendous fliers, and some Swifts apparently even fly from their nests in Ireland to France to feed, then back again to Ireland that same day!

Indeed, we still have a lot to learn about these amazing birds, and we are asking anyone who is at sea and happens to spot Swifts flying overhead to make a note of the time, position and direction. It would be fascinating to be able to discover more

about their lives. They spend more time on the wing than any other creature, and the only reason that they land at all is to lay their eggs and raise their chicks each summer. In autumn they head to sub-Saharan Africa and spend their time high in the sky, feeding on insects. However, they won't actually land again until it's time to nest the following year in Ireland: they literally fly non-stop for 9 months.

This is a vulnerable time of year for many seabirds, as they often have to travel

long distances to find food for their hungry chicks, then fly back to feed them. With so many birds concentrated in comparatively small areas of the sea, the effects of things such as oil pollution can be massive. Even a very small spill can have a huge impact on them.

We are asking for anyone who happens to come across dead or struggling seabirds, either on land or at sea, to inform BirdWatch Ireland so that possible problems can be identified and, hopefully, rectified before too many birds are affected. It is much harder to monitor birds at sea than it is on land, so any help at all would be greatly appreciated.

Speaking of help, I would like to end with a special plea on behalf of BirdWatch Ireland. I mentioned that these are difficult times for wildlife charities like ours, and one of the reasons for this is that all of our public membership recruitment and fundraising events, such as Bloom in the Phoenix Park and the Dublin Horse Show, have been cancelled. Please, if you would like to support the work that we do, as well as receive our award-winning magazines and take part (once restrictions have been lifted, of course) in over 450 outings and talks throughout the year, then join BirdWatch Ireland today.

You will find all the details and can sign up at www.birdwatchireland.ie

Photo inset: Roseate Tern RB07 on Rockabill by Maeve Maher-McWilliams



Win a €50 Voucher for your favourite Fish Mongers or Fish & Chip Shop - See page 20

news from Castletownbere

Helen Riddell

Castletownbere Festival of the Sea Cancelled

Castletownbere Development Association (CDA) have announced the cancellation of the 2020 Festival of the Sea in line with government guidelines on large gatherings. Commenting on the decision the association said, "this decision was not taken lightly but it was inevitable that the CDA would act in solidarity with so many other voluntary organisations, both local and national, in protecting the health of our communities and our frontline workers. The Annual Festival of the Sea is a huge event both socially and economically; it creates large gatherings of relatives and friends, many of whom travel from abroad for the craic to be had in Castletownbere and the Beara peninsula. Family celebrations and reunions are often scheduled to coincide with the festival to maximise attendance. However, this year we will have to content ourselves with virtual contact." The association are asking people to submit photos of previous festivals to their Facebook page to create an archive of the festival over the years. If you have any which you would like to submit, please send them to: oldctbfestivalphotos@gmail.com. When submitting photos, if possible please identify the people and the date.

Funding Approved for Pier Upgrades

The Minister for Agriculture, Food and the Marine Michael Creed TD has announced details of a €3.1m package to assist 10 coastal Local Authorities – including Cork County Council – to undertake and complete 58 development and repair projects on harbours and slipways owned by them, which includes a number in Beara. The package provides funding for maintenance and repair works in addition to supporting the ongoing development and enhancement of harbour facilities including some marine leisure developments. Works scheduled to take place in Beara include safety and improvement works at Drumlave, Adrigole, Beal Lough (the Pontoon), and Oilean na gCaorach, Bere Island.

Castletownbere RNLI Feature in New Book

Surviving the Storms, a new book which documents the bravery of RNLI crews around Ireland and the UK features a rescue undertaken by the Castletownbere RNLI lifeboat crew which saw the Coxswain awarded a medal for gallantry and the crew and launching authority receive letters of thanks from the RNLI. The book features eleven stories of extraordinary bravery at sea, royalties from the sales will go towards supporting the RNLI.

In the book Dean Hegarty, Coxswain of Castletownbere RNLI lifeboat recounts the dramatic rescue in 2018 of a fishing vessel which had lost all power at the harbour entrance to Castletownbere in storm force conditions. The fishing vessel had six crew onboard, all of whom were saved and brought to shore. The book is published by Harper Collins available to buy from all good bookstores, it is also published as an audio book. (Read more on page 39)

Castletownbere Coast Guard

Officer in Charge of the Castletownbere Coast Guard team, Martin Sullivan has stepped down after 26 years of service in the Coast Guard and 22 years as Officer in Charge of Castletownbere. Although Martin has no plans to fully retire just yet, he will remain in the unit and his colleague Leo O'Shea will take over the role of Officer in Charge. During his time as Officer in Charge Martin coordinated hundreds of rescue operations throughout the Beara Peninsula, on water, on the cliffs and in the mountains. The team paid tribute to Martin, for 'a steady hand, good humour and incredible dedication' and wished him all the very best for the future. A celebration to mark Martin's long service to the Coast Guard will take place in due course. He extended thanks to all his team members and especially to his family, for their support.

Ring of Beara Cycle Kenmare

The organisers of the Ring of Beara Cycle Kenmare 2020 have announced the cancellation of the event due to the current restrictions in place around COVID-19 pandemic. The next Ring of Beara Cycle Kenmare will take place on May 29th 2021. All registered participants will automatically transfer to next year's event and will be contacted with further information.

Local Festivals Cancelled

A number of local festivals in Beara have been cancelled due to the COVID-19 crisis. The Eyeries Family festival due to be held from July 17th to 19th, the Bere Island Festival due to be held from August 5th to 9th and the Allihies sports and horse racing festival due to be held on August 15th have all been cancelled for 2020.

