

MARINE TIMES

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



MFV Ardent on her way into Ardglass - Photo by Christopher Feenan

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Brexit Deal Fails Irish Fishermen

- Time to Get Back Our Fish for Our Fishermen - page 10

“An Example of the Low Esteem in Which Maritime Business in this Country is Held by Government”

Finance Department Refuses Covid Assistance to Boats Because “They Move...” - page 9

Newspaper for Ireland's Fishing, Marine and Coastal Communities

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the fine Art of Marine Finance

by Art Kavanagh

Don't Fan the Flames

One way to keep a fire spreading is to fan the flames, even a small fire will become a big blaze if you do that. We have taken a hit on the share of the EU Quota share out which most of the fishermen are trying to accommodate. That's what fishermen do - they get on with things.

I see alarmist comments coming from local politicians and even a Parish Priest telling us that the sector is finished. They

obviously have access to better information than I have but their comments are scaring the life out of the Banks who appear to be



MFV Rachel Jay landing at Ardglass - Photo by Christopher Feenan

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stalling their assessment of fishing lending.

Two of them have nailed their negative opinions to the mast. One is still not sure, but I am more than disappointed that a sector with such a prolific Repayment Record as fishing should encounter negativity from lenders who really should be offering support at this time ...

Uninformed comment no matter how well intentioned is so dangerous lads.

Two politicians expressed fears at the Dail Committee on Friday 22 January for the "Continued Viability of the Sector"- Do they mean the fleet is going to go bust???? I know that we have lost quotas but wonder where they got that information.

Why then am I submitting Loan Applications for further developments in the fleet ranging from complete new builds to significant upgrades???

For years I had been hoping that local politicians would refer regularly in the Dail to the Fishing Sector - maybe even to the point of applauding the successes of which there have been many- and pointing out the occasional administrative difficulty hindering the fleet.

Why now are they spending their Dail time talking the Industry down when they need encouragement.

There are difficulties - no doubt- but the Fishing Sector has always worked hard to overcome difficulties created as frequently from within the country as from without as the Brexit Problem is. There is an element of self-mutilation here Lads.

Can we try to avoid self harming by our own authorities going forward???

The Steering Committee will be important and it vital that it contain a mix of expert opinion. No room for politicians in it!!!!

One local Wag did suggest that the first money to be used out of the EU Funded Compensation Fund would be used to recruit extra Fisheries Officers???

Maybe no additional Fisheries Officers but with the ink still wet on the Quota Cuts the Points System is re launched just in case our lads might catch their breath.

The expression "Kick a man when he is down" springs to mind!

I know it is an EU Regulation, but the concept of **NO APPEAL** is obviously modeled on some dictatorship maligned by the civilized world. We know you are not guilty - but we are going to hang you anyway.....

At the other end of the Brexit fallout, we had the commotion surrounding the regulations surrounding the landing of catches by UK registered vessels at Irish ports.

I am quoting here from an E Mail from The UK Licensing Authority: "**The owner of a Northern Ireland fishing vessel Licence must have a permanent address of residency within NI or in the case of a Company ownership be registered at the UK Companies House with a Company Address in NI. The provision of an Address may be reviewed by DAERA (Licensing Authority) possibly seeking proof of permanent address of residency within NI for example through provision of utility bills etc**"

That's the RULE Lads and many of those who did benefit from the use of the NI Licences are now making arrangements to Register their vessels in Ireland. **Fair dues to them.**

I believe that history will show that very few things can match the strength of UNITY and by God do we need that now.

We need now to be encouraging our negotiators - not criticizing them for mistakes we believe they made in Christmas Week. The exponents of hindsight are coming to the fore now as indeed are the Hurlers on the Ditch who as I consistently preach NEVER SCORE They are too busy telling the players on the field what to do.

We need a dig out here Lads - there is no doubt of that- but we are stronger together.

We are stunned at the moment but far from out and we need to get behind the Negotiators and provide them with realistic information on what we need- mindful of our position in the Greater Scheme of things.

In the overall EU family, we are small players and we are in no position to DEMAND anything as many recent comment would suggest - but we are perfectly entitled to ask for Fair Play which we certainly did not get in December.

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Howth harbour with the Ave Maria II and the Glenaveena - Photo by Richard Guildea

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Letters to the Editor

Call for a Transition Licence, Delegated Junior Minister for Fisheries and Reform of the Department

Editor
Marine Times Newspaper

The last-minute dot com announcement by the Minister for Agriculture, Food and the Marine, Deputy Charlie Mc Conalogue to designate 5 additional landing ports (in addition to the existing 2) for the 15 coastal counties of the Republic is in stark contrast to the provision made by Northern Ireland who have already designated 7 ports for its 3 coastal counties within Northern Ireland.

The announcement by Minister Mc Conalogue is very far off the mark to what is truly needed for the safety and sustainability of small and inshore Irish fishermen. The greatest success of yesterday's announcement is the attempt to cover over the cracks that are evident within the Department of Marine, they simply are not fit for purpose and on face value are providing extremely poor advice to the Minister and what is worse the Officials are simply out of their depth at European level.

