

MARINE TIMES

IRELAND'S LEADING MARITIME NEWSPAPER - JANUARY 2021 - PRICE €3.00



Barbarella and Rachel D sprat fishing in Donegal Bay. Photo by Pauric Diver



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Brexit Deal Will Devastate Fishing Industry

“Duplicity” Alleged Towards Irish Fishermen

The government has failed the fishing industry in the Brexit negotiations, leaving it facing a potentially disastrous situation that could spread to ancillary industries, causing massive losses financially and in employment That is the reaction from the Irish fishing industry to the Brexit deal which has led to strong criticism of the government for not delivering on its assurances to the industry during months of pre-Brexit deal negotiations that it would protect Irish fishing. Full report on page 4

Rockall & Hard Borders in Irish Waters - See page 28

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by Art Kavanagh

New Year – New Deals?

So it looks as if they have done the deal and it also looks as if similar to previous episodes the fishermen of Ireland have been dealt a Bum Hand.

Disappointed as we are – the UK / Scottish lads are basically “doing their collective nuts”. They expected to be the big winners in this deal but obviously believe they are not- so we must ask- **WHO IS ??? The French maybe ????**

I remember distinctly being at a function around the time that the UK voted to leave the EU where some of those in the group stated that our politicians would have to play a blinder in whatever negotiations would take place around the fishing quotas. There was one wise voice in the group who silenced us all by suggesting that Ireland might not even be in the room when the deal was being discussed and completed. **How right he was.**

There is nobody who mirrors the contempt in which I hold the way the fishing industry has been managed in Ireland – but on this occasion I am afraid that we were outsmarted and outgunned. I am not convinced that there is anything we could have done to prevent this apart from actually

using our veto as the French threatened to do but even with my most loyal fishing hat on - I am afraid that we might have been shooting ourselves in the foot nationally by doing that.

We are Members of the EU and as such really do not have the option of dealing individually on matters like this. The deal went badly against us and it is clear that overall we are taking more than our share of the pain. Therefore our argument must be with the other members of the EU in an attempt to have some of the pain shared. There is no point in fighting amongst ourselves or blaming the Government for something over which they had very limited control.

The one encouraging element is what appears to be a commitment from the Government to compensate and support the fishermen and the ancillary industries who will be disadvantaged by the new arrangements. This is good as is what appears to be a joint approach by the POs.

We need to keep the momentum up lads because history will show that as we become used to discomfort the pain lessens. This is the thin edge of the wedge so we must attend to it now.

As part of any examination now to be done we must establish EXACTLY what we are losing here directly.

The SFPA should be able to quantify what our fleet has actually caught in the UK Sea Areas. Only then can we properly quantify in financial terms the potential cost.

My main function is in representing the fleet with the banks who are obsessed with the potential effects of the Brexit fallout and we need to be able to show what financial effects there will be in basic monetary terms.

It is also vital that some restriction be imposed on the prospect of an “Invasion” from other EU fleets seeking to make up for lost opportunities in the UK Areas. The Mutual Access condition does at least mean that we can fish in the UK Zones. I had been afraid that this would not happen.

One prominent operator did compare the new restrictions to a very severe quota cut which he reckoned we had survived before - but with respect I believe it worse than that on this occasion in that the cut is semi permanent

The sooner the industry with BIM and the Department can get together to put a plan together the better for everyone.

I hear Decommissioning being suggested against mixed reactions but if a really worthwhile package can be devised it may offer opportunities for people to exit with something to show for their efforts.

I continue to bang the Crewing Drum and even in recent days I have heard from owners of their difficulties in sourcing crews.

There is a suggestion that crews and ancillary works might be overlooked in any Decommissioning Scheme but maybe we could include something there to ensure that any **Irish Fisherman** faced with losing his berth would be accommodated on another Irish vessel which might have had to look outside the country for crew ??

Even where crews are being sourced outside - the increased regulation is making

it more difficult to maintain them and there are currently vessels tied up which certainly should not be tied up. **That is a disgrace Lads.**

We do have lots of Irish crewmembers - but not enough - but can we try to make sure that they will all be accommodated in a reduced fleet and at least reduce any crew job losses. Can I suggest that each one of them recruit one other prospective crewmember and at least let them try the experience.

Every Irish crewmember we get reduces the reliance on the non Irish crews (who in fairness to them have kept the show on the road) but for whom the paperwork and regulatory obligations are becoming excessive.

We are facing up to a potential problem here lads mainly created by outside forces over which we have little or no control. In those circumstances maybe our own regulators might be persuaded to root their Green Jerseys out of the press and ease up on the regulations - or at least their interpretation of them. There can be neither pride nor pleasure in one Irish person making a potentially difficult situation any more difficult than it should be by over policing

In the past few months I have heard anecdotes which are terrifying of the attitude of Control Officers who have adopted a Policing Role. There can be no pride or credit taken by anyone who makes a difficult situation even more difficult.....

We have a problem now which potentially affects us all- so Let US ALL combine forces to deal with it. There is neither time or place now for Point Scoring so a strong Team effort is required.

Sensible workable suggestions on how the current difficulties might be best managed must be useful. Claims that the Industry is “finished” do not help and will scare the life out of the Lenders. If they lose confidence and cut or reduce the Credit Lines – THEN we have a real problem.

I have spoken with some prominent members of the fishing community at catching and marketing levels and certainly am comforted by their attitude and optimism going forward.

Let's not let them down.



Ros a Mhil in resplendent winter sunshine - Photo by Patricia Ní Chonghaile

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Connacht Ranger - Photo by Christopher Feenan

National Fisheries College of Ireland Latest Course Schedule



Basic Safety Training

- 12-14 January, NFC Castletownbere
- 18-20 January, NFC Greencastle
- 25-27 January, NFC Greencastle
- 09-11 February, NFC Castletownbere
- 09-11 March, NFC Castletownbere
- 13-15 April, NFC Castletownbere
- 19-21 April, NFC Greencastle

Enhanced Safety Training

- 06 January, NFC Greencastle
- 04 March, NFC Greencastle

Deckhand Foundation Programme

- 01 Feb-12 Mar, NFC, Greencastle

Commercial Scuba Diving

- 22 Feb-20 March, NFC Castletownbere

GMDSS General Operators Certificate (GOC)

- 08-19 February, NFC Castletownbere

GMDSS SRC 1 and 2 Radio

- 29-31 March, NFC Greencastle

Advanced Fire Fighting and Prevention

- 01-05 February, NFC Castletownbere

Fire Prevention and Fire Fighting (3 Day) STCW-95

- 22-24 March, NFC Greencastle

Surface Supply Diving

- 06 April-30 April, NFC Castletownbere

For courses taking place in National Fisheries College, Castletownbere

Contact Della O'Sullivan

T +353 27 71230
E Della.osullivan@bim.ie

For courses taking place in National Fisheries College, Greencastle

Contact Maria McCarron

T +353 74 938 1068
E maria.mccarron@bim.ie

For courses taking place in the Coastal Training Unit

Contact Bob Walsh

T +353 87 683 7134

A complete list of upcoming courses from BIM is available on www.bim.ie/training



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BREXIT DEAL WILL DEVASTATE FISHING INDUSTRY

Taoiseach Admits Industry Has Been Badly Hit

“Duplicity” Alleged Towards Irish Fishermen

Report: Mark Mc Carthy and Tom MacSweeney



Western Chieftain fishing mackerel - Photo by Tommy Dirrane

The government has failed the fishing industry in the Brexit negotiations, leaving it facing a potentially disastrous situation that could spread to ancillary industries, causing massive losses financially and in employment.

That is the reaction from the Irish fishing industry to the Brexit deal which has led to strong criticism of the government for not delivering on its assurances to the industry during months of pre-Brexit deal negotiations that it would protect Irish fishing.

After the deal was announced on Christmas Eve, Taoiseach, Micheál Martin, conceded that the Irish fishing industry had been badly hit. “It will have a devastating impact on Irish fishermen and could have serious long-term implications for many of the State’s main fishing ports,” he said.

Over the Christmas holiday period there was a two-hour long online meeting with fishing industry representatives which was also attended by Marine Minister Charlie McConalogue. It did not resolve the serious concern outlined to government by the industry which is appalled at the substantial 26 per cent reduction in the mackerel quota, the biggest fishery sector, as well as a big cut of nearly 14 per cent in prawns double-digit cuts in whitefish quotas. The industry representatives disputed assessments that put the likely damage at a loss of €30m, claiming that figure would only be the initial effect of lost catches and that the true figure, when ancillary employment and support sectors are taken into account will be closer to €80m and 16,000 lost jobs. Industry leaders said it had been “dishonoured” and that promises made were

shredded.

As this edition of the MARINE TIMES went to print there was no certainty about the government’s response and whether it would, as demanded by industry representative organisations and Opposition politicians - “stand-up to the EU.”

Taoiseach Micheal Martin acknowledged that the deal didn’t achieve what Ireland wanted for fishing. “The deal does impact negatively on our fishing industry, but a no-deal would have been far worse,” he said.

Industry leaders told the Taoiseach and Minister that promises made to protect it had been dishonoured and that there had been duplicity towards Irish fishermen.

Irish People Don’t Realise How Bad the Deal Is for Fishing

“The Irish people don’t know how bad it is for the fishing and coastal communities. The last time this was done was the plantation of Ireland, when the land was taken from our people and given to somebody else, now our fishing has been taken and given to somebody else.”

That tough comment indicated the bit-

terness felt in the fishing industry in West Cork over the Brexit deal. It came from the Chief Executive of the Irish South and West Fish Producers’ Organisation in Castle-townbere West Cork, Patrick Murphy.

“This is not about our government doing a good deal for the country. This is a bad deal and it’s a bad deal for fishermen not just for this year but for generations. This is the annihilation of our fishing industry. It’s gone under this deal. Immense damage will be done to our coastal, fishing communities unless the government makes the EU change its current quota allocations to benefit Ireland.

“We have lost most of our largest fishery – mackerel and a considerable swathe of another vital fishery – prawns. Even the biggest boats in the industry will be uncertain about their future. In what mindset is that ok? Putting Irish fishermen out of business. The government wouldn’t allow French, Dutch, Belgian, Spanish, English farmers to come into Irish farms and take over sections of them. But that’s what it’s doing to Irish fishermen. It is a repeat of history, giving away our natural resources again.

They did it before and they are doing it again, destroying the Irish fishing industry. Irish fishermen will be a people lost to the coastal communities while European nations continue to exploit an Irish natural resource.”

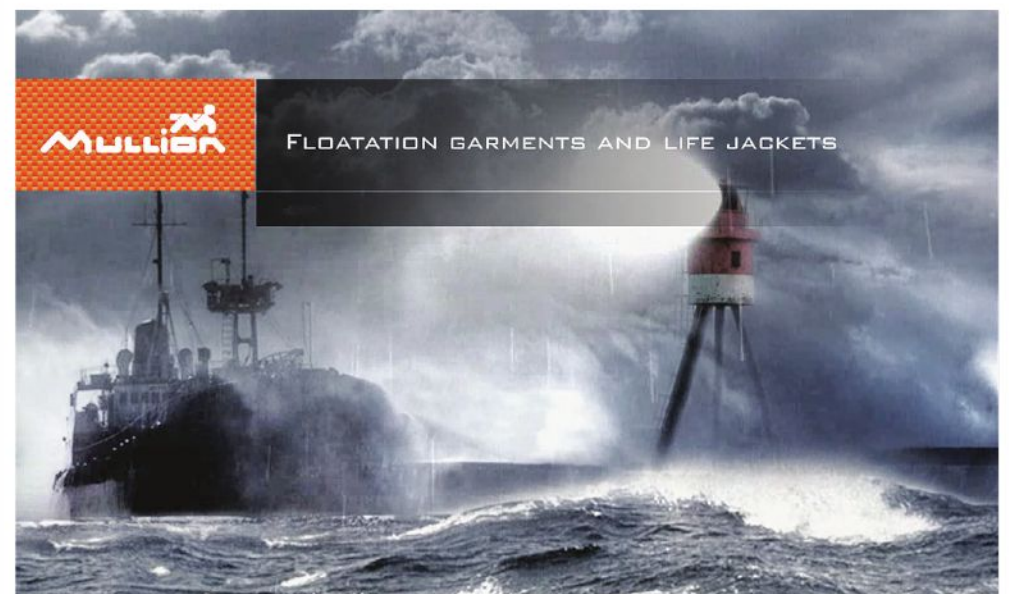
• See more from Patrick Murphy in *South West Viewpoint* on page 8

The Chief Executive of the Killybegs Fishermen’s Organisation in Donegal, Sean O’Donoghue, said that “a grievous wrong has been done to Ireland.”

“Guarantees to Irish fishermen have been shredded. We will be seeking compensation from our EU colleagues to put right this grievous wrong. Our highly-developed mackerel fishery stands to lose out dramatically.

“Our government must stand up to the EU and achieve compensation in the form of transfer of quota from the other EU coastal States to Ireland.”

• See more from Sean O’Donoghue on page 28



Designed for and by fishermen

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Relative Stability and Zonal Attachment

While that is what Ireland needs and there have also been demands for a revision of the Relative Stability arrangement, suggested because it is viewed as having always discriminated against Irish fishermen, that is seen by many fishermen as a forlorn hope, “based on previous experience,” a Skipper said to the Marine Times.

“What, for example, will the government do to support the industry’s case for immediately insisting on the concept of ‘zonal attachment’ in our waters? Irish fishers have rights which the EU has not given them under this provision. These should be insisted upon by the government,” said another.

“How likely is the government to achieve that when its response has been to suggest Irish fishermen should ‘decommission’ their boats which really means – “get out of the industry” -- make Irish fishermen redundant so other EU nations will benefit again from Irish waters. Very unlikely,” was a further comment.

French Act While Ireland Delays

Despite the repeated statements from government that it would protect Irish fishermen, the belief in the industry is

that it did not take action when French President Macron intervened in the negotiations and is thought to have insisted that the EU’s lead negotiator protect the French fishing industry.

While the Irish government has not yet outlined what it will do for the Irish industry, the French government announced measures on Christmas Eve, immediately after the announced of the EU Brexit ‘deal’ with the UK, of supports to French fishermen and fishmongers, including up to €30,000 in individual aid.

There has not been the outraged reaction from French fishermen compared to the response in Ireland, which has led to belief that French fishing has done better than the Irish industry.

“Fishermen and wholesalers will be able to benefit from a flat-rate aid of up to €30,000 depending on their dependence on products caught in British waters,” the French Fisheries Ministry announced. “The French government will present a complete plan to support French fishermen,” Minister Annick Girardin said, providing compensation over a limited period for part of the turnover losses of companies dependent on British waters. Other measures include investment aid under a recovery plan and “fleet exit plan” will be available for vessels dependent on British waters that want to stop activity.

The Brexit ‘deal’ will result in Europe-



Argonaut IV at Dunmore East - Photo by William Power

an boats relinquishing 25% of their current quotas during a five-and-a-half year transition period. After that there will be annual negotiations on the amount of fish EU vessels can take from British waters — and if Brussels is not satisfied it can impose economic measures against the UK.

‘Significant Blow’ to European Industry says Fisheries Alliance

The deal agreed between the EU and the UK is a “significant blow that leaves the industry facing an uncertain future,” according to the European Fisheries Alliance.

The Alliance is a coalition of European fishing fleets representing the interests of the fishing industry in the remaining 27 EU countries after the exit of the UK.

It has called on the European Commission and the Member States to “secure the long-term future of our industry.”

UK Fishermen Not Happy With Deal

The Brexit deal has not pleased all UK fishermen. There has been contrasting reaction. Many sectors of the UK fishing industry, in England and Scotland particularly, are not satisfied with the deal.

Elsbeth Macdonald, chief executive of the Scottish Fishermen’s Federation, said: “This deal falls very far short of the commitments and promises that were made to the fishing industry by those at the highest level of government.

“It does not restore sovereign UK control over fisheries, and does not permit us to determine who can catch what, where and when in our own waters. From 1st January 2021, the EU fleet has full access to the UK EEZ for what is essentially six years, as fisheries are managed on an annual basis.

“Yes, the UK fleet has reciprocal access to EU waters, but they are far more reliant on our waters than we are on theirs – EU vessels fish six times more in UK waters than we fish in theirs. The adjustments to UK shares of fish are modest at best, and in some cases will leave us with some very real practical fisheries management problems.

“A fundamental error was made by the government not securing sufficient quota

uplift in some key stocks to take account of international swaps, which will no longer be possible in the same way. Anyone involved in fisheries would know this gap had to be bridged for vessels in the whitefish fleet. We expect government to come forward with solutions to the problem they have created.

“The UK is not receiving a 25% uplift in quotas, but instead will gain 25% of the value of what was the EU’s share in 2019. This does not equate to a 25% uplift in quota. And significantly, by the end of the adjustment period this will fall very far short of the government’s stated aim of achieving zonal attachment. The annual consultations between the EU and UK will be meaningless during the adjustment phase, as the TAC fallback provisions in the deal mean the EU can still fish in UK waters for up to six months, even without TACS being agreed. By granting full access, the UK has no negotiating capital left with which to increase shares of the fish in our own waters.

“At the end of the six years, how does the government envisage us claiming a fairer share of the catches in our own waters without triggering punishment clauses in the deal?

“Although we are glad to be out of the CFP, our battle to secure better arrangements for our fishermen is far from over. We are now a coastal state with one hand tied behind our back and the industry’s task in the months and years ahead is to right the wrongs of this deal.”

See INTERNATIONAL NEWS on page 22 & 23 for more details.

Decommissioning and Tie-Up in Ireland?

The government suggestion of a tie-up scheme and a permanent decommissioning programme has not gone down well as it would reduce the Irish fleet in size, while the last tie-up, in the earlier stages of the pandemic, was rejected by the industry organisations as unacceptable and, as a result, had a low take-up.

The Department of the Marine’s response appeared mainly to be seeking registration details from Irish FPOs of their members to submit to the UK authorities for permission to enter British waters. At least one FPO was asked if it would be able assist with details of non-members for UK registration purposes.

Report continues on pages 6 & 7

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Isle of Man Irish Sea Herring Fishery

Following that the Department wrote to FPOs and Co-ops about the effects on the Irish Sea Herring fishery around the Isle of Man: "Historically there has been a small Irish Sea Herring fishery in the waters around the Isle of Man. However, Ireland's quota will now be reduced as a result of the UK's departure from the EU."

"The Minister will decide on the management arrangements for this fishery later in the year following consultation with the Quota Management Advisory Committee. At that time the Department will seek authorisation from the UK authorities through the Commission for the vessels covered by such management arrangements. In the meantime we are advising the Commission of this situation and seeking that application for such vessels to the UK authorities be made at that time (in effect a place holder).

"All EU vessels seeking to fish in UK waters, including the 6-12nmz around the Isle of Man, will require an authorisation from the UK to do so. If one of your members vessels has a track record of fishing in the Isle of Man 6-12nmz for any species other than Herring or if you are aware of any such vessels, please advise the Department of relevant records of same (the access is linked in the agreement to the "period beginning on 1 February 2017 and ending on 31 January 2020 by qualifying vessels of the other Party in the waters and under any treaty arrangements that existed on 31 January 2020").