Swim Week

Water Safety Ireland have made the decision to cancel swim weeks on a nationwide basis this year due to the current crisis. For further information on the re-validation of beach or pool lifeguard certificates see www.watersafety.ie/covid-19/



(Above): Martin O Sullivan steps down as officer in charge of Castletownbere Coast Guard after 22 years in charge and 26 years service.
(Below): Robyn RJ heading to sea. Pictures: Anne Marie Cronin Photography



Emma Lou in Ballycotton. Photo by Brian Motyer

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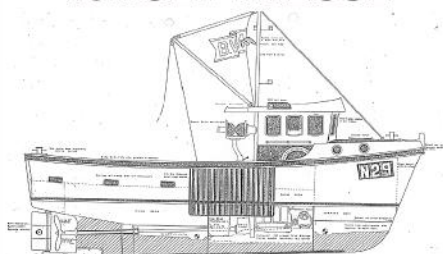
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Anchovies Captured in Donegal Bay and Goleen Bay

Anchovy are rarely reported from Irish waters but the 22.75 metre *Eternal Dawn* (SO958) caught an anchovy in Donegal Bay while fishing for sprat and herring. The specimen measured approximately 15 cm in length and was discovered while the catch was being processed in Norfish in Killybegs.

During mid-January 2020, the 9.25 metre *Jam-Mar* (S414) also captured two anchovies in Goleen Bay, near Crookhaven, Co Cork.

Declan Quigley, who is a recognised authority on rare and unusual fish and shellfish in Irish waters told *Marine Times*, “Until 1996, only 5 specimens of the European Anchovy (*Engraulis encrasicolus*) had been recorded in Irish waters.

The first specimen, measuring 15cm, was taken in a herring net in Ventry Harbour, Dingle Bay, Co Kerry during the autumn of 1869, and is currently on display in the Natural History Museum in Dublin. It was over 80 years later, in October 1951 before the second specimen, measuring 16.3 cm, was taken in a salmon net in Kinsale Harbour, Co Cork.

Ten years later, in July 1961, a third specimen, measuring 15.3 cm, was taken in a beach seine in the estuary of the Castle-town River, Co Louth. The fourth specimen, measuring 16 cm, was captured during May 1978 by the *MFV Ora et Labore*, west of the New Ground, Dingle Bay, Co Kerry.

A fifth specimen, was captured during April 1996, by the *MFV Skellig Light* while

trawling for *Nephrops* prawns at a depth of c.300 m on the Porcupine Bank, off the west coast, it measured 11.8 cm.”

He added, “The European Anchovy is confined to the NE Atlantic, ranging from Norway (c.64°N, Lysøysund, Sør-Trøndelag) southwards to equatorial West Africa (Gabon) [possibly to South Africa], including the Mediterranean and Black Seas. A closely related species (possibly a conspecific), the Silver Anchovy (*E. eurystole*), is confined to the NW Atlantic, ranging from Canada (c.44°N, Nova Scotia) southwards to northern Brazil.

E. encrasicolus is essentially a warm-water species, at the northern limit of its geographical distribution in NW European waters where its abundance varies widely from year to year, most likely in response to climatic and/or oceanographic factors. This highly migratory epi-pelagic species supports valuable (up to €2000/tonne) seasonal inshore purse-seine fisheries along the European Atlantic coast from southern Spain (Gulf of Cadiz) northwards to the Bay of Biscay, with occasional landings reported, from the English Channel and southern North Sea.

Prior to the completion of the Afsluit-



(Above): Anchovy caught in Donegal Bay by the *Eternal Dawn* fishing for Sprat.
(Below): Two anchovies caught in Goleen Bay by the *Jam-Mar*.



dijk Dam and closure of the Zuider Zee during 1933 there was a traditional seasonal pound-net fishery for anchovies in this vast low-salinity area. Although anchovy are still common on the Dutch coast, they are not exploited to the same extent. Nevertheless, 300 tonnes was landed by Dutch vessels during 2017.

Since 1950, annual NE Atlantic landings have fluctuated from 142K to 859K tonnes (average 452K). During 2017, a total of 532K tonnes was landed, with Mediterranean and particularly Black and Azov Sea countries accounting for 72% (384K tonnes), European Atlantic 15% (81K tonnes), and West Africa 13% (67K tonnes). Turkey (30%), Georgia (19%) and Spain (10%) cumulatively accounted for 59% of the total.”

“Research surveys have noted a significant increase in anchovy abundance in NW European waters over the last few decades. Since 1995, the species has been recorded with increasing frequency from all around the Irish coast, including the northern part

of the Irish Sea, Celtic Sea, and along the west coast.

During October and November 2001, anchovy were observed amongst scad and herring landed into Killybegs by the *MFV Father McKee* and *MFV Western Endeavour*. Indeed, according to FAO statistics, increasing quantities of anchovy have been landed by Irish vessels over the last decade, including 2010 (1 tonne), 2011 (9 tonnes), 2015 (49 tonnes), and 2017 (4214 tonnes), albeit mostly from the English Channel.

It is possible that anchovy may be more common in Irish waters than perceived. However, their relatively small size (maximum length 21 cm and weight 63 g) and pencil-thin shape probably enables most of them to pass through all but the finest of meshes. During 1870, William Andrews remarked ‘it is not unlikely but that in the autumn season the anchovy, with nets of a proper mesh, may be taken in Dingle Bay and other bays on the SW coast.’, Mr. Quigley concluded.



MFV Jimmy - Photo courtesy Donal Healy

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news from **Howth** Tracey Floyd



Howth harbour lights - Photo by Phil Hanlon

Howth and Dorans Skippers Mate are very excited to be back in print with our friends at the Marine Times. We hope that this pandemic finds all of you well and healthy. There is no doubt that this has been a strange and difficult few months for everybody, not least for everyone involved in the fishing industry. To add insult to injury, none of the industry issues have gone away, quotas are still crippling and the markets are deplorable for most.

It has however been amazing to see the ingenuity of some vessels utilising the power of social media to make ends meet. Perhaps in different ways the cream of the industry through their own inventiveness may just rise to the top.

Dorans Skippers Mate is thoroughly enjoying watching the regular videos by Dolores (Dodo) Branagan, wife of Brano and Mother of Richard and Charlotte on how to cook Prawns best. If you haven't seen or tasted her skills yet check out Brano's page, she would seriously put the best chefs in the country to shame.

The Skipper Expo is sadly missed this year and unfortunately it looks like the Dublin Bay Prawn Festival will also not go ahead this year either, there is still some chat about September but the more sensible option is probably next May (tbc).

You would think that lockdown would result in no news and no crises, unfortunately that is not the case. As of May 1st the Work Relations Commission were well and truly back on the case

WRC Inspections

While we have resigned ourselves to the fact that if we delve into the realm of A-typical workers, many of whom are fantastic crew members and invaluable to the operation of the vessels that they work on, we also open ourselves up to the scrutiny of the Work Relations Commission (WRC). That is just one of the many things that vessel owners work with and adhere to on a day to day basis.

However, it was a surprise to DSM that this also included vessels who have chosen not to avail of the scheme. You would think that by not choosing to use the facility to employ non EEA workers that you would be beyond the remit of the Work Relation Commission and the threat of prosecution.

That is sadly a misnomer. You would expect that as an agency of the state, that the Work Relations Commission would adhere to and respect the agreement as set out between themselves and the PO's and also advise owners of their rights, clearly and directly upon their request for information about vessels and crews. That is not necessarily always the case.

Having seen first-hand the threat of prosecution and having subsequently sought legal advice from Conways Solicitors with regard to this issue, DSM would like to be very clear and to ensure that both vessel owners and share crewmen are very clear as to their rights.

Even if you do not have non-EEA workers. You are still required to make your records and crew available for viewing in order for the Work Relations Commission to assess them on board your vessel. Yes, just to prove your innocence!

You are always required to give details of any A-typical Workers Working aboard your vessels.

You are not required nor indeed allowed under GDPR without the express consent of your crew, to allow the taking, in any form (including photo form) any information with regard to any share fisher. If a demand is made you should blank out all details of any share fisher, prior to forwarding your crew list.

For your own protection within your responsibilities under GDPR and the protec-

tion of the data of your share fisher workers the only acceptable form of transfer of this information to the WRC, is a copy of a redacted crew list (with share fishers blanked out) only showing A-typical Workers. Again yes, as silly as it sounds, even if you do not have any.

The details of Share Fishers should not be given to any agency who are not required under law as deemed for the purpose of which the information was gathered.

The agencies that this information was gathered for are the Marine Survey Office (MSO), Harbour Offices (HM) and Navy.

As a point of reference. The Work Relations Commission solely deal with employees and not the self-employed and they have no remit within the self-employed sector ie share fishers.

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INIS GNIB Cards

Considering the very public tarnish on the Irish Fishing Industry regarding the exploitation of A-Typical Workers this issue in relation to A-typical workers sounds shocking.

What is even more shocking is the fact that everybody appears to be aware and even worse, accepting of it. DSM finds it exploitive and surly it has to be illegal??? No..... maybe..... maybe not. Considering the degree of awareness regarding this thing, it seems that this is perfectly acceptable.

So, let's take a look..... local offices like Drogheda Garda Station, even if a boat is registered in Drogheda will not accept applications for the renewal of a GNIB card if the address of the boat owner is not within the Louth area, even if the crewperson is living aboard the Drogheda registered vessel.

The Drogheda Office will direct you to the Dublin Office which is in Burgh Quay in Dublin City Centre. The office in Burgh Quay have a state of the art website that you can go onto and book an appointment. Excellent! Except.... They allow appointments to be booked twice a day. 10.30am and 3.15pm. You fill in all of the details of the applicant, which takes approx. 2 minutes. No appointments available for any date.... Try again later.

You continue trying still no appointments. On and on that goes for weeks every day 10.30 and 3.15 with no result. It is frustrating to say the least. Adhering to the set out rules can be even more difficult than you would believe.

For me it came to light having had a conversation with another A-typical worker not even associated with the industry, and it transpired that.... No...., you do not go through the official GNIB website! You simply google GNIB, log into a different website from a foreign source and voila you can book your appointment directly from there.

They have taken all the appointments and all you need to do is give them all of your information and pay the small fee of €15 in order to get an appointment.

Yes, there are probably bigger issues in the industry, the country and the world right now, but is this not actually disgusting? Is this not an exploitation that the state choses to turn a blind eye to. Surly there is something that the state could do in order to prevent this happening, within their own website? Why is nobody challenging it or asking the question at least? Do we just pay the extra €15 and shut up? Answers and comments on the back of a €50 note to me at 1 West Pier, Howth!!!

ILO 188 is Still Here

Although there has been little direction as yet, in the administration of the various criteria in relation to the ILO 188 and most of it will likely not affect you very much until your next WRC Inspection or Code of Compliance Survey, it would still probably be best to be prepared.