"We propose to provide a list of eligible vessels to the Commission to be considered by the UK for authorisation."

The Department was asked to explain who agreed this decision, when and what were the 'official figures' in this dual-shared fishery.

At the time of going to print, that information had not been made known.

Rockall Confrontation

The seven-year-old agreement with Britain on Rockall appeared to have been broken when in the first week of January a Scottish patrol vessel confronted the Donegal-based Northern Celt and told Skipper Adrian McClenaghan that the vessel could not fish within 12 miles of Rockall.

Skipper McClenaghan said he had a permit to continue to fish within British waters. The Department of Foreign Affairs was alerted to the incident.

- *More on this story on Page 28*

Inshore Boats Warned Off by SFPA

Another incident in the first week of Brexit occurred when two Donegal skippers from the Inishowen Peninsula were told they could no longer tie-up at Greencastle Harbour because their boats were registered in Derry.

IIMRO, the Irish islands marine resource organisation, has been informed that boats registered in Northern Ireland are now required under IUU to land into designated ports in Ireland i.e. Killybegs and Castletownbere only.

"This presents a serious health and safety risk to some of our member vessels who will have to travel for a day from their home ports to land their catches. Obviously this has serious implications for the ongoing viability of livelihoods as well as the future of island fishers, IIMRO said. It has sought a meeting with Marine Minister McConalogue who is one of the T.Ds. representing North/East Donegal, which includes Greencastle and the Inishowen Peninsula. Sinn Fein's Spokesman on the Marine is also a T.D. for this constituency.

- *More on this story on Page 12 & 28*

Marine Minister McConalogue Welcomes Brexit Agreement - Pledges to Stand by Affected Sectors

The Minister for Agriculture, Food and the Marine, Charlie McConalogue, welcomed the Brexit Agreement, in particular, the agreed establishment of a trading relationship based on zero tariffs and quota restrictions, while at the same time, pointing to the more challenging impacts that will arise for the fishing industry as a result of the agreement reached on fishing quotas.

"This is a positive agreement for Ireland's agri-food sector, primarily in the avoidance of what would have been very damaging tariffs in the event of 'No Deal'.

The potential for tariffs of up to €2.5 billion on agri-food trade between Ireland and Great Britain had been one of the primary concerns for Government and for stakeholders right across the agri-food sector, so it is welcome that such an outcome has been avoided. The deal does, however, contain unwelcome elements for our fishing industry despite Ireland continually putting forward the strongest possible case for the sector."

Minister McConalogue emphasised that Brexit always had the potential to impact very negatively on both the agri-food and fisheries industries. He said he had worked closely with all stakeholders, Government colleagues and Member State counterparts to ensure that the best deal possible could be obtained for farming and fishing communities across the country.

"It was critical that a 'No Deal' outcome be avoided, not just because of its potential negative impact on trade, but also because of its very serious implications for the fishing industry as a result of access being denied to UK waters and displacement of EU fleets into Ireland's fishing zone. The Deal secured in the negotiations has avoided that outcome and secured for Ireland and other EU fleets continued access to UK waters for the next five-and-a-half years, with a further review on continued access thereafter. Inevitably, the Deal comes at a price and I know that it will have real impact on our fishing fleet and coastal communities.

"The EU Fishing industry will unfortunately have to concede some of the fish previously caught in UK waters. However, this will be much less than what the UK was demanding throughout, and right up to the end of these negotiations. I am acutely conscious that these quota reductions will affect important parts of Ireland's fishing industry. The Government will work hard with the industry to do all it can in supporting and addressing these challenges.

"I greatly appreciate the input of fishing industry representatives throughout the negotiation process ensuring that Ireland always spoke with one voice. I would like to reassure stakeholders that the Government fully understands their concerns regarding a cut in a number of quota shares and we will work together with the sector to develop the necessary supports and approach to address these impacts.

"We will also examine the wider economic impacts on the agri-food and fisheries sectors that will arise and consider the development of appropriate and targeted supports, including through engagement with the European Commission on the Brexit Adjustment Reserve."

Minister McConalogue again noted the importance of the recent agreement on the implementation of the Withdrawal Agreement, including the Ireland/Northern Ireland Protocol, which is of fundamental importance to the operation of the all-island economy and the highly integrated all-island agri-food supply chains.

"I want to reassure our farmers and fishers that the Government will stand with them in helping them deal with the implications of this Brexit outcome. We will continue to listen to, engage with and support all sectors in the time ahead," the Minister said.

Taoiseach, Tanaiste and Minister should have forced entry into the negotiations as the French did to protect their fishing interests, says member of the Dáil Committee on the Marine, Michael Collins, T.D.

Rural Independent Deputy Michael Collins from West Cork who is a member of the Joint Agriculture and Marine Committee wanted the "immediate recalling" of this Committee in relation to Irish fishing rights in light of what he described as "the disaster" of the Brexit Deal agreed for Ireland.

"The ramifications of the Brexit trade deal will soon be felt in every coastal community as the Irish fishing industry, which is worth €1.2 billion to the Irish economy, has been hit hardest by the deal. In effect, the Irish fishing sector has been thrown under the proverbial bus, while the Irish government watch on like bystanders instead of protecting our interests. I am appalled at this botched deal which will annihilate the Irish fishing sector. Belgium and Spain will lose less than 1,000 tonnes per annum in the pelagic sector, while Ireland will lose a staggering 23,496 tonnes. This indicates a government or Minister asleep at the wheel, to allow this to occur.

"The Irish government are completely out of touch and not listening or interested in the views of coastal communities. Instead, the government is absorbed with national media soundbites and spin. The Brexit deal is a complete sell-off in terms of Irish fishing rights. Irish sovereignty has been ripped apart by this. This is a sell-out of the fishing industry."

"Department officials must now lay out clearly the losses in all the specific species our fishing fleet will have to give up and the economic hit in the various segments of the fleet and details of the decommissioning proposal given to the Minister and Cabinet last week".

"I have been for weeks in the Dail pleading with Minister for Agriculture and Marine, Charlie McConalogue; with the Tanaiste Leo Varadkar and the Taoiseach Micheal Martin to force their entry to the negotiations with Michel Barnier and the UK, the same as French President Macron did, as it was Irish fish and our waters were up for grabs. This fell on deaf ears much to the dismay of the Irish Fishing sector which now fears wipe out.

"The purpose of the request to recall the Agriculture and Marine Committee is to lay the real facts bare as to what scale has Irish fishing rights been taken from our fishermen which will have devastating consequences for Coastal Communities. My call for government to have a standalone Minister for the Marine was also refused by the Government and shows what their intentions were for the fishing sector in Ireland."



Aine passing Rotten Island at Killybegs - Photo by Ronan Cunningham

Government Must Stand Up for Irish Coastal Communities - Pádraig Mac Lochlainn – Sinn Fein Marine Spokesman

Sinn Féin spokesperson on Fisheries and the Marine, Pádraig Mac Lochlainn, T.D., called on the Taoiseach and Minister for the Marine to stand-up for Irish coastal communities and immediately seek a re-negotiation of access to Irish fishing waters following the outcome of the Brexit trade deal.

“The outcome of this Brexit trade deal amounts to another 15% cut in quota and income to our Irish fishing fleet that was already struggling to survive. The response from the Taoiseach and Minister McConalogue to this deal shows that they are not really listening to Irish fishing communities. Limited financial compensation is not the issue. The real issue is the appalling on-going spectacle of the handing over of our immense Irish natural fishing resource to others every year, to the immense detriment of our coastal communities.

“It is now time to re-visit the EU Common Fisheries Policy quotas as they apply to Irish waters. This Brexit trade deal has clearly exposed the failings of the ‘relative stability’ approach that allocates quota in Irish waters based on the historical catch, decades ago, of the fleets of EU Member States rather than the needs of our coastal communities around Ireland, closest to those fishing grounds.

“For the Irish fleet to be further ripped apart while there are immense fishing resources around our coast is absolutely unacceptable and the Irish government need to stand up for Irish interests. Our fishing and coastal communities cannot be sacrificed again at the altar of European political expediency.”

Change of Name Notice

We, O'Donnell Fish Limited give notice that we have applied to the Minister for Transport, Tourism and Sport under Section 67 of the Mercantile Marine Act 1955 in respect of our Ship **“Saint Andrew” Official Number 402341** of Registered Tonnage 6.29 Tonnes (Net) for permission to change her name to **Girl Autumn** to be registered in the said name in the port of Galway.

Any representations or comments on the application should be sent to the Superintendent, Mercantile Marine Office, Leeson Lane, Dublin 2 within seven days of the appearance of this notice.

Signed (Applicant)

MARINE TIMES

NEWSPAPER FOR IRELAND'S FISHING, MARINE AND COASTAL COMMUNITIES



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Why Must Irish Fishermen Always Be Made to Suffer for the Benefit of Others?

There was no clear indication from government, as this edition of the MARINE TIMES went to print, of exactly what it intends to do to protect the fishing industry from the effects of the Brexit Agreement.

The focus of government at present is primarily on the serious effects of the Covid 19 pandemic. The health of the nation is and must be a major concern for government.

But the effects of the Brexit Agreement on the fishing industry are also very serious. They spell economic disaster for industry, the coastal communities and the ancillary sectors dependent upon it.

That must also be a major focus for government. But it does not appear to be so.

A cost effect of up to €80m annually and the possible loss of 16,000 jobs has been estimated by the industry. This would be massive economic damage.

The government response to what is a disastrous Agreement for the fishing industry, is not encouraging.

While acknowledging, as Taoiseach Micheál Martin did, that the deal agreed between the UK and the EU will have serious long-term implications for the industry and fishing ports, the suggestion emanating from government that it was considering a decommissioning scheme for the Irish fleet is being seen as an admission of failure and an attitude that Irish fishermen will again be made to suffer, while others benefit.

Decommissioning, to put it bluntly, means reducing the size of the Irish fleet, forcing Irish fishermen into redundancy to provide opportunity for non-Irish EU boats to fish in Irish waters. That, effectively, would mean the Irish government helping to protect the rest of the EU fleet, at the expense of its own people.

Minister Charlie McConalogue has admitted that the Brexit deal “comes at a price and will have real impact on the fishing fleet and coastal communities.”

He said he wants “to reassure our fishers that the Government will stand with them in helping them deal with the implications of the Brexit outcome.”

What does he mean by this because the government attitude appears to be accepting

that the fishing industry should take the most severe blow, while other sectors are protected.

This is not good enough.

The government assured the industry, during the negotiations, that it would be protected. That assurance has not been delivered on. The government failed to protect Irish fishing.

What did Taoiseach Martin and Minister McConalogue mean when they told industry representatives: “We have commenced a series of engagements to work through this. We will work together with the sector to develop the necessary supports and approach to address these impacts.”

What, for example, will they do to support the industry’s case for immediately insisting on the concept of ‘zonal attachment’?

Surely Irish fishers have rights, such as under this concept and several other aspects related to the value of the stocks in Irish waters. These should be insisted upon by government.

The concept of ‘Relative Stability’ has been used to underpin the Common Fisheries Policy, to the detriment of the Irish fishing industry. Its greatest benefit has been to other EU nations. It should no longer be accepted by the Irish government that EU nations have superior rights in Irish waters to our own native fishermen.



Daithi and Donnacha Carty after building this lobster pot Christmas tree at Bundoran

Taoiseach Martin has made the case that the Brexit deal “overall gives a good platform for the Irish economy,” but conceded that it would have a devastating effect and long-term serious implications for the fishing industry.

Why must Irish fishermen always suffer for the benefit of others?

There is one way in which the government can change that.

Taoiseach Martin and Minister McConalogue must deliver to the industry what it has sought – a complete reallocation of fishing rights in Irish waters to favour the Irish fishing industry.

Nothing less will do for the fishers of an island nation.

The South - West View



Patrick Murphy

CEO Irish South and West Fish Producers' Organisation

The very concept of 'Relative Stability' that has underpinned the CFP since 1983 and which has enabled French, Spanish and Dutch Fishers to plunder our Waters ever since is dead: maimed and killed by the EU itself arising out of the "deal" with UK!! Patrick Murphy, CEO Irish South and West Fish Producers' Organisation, is always outspoken in his monthly column and is not happy about the Brexit Agreement.

'Relative Stability' is Dead

Statements on Brexit and on fishing emanating from our political leadership have pushed many Fishing Communities and many of those engaged in Ireland's Fishing Industry over the edge.

A line in the sand has been drawn beneath the Irish Fishing Industry and as happened with the Plantations in 16th- and 17th-century Ireland, when Irish land was stripped from the Irish by the English Crown and colonised with settlers from Great Britain, Europe has now confiscated our seas and our fish while aided and abetted by our feckless Politicians and Government agencies.

We in the Industry have spent most of our days since Christmas Eve desperately trying to calculate the devastation that is foisted upon our Irish people by the Agreement reached between the UK and EU without a shred of assistance from our Department Officials.

The score reads:

Ireland 1 - United Kingdom 99

Minister McConalogue's statement that the Irish Fishing Industry will take "a lot of pain upfront" resulting from Brexit is shameful, callously dismissing the permanent loss of 15% of the Irish People's ever-renewable Natural Resource in Fishing this year, rising to 25% over the next five years. This is a National Asset which is to be stripped from us, traded and gifted as part of a deal with our nearest neighbour, the UK and so-called European partners.

This is a horrific betrayal of the negotiating mandate the European Union said was

in place to protect our rights as EU Citizens. Whoever this deal benefits among our European neighbours it certainly confers NO benefits on Irish Fishing Communities and inflicts only pain and loss.

Since Christmas Eve, a huge part of our time as leaders in the Industry has been spent trying to console and reassure our mentally tortured men and women Fishers who fear for their futures and for the futures of their families and communities.

While the Minister now acknowledges that this Industry will suffer the most intense pain in order to satisfy greater forces in International Trade he declares this giveaway as a positive for the entire State! At the same time he downplays the loss of what he says is only €35 million (per annum) in raw resource while singularly ignoring the very substantial losses in added-value generated by the processing and export-led added value bringing the total actual losses up to €87 million per annum. (REF BIM)

No account is taken of the very many other local Industries dotted along our coastline in isolated Villages and small Towns that are dependent upon this very significant loss in income of €87 million per annum in each and every year, forever!

This identifies the Minister's and Government's blindness to the plight of the very

many families of Irish Fishers the overwhelming majority of which reside among our Coastal Communities, most of which already teeter on the verge of economic and financial ruin. No account is taken of the taxes paid by our Fishing Communities that support the very viability of these Communities; no account is taken of the money earned in exports nor the goodwill earned by the presentation on the tables of Ireland, Europe and beyond of Irish Seafood caught in the raw and challenging North Atlantic. No account is taken of the mental and financial well-being of very many families and small local businesses that depend on the fruits of the sea for their livelihoods.

This is a disgrace and should be the source of huge embarrassment for anyone claiming that this wholly unwellcome, forced and imposed sacrifice is acceptable!

The wounds inflicted on our Coastal Communities will be felt for many the long year to come with the losses repeating in each and every following year. They will multiply very quickly over time resulting in €100's of millions, becoming Billions, being lost to our country and to our coastal communities that are supposed to be protected by the EU Common Fisheries Policy and by our Irish political class - sent to Europe to represent us.

It is from our very own sea that others living in far-distant parts of Europe are gifted the spoils, contradicting all notions of fairness and Natural Justice and the supposed protections for remote coastal communities set forth in the CFP.

UK waters are almost identical to Irish waters insofar as both hold and contain the wealth of Europe's Fish Stocks. This is where the Fish spawn and where juvenile Fish are nursed to maturity. Our neighbouring Fishers saw others gaining and holding the wealth of their waters and now their country's leaders have successfully exited the hated Common Fishery Policy with enormous increases granted to English, Welsh, Scots and even Northern Irish Fishers under a concept known as Zonal Attachment.

• "Zonal attachment" of a stock is the share of the stock residing within a particular country's Economic zone, if

necessary weighted by the time it spends in a country's zone over a year. This, then, determines the share that each country gets of the total catch quota for that stock

We Irish Fishers are possessed of every bit as equal a Natural Right to fish in our own waters as are British Fishers but this Right has, once again been sacrificed with consummate ease by those we the people elected to protect our Rights and defend our Social and Economic Interests at home and in Europe.

"The Fields of Athenry" remembers those who saw their land taken from them and who were then jailed for trying to grasp some of the crops sown in their own very fields to feed their families. Will it also be sung in decades to come to mourn future generations of lost and ghost-like Fishers all along our Coastal Communities when Fishing and the ways of the sea are but a distant memory?

In 2021, will we once again live through repetition of the mistakes of history made between 1976 and 1982?

The Total Allowable Catch Figures for each and every Stock in EU Waters are calculated annually on the basis of Scientific Advice from bodies such as ICES and STECF and the Total Allowable Catch is then divided between Member States on the basis of a Formula constructed in 1982 called Relative Stability and which conferred enormous and wholly unequal shares in Fish Stocks in Irish Waters to our EU neighbours while granting scraps from the Rich Men's Table to Irish Fishers. This formula wasn't even defined until 2001 when the Policy had already been in force for 20 years, at which stage irreversible damage had already been inflicted on Irish Fishing Communities.

The very concept of Relative Stability that has underpinned the CFP since 1983 and which has enabled French, Spanish and Dutch Fishers to plunder our Waters ever since is dead: maimed and killed by the EU itself arising out of the "deal" with UK!!

We do not want a derisory sum of money of the kind being whispered in the 'Corridors of Power' to be settled upon us in order to buy our silence and hasten the ending of hundreds of years-worth of renewable earnings worth Billions over time.

We want what is right and we want what we, a supposedly equal Member of the European Community, is entitled to. We want to **continue** to catch Irish Fish in Irish waters for the benefit of our own local Irish Communities.

We do NOT want to be forced to give away these fish to others and effectively end a way of life on our country's coastline that can and should feed millions while providing sustainable incomes for the tens of thousands of people who live in our Coastal Communities for the moment!

Allow Irish Fishers, just like the English, Scots and Welsh Fishers, to be given the Right to catch a fair and equitable portion of the fish that swim and breed in our own Irish Waters so to save the Coastal Towns and Villages dotted all along our coast and the Communities who depend so much on fishing for their livelihoods!



The Full Moon rising over Castletownbere Picture: Anne Marie Cronin Photography

Thank you for the good work.

Fishermen working out of the ports of Killybegs & Greencastle have played their part in helping to remove more than 400 tonnes of marine waste to help protect Ireland's marine environment.



#BIM
#Fishingforlitter
#CleanOceansInitiative



SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS



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



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



Coast Guard Annual Report Shows A 'Busy Year' - Safety Concerns Identified

The key challenge for the Irish Coast Guard last year was to ensure the 24/7 delivery of Coast Guard SAR (search-and-rescue) services, as co-ordinated by the three Rescue Co-ordination Centres in Malin, Valentia and MRCC Dublin and responses delivered primarily by the Coast Guard's volunteer sector, its contracted Helicopter service, the RNLi and Community Inshore Rescue services, according to the Director of the organisation, Eugene Clonan.

"I want to thank all the men and women that make up our SAR community, for the discipline and commitment they have demonstrated in maintaining service availability through the most challenging of times," he said in reviewing the work of the service during last year.