Regardless of the enforcement these requirements (SI 672/2019) are part of public record and legislation and it is currently in play across Europe and internationally. Even without direction or marine notice. What is wrong with the industry taking the lead and taking ownership of the inevitable? For once, why doesn't the industry take control of its own destiny?

There is an opportunity for all involved to control the narrative for the industry, it may not be sexy enough to get the headlines in mainstream media but it will resonate and it will make an impact with the naysayers and potentially make those hard working, highly skilled people who work so hard and silently within the industry to feel a bit less like the "drunken uncle at the wedding" (direct quote, from an anonymous fisherman)

Medical Certificates

Shop around! Big time Prices in the North East run anywhere from €180 to €50 and the invasive nature of the examination also varies it is still important that you get them for all crew and there has been a marine notice advising of doctors in all areas.

Seriously lads, this is one for the wives and loved ones, you boys are notoriously doctorfobic, now it is a requirement of your employment and an opportunity to nip any issues in the bud before they become a problem.

Crew Agreements

This is one aspect of the legislation, that, I would hope will protect both owner and worker alike. If drafted correctly and tailored to the particulars of the vessel and its crew, it should also have some impact on insurance costs and indeed also be of use in the event of any subsequent claims.

Both Dermot Conway and myself have been knocking heads in order to come up with the best possible iteration of this document so please feel free to give either of us a shout about it.

Crew Lists

Another part of the legislation and yet another sensible one. Anyone who has ever taken BIM - Declan Donaghue's

Basic Safety Training Course will know the importance of knowing exactly who is on-board at any given time. Nicknames are not of much use in the case of man overboard or lost at sea.

While we don't even want to think about these things, good seamen are always prepared. A crew list, being sent ashore at time of departure, just makes sense. In the unlikely event of something bad happening at sea, there is at least the ability to identify the people or person involved and at least gives the possibility of notifying the next of kin. Nobody wants to think of this, until it happens. It is just one small step that could potentially bring just one family, some closure in a time of heartache.

New Crew

Registering new A-typical crew is another minefield that proves to be ridiculously difficult. Thankfully I actually speak the language of the state and so I can assist in advocating for the people presenting, I am also lucky to have reasonably good administrative skills and yet, in my role on behalf of vessel owners I find it difficult to navigate the system.

We start with My Welfare, PPS appointments, then GNIB, then register with revenue, following that you attempt to get a bank account. Easy-peasy, oh yeah!

Nobody tells you that all of this can take

up to 6 months or more out of a 1 year contract. Let's not forget that, unless you keep your crew person ashore for the entire time that it takes to schedule, receive and coordinate those appointments, it is very likely that those appointments will go outside of the time when those appointments are due.

Once the vessels are at sea does the vessel steam back from Jones Bank or the Porcupine, to Howth, probably not? Let's face facts there!

If not, the process starts all over again. If a skipper or owner attempts to explain this to any agent of the state, it seems just, unbelievable, convoluted, simply as though they have not bothered. Who would believe it?

Yet despite the un-believability, it is true, regardless of the fact that it does not make any sense.

Don't forget, In the middle of all this, you are also likely to get a strongly worded letter from the Work Relations Commission requesting all of the paperwork that you have not yet acquired.

Sense is not a prerequisite to how the individual arms of the state work.

Surely, as an industry that has been flagged as an essential service during this pandemic, there really needs to be a way to help assuage this craziness? Maybe not.



(Above): Calm night in Skerries harbour - Photo by Richard Guildea.

(Below): Historic photo of well known fishing families celebrating final payment of the BIM Loan for their vessels, featuring Seamus, Francis and George Corr with Buttons Wilde amongst other hopefully familiar faces - Photo ctsy Robbie Corr.



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From Mono to Multi the Future of Aquaculture

Seafood is a popular and healthy food product in Ireland with the average Irish person consuming about 22kg of fish per year. People recognise the health benefits with fish being low-fat and a good source of omega-3 fats, which are vital for brain function, heart and many other benefits.



Growing seaweed on a line. (Inset photos): Growing of scallops in the Lehanagh Pool and the IMTA Impact pilot site at Lehanagh Pool, Connemara.

Salmon is the most popular fish bought by Irish families. In Ireland most of our salmon are farmed, and along with mussels and oysters, are the main farmed species in the country. Aquaculture is the farming of animals in the water and has been practised for centuries, with the monks farming fish in the middle ages. More recently the technology has progressed and the aquaculture sector is now producing in the region of 50 thousand tonne annually and provides a valuable food product as well as much needed employment in many rural areas of Ireland.

A typical fish farm involves keeping fish in pens in the water column, caring for them and supplying them with food so they grow to market size. Or for shellfish, containing them in a specialised unit and allowing them to feed from natural plants and materials in the water column until they reach harvestable size. While farming fish has a lower carbon and water footprint to those of land animals, and a

very efficient food fed to weight gain ratio compared to beef, pork or chicken, farming does require protein food sources and produces organic waste which is released

into the surrounding waters. Finding sustainable food sources, and reducing the environmental impacts are key challenges facing the sector as it continues to grow.

One innovative solution being



investigated to deal with these issues is called integrated multi-trophic aquaculture, or IMTA. IMTA is a different way of thinking about aquatic food production and is based on the concept of the 'food chain'. It involves farming multiple, complementary species from different levels of the food chain together for their mutual benefit, where the waste by-products from the fish providing food for another species. Shellfish filter out microscopic plants and organic content from the water column to grow, and seaweeds and plants absorb the minerals from the water for them

to grow. Growing shellfish and seaweed species in close proximity to fed fish mimics these natural cycles in the seas and creates a local ecosystem where the

wastage and impacts are reduced, and the productivity and diversity of products from the site is increased. The Marine Institutes' aquaculture research site in Lehanagh Pool in Connemara is an example of IMTA, where salmon are reared on site, with scallops and seaweeds growing alongside helping to remove the organic inputs. IMTA is seen as a promising solution for sustainable aquaculture development.