"Despite the impact of Covid-19, 2020 has proven to be a relatively busy year. Overall, the Coast Guard coordinated 2,643 incidents in comparison with 2,490 incidents in 2019. Activity over February, March and April was the lowest recorded for each of those months over recent years

but noticeably picked up in May with August and September proving to be exceptionally busy. 464 incidents were recorded in August in comparison with 369 for August of 2019 and 307 incidents recorded in September with a corresponding figure of 239 in 2019."

The Coast Guard said that it "attaches particular attention to what it categorises as *Lives Saved* - assistance provided that prevented, loss of life, severe risk to life, or protracted hospitalisation. Last year the Coast Guard recorded that 391 individuals were categorised as *Lives Saved*.

It noted an increase in two activities that "gave rise to safety concerns" - increases in the number of incidents involving persons using inflatable devices (lilos / dinghies etc) on beaches and inland waterways during summer months and increased participation in open-water swimming in autumn and winter.

"The Coast Guard acknowledges that safety messages regarding open-water swimming have been well-heeded with most participants adhering with basic safety precautions."

Coast Guard Helicopter services, provided under contract by CHC Ireland, operate day and night services out of bases at Sligo, Shannon, Dublin and Waterford. In 2020 CHC flew a total of 781 missions. In addition to Search and Rescue services these missions include 24/7 emergency medical support to the island communities. Coast Guard also provides Helicopter Emergency Medical Service (HEMS) support and inter hospital transfers services to the HSE including emergency paediatric transfers to UK.

Volunteer Units

"Volunteer Coast Guard units provide a combination of Rescue Boat, Cliff rescue, Shoreline search capabilities and emergency community support in conjunction with the other emergency services," says the annual report. "The 44 units were tasked to a total of 1270 missions this year. Services included Covid-19 related transport support to HSE."

There is no mention in the report of personnel issues in the volunteer section of the Coast Guard, which have been reported by the Marine Times in the past year.

Use of Drones

"Further development in the use of Small Unmanned Aircraft drone systems (UAVs) has equipped Coast Guard units to enhance search capability. By the end of 2021 Coast Guard anticipates that it will have 9 units with UAV search capability," the report says.

RNLi lifeboats were tasked to 783 missions while Community Inshore Rescue Boats responded to 84 mission. During the year the Coast Guard and RNLi agreed a Memorandum of Understanding setting-out longstanding arrangements for SAR response and coordination.

MRCC Dublin serves as the national single point of contact for processing of

COSPAS-SARSAT 406 MHz Satellite Beacon Alerts generated by Irish registered beacons worldwide (EPIRBs (Emergency Position Indicating Radio Beacon; PLBs (Personal Locator Beacons) and ELTs (Emergency Locator Transmitters), including any beacon alerts from foreign flagged vessels or aircraft operating within the Irish SRR (Search & Rescue Region). During the year a total of 192 satellite beacon alerts were processed, many of which were the result of false alerts due to the mishandling or incorrect disposal of beacons.

VHF Changes - Mobile Phones Should Not Be Relied Upon

In preparation for future developments in VHF Data Exchange systems (VDES), the Irish Coast Guard Engineering Branch completed equipment updates to several of the VHF hilltop sites around the country. The most noticeable difference to the mariner is the change of working VHF channels. These changes are published in Marine Notice 61 of 2020.

The Coast Guard stress the core safety message *Stay Afloat - Stay in Touch* and highlights the importance of never engaging in any commercial or recreational boating activity without wearing a fully serviced Life Jacket or Personal Flotation Device (PFD), coupled with a capacity to raise the alarm via means such as a VHF radio, Personal Locator Beacon, EPIRB or mobile phone.

"This should be supported by informing shore-based colleagues of intended activity and anticipated return time. Mobile phones should not be considered as a suitable substitute or be relied upon as the only means of emergency communication at sea. Phone coverage at sea is limited and unreliable. Mobile phones are also highly susceptible to failure due to water ingress," warns the annual report.

Coast Guard First Aid Training

The *Sunday Independent* newspaper in December published a report raising "questions over Coast Guard first aid training" based on correspondence it had obtained about the training of volunteers and whether it was at sufficient level to support people assisted in emergency rescue situations.

The Department of Transport, responsible for the Coast Guard, responded that "a combined search-and-rescue response with volunteers, helicopter cover and the National Ambulance Service ensures casualties receive the best possible care at the right time and place. No concerns have been raised with regard to this issue or more generally in relation to the level of care and responsiveness of Ireland's overall SAR system."

The MARINE TIMES has received more contacts from some volunteer units about the dismissal and replacement of OICs (Officers-in-Charge) who questioned operational and administrative decisions issued from Coast Guard headquarters in Dublin to local units. A number of legal actions are understood to have been threatened.

The Department has not responded to queries from this paper about whether the Killala Unit in County Mayo has been returned to full operational activity following an instruction to it from management not to engaged in marine rescue.

Coastal Ambulant Discovers Ocean Perambulator

Pram Shrimp (*Phronima sedentaria*) at Kilkee

Report by Declan Quigley

While walking along the shore at Kilkee, Co Clare on 30th November 2020, Kevin Harte discovered an unusual Pram Shrimp (*Phronima sedentaria*) peeping out of its gelatinous 'house' (Fig. 1).



Figure 1. Pram Shrimp (*Phronima sedentaria*) discovered by Kevin Harte stranded at Kilkee, Co Clare 30th November 2020.

The Pram Shrimp is a oceanic bathy-pelagic hyperid amphipod which is often found living inside transparent pelagic tunicates such as salps and pyrosomes which it parasitizes and fashions into a gelatinous barrel-like house where it shelters and rears its young. The species derived its common name from observations of it

swimming and pushing its barrel full of young through the water. Although the Pram Shrimp has a circumglobal distribution, the northern limit of its distribution in NW European waters is off the Shetland Islands,

and late autumn would appear to be the hatching season in the North Atlantic.

The Pram Shrimp was first recorded from Irish offshore waters (Porcupine Bank) during 1888, and up to 1911 several specimen were taken during research cruises off the west coast at depths ranging

from near surface (27m) down to 3420m. Since the mid-1980s stranded specimens have been recorded intermittently but occasionally in large numbers along the SW, W, NW, and NE coasts, the vast majority during the winter months, particularly during December and January (85%). This offshore species would appear to be carried

ashore during particularly severe winter storms. Mass standings were recently reported during December 2004 (Sligo), December 2011 (Kerry), and January 2019 (Galway, Mayo, Sligo, Donegal and Antrim) [Fig. 2 inset Pram Shrimps stranded in Co Donegal during January 2019 (Michael Cunninham)].

Declan is always interested in receiving reports about unusual specimens. (087-6458485; Email: declanquigley@eircom.net)



Potting Gear & Accessories

Plastic Coated Frames + End Door + Hook and Bungee Cord

22" x 8mm x 16"/18" Wide x 16 Bar Base
 22" x 10mm x 16" Wide or 18" Wide x 14/16 Bar Base
 24" x 8mm x 16"/18" Wide x 16 Bar Base
 24" x 10mm x 16" Wide x 14/16 Bar Base
 24" x 10mm x 18" Wide x 14/16 Bar Base
 24" x 10mm x 18" Wide LOW/WIDE 16 Bar Base
 24" x 10mm x 18" Wide **HIGH Type** x 14/16 Bar Base
 24" L x 10mm x 21" W x 17" H 4 Bow Dee Type **Spider Crab Pots** To suit 10" Pot Neck
 26" x 10mm x 18" Wide **HIGH Type** x 14/16 Bar Base
 30" x 10mm x 18" W x 16 Bar Base Top Entry Parlour Pots
 30" x 10mm x 18" W x 16 Bar Base Side Entry Parlour Pots
 36" x 8mm x 18" Wide x 17 Bar Base Side Entry Parlour Frames
 36" x 10mm x 18" Wide x 16 Bar Base Side Entry Parlour Frames

Rectangular Storage Pots - Double Netted + Opening Door

22" x 20" x 14" x 8mm Steel
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Pot Doors - Any Size Made to Order (8mm or 10mm Steel)

All our Pots are Made From European Steel, Fabricated Locally and Netted in our own premises by our own workers. We do not import or Sell Chinese Pots!

Full range of pot frames in sizes 22" to 36" in 8mm, 10mm and 12mm steel, plastic coated or a combination of steel sizes - Made To Order. These frames are available in various different designs - details on request. These pots can be finished to any stage of completion; frames, netted only (Orange or Black Netting), topsides roped, fully roped top and bottom, or base rubbered.

We also can tie on a toggle or spinner to the end of the pot if required. We can also fit extra steel reinforcing bars on the base of the pot, fitted lengthways or across the 3 'D' sections.

Please phone for a quotation on any of the above listed options.

Quick Delivery Time on New Pot Orders

On Pot Netting - We can Offer Mesh Sizes 40mm, 48mm, 50mm, 60mm, 65mm & 75mm (Inside Mesh Measurement). Supplied in a mixture of colours. Green, Black & Orange Available. All European Manufactured. Available in 3mm, 3.5mm, 4mm & 5mm.

Rolls of Bait Bag Netting Available or Bait Bags Made up Singly to Any Specification.
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Heavy duty Nylon Spinners available in sizes 1.5ton BL, 2.5ton BL and 3.5ton BL & 3 Hole Nylon Spinners.

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Plastic Pot Bases - 26" x 16.5" x 5mm Black - NEW SIZE!

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Minister for Transport Challenged Over Proposed MCIB Legislation

A 'Report into the Operation and Effectiveness of the Marine Casualty Investigation Board (MCIB)' has been sent to a number of Oireachtas Committees by the international maritime lawyer who has challenged the Board's operations.

The report has been compiled by Captain Neil Forde of Marine Hazard Limited who previously worked in the Marine Survey Office of the Department of Transport.

His analysis of the MCIB was carried out on the instruction of lawyer Michael Kingston whose father was one of the Whiddy Island oil terminal staff in Bantry Bay killed in the Betelgeuse tanker explosion there on January 8, 1979.

Mr. Kingston has been critical of the MCIB for some time, pointing to a ruling by the Court of Justice of the European Union (CJEU) that the composition of the Board was not adhering to EU regulations against a potential conflict of interest.

Coinciding with the anniversary of the tragedy, Mr. Kingston wrote to the Ceann Comhairle, Seán Ó'Fearghail / Chair of the Oireachtas Business Committee and to the Chairs of the Committee on Transport and Communication Networks, Kieran O'Donnell TD; Public Accounts Committee, Brian Stanley TD; Agriculture and Marine Jackie Cahill; Committee on Climate Action, Brian Leddin; European Union Affairs Joe McHugh; Committee on Justice, James Lawless and the Cathaoirleach of the Seanad, Senator Mark Daly, criticising the decision by Transport Minister, Eamon Ryan, to seek a waiver to fast-track legislation which relates to the MCIB at Committee Stage in the Oireachtas.

The Department has confirmed that, in accordance with Dáil Standing Orders, a request was issued on December 18 to the

Business Committee seeking a waiver of the requirement for pre-legislative scrutiny of the general scheme of a proposed Merchant Shipping (Investigation of Marine Casualties Amendment) Bill.

"The reason for this request relates to the urgent need to progress the Bill as quickly as possible to amend the Merchant Shipping (Investigation of Marine Casualties) Act 2000, which underpins the MCIB and provide a legal basis for the appointment of new members to the MCIB to fill current vacancies on the board," the Department said in a statement. "Consideration of the request is a matter for the Business Committee and their response is awaited."

Last September two civil servants stepped down from the MCIB following a ruling by the European Court of Justice which found that it lacked independence.

Capt. Forde's report says that he has conducted investigations for the MCIB but claims, in his report, that it was not investigating certain matters for which it had a statutory duty.

Mr. Kingston says that the report, dated 4th January 2021, demonstrates "how important it is to analyse any proposed legislation properly."

He has offered to discuss the issues he has raised with any of the Oireachtas Committees.

The MCIB has not responded to the report.



"She stopped time for everyone around" - the comment of Teddy Murphy who took this photo of the restored and last Irish schooner, the ILEN, sailing through Dalkey Sound into Dublin Bay in December as she continued her programme of delivering cargo by sail around Ireland, recalling shipping times of the past. Photo sent by Ilen Maritime project.

Island Fishermen Need Support to Stay Afloat

“Island fishermen have had a terrible year and need a package of supports to keep them afloat. IIMRO are very concerned that island fishers were not represented at recent Brexit industry meetings with the Government. Bad deals and fishing seem to go hand-in-hand when decisions are being made and we need to make sure this time that the island and other small scale fleets are not pushed out.”

That is the opinion expressed by Jerry Early, Chairperson of IIMRO, which has welcomed the commitment by Taoiseach Micheál Martin that a “comprehensive plan would be developed in consultation with the representative bodies” in response to the negative impact of Brexit on the sector.

Much of the focus of the Brexit negotiations have been on quota and fair access to the fishery resource. Quota in Ireland is a public resource. Nevertheless just 0.85% of Irish quota uptake in 2018 was taken by the under 12 metre fleet segment. That is less than 1% of Ireland’s national resource for 1,307 small boats, which make up ~84% of the Irish fleet.

It is vital that any supports developed in the wake of Brexit proactively prioritise the small-scale, low impact island and inshore fleets that make up the majority of the vessels and the bulk of the jobs across the Irish seaboard.

This new Brexit plan must address the glaring inequity of putting access to quota for high-value sought after species beyond the reach of small boats, leaving them overly dependent on non-quota species such as crab and lobster.

The last year has shown that events beyond the control of fishers such as Brexit, COVID-19 and the removal of EU-US lobster tariffs have, and will, inflict huge damage on coastal communities and revealed major failings in our current fisheries value chain.

IIMRO look forward to engaging constructively with Taoiseach Micheál Martin and Minister Charlie McConalogue to ensure that island small-scale fishers are included in the plan and that meaningful support measures reach those that need it most.



* As this edition of the MARINE TIMES went to print IIMRO had been informed that boats registered in Northern Ireland are now required under IUU regulations (Article 5 EU 1005/2008) to land into designated ports in Ireland i.e. Killybegs and Castletownbere only. This presents a serious health and safety risk to some of our member vessels who will have to travel for a day from their home ports to land their catches. Obviously this has serious implications for the ongoing viability of livelihoods as well as the future of island fishers.

IIMRO is awaiting response to a request for a meeting with Marine Minister McConalogue.

Continuity 'Secured' for Fishing Quotas for the First Three Months of 2021

The Minister for Agriculture, Food and the Marine, Charlie McConalogue T.D., welcomed the agreement reached at the EU Council of Fisheries Ministers in Brussels to set quotas for fish stocks for the first three months of 2021.

The Minister said, "Our fisheries sector has faced unprecedented challenges during 2020. We had the uncertainty relating to the potential severe impacts of the UK's withdrawal from the EU that has been hanging over our heads since 2016. In addition, of course this year, the sector has had to cope with the disruptions caused by the COVID-19 Pandemic on our seafood markets."

As there was no agreement with the UK on a future relationship, including fisheries, yet decided upon during the annual quota circus no agreement could be decided upon how to collectively manage our shared stocks. In the absence of such an agreement, interim arrangements were necessary to ensure continuity of fishing by our fleets in the early part of the New Year.

The Minister stated that; "The issue was to get those arrangements in place to allow us to open our fisheries on 1 January. In addition, for a small number of key fisheries, I secured arrangements taking into account that a high proportion of the fishery occurs in the first quarter of the year."

Fisheries Ministers agreed to set interim Total Allowable Catches (TACs) and quotas for the first quarter of 2021 based on a

"rollover" of 25% of the 2020 TAC levels for the majority of stocks. A higher rollover has been applied to certain migratory stocks that are fished mainly during the first few months of the year and are of particular importance to Ireland.

Minister McConalogue said, "I supported this common-sense approach which will ensure continuity for our fishing industry

without prejudicing the outcome of the ongoing negotiations on the future relationship with the UK. It was vital to me that the percentage rollover for those stocks that we traditionally fish in the early part of the year were sufficient. I am very pleased that this was achieved for the early season or migratory stocks of mackerel, blue whiting and horse mackerel."

The Minister went on to say that, "Commissioner Sinkevičius understood that the quota made available in the important prawn fishery in the Porcupine Bank would not be adequate to support the planned fishery. The Commissioner committed to work with me during January to deliver an amendment that will allow this fishery to continue under its normal pattern. This

was a very important issue for me and will ensure that our fishermen can plan in the normal way for the early part of the year."

The Minister thanked the Commissioner for his constructive approach to the negotiations "Commissioner Sinkevičius and the German Presidency listened to the concerns which I set out in relation to the issues facing Irish fishermen during these difficult times. The agreement reached at Council today will ensure that our fish stocks are managed sustainably and that our fleets can continue to fish in the New Year."

A further Council will be held to finalise the TACs for the remainder of 2021. This will take place early in the New Year, following consultations with the UK and Norway on shared stocks.



Barbarella and Rachel D sprat fishing in Donegal Bay. Photo by Pauric Diver



SAFE SUSTAINABLE SEAFOOD

PUBLIC CONSULTATION

The Sea-Fisheries Protection Authority (SFPA) sets out its strategic programme every three years. We are currently preparing the Statement of Strategy for 2021 - 2023, which will focus on what we want to achieve during this period to ensure we deliver the effective regulation that is central to the realisation of the vision for the shared marine resources surrounding Ireland.

As part of the process of developing the strategy, we welcome the contribution of members of the public and stakeholders, especially those who fall within the SFPA's regulatory remit.

We would welcome your views specifically in relation to the following questions:

- What are the forthcoming challenges that we need to address and is our current focus adequate to meet those challenges?
- How well do SFPA services meet the needs of the marine sector and how could they be enhanced?
- What matters should be considered in developing the SFPA mission, vision and value Statements?
- What metrics should the SFPA use to measure our performance and monitor achievement of our strategic goals?



A copy of our current strategy can be viewed at sfpa.ie/Who-We-Are/About-Us/Our-Strategy. We would be grateful to receive your response together with any more general views you may have on the strategic direction of the SFPA and how it can best deliver on its remit.

Please submit your response by email to strategy@sfpa.ie by Friday, 15th January 2021.

Note: Please be advised that submissions received will be subject to the Freedom of Information Act 2014.

sfpa.ie

Anchovies in Large Numbers off South-West Coast

Possible new fishery?

Marine Times Reporter

Fishermen in Cornwall are being paid up to stg£2,000 a tonne for anchovies, but Irish catches off the South West coast are getting just €160 a tonne.

This considerable difference has been reported to the Marine Times as large shoals of the warm water species arrive off Ireland.

“Astonishing” is how marine scientist, Dr Kevin Flannery, described what fishermen are seeing.

There are no quotas on this species which offer a new fishery at times when the industry needs development. But there has not been a strong, supportive response from State agencies to what fishermen are reporting as a possible new fishery which could be developed at a time when the Irish industry needs new opportunities.

Anchovies have been recorded in Irish waters since 1870 when they were first seen off Ventry in County Kerry.

Dr. Flannery has noted and published information about the species previously.

What is now becoming apparent is that the latest reports are not of a “vagrant species”. It is possible that, as other species move away from Irish waters, these may be arriving into Ireland.