The Institute is coordinating the innovative Horizon2020 IMPAQT project which is working to promote aquaculture production based on IMTA, by addressing the lack of data and tools to assess the factors that affect IMTA, and to enable a real-time response to production challenges, environmental impacts and seafood quality.

The project is developing a computerised, artificially intelligent, management platform which analyses the environment, the fish behaviour, and data from other sources such as satellite data, image analysis, and inputs from the farmer on site. This is used to inform fish welfare

and water quality and to provide real-time operational feedback and advice to the farmer on the management of their site. The technologies include new sensors, wireless communication systems, and state of the art software utilising the internet of things. This system is being designed and tested at the Institute's research site in Lehanagh

Pool, at Keywater Fisheries IMTA site in Sligo, in collaboration with our international partners at other sites across Europe, and in Turkey and China.

The Marine Institute's Oceans of

Learning series has focused on 'Food From Our Oceans'. Oceans of Learning offers videos, interactive activities and downloadable resources on assessing fish stocks, aquaculture, phytoplankton and the work undertaken at the Marine Institute's Newport Research Facility. To view the resources, visit Food from our Ocean

For more information on Oceans of Learning visit www.marine.ie and follow the Marine Institute on Facebook, Instagram and Twitter.



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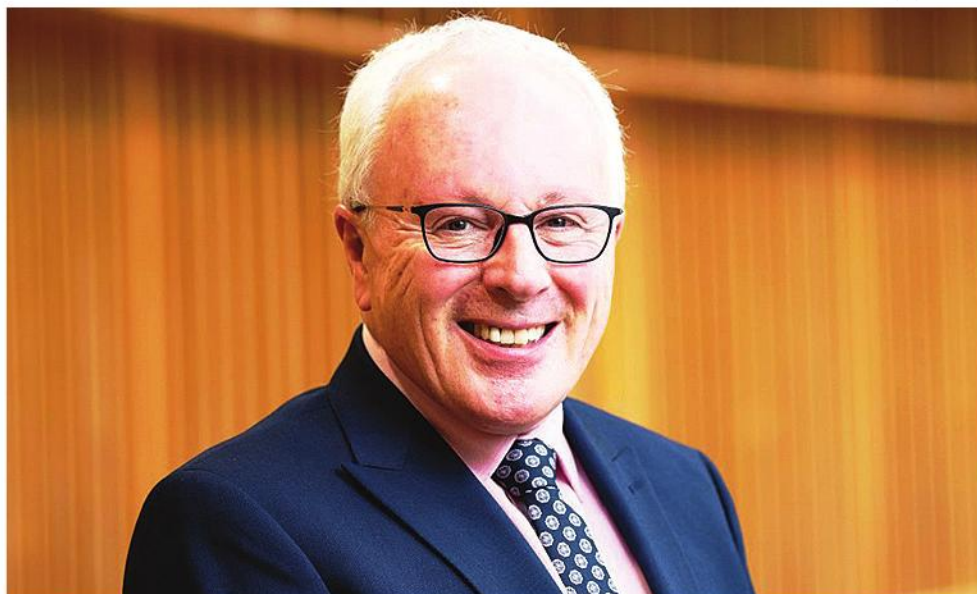


Foras na Mara
Marine Institute



THE MARINE TIMES INTERVIEW

“It has never been more vital to understand the importance of the sea”



Dr. Paul Connolly took over leadership of the Marine Institute at a very challenging time. He had not long become Chief Executive following Dr. Peter Heffernan's retirement, when the Covid 19 Pandemic struck. The Institute is Ireland's State agency for marine research technology, development and innovation. He is a former President of the International Council for the Exploration of the Seas and was Director of Fisheries and Ecosystems Advisory Services at the Institute before his appointment as CEO. In this interview with the MARINE TIMES he discusses his hopes and plans for the five years ahead in his new role.

Dr. Paul Connolly has no doubts about the importance of understanding the oceans and their contribution to life on this planet.

“Seven out of ten breaths we take are part of the oceans' contribution to humanity,” he says during the interview, a point which sticks in one's mind.

“It has never been more important for the public to understand the importance of the sea. The encouraging aspect is that the indications are that there is huge and growing public interest in the oceans. That is grounded in the impact the oceans are having on climate,” he adds.

That statement indicates that the new Chief Executive of the Marine Institute sees a fundamental relationship between the oceans and the environment.

“Environmental issues will be embedded in the future relationships we have with the sea. There will be Marine Protected Areas, but it is going to be very important in establishing them that there is close work with the fishing industry about them.”

That opinion would seem to come from his previous post in the Institute as Director of Fisheries and Ecosystems Advisory Services.

His appointment is part of what amounts to a “fifty per cent change in the leadership of the Institute,” as he describes what is a major element of his new job, getting all of those changes working and at the same time dealing with the building of the Institute's new research vessel which is being built in Spain and to be delivered in the middle of 2022.

“The major issue there is making sure it comes in on time and in budget and that with all the traditional things we do, providing scientific support to various government departments. That includes the Department of the Marine.

“We provide them with scientific advice on a sustainable seafood industry and a lot associated with that, monitoring the health of the seas for example. The whole issue of climate, trying to understand climate and the big impact the ocean plays in that will be huge and we will have a big focus on that.