The Marine Institute has said that the arrival of the species has been “noted” but there is no indication which this paper can identify showing that State agencies are preparing to assist the industry in what could be a developing fishery. If they do not act, there is a possibility that other EU nations will do so and, perhaps also seek to prevent Irish usage of the resource. That has happened when they succeeded in excluding Ireland from participating in the Bluefin tuna fishery which other nations exploit in Irish waters, because the Irish government failed to establish Irish rights to the resource in our own waters.

There is an urgent need for the Marine Institute, Bord Iascaigh Mhara to analyse what is happening and establish if the anchovy arrival is a permanent trend and whether they are arriving as other species move away, as a possible effect of global and sea temperatures warming.

The Marine Institute knows that anchovies have been in Irish waters in small numbers since 2003. They were noted as part of its periodic groundfish surveys.

The SFPA said it was aware of reports of anchovy catches and would be monitoring activities in line with relevant regulations.

EU quotas for anchovies have been set for Atlantic areas, mainly in the Bay of Biscay and west of Portugal. There is no quota in Irish waters, making it an open fishery for Irish boats.

The small, oily fish, are widely used in Mediterranean cooking. Peru has one of the world’s largest anchovy fisheries. Popularity of the fish as a pizza topping, in salads and with olives has increased its value.

Bord Bia could develop markets for Irish boats catching these fish. The market is limited at present and catches have been used for fishmeal, which fishermen say is not achieving maximum value from what could be a developing fishery.

“This is what our State agencies should be looking at, but there is little indication that they are moving to develop Irish fishing in this way,” an industry source told the Marine Times.

Catches continue to be reported, with landings in Castletownbere and from Dingle reported. Sardines are also reported in increasing numbers off the South West.



Sarah Jane out of Courtmacsherry with Kenneth and Colin Cashman
Photo courtesy David Edwards

Change is Here

Seafood businesses urged to familiarise themselves with new processes and rules to reduce impact of Brexit

Bord Iascaigh Mhara (BIM), Ireland’s seafood development agency is urging every seafood business who trades with or through Great Britain, no matter how small his or her operations, to continue to familiarise themselves with the impacts any new rules or processes will have on his or her operations and supply chains.

Jim O’Toole, CEO BIM, acknowledged the dual challenge the COVID-19 pandemic and Brexit is having on the sector and said: “The focus of BIM and other state agencies including the SFPA is to continue to provide support and guidance to the sector during this challenging time. By working together and taking action now, we can reduce the impact of Brexit as much as possible. Brexit has changed the way many seafood businesses operate and they need to be ready for this change.”

Any seafood business that has not already done so, is being urged to complete BIM’s Brexit Readiness Assessment questionnaire. The short questionnaire takes

less than 5 minutes to complete and can signpost businesses to the steps they need to take to get Brexit ready. The assessment questionnaire covers customs and revenue, registrations, supply chain, financial management.

BIM’s online Brexit hub also includes guidance and financial support for seafood businesses. These include access to funding to support businesses that are importing/exporting products to Great Britain.

For more information go to bim.ie/Brexit or to sfpa.ie/What-We-Do/Trade-Market-Access-Support/Brexit-Information

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Tom MacSweeney's Maritime Ireland Diary

Building A Maritime Community

Heading into the New Year I am encouraged by the response of listeners to my new programme format on radio. I have always loved radio. It is a simple, straightforward, one-to-one relationship with the listener. In that regard it is unique.



Castletownbere fishing fleet - Picture: Anne Marie Cronin Photography

It is also important for a radio presenter to listen to the audience, feedback, comment, is most valuable.

After 20 years of innovating, developing and presenting Seascapes on RTE Radio and 5 years doing the same on local community radio stations around the country with THIS ISLAND NATION, I have begun presenting the MARITIME IRELAND RADIO SHOW.

From the response of listeners and readers, to whom genuine thanks for taking the time to comment and make suggestions, my intention is to develop the MARITIME IRELAND RADIO SHOW as a major source of communication about Ireland's maritime culture, history, tradition and development. These are so important to THIS ISLAND NATION where the connection with the sea is as old as time itself,

a fundamental part of Ireland, socially and economically.

From my experience as a marine journalist and broadcaster, I remain concerned that the importance of the maritime sphere is still not fully appreciated by government, political and civil servant sectors.

Surrounded as we are by water, maritime transport is vital, with 95 per cent of exports and imports moving across the seas. So our ports are the gateways, the doors providing access and egress to and from Ireland. It took a long time for government to move on that aspect in the context of Brexit.

While the State continues to run internal national transport systems, it does not have a State company in the external sphere.

Aer Lingus was privatised, Irish Shipping was closed down. Does that not leave Ireland exposed?

History shows that such a policy is dangerous.

The fishing industry, as you will read elsewhere in this edition of the paper, has been very badly treated in the Brexit deal. Government has not protected the industry as it had indicated it would do. Not the first time the industry has been treated in this way.

Is there enough concern for the coastal communities, dependent as they are on the fishing industry?

Is too much of State-thinking inward looking without enough outward to the sea as a major channel of communication?

Is too much of State-thinking and planning urban-centred?

The resilience of fishermen and the fishing industry is magnificent, but is it fully appreciated at State level?

Is the importance of seafarers, of shipping, the ports, the ancillary maritime services, understood?

All of these points are worthy of consideration and discussion and should be major issues for government, but are they?

They will be on the MARITIME IRELAND RADIO SHOW, which I hope to develop as the audio journal of the maritime sphere, bringing together the 'community of the sea' of which you can all be part.

The MARINE TIMES is a supporter of the programme and, I hope, you dear reader, will be too.

There is a list of the radio stations broadcasting the MARITIME IRELAND RADIO SHOW and the Podcast can be heard on www.marinetimes.ie Podcasting has become a major source of radio listening.

If you would like to receive the programme's Listener's Newsletter, Email your interest to: maritimeirelandradioshow@gmail.com or subscribe via MailChimp.

From Listeners and Readers

- Hi Tom, I see that there is now a distillery providing gin on Cape Clear Island and read that former fishermen in Union Hall are involved in a new whiskey distillery. Both are West Cork locations. Is this a new alternative for the coastal communities or is it that things are driving communities to drink?

- Tom, In regard to your piece about labelling of fish products in supermarkets being misleading, your correspondent is right about that. It is unfair to Irish suppliers, but when shopping it is difficult enough to differentiate between what is really Irish fishing produce and what is just packaged or dressed-up as Irish?

- Tom, Have you heard about blockchain and the Irish fisherman who has used the technology? This is Verifish, developed by former fisherman Frank Fleming and it provides information about fish from catching on a boat to the supermarket. You should highlight positive things like that.

Fishermen to the Rescue

Neil Minihane from Castletownbere, Tom Kennedy from Dingle and Anthony Sheehy from Baltimore, all Irish South and West Producers' Organisation members, helped out Fota Wildlife Park in Cork Harbour in December when they delivered five tonnes of fish to help feed the animals. Park Director Sean McKeown had outlined its problems in meeting a €15,000-a-month feed bill for the 135 animal species in the 100-acre park. It is a not-for-profit charity operation.

"We were thrilled and so pleased with the help from fishermen at a time when we really needed support, having been hit hard by the pandemic effects and the lost income of visitors. Much thanks to the fishing industry."



STATION	BROADCAST TIME
CRY 104 FM YOUGHAL	MONDAYS 6.10 pm
DUBLIN SOUTH 93.9 FM	THURSDAYS 6 p.m.
DUBLIN CITY FM 103.2 FM	FRIDAYS 3 p.m.
DUBLIN NEAR FM 90.3 FM	THURSDAYS 4.30 p.m.
DUBLIN LIFFEY SOUND FM 96.4FM	THURSDAYS 6 p.m.
DUNDALK FM 97.7 FM	SATURDAYS 9 a.m. – SUNDAYS 5 p.m.
ERRIS FM 90.8 FM	FRIDAYS 4 p.m.
KILKENNY CITY RADIO 88.7 FM	MONDAYS 9.30 p.m.
RADIO CORCA BAISCINN	WEDNESDAYS 1.35 p.m. & 6.30 P.M.
SOUTH WEST CLARE 92.5-94.8 FM	MONDAYS 5 p.m.
UCC RADIO CORK 98.3 FM	FIRST FIRDAY OF EACH MONTH
CONNEMARA COMMUNITY RADIO	HOUR-LONG PROGRAMME AT 6 p.m.
87.8 FM and 106.1 FM	MONDAYS 5/6 p.m.
ATHLONE COMMUNITY RADIO	SATURDAYS 9.30 p.m. SUNDAYS 5.30 p.m.
WEST CORK FM ONLINE	SATURDAYS 9.30 p.m. SUNDAYS 5.30 p.m.
BERE ISLAND 100.1 FM	SATURDAYS 1 p.m.
KINVARA FM ONLINE	SATURDAYS 1 p.m./WEDNESDAYS 10 p.m.
COMMUNITY RADIO CASTLEBAR 102.9FM	SATURDAYS 2 p.m.
WEST LIMERICK 102 FM	

THE MARINE TIMES INTERVIEW

The MARINE TIMES INTERVIEW each month profiles figures in the fishing and marine industries and chronicles their opinions. At this time of year annual reviews are popular, looking back and, perhaps, learning from past months. So here is a review of the opinions of some of those recorded in the past year at interviews with Marine Times Deputy Editor, Tom MacSweeney.



MFV Emma Lou - Picture by Rosemary Hill

“WE GOT ROBBED IN EUROPE IN FISHING”

February 2020: John Nolan, Managing Director of Castletownbere Fishermen’s Co-op who has been 37 years in the fishing industry, was the interviewee.

“At a national level, fishermen and the industry are considered unimportant,” he said.

“There is no acceptance at national level that the fishing industry is different from other industries and that there have to be different solutions for it. It is a different job, a different environment of working, weather-dependent, conditions at sea dependent. Conditions ashore can’t be applied in regulations, for example, to fishing which must be respected, but what is often being brought into the industry by the State is driving people out of fishing.”

- Spoken almost a year ago and still remarkably appropriate in the context of what the industry is facing following the Brexit Agreement.

“THE STATE NEEDS TO WAKE UP TO THE POTENTIAL OF FISHING”

March 2020: Denis Good, Founder and Chairman of the Good Fish Company, based at Carrigaline in County Cork, was the interviewee.

The company was established in 1988 and is one of the largest fish processors in Ireland. Denis Good began his working life as a shipwright and became a fishmonger before starting his successful company. He gave a fish processor’s

view of the fishing industry, highlighting the “thousands of lorries” carrying fish caught off Ireland to the Continent every year, doing nothing for the country or the Irish economy and without enough inspection of this.

“The State,” he said “needs to wake up to the fact” that the CFP “would be dead because of Brexit.”

This, he said, would provide an opportunity to “correct the mistake made when Irish fishing rights were given away” when Ireland originally joined the EU.

- When viewed in the current situation the industry is facing post-Brexit deal where the government admits that the industry will be badly hit by the outcome, how very perceptive these comments remain.

“IT HAS NEVER BEEN MORE VITAL TO UNDERSTAND THE IMPORTANCE OF THE SEA”

July 2020: Dr. Paul Connolly who took over leadership of the Marine Institute at a very challenging time was the interviewee.

He had not long become Chief Executive 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.

“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 said.

- In the context of what has evolved in the climate sector, perceptive and very apt in the present time.

“IT IS VERY IMPORTANT THAT WE GET THE MESSAGE OUT ABOUT THE IMPORTANCE OF IRISH SEAFOOD”

August 2020: Five generations of O’Malley’s have made a living from the sea in Achill. Hugh O’Malley, the latest to be doing so, was the interviewee.

“I grew up in a fishing community. My Dad was fishing for a time as I was growing up and as a result of what I heard, I looked at what could be done in Achill and one of the things I looked at was indigenous industry and aquaculture to me was the future. I always knew I wanted to be a fish farmer.

“It is very important that we get out to the public the importance of Irish seafood, the sustainability of our seafood industry, what aquaculture can do for local communities, the husbandry of the business. The aquaculture industry is a huge benefit for Ireland and that needs to be told to the public.”

- A most perceptive opinion, particularly in the context of what has emerged through the year, emphasising the need for the State to fully recognise the importance of aquaculture.

“THE SECTOR HAS PROVED ITSELF THROUGH A LOT OF CHALLENGES”

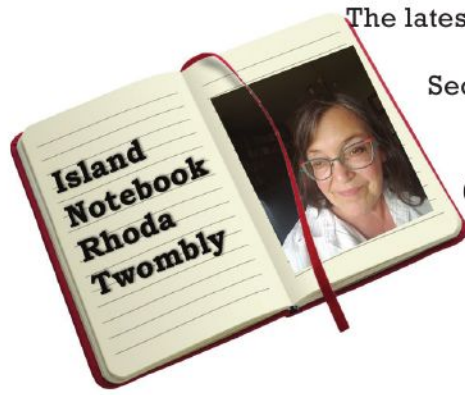


September 2020: Alex Crowley, Secretary General of the National Inshore Fishermen’s Association, was the interviewee.

Alex from Caherciveen in County Kerry is, a full-time fisherman who owns and Skippers the MFV Emma Lou, fishing a range of inshore species.

“We need representation at the Cabinet table. We need a strong Minister there for fishing, but we haven’t had one there in that fashion for some time now. We’re suffering as a sector and we can’t afford that for our future. We are in an unprecedented crisis and if you look at what came out as help from the government in the pandemic, there was very little towards the fishing industry. You can’t help wondering that, if there was a strong voice for fishing at the Cabinet table that that should not have been the case. We haven’t had that and we are feeling the effects of that really,” he said.

- When you look back at what Alex and other interviewees said you can appreciate how dedicated to and perceptive about the fishing industry they are and how important it is to have people of such quality in the industry.



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

Comhdháil Concentrates on Growth and Diversification of Employment

A hopeful and happy new year to you – and all our Islanders and friends on the mainland. I don't think anyone will be sad to see the back of 2020.

The heartbreak and stress of dealing with the Covid pandemic is still with us, more so now than ever. While we take hope and courage from the vaccines being rolled out across Ireland, it will be months before we will all be protected.

While the Islands look forward to welcoming visitors, tourism must be re-opened carefully and cautiously when there is confidence that our most vulnerable are protected.

Comhdháil Oileán na hÉireann plans to concentrate on opportunities for population growth and diversification of employment. As the transmission of the virus increased there was mass movement of people from urban to rural areas. Those that could work

from home realised that, by adapting to new ways of working, life was better without hours of commuting each day.

People are realising that there can be a better quality of life away from the cities and it is hoped that some will consider Ireland's Islands as a viable alternative.

For this to succeed a lot more planning and work is required.

Number one on Comhdháil's list is facing the challenge of increasing the housing stock on Islands. Existing available housing will not support an influx of permanent residents. Also high on the list is high-speed broadband. Most islands currently have workable internet connections but in many places it is unstable and too slow to support IT-based businesses.

While there is much to be done, there are plenty of examples of positive outcomes for community development projects up and down the coast.

BERE ISLAND

Bere Island Projects Group was successful in their application for funding for their Island Learning Centre. The Mitigating Against Educational Disadvantage programme through ETB/SOLAS is specifically aimed at community education and providing hardware and software to increase the digital reach and capability of community learning centres. Bere has used the grant to invest in laptops, a broadband projector, whiteboard, desks and a camera sound system for remote teaching. 2021 will see huge expansion of their classes and programs for a wide range of ages and interests. This is in addition to their hugely successful community radio broadcasts and several projects run in their national school plus plans for further involvement in the EU's Clean Energy programme.

INIS MEÁIN

Inis Meáin Development Company has started on expanding their community centre supported by a significant grant. This will allow for a wide range of teaching, training and leisure activities as well as a new office for the development company.

SHERKIN, CAPE CLEAR, INISHBPOFIN AND ARAN

Sherkin Island is also in line to revamp their community centre. Oileán Chléire and the Aran Islands have been involved in

the EU Clean Energy of European Islands project while Inishbofin is included in a submission to NESOI (a European Energy Consortium) for funding of feasibility studies on a wave energy plant.

These are only a few examples of the Islands working to move forward, of community spirit and entrepreneurial dreams becoming reality.

Comhdháil extends their deepest sympathy to those who have lost family and friends over the past year. One of the cruellest outcomes of the virus is the prohibition of traditional grieving processes: this will scar the country for years to come. The Islands will face and conquer the challenges of 2021.

Until next month, for now it's slán from the Islands.

The Marine Times is delighted to support the islands through publication of this monthly from Comhdháil Oileán na hÉireann, the Islands' Federation and thanks Rhoda for her dedicated and comprehensive monthly report. Keeping the islands to the forefront of public attention is important and the Marine Times is pleased to be able to provide this channel of communication.

30 Years of The Irish Whale and Dolphin Group

The Irish Whale and dolphin Group is 30 years in existence. It was founded on December 1, 1990 when a group of people interested in whales and dolphins met at the ENFO Offices in St Andrews Street, Dublin. At that meeting the Irish Whale and Dolphin Group was formed and Dr. Don Cotton, Lecturer in the Sligo Institute of Technology, was elected Chairman.

Irish Whale and Dolphin Group



"Prior to the foundation of the Irish Whale and Dolphin there were several areas of the country where individuals were already making fairly regular observations about cetaceans. The time was right for some sort of 'coming together' and co-ordination of what was an uncoordinated interest," he writes on the IWDG website, recalling how the Group was started.

"Professor James Galway of UCG had published three books specifically on mammals and many papers and notes on Irish mammals. He was already internationally known as Ireland's mammalogist. His most recent book was a thoroughly readable summary of many bits and pieces about Irish Cetaceans, a topic that had been hitherto almost neglected, 'Irish Whales and Whaling.' He had guided many post-graduate students through to doctorates. His dedication to mammal matters was well-known. When a (cetacean) stranding came to his attention along the West Coast, he would be there taking measurements, samples and writing a note for publication to describe the find for the 'Irish Naturalists' Journal.'

"In UCC a post-graduate student, Simon Berrow, had been visiting strand-

ed animals, outside of his Ph.D., studies and collecting tissue samples for pollution analysis.

"My own efforts of keeping records of every living thing worth recording in Sligo meant that I was also a local one-man shop for cetaceans amongst other things. The link between a Sligo student attending UCG, Martin Cawley; with Professor Fairley brought Sligo and Galway closer together and my involvement with the Irish Naturalists' Journal published from Belfast, also started to cement together more co-ordination between those interested in the mammals at a wider geographical level.

The Dublin area also had its enthusiasts. Brendan Price was becoming well-known for his attempts to rescue stranded seals in his under-funded Irish Seal Sanctuary. It was only a small step to gain an interest in live stranded dolphins and porpoises so he was a natural proponent to become connected with those interested in whales and dolphins.

"It was the UCC group that saw the need for a more co-ordinated attempt to treat Ireland as one unit and somehow it was through the good offices of Simon Berrow that people were contacted and the suggestion made to hold an 'All Ireland' meeting to see what could be achieved. He booked the meeting room at ENFO in the heart of Dublin, circulated the date and encouraged

key people already mentioned and anyone else with an interest to attend. I think that 6-8 people were there. I don't know what he expected, but at the first meeting a Chairperson was appointed and I found myself in that seat with a disparate group of enthusiasts all with their own angles and ideas about cetaceans, a wide geographical spread of activity, but no common direction. There were those scientists who wanted to set up a recording network and take post-mortem samples to determine pollution levels in tissues, to those who wanted a 'flying column' to rush out and rescue unfortunate creatures that had live stranded but these individuals had little time for the scientists sampling dead animals.

"And so the group was formed. A constitution was written and a first public meeting was organised in the Regional Technical College, now the Institute of Technology in Sligo. It was attended by about 70 people, now called members. The second public meeting in UCC was even more well-attended and "the rest is history!"

- Read more from Dr Don Cotton, Retired Senior Lecturer at Sligo Institute of Technology, on iwdg.ie

Windfarm Policy

The marine renewable energy industry in Ireland is set for explosive growth in the coming years with a production target of 5GW of offshore wind energy by 2030 and an ambition of 30GW by 2050. The Irish Whale and Dolphin Group (IWDG) supports the decarbonizing of the Irish economy, but offshore developments should be carried out within the framework of both national and international best practice and should have only minimal and not signifi-

cant impacts on whales, dolphins and porpoises and their habitats. An IWDG Policy Document on Offshore Windfarms was launched at the annual meeting to describe best practice in the protection of whales, dolphins and porpoises during the development process for offshore windfarms. Many of the same policies can apply to any marine renewable energy installation.

Sperm Whales Abundant Off Ireland



**Sperm whale at surface
Photo by Simon Berrow IWDG**

Sperm whales are one of the most abundant great whale species in the deep waters of offshore Ireland, according to a new study by the Scotland-based Sea Mammal Research Unit Consulting (SMRU Consulting) and Galway-Mayo Institute of Technology (GMIT). The study, published recently in the Journal of Cetacean Research and Management, estimated there is a population of 380 sperm whales in waters deeper than 300m off Ireland's western shores.

More on this story can be found on www.marinetimes.ie

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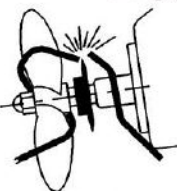
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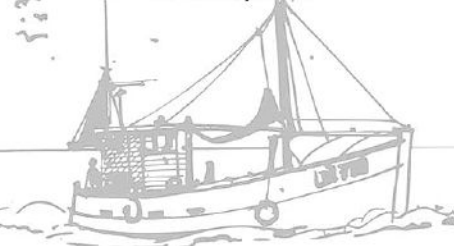


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Contact John at Cleggan, Co. Galway
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On Saturday morning 12th December, at low tide, a small group assembled in the rain on Streedagh Strand in County Sligo around the wooden remains of well-known wreck which often becomes visible as the sands shift. The group was there to commemorate the loss of the boat for the very first time on what unbelievably turned out to be the exact 250th anniversary of its loss. The story of the wreck, which some thought was part of the fabled Spanish Armada, has only recently been uncovered by the National Monuments Service of the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage. It is a story of tragedy with the loss of 20 lives in December 1770, but also a story of great heroism, bravery and selflessness. At last, it can be told...

The story behind a well-known Sligo shipwreck has been a long time coming. Locally known as 'the Butter Boat', the skeletal remains of a wooden wreck on Streedagh Strand in County Sligo are regularly revealed when the sands shift and it is a well-known landmark for the many locals and tourists who visit the popular beach.

Research by the National Monuments Service of the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage has now confirmed the identity of this historic wreck as the remains of the Greyhound, out of Whitby port in Yorkshire in England. The full and tragic story of its sinking on the night of 12 December 1770, 250 years ago have been marked for the very first time, with a moving ceremony at which locals honoured the 20 now known to have perished.

During a storm that December, unable to seek safe harbour in Broadhaven Bay due to the poor weather, the Greyhound was driven to anchor in a perilous position beneath the towering cliffs off Erris Head in County Mayo. The crew was forced to abandon ship and, in a tragic oversight, a cabin boy was left on board.

On learning of the plight of the cabin boy, local volunteers from Broadhaven Bay, together with the crew of a passing ship from Galway and some of the original crew of the Greyhound showed extraordinary bravery in an attempt to rescue the boy and the stricken ship. While the rescue team did manage to board the Greyhound and move the vessel away from the cliffs, the Greyhound was driven further out to sea by the force of the storm with some of the volunteer crew still on board, including the cabin boy, and later that night she was wrecked at Streedagh Strand, 100km to the east, with the loss of 20 lives.

Minister of State for Heritage at the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage, Malcolm Noonan, T.D., has welcomed the uncovering of the full and tragic story of the Greyhound and the events that led to its loss 250 years ago.

"I know there is a huge amount of local interest in this wreck and that its identity has been a topic of debate for many years, with many calling it the Butter Boat and others thinking it part of the Armada. I am very pleased that through archaeological investigation, scientific analysis and historical archival research our National Monuments Service has been able to finally confirm the wreck's identity and the events of 12 December, 250 years ago," Minister Noonan stated, adding the use of scientific data and local stories, passed down through generations, bore fruit.

"In particular I am struck by the value of folklore archives along with applied archaeological research in uncovering the full and tragic story of the Greyhound and those caught up in the tragedy".

"Its calamitous story illustrates starkly the perils of the sea but also highlights, how in times of trouble, the common bond of the sea brings people from different backgrounds together in an attempt to save lives. I am proud that my Department has been able to bring to light this story of tragedy and loss but also of extraordinary bravery, compassion, selflessness and heroism."

At a ceremony on Streedagh Strand locals, including

Shipwreck Mystery Solved – 250 Years to the Week it Sank



religious leaders in the area, and members of the National Monuments team that solved the mystery paid tribute to those lost at sea, and laid a wreath on the wreck, remembering its known dead for the first time on what was its exact 250th anniversary.

"It was appropriate to commemorate the event and to remember all those lives lost so selflessly at Christmas 1770," Minister Noonan concluded. "We were honoured to join with the local community in commemorating the tragedy of the Greyhound. I am very appreciative of the continued community partnership between our National Monuments

Service and the Grange Armada & Development Association, Spanish Armada Ireland and Sligo Sub Aqua Club to promote, commemorate and keep watch over the internationally important wrecks of the Spanish Armada lost at Streedagh in 1588 and also the wreck that we now know is the remains of the Greyhound.

"We hold in our honoured custodianship the memory of those lost in the Spanish Armada wrecks and to that we now add the memory of those lost in the tragic wrecking of the Greyhound 250 years ago."

Higher Diploma in Aquabusiness - Medal Presentations



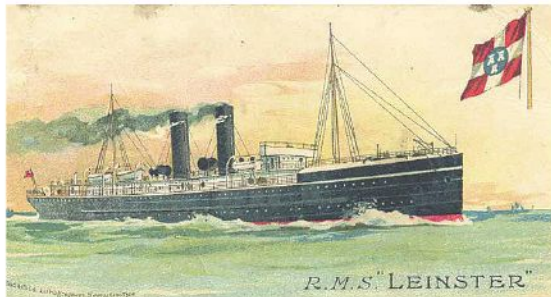
The 2020 Medals in Memory of Joey Murrin and Brendan O'Kelly were presented on Friday 18th December at the front of the Wexford Campus building at Summerhill overlooking Wexford Harbour. Edel Murrin presented the Joey Murrin medal to Brenda O'Riordan of Ballycotton who has worked with BIM for going on four years and is married to Tadhg O'Riordan a fisherman from Ballycotton. Carol O'Kelly presented the Brendan O'Kelly medal to Seamus Flaherty Jnr of Kilmore Quay, an engineer who is a member of the O'Flaherty Fishing family. Seamus worked in Australia for ten years and returned to Ireland with his wife and young family for Christmas 2018. (l-r): Richard Bates (member of the Steering Committee for the HDip in Aquabusiness), Dr Janette Davies, Deputy Head of Campus, Edel Murrin, Brenda O'Riordan, Brian O'Loan, BIM, Seamus O'Flaherty Jnr, Carol O'Kelly, John Doyle, (member of the Steering Committee) and John Hickey, BIM. Photo by Ger Hore Photography.

RMS Leinster Log: Keeping the Memory Alive

On 10 October 1918, in the final weeks of the First World War, the City of Dublin Steam Packet Company steamship *RMS Leinster* was torpedoed and sunk by German submarine UB-123. Current research shows that 569 lives were lost. The sinking resulted in the greatest ever loss of life in the Irish Sea and highest ever death toll on an Irish-owned ship.

Attempting to return to Germany, UB-123 was lost in a minefield in the North Sea with all of its 36 crew. Those who were lost in the sinking of the *RMS Leinster* came from Ireland, Wales, England, Scotland, the Channel Island of Guernsey, Canada, the United States, Australia and New Zealand. The crew of UB-123 all came from Germany.

The *RMS Leinster* Log – Keeping the Memory Alive comes from the *RMS Leinster* Team.



Wreck Site

The wreck of the *RMS Leinster* lies on the seabed in the Irish Sea. To commemorate the Centenary of the sinking a Plaque was placed on the wreck by local divers from the Marlin Sub Aqua Club. A replica of the plaque was donated to the National Maritime Museum, Dun Laoghaire, for inclusion in their *RMS Leinster* display.

Research Continues

The *RMS Leinster* Team have been continuing research into the 813 people who were on board the *RMS Leinster* on the 10th October 1918. At this stage we have gone as far as we can with the information available.

Research into the survivors has been particularly difficult as, in many cases, the only information available is a name (sometimes misspelt) in a newspaper. We have also been answering queries

relating to the sinking and the people on board. The information relating to each of the 813 people (casualties and survivors) is displayed on our website. We would welcome any further information which may be available so that we can update our records. (info@rmsleinster.com)

Postal Sorters Relatives Group

Joan Sugrue, granddaughter of *RMS Leinster* Postal Sorter William Wakefield, has formed a Postal Sorters Relatives

Group. members of the group had a meeting with the Heritage Officer of *An Post* (The Irish Post Office) at which we informed him of the existence of the group and outlined a number of ideas to promote commemoration of the *RMS Leinster* in general and the Postal Sorters in particular.

They also outlined plans to carry out further research into the lives of the Postal Sorters. In early March 2020 three members of the group travelled to Enniscorthy, County Wexford to carry out initial research for a possible project. Unfortunately Covid 19 appeared shortly afterwards, putting the group's activities on hold.

If there are relatives of *RMS Leinster* Postal Sorters who are not already in contact with the Postal Sorters Relatives Group and would like to make contact with other relatives please contact Joan Sugrue at joanlouisesugrue@gmail.com

Port of Waterford to Invest Almost €1m in New 'Port Láirge' Pilot Boat

The Port of Waterford is to invest almost €1m in a new pilot boat to be named Port Láirge, which as Irish for Waterford is a name long associated with a steam-powered dredger that served Waterford for more than 70 years until the 1980s. The 15-metre long boat will provide safer working conditions for pilotage personnel. Youghal, Co Cork-based Safehaven Marine won a tendering process to design and build the new boat which will be fitted with the latest marine safety technology.



Frank Kowalski of Safehaven Marine said that they were "Delighted to have signed contracts with the Port of Waterford after being awarded the International tender for their new pilot vessel earlier this year. Particularly gratifying for all of us at Safehaven as Waterford is a local Irish Port just 50 miles from our factory. Their new Pilot vessel will be one of our 15m Interceptor 48 Pilot's, she

will be 'self-righting', capable of operations in all weather conditions and powered by Scania DI13 500hp engines, providing her with a very economical operational speed in excess of 25kts. Extremely highly specified and incorporating all of our latest refinements developed for our 48 Pilot recently, she will be a fine new vessel for the Port of Waterford and we look forward to building her."



City Quay Memorial - LT Isolda & MV Innisfallen wreaths



To honour the unnamed brave young man who saved my life when M.V. *Innisfallen* hit a mine and sank in the River Mersey on 21st December 1940.



M.V. *Innisfallen* painted by Kenneth King

Also in memory of the four Irish seaman who lost their lives in the tragedy:

- Able Seaman W. Doyle, Dublin
- Quartermaster D. Geary, Kinsale
- Able Seaman J. Porter Dublin
- Able Seaman J. Rickard, Howth

May they all rest in peace
Ar Dheis de go raibh a n-anamnacha dílse

Patrick Murphy
Pembrokeshire, Wales

The Maritime Heritage Column

Eightieth Anniversary of the December 1940 M.V. Innisfallen Tragedy in the River Mersey

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



The annual wreath laying ceremony at the City Quay Seafarers Memorial was cancelled in 2020 due to Covid-19. However, because of travel restrictions, at the request of Pembrokeshire resident Patrick Murphy, a child passenger when M.V. *Innisfallen* was mined in the River Mersey on 21st December 1940, the Maritime Institute of Ireland privately laid a wreath on Patrick's behalf in honour of the brave unknown sailor who saved his life and the four tragic casualties of that fateful winter night. Patrick conveys the drama of the sinking in his own words.

"As I approach 83 years old, I am probably the last living survivor of the sinking of the City of Cork Steam Packet, *Innisfallen*, sunk by a German mine on 21st December 1940. My mother, Christina Murphy and I were to sail from Liverpool to spend Christmas at the family farm near Mallow, Co. Cork and I was hugging my Christmas present, Danny - a huge cowboy doll, made by my mother.

At two and a half, I had little detailed awareness of the disaster, but I do have memories like a series of disjointed colour slides which are in sharp focus, with no accompanying sounds. My mother, never discussed it: it was far too painful for her to recall the things I wanted to know about as I grew older, but over time details were filled in by relatives. It was years before I appreciated just how terrifying it was for her, trying to protect me, while overhead, scores of Heinkel He 111 bombers razed the city and the docks over three nights with parachute mines, high explosives, and incendiary bombs.

We shared a cabin with two women teachers. I recall being in a bunk and being given a red stump of pencil and a magazine to scribble in – a sign of things to come as I became a professional artist. The bombers arrived just after the ship left her berth. All navigation was halted

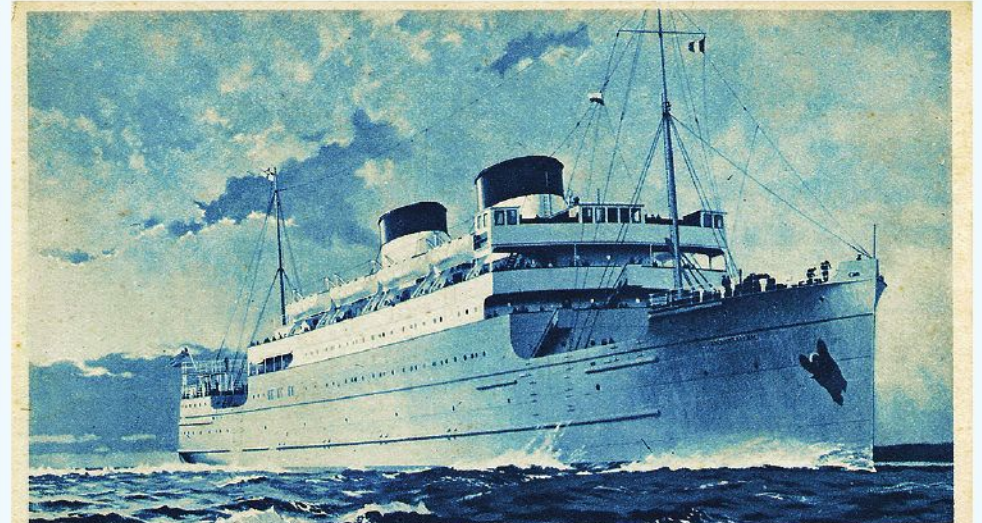
so *Innisfallen* lay exposed, in the middle of the river, all night with bombs and mines falling around her. She set sail again for Dublin the following afternoon at 1500 hrs. Passing New Brighton Tower, a magnetic mine tore a hole in the port bow.

Two men rushed into our cabin to save the women. They pulled my mother out,

screaming, onto the deck to get into a lifeboat but she tried to get back to the cabin. Finally, they realised that her distress was because her baby was still there. I had been thrown out of the bunk and was hidden under debris. A brave young man immediately returned to the cabin, even though the ship was sinking fast. He found me in the dimness, picked me up and pushed me down inside his greatcoat and fastened it up. Only my head was sticking out. I remember him crawling on his hands and knees with me slung beneath him, through the dim light. The lapels on his blue-grey greatcoat were large each side of me.

At some stage, I recall being in somebody's arms and the seeing lots of beautiful lights. This would have been the searchlights and the billowing smoke, flames, and sparks coming from the flaming ships and buildings of Liverpool and Birkenhead, set ablaze by thousands of incendiary bombs. But no sound accompanies all this. Nothing to frighten me!

Then, it was a cold and damp early morning on Liverpool Pier Head. I was



Motor Vessel "INNISFALLEN" (3600 tons, 18 knots). LONDON-FISHGUARD-CORK-DIRECT EXPRESS SERVICE. CITY OF CORK STEAM PACKET CO. LTD.

lifted onto the passenger platform of a corporation bus. The conductor leaned down to me and folded my hand around a silver threepenny bit. We had no luggage – and Danny was gone! My only clothing was an adult's large, dark blue lifejacket fastened with linen tapes. It reached to my bare feet and its armholes were huge on me. My mother was wearing a man's blue-grey greatcoat with large lapels.

able to trace and the four Irish seamen who died, by having a Mass said for them. Following my Mother's death in 1994, I painted "Christmas Package" - my impression, and memories, of the sinking of *Innisfallen*."

In December 2020 two wreaths were laid at the memorial: one for the Irish Lights Lighthouse Tender *Isolda* sunk by a German aircraft on 19 December with six casualties and the other for M.V. *Innisfallen* sunk two days later on the 21st December 1940 with four casualties. A tragic Christmas for so many Irish seafaring families. Ar dheis Dé go raibh a n-anamnacha dílse.



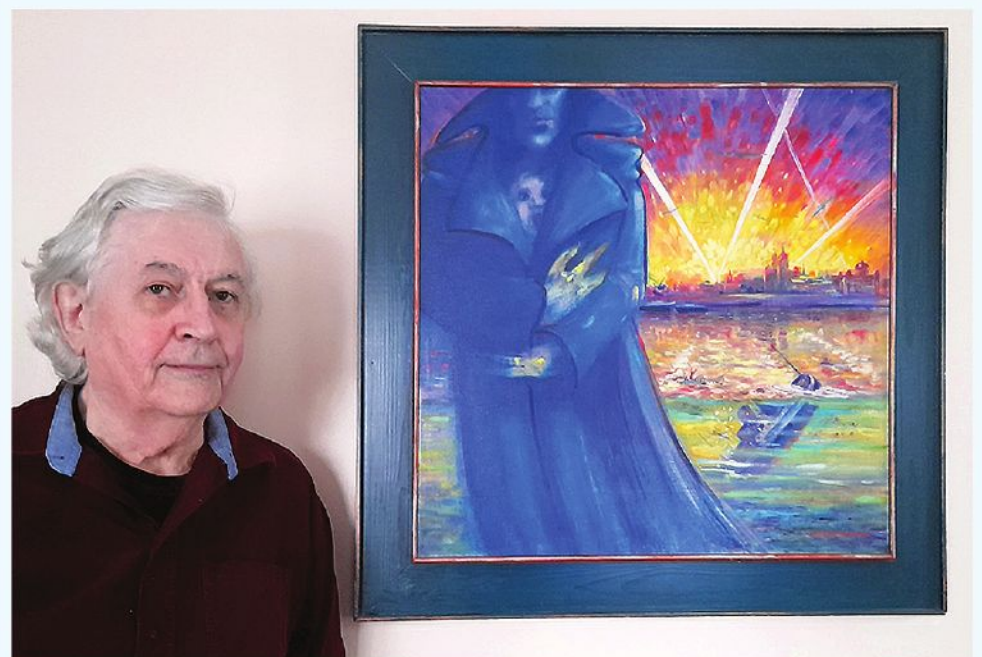
Patrick & Christine Murphy 1937 War Travel Permit Christina & Patrick Murphy (aged 3 yrs)



Each year, on 21st December, I remember that brave young man whom we were never



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



Patrick Murphy and his painting "Christmas Package" 1994

International Fishing and Maritime News

Brexit Deal Dark Day for European Fishing Industry

The deal agreed between the EU and the UK is a “significant blow that leaves the industry facing an uncertain future,” according to the European Fisheries Alliance.