“We must show to the marine industry and the public the science of what we are doing and keeping the marine sector abreast of what we are doing and keeping them informed about what we are doing. It is very important that we have good and strong communications and that is particularly important with the fishing industry.”

“These are very exciting times for ocean science,” he says, looking forward to next year when the United Nations ‘Decade of the Ocean’ will be launched. He talks about the necessity for countries to work together, to have strong co-operation and develop international research programmes “where countries work closely together on research projects that deepen understanding of the oceans and help to predict the way the ocean has its influence on climate and ultimately on society.”

There is, he believes, growing public interest in the ocean. “It provides oxygen to breathe. Seven out of ten breaths we take are part of the oceans' contribution to humanity. It also provides food, it influences and impacts the weather, the climate, so we need to talk about these aspects and appreciate them and why ocean acidification and plastics pollution of the seas are real threats and create serious problems.”

Emphasising these points he quotes statistics which should underline them in public consciousness.

“Huge numbers of the Earth's population live close to the ocean, the Food and Agriculture Organisation of the United Nations reckons that about 60 million people are engaged in livelihoods around fisheries and aquaculture; 90 per cent of the world's trade

comes from ocean-going ships. If you take the EU and the coastal industries associated with the ocean, there's 3.4 million jobs associated with tourism around the marine, aquaculture, renewable energy, biotechnology, fishing and shipping.

“So the seas and the ocean are absolutely critical to society.”

As a result of that, Dr. Connolly sees that “one of the big jobs of the Marine Institute is to keep showing and raising the awareness of the ocean and getting the public and the schools and the scientists of the future to engage with the sea and really impress how important the ocean is to our society and the way we live.”

Public understanding is growing he says and events such as SeaFest have shown that – over 100,000 last year when it was held in Cork and he saw at first-hand the interest in the Marine Institute and its work.

Regrettably, Covid 19 forced the cancellation of this year's event, but Dr. Connolly is clear that there is an obligation on the State agency to get its message through to and accepted by, the public.

“The onus is on us to visualise the work

we do and tell our story in a very simple and informative way to the general public.”

He knows the possible impact of Brexit on the Irish fishing industry and how there may be EU and UK waters and says that it was made clear to the public at last year's SeaFest exhibition and creating such understanding is important to public perception of the fishing industry and Ireland's marine resources.

A thriving maritime economy, understanding the ocean's eco-systems, harnessing our ocean wealth, the whole idea of engaging with the sea, building on our maritime heritage and “strengthening with the general public, the maritime identity we have and increasing our awareness of values, the opportunities that are there from the oceans and making everyone aware that when they walk along a beach they can look out and know the value of the ocean, but know also the importance of the oceans to the way they live, to the climate and to their general well-being,” these are, it comes across in our interview, the principles which embody Dr. Paul Connolly's aims for his leadership of the Marine Institute.

Competition

What does the sea mean to you?

#SeaToMe

For more information on
Oceans of Learning

and the 'Sea to Me' competition, visit www.marine.ie

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Fish Imports and Exports to Third Countries Continue to Rise

Fish imports into Ireland from outside the EU are continuing to rise, according to figures released by the Sea-Fisheries Protection Authority. In 2019 over 4,000 tonnes of fishery products were subject to SFPA import controls, up 26% on 2018.

Last year the SFPA provided catch certificates for over 11,500 tonnes of Irish exports to Third Countries, an increase of 8% on 2018. In addition the SFPA provided health certificates for almost 84,000 tonnes of exports to Third countries. These certificates confirm that the products were handled under satisfactory hygienic conditions in an SFPA approved establishment and are accurately described.

Fish is highly traded in international markets. Dr Susan Steele, Chair of the SFPA states: "IUU fishing is a significant threat to the future of fishing. It creates an uneven playing field and jeopardises the development of sustainable fisheries on which many coastal communities globally rely for their livelihoods, including in Ireland where the fishing industry supports over 11,000 jobs. As regulators, we are committed to utilising all the controls available to us to help detect and deter IUU fishing and fishery products within our jurisdiction."

"Regulation, including health certification, also underpins confidence in the safety of Irish seafood products, providing vital reassurance to retailers, hospitality businesses and consumers at home and abroad. This is especially important given that the seafood sector is one of the main drivers of export growth for agri-food within Food Wise 2025. With the world eating more fish than ever before, and a forecast that consumption will increase to 30 kilos per person by 2030, the opportunity exists for exports of seafood to increase substantially beyond the current figure of over €650M. Retaining Ireland's growing reputation for producing superior seafood is essential and the integrity of the supply chain will be all-important."

Dr Steele said that everyone in the supply chain has a role to play in protecting it. "This includes importers and exporters who can ensure the goods they handle have the correct documentation. It may be difficult to distinguish between a legally and illegally obtained fish, however robust inspection processes and accurate paperwork will tell the tale."

Mr. Gerard O'Hare, Managing Director, Beagans Limited, a leading independent customs broker in Ireland, reiterated the importance of a robust regulatory system, acknowledging the role of the SFPA in verifying and assuring the provenance of products being imported and exported. "A wide and varied range of fish and fish products from a growing number of non-EU countries are now commonplace in the container and airfreight traffic arriving into Ireland. The SFPA's regulatory control system ensures that processors and wholesalers receive a product from an approved source with a traceability chain, which is essential to maintaining the integrity and security of the supply chain, while also facilitating trade."

Fish and fishery products from China, Ecuador and India accounted for almost half of the total volume of imports in 2019 while Nigeria, China and Egypt accounted for almost two thirds of the Irish seafood exports outside the EU in 2019.