The Alliance is a coalition of European fishing fleets representing the interests of the fishing industry in the remaining 27 EU countries after the exit of the UK. It has called on the European Commission and the Member States to “secure the long-term future of our industry.”

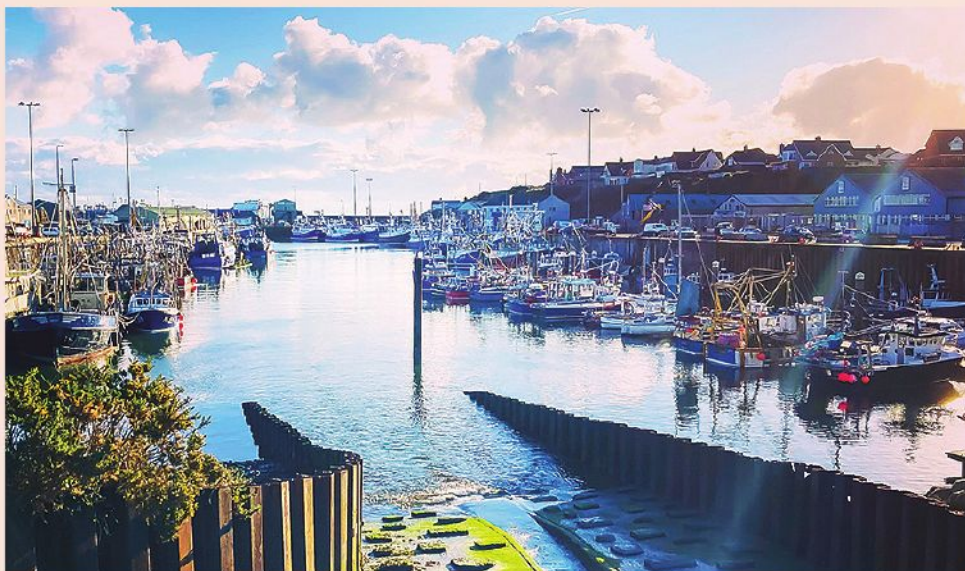
The Alliance issued a statement on Christmas Eve after the negotiators announced the conclusion of a deal, in which it said: “EU Fishers are paying a high price for a Brexit agreement that is a significant blow and leaves them facing an uncertain future.

“European Fishermen will pay a high price for today’s Brexit agreement. While the exact details of the agreement remain to be seen and analysed, the information available is very concerning to EU Fishermen. We are now facing the prospect of loss of large parts of fishing rights that have been built-up over many generations of fishermen. This will have grave consequences for the fishing industry, the fishermen, their families and communities.

“This deal does not provide any long term certainty for our fleets, as the entire agreement might be back in play in a mere five years from now. This will stifle investment in our sector and coastal communities and completely leaves open the questions of long-term collaborative, sustainable management of fish stocks.

Gerard van Balsfoort, Chairman of the European Fisheries Alliance said that “details of the deal notwithstanding, it is clear from what we know that this is a dark day for the European fishing industry. The loss of a significant part of our fishing rights, built up over many generations of fishermen, is a huge blow that leaves thousands of livelihoods hanging in the balance. On top of this, the extremely short transition period leaves us facing further uncertainty and hardship in the very near future. It provides no long-term certainty.

“We call upon the European Commission and the Member States to take all the necessary measures, financial and political to secure the long-term future of our industry.”



Kilkeel fleet sitting in the winter sun getting ready to start the year off, a year unlike any before following Brexit - Photo by Christopher Feenan



Brexit Agreement Does Not Please All UK Fishermen Who Say Boris Johnson Failed Them and ‘Bottled It’

The Brexit deal has not pleased all UK fishermen. There has been contrasting reaction.

The Scottish Salmon Producers’ Association, whose members were particularly fearful of the effects of a no-deal scenario, said it would alleviate some of the most serious problems feared, but Chief Executive Tavish Scott, said: “We still have concerns. The disruption at the Channel hit our members ability to export. Brexit means the Scottish salmon sector now faces the reality of lots more red tape, bureaucracy and paperwork which are the reality of the extra trade barriers which come with Brexit. Until we see how the Agreement actually works in practice, it is impossible to make a clear judgement on how it will affect salmon farming.”

The Agreement requirement for thousands of Export Health Certificates (EHCs) has been estimated as likely to cost the sector stg£1.3 million annually, a cost that did not exist prior to Brexit. Scottish salmon exports to the European Union have been estimated as worth stg £320 million annually, which is a considerable part of making fish the UK’s number one food export.

Elsbeth Macdonald, Chief Executive of the Scottish Fishermen’s Federation, was also critical, saying that the Agreement did not appear to deliver on the industry’s aspirations: “What has been outlined so far is that full access will be granted to EU vessels for effectively six years from January,” she said. “Over the same timescale the increase in quota shares for UK vessels will be 25 per cent. The principles that the Government said it supported – control over access, quota shares based on zonal attachment, annual negotiations – do not appear to be central to the agreement. After all the promises given to the industry, that is hugely disappointing.”

The National Federation of Fishermen’s Organisation, which represents English, Welsh and Northern Irish interests, accused UK Prime Minister Boris Johnson of “bottling it”.

“The answer is both obvious and bitter. When push came to shove, despite the legal, moral and political strength of our case, fishing was sacrificed for other national objectives. Lacking legal, moral, or political negotiating leverage on fish, the EU made the whole trade deal contingent on a UK surrender on fisheries. In the end-game, the Prime Minister made the call and caved in on fish, despite the rhetoric and assurances that he would not do what Ted Heath did in 1973.

“There will be an extensive public rela-

tions exercise (by government) to portray the deal as a fabulous victory, but it will inevitably be seen by the fishing industry as a defeat. There will be those at either end of the ‘Leave – Remain’ spectrum in the ‘told you so’ mould, but there was no inevitability about this outcome.

“The UK negotiating team fought hard and long – fishing was the last issue to be settled – but in the final stretch the decisions lay at the very top of government – with the Prime Minister – and he bottled it. Economics reasserted its dominance over politics.”

“The Cornish fishing industry has been used and abused. Any shred of trust fishermen had in politicians will be difficult to ever rebuild,” is how the Cornish Fish Producers’ Organisation responded to the agreement. It is particularly concerned with the effects on the inshore UK fleet.

Key promises made to the Cornish fishing industry have been broken and fishermen betrayed, according to its Chief Executive, Paul Trebilcock. The CFPO claims to represent “the interests of hundreds of fishermen across Cornwall.

“My members have been left reeling from the deal. Promises of full and absolute control of our waters and better fishing opportunities have been made time and time again only to be shattered at the final moment,” he said. “It is certainly not the deal we were led to believe we would receive, and it has left Cornish fishermen feeling angry and insulted.”

The CFPO criticised the agreement giving on-going EU access to UK waters.

“Full and absolute control of UK waters out to 200 miles, or the median line, was a stated objective for the UK,” said Mr Trebilcock. “However, within the final deal, EU access to UK fishing grounds will, in effect, remain the same as now for a minimum of five and a half years.”

Particularly egregious for the inshore fleet, EU access will continue within the UK’s 6-to-12 mile limit, which should be a ‘red line’ for the UK. The CFPO has also strongly criticised quota allocation allowances, saying that “the deal does not reflect fish populations and we are also concerned at the increased paperwork with the new need for catch and health certificates and border controls.”

WEEKLY NEWS AND COMMENT FROM
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Chinese Heading for Squid and Causing Pacific Concern

The increased concentration of the Chinese government on seafood for its huge population is emphasised by the approval the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Affairs of the People's Republic of China gave for the reconstruction of the refrigerated transport vessel, 'Fu Yuan Yu Yun 992,' as the largest fishery support vessel in China. Pingtan Marine Enterprise's vessel is 132 metres long, that is 435 feet and its refit was completed last October.



It left Shidao Port in Weihai City, Shandong Province on December 12 bound for fishing grounds in the international waters of the South-East Pacific. Six large squid jigging vessels, that had returned to China during the year from the South-West Atlantic, for maintenance and repair, left the port of Mawei five days later, on December 17, heading also for the South-West Pacific fishing grounds where the Fu Yuan Yu Yun' will be their support vessel.

A concentration of Chinese vessels fishing together has caused concern off Chile. In December, the conservation group Oceana accused Chinese fishing boats of "pillaging" the waters off the environmentally sensitive and protected Galapagos Islands for squid. That fleet was reported to have been made up of more than 400 fishing vessels. The Chilean Navy was sent to the scene because a number of the boats were entering its EEZ. The Galapagos Islands are a UNESCO World Heritage site and home to many unique species.

Last July the Chinese Government banned its fishing fleet from catching squid in parts of the Atlantic and Pacific oceans for three months after environmental groups alleged that it was engaged in illegal fishing activities that were devastating ecologically sensitive areas such as the Galapagos Islands. China said the ban would "promote long-term sustainable use of fishery resources in open waters and highlights China's image as a responsible fishing power and is a milestone for China's participation in international maritime management."

Last month (December) the archipelago nation of Palau, east of the Philippines and north of New Guinea, detained a Chinese fishing vessel in Helen Reef, Palau's most southernmost region. Palau said the boat had entered illegally and fished for sea cucumber. When boarded by a patrol vessel it was found to have 500 pounds (225 kilograms) aboard. The vessel and 28 crew, reported to be from Hainan Province in China were detained.

Palau does not have formal diplomatic relations with China as it recognizes the Republic of China government on Taiwan

Chinese fishing vessels are increasingly being accused of illegal entry to the waters of Pacific Island nations.

Size of Chinese Vessels Shown by Argentinian Navy

The size of some of the Chinese vessels and the extent of their fishing facilities is shown in the photo here which was issued by Argentina's Navy Press Office. It shows the Argentinian Navy Ocean Patrol vessel, "Bouchard," escorting a Chinese flagged fishing vessel after it was arrested for allegedly operating illegally operating in Argentina's Exclusive Economic Zone.



The comparative size of the Chinese vessel compared to the Naval boarding boat being used from the patrol vessel indicates the extent of the Chinese fishing operation.

China's distant-water fishing vessels have long caused controversy in waters around Asia. As the fleet has grown, so have complaints. There have been incidents also in Ecuador, off Africa and the Korean Peninsula.

It has been alleged that Chinese illegal fishing is being used by the Beijing government to stake wider maritime territorial claims.

Canadian Fisheries Minister at Centre of Storm Over Closure of Salmon Farms

A big political row has broken out embroiling the Canadian government in a huge controversy in which has been accused of "unravelling the viability" of an entire community in British Columbia.

This follows the decision announced by Bernadette Jordan, Minister for Fisheries, Oceans and the Canadian Coast Guard, in December to phase out 19 salmon farms in British Columbia.

The decision to phase out all open-net fish farming in the Discovery islands region over the next 18 months was announced, local government leaders and representatives of the salmon farming industry say, without consultation with the industry and based only on discussions she held with organisations opposed to salmon farming.

The local government leaders and representatives of the salmon farming industry replied in an open letter in which they said to the Minister: "You made this decision without even speaking to the industry nor locally-elected officials and have put 1,500 jobs at risk, threatening the viability of the industry throughout British Columbia."

The letter says: "Salmon farming is deeply integrated into the fabric of local lives and, as one of the most significant local employers, your decision has the potential to unravel the viability of North

Island Indigenous and non-Indigenous communities. Yet you made this decision without even speaking to the industry nor locally-elected officials who deeply understand BC's salmon farming communities and have a direct interest in your action.

"Your decision puts at risk 1,500 jobs supported by the farms, and indirectly threatens the viability of the industry throughout British Columbia. Like all Canadians and residents of our communities during the pandemic, workers in the salmon farming industry and local business owners are under severe emotional strain. Now they face the prospect of losing their jobs and their businesses going under.

"What is your plan now to help our communities recover from your decision? What is your government willing to commit at this stage, and beyond, to help us pick up the pieces for the people who live, work and take care of their families here on our coast?"

The Canadian government said it had consulted with 'First Nations' representatives in the region, who blame fish farmers for the decline in wild salmon. In Canada, the 'First Nations' are the predominant indigenous peoples in Canada south of the Arctic Circle. The government did not say it had held discussions or consultations with anyone else.

Norway to Examine Scheme for Regulating Salmon Farming

The Norwegian Research Council has been commissioned to examine the scientific basis of what has been described "traffic light" scheme for regulating salmon farming, with emphasis on how it controls lice. The country's Fisheries and Seafood Minister Odd Emil Ingebrigtsen said it was important to have a professional assessment on the situation "in order to make it even better."

A seven-member 'Evaluation Team' has been appointed which will be chaired by Crawford Revie, Professor of Data Analytics at Scotland's University of Strathclyde Department of Computer and Information

Sciences. Two years ago he returned to the UK after spending a decade at the University of Prince Edward Island's Atlantic Veterinary College. Before moving to Canada Professor Revie worked on projects involving fish health and sustainable salmon aquaculture.

The Norwegian Research Council said it had sought candidates with high scientific competence, but at the same time avoiding strong ties to the Norwegian environments.

The Norwegian coastline has been divided into three colour-coded zones: green, where growth is free to take place; amber, which allows for limited expansion; and red, where there can be no expansion and where existing production must be reduced. It has been introduced to "ensure predictable and sustainable growth in the aquaculture sector and was based on scientific advice," according to the Council. "The sector is constantly evolving which is why a broad-based expert group has been brought in to conduct an evaluation."

The scheme has not gone down well with some sections of the industry. Up to 25 salmon and trout companies who have found themselves in the red zone have indicated that they plan to sue the Norwegian government, alleging they are being "robbed of part of their livelihood."

There is an Irish member of the Evaluation Team – Dr. Dave Jackson of the Marine Institute. The other members of the team are: Deputy Director / Professor Anders Koed, DTU Aqua, Denmark; Associate Professor Heather Swanson at University of Aarhus, Denmark; Assistant Professor Jarno Vanhatalo at University of Helsinki, Finland; Head of department Kirstin Eliassen at Fiskaaling, Faroe Islands; Jimmy Turnbull, Professor of Aquatic Population Health and Welfare at the University of Stirling's Institute of Aquaculture, Scotland.

They are to submit a final report to the Research Council by the end of November.

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news from **Castletownbere** Helen Riddell

Lifeboat Rescue

Castletownbere RNLI lifeboat launched on the afternoon of Saturday January 2nd to assist a fishing vessel which had lost power 18 miles south of Castletownbere harbour.

The lifeboat, under coxswain Aaron O'Boyle launched at 3.30pm and located the stricken vessel 51 minutes later, there was a three metre swell and force 5/6 north-westerly winds. The Castletownbere-based 11m fishing boat had three crew on board. The volunteer lifeboat crew attached a tow rope and proceeded to tow the vessel to Castletownbere harbour where it was berthed at the pier at just before 8.00 p.m.

Commenting on callout Castletownbere RNLI Lifeboat Operations Manager Paul Stevens said, 'this was the first shout for the station in 2021 and the first call-out with Coxswain O'Boyle in command. He and the volunteer crew undertook the rescue with great skill and efficiency and there was a positive outcome.

Beara 3k a Day

The organisers of the Beara 3k a Day walking group have introduced a January 2021 challenge. Anyone who would like to participate can walk 3k or more daily, posting photos and a description of the walk on the group's Facebook page. Those taking part are asked to adhere to all current Government guidelines and exercise within their 5k from home limit.

Beara Further Education and Training Centre

The Beara Further Education and Training Centre have a number of courses commencing from January 2021 which include drawing, computer applications, textiles, art and design, internet skills, digital photography, cooking for the family, English for beginners, use of everyday maths and conversational Irish. For further details on all courses contact Noreen on 086 8239147 or email noreen.murnane@corketb.ie Courses will be delivered via remote learning.

COVID-19 Support

The Castletownbere Development Association and GAA clubs from throughout Beara are available to help the local community during the current lockdown in providing help with grocery collection, medication pick up and delivery, fuel delivery, checking in on neighbours and undertaking any other tasks where necessary. Anyone who requires assistance can contact Sandra on 087 2927534.

Cork County Council's COVID-19 Community Support programme is also available to assist anyone living alone or

who needs support at the current time. They can also arrange delivery of food or medication and other practical supports. The number to call is 1 800 805 819

Just in Time Award

Garda Dave Fenton who is based in Castletownbere Garda Station was one of those who were recognised at Water Safety Ireland's National Annual Awards Ceremony, which was broadcast online on November the 24th.

Earlier in the year, Garda Dave Fenton, who is a deputy coxswain with the Castletownbere RNLI lifeboat, was alerted to a woman in distress in the water at the pier in Castletownbere. Dave entered the water, and kept the casualty calm until a small boat was launched by two men. The woman was brought onto the boat and taken to the lifeboat station. The casualty made a full recovery. Garda Dave Fenton received a Just In Time award for his efforts, which is his second such award. He received his first Just in Time Award for a rescue he and Garda Caroline Guest, and lifeboat mechanic Marney O'Donoghue carried out in 2014.

Castletownbere Coast Guard

The Irish Coast Guard coordinated a total of 2642 incidents in 2020. The Castletownbere Coast Guard team trained throughout 2020 as much they were able to between the various restrictions and lockdown, and responded to a number of incidents throughout the year. The team's long-standing officer-in-charge Martin Sullivan stepped down in May. Martin is still staying on as a member of the crew while the OiC position is now held by Leo O'Shea.

Beara West Family Resource Centre

In line with Level 5 restrictions and government guidelines, the Beara West Family Resource Centre will remain closed, the team are working from home and continue to be available for all support needs and can be contacted on 027 70998. The community catering programme has resumed which can arrange for a meal delivered to the door every Thursday at a cost of €5. To avail of the service or for further information, please phone Aileen on 086 8560319 or 027 70998. The Centre also have a programme of online activities planned for January, aimed at promoting the health and wellbeing of Beara residents in the New Year. All the online courses will be delivered via Zoom and a full timetable and further details of all courses are available at www.bearawestfrc.ie

Baltimore Coxswain Kieran Cotter Retires After 45 Years

One of the 'Mad Men in the Small Boat'

There have been many unusual sights caused by the Covid 19 pandemic, one of which was certainly the handing-over of the lifeboat keys at Baltimore Station in West Cork using a fishing rod!