Dr Steele confirmed that the SFPA is anticipating and preparing for the possibility that exports to the UK may require health certificates in the future. During the current transition period EU rules and regulations will continue to apply to and in the UK and there will be no immediate changes for import or export practices with the UK until after the end of the transition period.

Imports to Border Inspection Posts Ireland

Exporter Country	Number	Weight (Kg)
China	64	1,051,908
Ecuador	29	560,343
Philippines	18	251,155
South Africa	21	378,971
India	33	456,126
Thailand	17	193,443
Mauritius	8	180,605
Iceland	561	269,308
Vietnam	18	201,057
Hong Kong	8	121,243
Argentina	1	23,809
Chile	2	42,645
Ghana	7	133,156
Norway	3	135,648
Canada	3	12,763
Madagascar	2	39,744
Myanmar	3	79,379
Bangladesh	6	42,957
Morocco	2	24,480
USA	7	72,348
Malaysia	1	8,650
Total	814	4,279,739



(Above): Brendan O'Flaherty & crew on the Kilmore Quay beamer 'Mary J', just in from a trip. Photo courtesy Stephen Jones (i-fish.ie)

(Below): AQUARIA off Kilkeel. Photo by Andrew Kearney.



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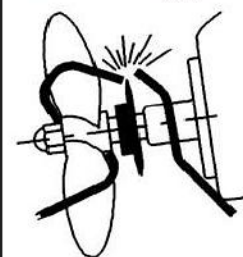
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RNLI REPORT

Niamh Stephenson, the RNLI's Public Affairs Manager, highlights the commitment and selflessness of the RNLI during the Covid-19 pandemic and also brings to our attention a new book showcasing heroic actions by Irish lifeboat crews

New Book 'Surviving the Storms' Showcases Incredible Rescues by Irish Lifeboat Crews

The RNLI's focus as outlined by our Chief Executive, Mark Dowie, during the Covi 19 Pandemic is: "The well-being of our volunteers and staff and the preservation of the RNLI's lifesaving service."

Just as you would expect from a charity nearing its 200th birthday, the RNLI remains on call and operational. Our lifeboat crew come from all walks of life and we want them and their loved ones to keep safe at this time. Therefore there are no exercises or training going on at the moment and the lifeboat stations remain closed to the public. While launches are thankfully down due to less people on the water, some of our lifeboat crews have been out on callouts.

All of us in the RNLI have been keeping this at the forefront of everything we do. The RNLI continues to be 'on call,' answering pagers and rescuing those in trouble at sea and on inland waters. And of course, our RNLI crews are following Government advice and measures.

I'm taking every opportunity to thank every one in our charity that is helping to keep the RNLI operational and in a state of readiness at this time. In particular, those on the front line and who remain on-call, keeping our boats and equipment in working order and ready to launch if needed. I along with all my colleagues are grateful to all our incredible volunteers for their continued support and commitment at this challenging time. We will look back on this as a time when the RNLI rose to the challenge.

Our volunteers come from all works of life and I'm acutely aware of how many of them work in our health service or have loved ones who work there. We are

so proud of you and the incredible work you are doing to help us all at this time.

A new book providing a collection of first-hand accounts of some of the most dramatic rescues carried out by RNLI lifesavers around Ireland and the UK over the past 20 years, features an incredible feat of bravery by a Cork lifeboat crew and an incredible feat of bravery by Portrush man and former RNLI station mechanic, Anthony Chambers.

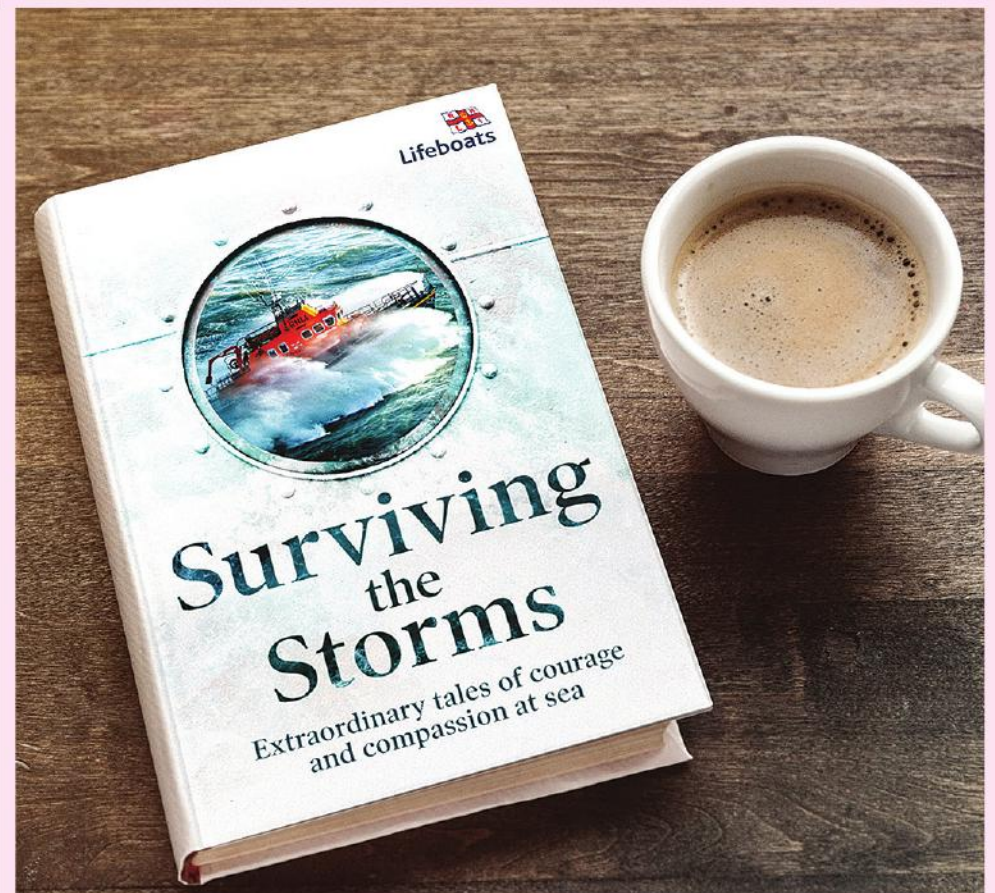
Surviving the Storms features 11 stories of extraordinary courage and compassion at sea, providing a rare insight into the life-or-death decisions the RNLI have to make when battling the forces of nature and saving lives.

Told in the words of Castletownbere RNLI Coxswain Dean Hegarty, it provides a first-hand account of the dramatic rescue of a fishing crew in storm force conditions after their vessel lost all power at the harbour entrance of Castletownbere in West Cork. Six lives were saved that night and the Coxswain is set to receive a medal for gallantry, and the crew and launching authority, letters of thanks from the Institution. The book *Surviving the Storms* is on sale now with royalties from all sales supporting the lifesaving charity.

In an extract from the book Dean Hegarty, who at 24-years old had been on the lifeboat crew for five years and was a recently appointed Coxswain on his second callout in charge, explains what he saw when he and his lifeboat crew came on



Castletownbere RNLI Medal rescue crew which feature in the new book 'Surviving the Storms'



scene. 'Within 10 minutes of the original mayday call, we were on the scene. What I saw when we arrived, I can't lie; It almost gave me a heart attack. The way the tide was going out and the wind was coming in, it was churning the sea up and creating a big, watery explosion. There were huge swells reaching six metres, the height of a two-storey house, tossing the fishing boat around like a rag doll and pushing her ever closer to the sixty metre cliffs to the west of the harbour mouth. The gales were now peaking at storm force 11. My heart started to race as I watched waves crashing up against the cliffs, with the vessel only 30 or so metres away from the rocky shoreline.'

Portrush man and former RNLI station mechanic, Anthony Chambers, the recently retired lifeboat mechanic saved the lives of two teenage boys who became trapped in a cave with a fast-rising tide in 2009, receiving the RNLI's medal for gallantry for the callout.

Being part of the lifeboats for Anthony Chambers came from his family. It started with his grandfather, Karl, who had been the mechanic for the first motorboat in Portrush in 1924. Then his father Gilbert, took over from him in 1947.

Anthony's story concerns the rescue of two 14-year-old boys trapped by the fast rising tide in a cliff cave near Castlerock Strand on 5 August 2009. To rescue the boys Anthony had to swim from the all-weather lifeboat into the cave carrying lifejackets to bring both boys to safety in terrible conditions. He did this twice to bring both boys

to safety.

In an extract from the book Anthony describes the moment he brought the second boy to safety, utterly exhausted after the rescue, to be met by another lifeboat crewmember Gerard Bradley who was on-board the waiting inshore lifeboat outside the cave.

"As we kicked our way towards the boat I felt the strength draining out of me, like sand out of an egg timer, it slipped away. I'm going to have to let him go. The lifeboat was just ahead of us and Reece was secured in his lifejacket. I knew Gerard would get him within moments. The boy would be safe. But I can't keep on.'

'Despite the ordeal almost being at an end. The exhaustion was too much. I prepared to let go and let the waves take me. I knew that as soon as I did, I'd be swallowed up and drown. I just didn't have it

in me to fight the waves anymore. But just as I went to release my grip and surrendered myself to the sea, Gerard came up alongside us. They'd got to us. I thought.'

RNLI Chief Executive, Mark Dowie, said: '*Surviving the Storms* is a wonderful account of selflessness and bravery although there is no book big enough to do justice to every RNLI rescue and rescuer. We have hundreds of lifeboat stations and thousands of crew members and lifeguards all dedicated to saving lives. Between them, they've helped so many people survive

the storms and I'm proud of every one of them.'

Surviving the Storms is now available to buy in all good local bookstores.





Ardglass resplendent in early Summer sunshine - Photo courtesy Ross Mulhall (Ross Boat Photos)

Is Marine the Poor Departmental Relation?



The Chief Executive of the Irish Fish Producers' Organisation, John Ward, says that it is time for a discussion about the place of the marine sector

It has been a bad few months for the fishing industry and when we see how the Brexit negotiations are going, it looks like going from bad to worse in 2021.

The individual press releases from the four PO's showed how disappointed they were about the inadequacy of the Minister's tie-up aid scheme.

Despite two meetings with the Minister we were unable to broker any change of his Department's proposals.

The final outcome showed that the take-up of 67 vessels from a national fleet of 1983 vessels clearly demonstrates how it was viewed by the Industry. In fact some 88% of the 67 vessels that did apply were in the sectors of 15 metres and under. We expect the total payout to be less than €100K.

To add insult to injury, we were shocked

to see a €50m scheme announced for the meat processing industry.

Now with a new government waiting in the wings, it might be time to have a discussion as to whether the Marine is the poor relation to Agriculture in DAFM and might fare better to be elsewhere.

I cannot see us having a separate Marine Department.

Whilst we all appreciate having a senior minister take charge of the portfolio, in recent times it seems, agriculture is just too important to the economy for the Marine to get the attention it deserves.

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