Socially distanced and by a fishing rod, Kieran Cotter hands over the lifeboat keys to Baltimore RNLI's new Coxswain Aidan Bushe – photo RNLI-Micheal Cottrell

That was to ensure it was seen to be done in public in a 'socially-distanced' way on December 30 when Kieran Cotter brought to an end 45 years' active service on the crew of the village lifeboat, where his retirement as Coxswain "brought to an end an era in our village," as local people described the occasion when Aidan Bushe, from the well-known and renowned local publican family of Bushe's bar took over as Coxswain. Kieran is continuing his involvement with the station as a Deputy Launching Authority.

Kate Callanan, Volunteer Lifeboat Press Officer at Baltimore reports: At age 17, Kieran first became interested in Baltimore Lifeboat and he officially joined the crew on January 1, 1975. In the early years as a crew member Kieran was involved in the dramatic rescue of the 1979 Fastnet Race. Baltimore Lifeboat was the first lifeboat launched and spent the longest time at sea during the tragedy. At the time it was the biggest rescue operation since World War 2. Kieran and his brother Liam were also involved in the rescue of Charles J. Haughey in 1985.

Kieran held the position of second Coxswain for a number of years before becoming Coxswain following the retirement of Christy Collins in 1989. During his 45 years at the station Kieran has received multiple awards for his roles in many rescues. Most notably, in 1991 Kieran was awarded the Bronze Medal for gallantry and the Maud Smith award for the bravest act of lifesaving that year following the 26-hour rescue of the fishing vessel the *Japonica* and her 15 crew, who referred to Baltimore lifeboat and her crew as "The Mad Men in the small boat" and the rescue of the yacht *Atlantis Adventure* and her five crew. Coxswain Cotter and his crew also received recognition from the Swiss Embassy in 2008 for the outstanding bravery and commitment shown during the rescue of Swiss nationals in hazardous conditions and from the United States Congress for the rescue of the crew of *Rambler* during the 2011 Fastnet Yacht Race.

Kieran has seen many changes during

his time at the station including the arrival of four different classes of all-weather lifeboats and the reconstruction of the lifeboat station and pen at Bull Point to accommodate the current Tamar Class all-weather lifeboat the Alan Massey and the Atlantic 85 inshore lifeboat the Rita Daphne Smyth. In September 2019 Kieran accepted the 100th Anniversary Vellum on behalf of the crew, management and fundraising team at Baltimore.

Declan Tiernan, Chairperson of Baltimore Lifeboat, paid tribute to Kieran saying "Natural leadership is a rare gift which Kieran Cotter has in abundance. It is the ability to instill confidence and trust in the people around you, calmly dealing with new and unforeseen circumstances without raising your voice. The ability to assess a situation, come up with a plan that your crew will execute because they have the utmost confidence in their leader.

Tom Bushe, Baltimore RNLI Lifeboat Operations Manager, who was on the lifeboat crew with Kieran in the 1980s said that Kieran's "vast array of knowledge and experience will not be lost to Baltimore RNLI as he is going to continue to be involved by becoming a Deputy Launching Authority"

Kieran is leaving the Alan Massey and her crew in good hands, with second Coxswain Aidan Bushe now taking over the role as station Coxswain.



Another long-serving Baltimore crew member also retired in December, Ronnie Carthy, who participated in his last exercise aboard before leaving the crew (pictured above). He will be missed for his great contribution to safety at sea.

Have you News, Views & Photos that you would like to see in the Marine Times?
Email us at editor@marinetimes.ie



WATER SAFETY IRELAND REPORT

New Year resolutions for fishermen and their families are suggested by John Leech, Chief Executive of Water Safety Ireland, the national safety organisation

New Year Resolutions

The first quarter of the year normally brings with it some of the worst fishing vessel tragedies of the year.

Thankfully, our fishermen are enjoying settled weather at present, but they know that it will break soon in our temperate climate and that it is important that they are prepared for it.

I would like to see all our fishermen use a risk-based approach throughout the year and that their families support them in their endeavours. This will help reduce these awful tragedies that our coastal communities have endured each year.



This time last year we all learned of the tragic news that the Fishing Vessel *Alize* from Kilmore Quay had disappeared approximately 9 Nautical miles south of Hook Head with Joe Sinnott and Willie Whelan onboard. I also remember the crews of the *Pere Charles*, *Honeydew II*, *Maggie B*, *Rising Sun* who also perished in the waters nearby. All around our coast we have sacrificed so many lives to the fishing industry with several memorials dotted around our coastline to remember these brave fishermen to whom we all owe a great debt of gratitude for keeping our fishmongers supplied with fresh fish and for keeping our fish processors in business.

The Marine Casualty Investigation Board has completed many investigations on the various sinkings and fires in our fishing fleet since 2003 and in summary their recommendations are as follows:

- The need for an enhanced maritime safety culture.
- Unsuitable or inadequately maintained safety equipment on board, or lack thereof.
- Lack of crew training.
- Failure to plan journeys safely, including failure to take sea/weather conditions into account.
- Non-wearing of personal flotation device (lifejacket/buoyancy aid).

- Vessel unseaworthy, unstable and/or overloaded.
- Inadequate enforcement of regulations.
- Impairment due to fatigue or the influence of alcohol and/or drugs.
- Inadequate crewing levels/solo operation.
- Unsuitable clothing being worn on board.

So, please make it your New Year's resolution to stay safe afloat this year, be careful out there, take cognisance of the points above and ensure that your vessel complies with all the requirements of the Marine Surveyors' Office.

Keep safety to the forefront of your mind, always wear a lifejacket.

Keep an eye on the weather with the Irish Lights

Met Ocean buoys that update the weather for you every 15 minute.

Always check the weather forecast before you go to sea. The buoys are based at the Fastnet Lighthouse, Kish Bank

Lighthouse, buoys at Ballybunion, Coningbeg, Dublin Bay, Finnis, Foyle,

Splaugh, South Hunter and South

Rock. Follow them on Twitter for the most accessible results, also available on their website <https://www.irishlights.ie/technology-data-services/metocean-charts.aspx>

Update on our Water Safety Ambassador and Fundraiser, Henry O'Donnell a native of Carrickfin, Co Donegal - the "Finman" - who is as I write just west of the Salt-ees and has completed over a third of his circumnavigation of our Island Nation. He is helping raise funds for the Irish Cancer Society and ourselves.

He wants to help us to help others to prevent drownings, so please make a donation at https://www.idonate.ie/fundraiser/11390779_fin-swim-2020-s-page.html where you can also follow his progress as he aims to be the first person in the world to circumnavigate a country by fin swimming. We wish him continued success.

So, until next month, enjoy your aquatic pursuits or sports and always wear a lifejacket on or near the water and use your influence to further reduce the number of drownings on our island nation.



Letters to the Editor

'The Lady Min'

Dear Sir,

In response to Tom MacSweeney's interesting item (December 2020 issue) on the restoration of the *Lady Min*, nostalgia has prompted me to set down a few words.

As a boy in the late 40s/early 50s I recall the *Lady Min* arriving annually at Union Hall towards the end of July. The petite 30ft Gaff-Cutter would by then have battled her way passed the Old Head of Kinsale, the Seven Heads and the Galley Head on a westwards voyage from Cork Harbour.

It's now hard to believe that back then yachts big or small were a rarity on the South West Cork coast. As such, berthed side-by-side with the larger fishing trawlers the smaller boat attracted considerable attention. Up in the village too word of

mouth made it known that the *Lady Min* had arrived.

An added interest to the boat's visit was that her crew of three were locally well known - George Bushe, John Driscoll and Jack Driscoll were men who in earlier years had moved from one of the Baltimore Boatyards to follow their trade at Crosshaven. Having spent a few days at Union Hall, the *Lady Min* again set off on her westward voyage with the crew making sure of arrival at Baltimore for the Annual Regatta on the first Monday of August. It was an occasion dominated big time by rowing - then Baltimore's unquestionable highlight of the entire year.

A week or so later the *Lady Min* made the return trip back to base.

Pat Nolan,
Ballycastle,
Co. Antrim



Missing Seats at Tramore Pier

Good to hear that the missing seats at Tramore have been found, let's hope they will be returned - The Pier Fishermens Association got together and financed seats to be made up remembering fishermen lost at sea and to honour the R.N.L.I. so that they may be used by anyone who wants to take a load off down at the pier in Tramore. The seats were removed early December but thankfully they have been discovered following a campaign to find them - now the campaign to have them returned and back in place begins.

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Ag Soláthair Seirbhísí Mara

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Common Octopus (*Octopus vulgaris* L.) Captured off SW Ireland

Report by Declan Quigley

During late July 2020, the MFV Xmas Eve II (T31) [Skipper: Stephen Casey, Sneem] captured a specimen of the Common Octopus (*Octopus vulgaris*) measuring c.50cm total length (TL) while potting for lobsters off Westcove, Caherdaniel, Co Kerry. Prior to releasing the lively octopus, Stephen recorded a video clip which clearly showed the diagnostic double row of suckers along the length of the tentacles, distinguishing it from the more frequently encountered Curled or Horned Octopus (*Eledone cirrhosa*) which has a single row of suckers.

Stephen remarked that he had caught three more specimens of *O. vulgaris* from the same area, including one during 2019, and two smaller specimens measuring c.35cm and c.20cm (TL) while potting for lobsters and shrimp during late August and early September 2020 respectively. Finally, during early December 2020, the MFV Jam-Mar (S414) [Skipper: Vincent Regan, Skull) captured another specimen of *O. vulgaris* while potting for lobsters off Goleen, Co Cork. Vincent's specimen was donated to Dingle Oceanworld where it is currently on live display (Figs. 1-2).



Many of the historical records of the Common Octopus from Irish waters are unsubstantiated and it is possible that they may have been confused with the Curled Octopus which is common all around the Irish coast. Indeed, apart from two small (c.15cm TL) specimens recorded from Dublin Bay during the 19th century, both of which are preserved in the Zoological Museum in Trinity College, there is only one previously confirmed record of *O. vulgaris* from Irish waters.

On 28 March 2005, the MFV *Elsie Maria II* (T114) [Skipper: David Granville, Dingle], captured a large specimen while trawling in Dingle Bay, Co. Kerry (Fig. 3). The following morphometric details were recorded: total length, 103cm; mantle length (ML) 21cm; maximum length from tip of beak to tip of arms 89cm; maximum arm span 160cm; and weight 3.75kg. The specimen is preserved in the National Museum of Ireland.



Until recently, the Common Octopus was generally considered to be cosmopolitan with a global distribution in temperate and tropical waters. However recent research has shown that it is a species complex and that multiple *O. vulgaris*-like species are currently being incorrectly treated under a single species name, *O. vulgaris*. Indeed, it is possible that *O. vulgaris* may be confined to the Mediterranean and NE Atlantic.

The Common Octopus attains a large size; maximum TL 140cm. ML 40cm, and weight 10kg. In the western Mediterranean, ML at first maturity is about 9.5cm in males and 13.5cm in females, with a maximum life span of 20 and 17 months respectively. *O. vulgaris* is found from the shoreline down to depths of about 400m, but is most abundant between 15 and 100m on all types of sea bed. Although the Curled Octopus is also short-lived and exhibits a similar geographic distribution and depth range, it is a relatively small to medium-sized octopus, attaining a maximum ML of only 18cm.

Although a Common Octopus has been reported on one occasion from as far north as Norway (Trondheim Fjord, 63.5°N, 10.3°E, July 1921), and only occasionally from the North Sea, the species has rarely been recorded further north than south-western Britain and the western English Channel, where its abundance varies from year to year. Periodic 'plagues' associated with higher than normal sea water temperatures and mass mortalities associated with particularly severe winters have been recorded on the UK side of the English Channel.

During the early 1950s, *O. vulgaris* pelagic larvae of various sizes, ranging from newly hatched to 6mm (mantle length), were discovered in plankton hauls north of the Channel Islands. Since there was no indication of substantial breeding on the English coast, it was concluded that these larvae were derived from breeding centres on the coast of Brittany and the Channel Islands and that the influx of larvae, influenced by the vagaries of water movements within the English Channel each year, probably accounted for the fluctuations in the abundance of the species in southern UK waters. The duration of the early, planktonic, post-hatching phase is influenced by temperature, ranging from 33 days at 25°C to 60 days at 21°C. It is possible that the same factors may also account for the occasional immigration of *O. vulgaris* larvae into Irish waters. Indeed, the trend of increasing temperatures in Irish waters during recent decades may facilitate an increase in the abundance of *O. vulgaris*. It is interesting to note that several large specimens of *O. vulgaris* have recently

been recorded from the English Channel and southern North Sea.

Although the Curled Octopus is the species of octopus most commonly found in Irish inshore waters, it is possible that the Common Octopus, albeit apparently uncommon, may occur more frequently than the current paucity of authenticated records would suggest, particularly along the S and SW coasts.

Both species of octopus are commercially important. According to FAO statistics, a total of 27,211 tonnes of *O. vulgaris* and 3437 tonnes of *E. cirrhosa* was landed by Mediterranean and NE Atlantic countries during 2018. Almost 89% of the *O. vulgaris* were landed by Senegal (33.3%), Portugal (22.3%), Italy (13.8%), Tunisia (12.5%) and Greece (10%), while Italy accounted for 88% of the *E. cirrhosa* landings (Ireland, 0.1%).

Declan is always interested in receiving reports about unusual species (declanquigley@eircom.net; 087-6458485).



Clifden RNLI pictured coming to the aid of a ten metre trawler that was taking on water and in danger of sinking - a full report from this rescue is on the Marine Times website (www.marinetimes.ie) along with many other stories from around the coast.

DORANS Skippers Mate Giving Skippers Peace of Mind

With an ever growing list of rules and regulation, fishing vessel owners and skippers are finding it more time consuming and complex to adhere to the many rules and regulations covering fishing vessels and their crews.

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Let us help you and your crew stay safe at sea

news from the **North West**
 editor@marinetimes.ie



Northern Celt at Rockall - Photo courtesy Alan O'Shea

No Irish Wanted at Rockall

The Greencastle fishing vessel 'Northern Celt' has been prevented from fishing in the waters around Rockall in the North Atlantic by a Marine Scotland patrol boat. The Northern Celt vessel was boarded by officials from Marine Scotland and skipper Adrian McClenaghan was told that he can no longer fish within 12 nautical miles of the long disputed outcrop.

"We were fishing in Rockall and members of the crew from the Jura boarded us. They informed us that we could no longer fish inside the 12-mile limit of Rockall," McClenaghan told RTÉ News.

Sinn Féin spokesperson on Fisheries and the Marine Pádraig Mac Lochlainn TD has called on Fine Gael and the Minister for Foreign Affairs Simon Coveney to urgently defend Irish fishing rights to Rockall, following confirmation that a Donegal based fishing vessel has been prevented from fishing in the area of 12 miles around Rockall by British authorities.

Teachta Mac Lochlainn said: "In June, 2019, I warned the then Fine Gael Minister for the Marine Michael Creed that the 2013 Agreement between the Irish government and the British government establishing a Single Maritime Boundary between the Exclusive Economic Zones of the two countries and parts of their Continental Shelves, essentially recognised British sovereignty over Rockall. This is a shameful agreement that has never been ratified by the Dáil.

"Fine Gael were warned that the deal that they signed in 2013 would cause real problems after Brexit and they didn't listen.

"They could have supported the governments of Iceland and Denmark in demanding shared sovereignty and fishing rights

around Rockall but they chose not to do so.

"They have created this mess and now Fine Gael, the Minister for Foreign Affairs and this government needs to sort it out. They must defend the historical Irish fishing rights at Rockall and they need to undo the 2013 Agreement that was never ratified by the Dáil as required by the Constitution."

As this issue of the Marine Times was going to press the Minister for Foreign Affairs and the Minister for Agriculture, Food and the Marine met to discuss recent developments in relation to Rockall.

Their statement reads: The Ministers are fully aware of interactions between an Irish fishing vessel, and a Marine Scotland patrol vessel in recent days. The Irish Government has been in contact with the relevant Scottish and UK authorities.

Through this engagement, the Irish Government is seeking to address the issues involved, reflecting the longstanding fisheries tradition in the area. Taking account of the new EU-UK Trade and Cooperation Agreement, this may also require contact with the European Commission.

In addressing these issues, the Minister for Foreign Affairs and the Minister for Agriculture, Food and the Marine, as well as their respective officials, are considering all options for further engagement on the issues involved and are continuing to work closely together.

While engagement continues, there remains an increased risk of enforcement action being taken by Scottish fisheries control authorities against Irish vessels operating in the waters around Rockall at present.

Whilst the politicians 'consider' the situation it is cold comfort to Adrian McClenaghan who made the difficult decision to cut his fishing trip and return to Greencastle and said that his business now faced an uncertain future if he could not return to Rockall waters, which is where he earns about 30% of his turnover. Brexit has slashed 25% off the amount of fish he

is normally allowed to catch each year is another blow to his business.

"This is devastating to not just me and my 10 crew, but also all the other boats who can't fish around Rockall until this situation gets sorted out."

Guarantees to Irish Fishermen Shredded

KFO Chief Executive Sean O'Donoghue says guarantees to Irish fishermen have been shredded. "The Brexit deal reached has demonstrated the duplicitous nature of these protracted negotiations. We are dismayed at how repeated guarantees given to Irish fishermen have, effectively been shredded."

Having secured a host of written commitments in official documents pertaining to the fisheries sector post-Brexit, four-and-a-half years of agreements have, for all intents and purposes, been dishonoured by the negotiators.

"We cannot stand idly by and allow decades of investment in developing a successful enterprise, to be sacrificed by the shape of this very poor deal.

"In spite of a seismic effort to redress the imbalance of the proposed deal, not enough has changed and our highly-developed mackerel fishery stands to lose out dramatically. The full detail of the text will require very close examination and analysis.

"Make no mistake - we will be seeking compensation from our EU colleagues to put right this grievous wrong.

"We won't accept this. Moreover, we fully expect the Irish Government to deliver the requisite compensation in the form of transfer of mackerel quota from the other EU coastal states which pro rata, have seen a much less severe impact on their respective mackerel fisheries."

Hard Border in Irish Waters

The inshore fishing industry in north Donegal and its islands face potential financial disaster and safety issues due to new regulations from Europe which came into effect following Brexit. It has emerged that 37 vessels around the Donegal coast can no longer land their catch at their local piers because they have British fishing licences.

Some of these boats are currently tied up off Tory, Arranmore and Burtonport amid growing fears that they may be forced to jettison their catches following actions at Greencastle recently when Inishowen fishermen Skipper / owner of Coleraine-registered 'My Girls JII' Derek McAvenue & his brother Darrin, skipper / owner of 'Quick-silver' were discharging their day's catch at Greencastle Harbour only to be approached and cautioned by the SFPA to inform them they had no legal right to land their catch.

Speaking to the local press in Inishowen Darrin McAvenue from Moville said the Sea Fisheries Protection Authority (SFPA) was attempting to force up to 40 fishing vessels from around the peninsula, to land their catches at two "designated" harbours only, Killybegs in Donegal or Castletownbere in Cork.

In common with many Inishowen fishermen, including his brother Derek who lives in Malin Head, Darrin McAvenue's vessel is registered in Coleraine.

He explained: "However, there is no suitable harbour over there. We fish to five miles out of Greencastle, up towards the Northern Ireland waters. We have to have a Northern Ireland licence to fish and then we come and we land our product in Greencastle. I have been landing catches in Greencastle for the past 15 years without

any problems.”

Pádraig Mac Lochlainn TD, Sinn Féin Spokesperson on Fisheries and the Marine, told Marine Times: “The treatment of Irish fishers in recent days, who had secured a fishing licence in the North of Ireland under the UK licencing system, amounts to second class citizenship. These new instructions, to only land in Killybegs and Castletownbere, if maintained, will effectively end the livelihoods of a significant number of fishers and seriously impact on some fishing Co-Ops and local businesses.

“Across the political divide in Ireland, we worked together to protect the All Island Economy and to ensure there would be no hard border on the island. Those united efforts were successful and we ensured that all of this island will remain in the EU Single Market and Customs Union.

“So why are Irish fishers being treated as if they are living in England and outside the European Union? I consider these instructions to be against the spirit of the Good Friday Agreement.

“It is also very important to point out that all of this will endanger the lives of the affected fishers, forcing them to travel considerable additional distance in small vessels.

“The Minister and his Department need to urgently sort this out in cooperation with the EU Commission and UK authorities”.

The Marine Times contacted the SFPA for the official stance on the regulations – their statement reads: As the UK is no

longer an EU Member state, UK registered fishing vessels, including those vessels which are registered to addresses in Northern Ireland, are subject to new EU fisheries and food safety controls reflecting the UK’s status now as a Third Country.

From 1st January 2021, UK registered vessels, including NI registered vessels must be pre-authorized by the SFPA prior to their arrival into port. If authorised, they may only land into one of the two Irish ports that are currently designated for Third Country landings: Killybegs or Castletownbere. There are certain exemptions for Northern Ireland registered vessels in relation to food safety requirements when landing to Irish ports, but otherwise they are treated as non-GB UK vessels.

While the SFPA does not comment on individual cases it can confirm that several investigations are underway into unauthorised landings that took place in Greencastle since 1st January. Greencastle is an undesignated port for Third Country vessels for the purposes of the provision of port services, and the conduct of landing or transshipment operations.

The SFPA is committed to fair and effective regulation and the application of EU regulations including those regarding third countries, such as the UK. Breaches of EU legislation can result in criminal prosecution regardless of a non-EU vessel’s country of registration.

The SFPA would encourage all vessel owners to familiarise themselves with the new regulations. Full details are available



SFPA Fishery Officers formally caution the skippers of the two Northern Ireland registered fishing vessels, My Girls JII and the Quicksilver for tying up at Greencastle Harbour thereby breaking Brexit and EU legislation. Skippers told only two designated ports available to NI reg vessels: Killybegs and Castletownbere. Photo courtesy Enda Craig

on the [SFPA website](http://www.sfpa.ie). The SFPA would also encourage any Irish registered vessel owner with a query regarding sea-fisheries regulations to contact their local SFPA port office.

Ironically as this issue of the Marine Times goes to press it is reported by the ANIFPO in Kilkeel that “Irish trawlers are currently landing mackerel caught in U.K. waters into Northern Ireland

ports. DAERA worked hard to ensure 7 harbours around Northern Ireland were approved and designated in time for landings such as this to avoid a hard border on this island and continue this important unfettered trade. We need to see Dublin take similar action. Only 2 Irish harbours are designated to receive landings from NI registered vessels. Where there is a will there is a way.”

Research Project to Measure How Extreme Storms and Wave Heights will Impact the Coast

NUI Galway and Marine Institute partnership deploys waverider to measure the impact of storms and rising sea levels in Brandon Bay

A research project led by coastal and ocean scientists in NUI Galway and the Marine Institute involves the deployment of a combination of smart buoys and time-lapse imaging to measure storm impacts and support the development of coastal flood and erosion defences.

The project, Brandon Bay on the Dingle Peninsula, Co Kerry, involves:

- A new waverider buoy provided by Sustainable Energy Authority of Ireland to measure wave height, wave direction, wave period, surface currents, and water temperature as well as storm impact

- Data being made available to view or download on the Marine Institute supported website Digital Ocean, a web portal to view data collected in and around Ireland’s maritime zone.

- The installation of a shoreline monitoring system along Brandon Bay at three sites, which will capture images of the beach every 10 minutes during daylight hours over the next 12 months, to identify the time periods when wave run-up is high enough to reach the dune toe and potentially cause coastal erosion. This research is funded by Geological Survey Ireland.

Dr Eugene Farrell, Discipline of Geography and Ryan Institute’s Centre for Ocean Research and Exploration (COREx), NUI

Galway, said: “We want to improve existing coastal change models by developing better insights into why does change occur and how much change will occur if we dial up climate projections for rising sea levels and storminess. To answer these questions we require process-response coastal models and these are only possible if nearshore observations from wave buoys such as the one in Brandon Bay are deployed over long time periods to capture all the seasons.

“We already know that changes along the coast from elevated storm surge and wave run-up result in changes in seabed and beach elevations. The data captured by the waverider will play an integral part in dismantling the important connections between different storm types such as size, direction, duration, clustering and coastal response that allows us to share real time ocean observations that can be used to address coastal erosion and coastal flood protection.”

Alan Berry, Manager of Marine Research Infrastructures at the Marine

Institute said, “The wave buoy at Brandon Bay will enable researchers to observe and understand how our ocean is changing and determine how to respond to current and future patterns of change. Open access to this data on Ireland’s Digital Ocean website is valuable to climate researchers in Ireland and across Europe.”

The Brandon Bay long-term waverider project is co-led by Dr Eugene Farrell, Discipline of Geography, Sheena Parsons, Earth and Ocean Sciences, and Dr Stephen Nash and Andi Egon, Civil Engineering in NUI Galway, and Alan Berry and Connall O’Malley from the Marine Institute with support from the Sustainable Energy Authority of Ireland.

In September 2020, a Coastal Change Technical Working Group was established within the Irish government and tasked with overseeing the development of a scoping report on a national coastal change management strategy. They have envisaged that the scoping report will address issues related to ‘baseline and other data capture and research requirements to inform developing, implementing and monitoring a national coastal management strategy, to include potential damages assessment’.

Dr Eugene Farrell adds: “We feel it is our responsibility as coastal scientists to

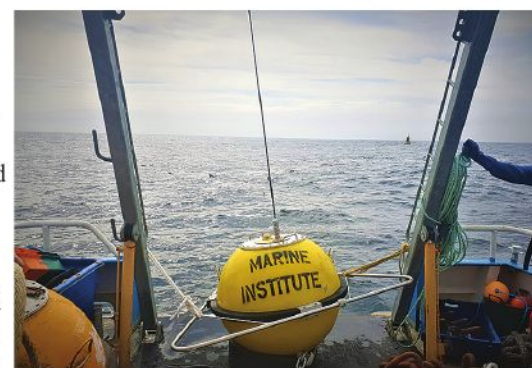
provide the requisite baseline information and recommendations to guide future research along the coast in order to fill knowledge gaps. This is an integral part of the Brandon Bay Waverider project and can be used as a demonstration project so that future investment in coastal infrastructure can be identified.

“Cumulatively, our approach requires a large team of experts to work together. The Maharees in Brandon Bay is already becoming a hub for coastal science thanks to the active community group in the area, the Maharees Conservation Association. There is an

urgent need to increase our understanding of coastal change so that that we can better protect our coastal communities and design conservation plans for coastal ecosystems whose dynamic boundaries move in response to changing climate conditions.”

The Brandon Bay Waverider project is supported by the Marine Institute, NUI Galway and MaREI, the SFI Research Centre for Energy, Climate and Marine research and the Sustainable Energy Authority of Ireland.

Wave data results from the Brandon Bay Waverider project can be viewed at: www.digitalocean.ie



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Pink Spiny Lobster (*Palinurus mauritanicus*) in Irish Waters

Declan Quigley reports

During late November 2020, the *MFV Audacious* (DA14) [Skipper: Declan Clinton, Clogherhead] captured a specimen of the Pink Spiny Lobster or Mauritanian Crawfish (*Palinurus mauritanicus*) while trawling at a depth of c.420m on the southern Porcupine Bank, off the west coast of Ireland (Fig. 1).



The Pink Spiny Lobster occurs in the NE Atlantic from western Ireland (53.25°N) southwards to southern Senegal (16°N) and in the western Mediterranean Sea (16°E). The species lives in relatively deep water (180-748m), with greatest densities at 200-400m along the edge of the continental shelf, especially in canyons, preferring muddy and coralligenous substrates near rocky outcrops. In the Bay of Biscay they have been observed in deep water sheltering at the entrance of circular holes dug at the base of compact mud cliffs. Males measuring up to 230mm carapace length (CL) and weighing up to 7kg have been reported from the Bay of Biscay where sporadic targeted netting for Pink Spiny Lobsters occurs on coral grounds at depths of 280-375m off Brittany (between La Chapelle and La Petite Sole). However, good spots are very restricted and rapid decreases in catch rates prevent this activity from remaining economical for long.

The species was first reported from Irish waters during May 1911 when a single male specimen measuring 154mm total length (TL), was captured by the research vessel *HYM Helga II* (Fig. 2) at a depth of c.400m, c.93km west of Blackball Head, Co Cork.

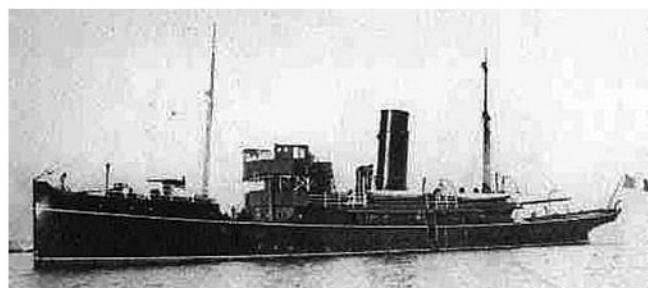


Fig 2. HMY Helga II (1908) & Muirchú (1923)

Five years later, the *Helga* was famously tasked with shelling several Irish rebel bases during the 1916 Easter Rising in Dublin, including Boland's Mills, Liberty Hall and Irish Distilleries, and was used during the *War of Independence* to transport equally notorious British auxiliary troops ('Black & Tans') around the Irish coast. Ironically the *Helga* was subsequently purchased by the newly formed Irish Free State's Coastal and Marine Service (CMS) in

1923, and renamed the *SS Muirchú*. She was decommissioned during May 1945 but sank off the Saltee Islands, Co Wexford while under tow from the *Free State Naval Base* (Haulbowline, Cork) to *Hammond Lane Scrap Merchants* in Dublin. Her crew were rescued by a Welsh trawler. The wheel was recovered from the wreck by local divers and is on display in *Kehoes Pub* in Kilmore Quay.

Over the next 60 years there was a complete absence of records until four specimens were recorded during 1971-72. Two were captured by the *MFV Star of Mace* (Skipper: D. Clocherty) and *MFV Caoran* (G76) [Skipper: P. Burke] in relatively shallow (25-30m) inshore waters off the Skird Rocks, Co Galway. The first specimen (September 1971) was a berried female measuring 380mm TL, 138mm CL, and weighing 1.63kg. The second specimen (May 1972) was a male measuring 410mm TL, 165mm CL, and weighing 2.267kg. The third specimen (November 1972), measuring c.300mm TL, was captured by the French research vessel *RV Thalassa* at a depth of 300m on the Porcupine Bank. The fourth specimen (October 1971), a berried female measuring 421mm TL and 145mm CL, was found in an on-shore lobster and crawfish holding pond formerly operated by *Shellfish Industries of Ireland Ltd.* at Ballvaughan, Co Clare.

During August 1983, the *MFV Aine Ide* (G180) [Skipper: J. Murphy, Dunmore East], captured a small specimen measuring 47mm CL while trawling at a depth of 400m on the Porcupine Bank. During June 1984, the *MFV Roving Swan* (D64) captured a female specimen 133mm CL and weighing 1.531kg, while trawling in relatively shallow water (50m) on the Near Ground, Dingle Bay, Co Kerry (Fig. 3).



Fig 3. Pink Spiny Lobster captured by the *MFV Ocean Venture* on the Porcupine Bank (May 2010)

During July 1986 and March 1987, exceptionally large numbers (1430) were captured by two Castletownbere trawlers, the *MFV Orion* (SO643) and *MFV Menhaden* (S135) [Skipper: Larry Murphy] in deep water (300-360m) off Blackball Head, Co Cork, the same location where the first Irish specimen was recorded during 1911. The CL and weight of the latter specimens ranged from 54-157mm and 0.1-2.4kg respectively. It appears that groups, primarily composed of females, undergo migrations during late autumn, which probably increases their vulnerability to capture in demersal trawls. Indeed, off NW Africa, individual hauls of 200-400 specimens have been reported.

There were no subsequent reports from Irish waters until May 2010, when at least 30 specimens measuring 129-145mm CL and weighing 1.3-1.6kg, were taken by the *MFV Ocean Venture* (S121) [Skipper: Ross Minihane,

Castletownbere] while trawling at a depth of 200m on the south Porcupine Bank. Although some of these specimens were transferred alive to *Dingle Oceanworld*, they did not survive.

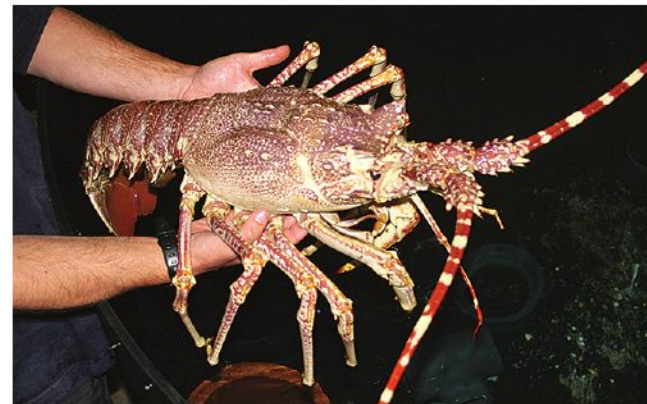


Fig 4. Pink Spiny Lobster (4.2kg) captured by the *Brittania* 320km SW of Newlyn, Cornwall (2007) [Photo Paul Gainey]

Pink Spiny Lobsters have occasionally been recorded off SW England. During July 1987, a specimen was captured c.37 km NW of St Ives, N Cornwall and survived in the former Penzance Aquarium for a number of years. During July 2005, a specimen was observed by a SCUBA diver in shallow water off Church Rock, Broadhaven, S Wales. During September 2007, an exceptionally large male specimen, measuring 595mm TL and weighing 4.2kg, was captured by the *MFV Brittania* (Skipper: 'Masher') while gill netting on a wreck c.320km SW of Newlyn, Cornwall (Fig. 4). The specimen was transferred alive to the *Blue Reef Aquarium* (Newquay), but did not survive for long.

Although some Pink Spiny Lobsters occasionally stray into inshore waters, it is possible that they are not distinguished from the closely related Common Spiny Lobster or Crawfish (*Palinurus elephas*) [Fig. 5]. According to FAO statistics, a total of 2757 tonnes of Spiny Lobsters (*Palinurus* sp.) were landed globally during 2018, but almost 60% were not identified to species level, including 9 tonnes (as *Palinurus* spp.) from Irish waters. Indeed, only 3 tonnes (0.1%) were specifically logged of *P. mauritanicus* by French vessels.

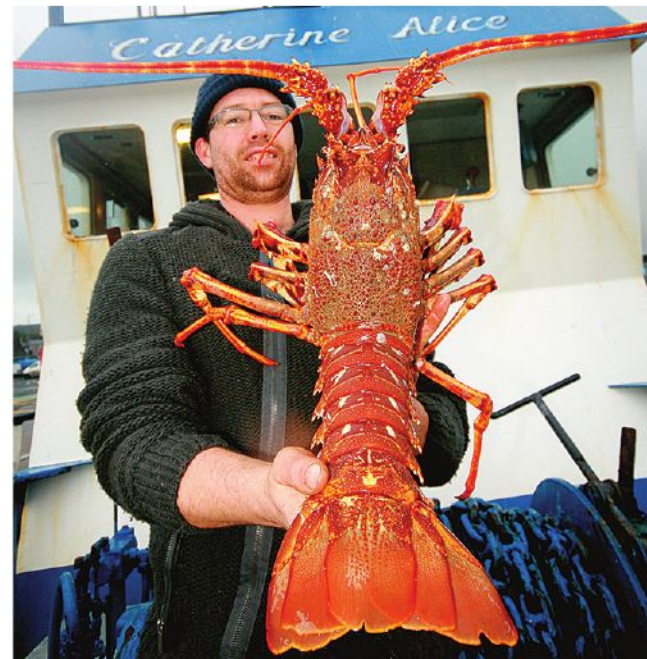


Fig 5. Common Spiny Lobster (*Palinurus elephas*) weighing 3.8kg, from the Smalls Bank, Celtic Sea on (January 2013)

In summary, it appears that there may be a resident self-sustaining population of Pink Spiny Lobsters occupying inaccessible deep water habitats off the SW Irish coast as far north as the Porcupine Bank, but they are now rarely captured (or recorded), possibly due to the closure of large tracks of deep-water cold-water coral areas to demersal trawling.

Declan is always interested in receiving reports about unusual specimens and you can contact him at 087-6458485; Email: declanquigley@eircom.net



Taking a well earned rest on the Arkh Angell - Photo by Fintan Power

National Seafood Survey Extended to Capture More Accurate Data on Importance of Inshore Fisheries

This month Bord Iascaigh Mhara (BIM), Ireland's seafood development agency, is inviting all fishing vessel operators under 10 metres to complete its annual National Seafood Survey. More than 1,500 vessels in Ireland fall under the 10-metre size category according to the sea fishing register. The inclusion of their data in the survey will provide a more accurate account of inshore fisheries' contribution and economic resource in coastal communities throughout Ireland to National and EU Policy makers.

Survey questions cover areas such as economic, employment and operational details based on previous years' activities. Previously, only active fishing vessels over 10 metres were asked to complete the survey. BIM has worked with the National Inshore Fisheries Forum (NIFF) and the National Inshore Fisheries Association (NIFA) to improve the survey and capture the questions in the best way possible.

Asked about the significance of the National Seafood Survey for 10m inshore

boats NIFF member John Menarry stated: "If the inshore sector wants to be taken seriously once and for all they must be able to prove their worth. By filling out the National Seafood Survey as best they can we can start the process of showing the country what we really are worth and in turn use the information provided to help benefit the inshore sector."

The survey data will be shared in an aggregated form to provide advice on the inshore sector to national agencies and the EU. Providing the economic information requested is also of particular importance to every fisherman in Ireland, due to the fact that the EU sees economic data as a critical and necessary component in the development of long-term management plans for the majority of stocks targeted by the Irish fleet.

The survey has been posted to every active fishing vessel owner on the register and includes a freepost envelope for return - please do complete and return.

The completed survey form should be returned by Friday the 15th January 2021. For more information, please go to bim.ie/dcf



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