For too long Irish Marine Officials are playing the role of being subservient to Europe to the point of perfection, bowing and cow-towing to their European masters, a new generation of personnel needs to be brought into the Department, a new generation through their own confidence and ability needs to lead us as equals within Europe.

The announcement is a classic demonstration of a knee-jerk reaction of the Department of Marine and Government to the unacceptable, very dangerous and unworkable situation in which Irish fishermen were plunged by the failure of the Department to engage with the European Commission.

The European Commission DIRECTORATE-GENERAL FOR MARITIME AFFAIRS AND FISHERIES requested from all member states their designation of ports for non-registered European boats in a notice to all stakeholder (coastal countries and Ireland) from Brussels on 17 August 2020, why was this request not acted upon by the Irish Government in advance of the 31st of December 2020? Why did the Department of Marine officials fail to deal with the consequences of this directive because with or without a deal: this was going to be a massive issue.

The designation of ports for LANDING OF FISHERY PRODUCTS IN THE EU in section 3.2.3. for a fishing vessel flying a third country flag are exempted from official controls at border control posts provided that they are performed by competent authorities in Union ports designated by Member States in accordance with Article 5(1) of Regulation (EC) No 1005/2008. (North East Atlantic Fisheries Commission (NEAFC) regulations).

Why did they not anticipate like the Dutch, the French and other European countries, that there was a third category of vessels, Irish owned and Irish based vessels/boats operating under a third country licence, it is this failure on their part that is their greatest blunder.

It is obvious and now very clear that our Government and the Department of the Marine unlike France, the Dutch and Spain, etc failed to see the need to facilitate and failed to engage with Irish based fishermen with Northern Ireland Licences, it clearly demonstrates a lack of knowledge and lack of care for Irish based fishermen and exposes a Department of Marine that is not fit for purpose.

Again, I am calling for a delegated Junior Minister for Fisheries with full powers and for a reshuffle of the Department which for years now needs new blood, thinking fresh for it is clear that the officials are there too long, they are institutionalised that they have noth-

ing more to offer and have overseen the decimation of Irish fishing and coastal communities and the Department in its present form is a monument to the disaster it is and has been for Irish fishing. Other departments help their areas of concern to grow, the Department of Marine throw the Irish fishermen overboard at every opportunity and persecute them. We need a Minister who can concentrate on the Department fully who will know where the bodies are buried and who will gain a good brief by engaging in a wide consultation, independently (without their officials listening) with fishermen and who will not be afraid to make just, fair, rational, good decisions and will learn and know the language of fishing.

It is very clear that a new single focused Minister, with a good knowledge of fisheries is needed and a Minister who will take advice from people who have a good knowledge of fishing outside of the Department. It is evidently and abundantly clear that the Minister for 3 Departments, which is a huge task is getting dire advice because nobody would have ignored the request to designate necessary ports or to find a solution that was workable for over 40 boats in his own county. Dire advice given was abundantly clear when the Minister who together with the Minister for Foreign Affairs, himself a former Marine Minister Simon Coveney welcomed the worst possible and most disastrous deal for Irish fishermen that will result in a massive losses of our total allowable catch of up to 30% when we should be increasing our catch, to welcome losses of €34 million which we are now told is €43 million and which fishing sources now believe could be as high as €70 million, to preside over a Department that is persecuting the fishermen in Killybegs on untenable and unjust weighing demands on piers, failure to appoint necessary fishing representatives to overhaul the Sea Fisheries Protection Authority (SFPA) which Price Waterhouse Coopers (PWC) states is "not working efficiently and requires urgent attention", all this clearly shows just how dire the advice that is being received and acted upon.

Unfortunately, it is the case that at some different levels of Government, they seriously believe that a good Brexit deal was reached, recent social media postings



by a Donegal Senator claimed the sector were content. Perhaps more than the Department were out of touch when it comes to Marine and Irish fishing.

The Minister for Marine and the Minister for Foreign Affairs and Department of Marine officials have created a hard economic border on the island of Ireland for Fishermen and destroyed the goodwill of the Voisinage agreement of 1967 between Taoiseach Sean Lemass and Capt Terence O'Neill PM NI in 1967 that made legal reciprocal fishing and landing rights in both jurisdictions), of the Good Friday agreement both which guaranteed by law the free movement of boats and landings at all ports in both jurisdictions and failed to make the necessary provisions needed in the Northern Ireland protocol. Why is it that fishermen do not have free movement like Farmers and other Irish and UK citizens on the island of Ireland who many enter into any of the counties in the North or the Republic with their animals, goods and services and have free unhindered movement and access to both jurisdictions. What is the difference between Fishermen and all other Irish citizens? What value is the Northern Ireland Protocol if it excludes the fishing sector?

Donegal and Irish based fishermen bought their licences mainly in Northern Ireland and were offered the good economic opportunity to buy the licences with these boats which was something that was encouraged in order to expand the Irish share of the European fishing fleet. French, Spanish based boats and more so Dutch based boats hold Irish licences and a huge number of British licences and those from other EU countries.

The failure by the Minister in yesterday's announcement to better protect the lives and sustainability by the Donegal based Minister but the Clonakilty and Department of Marine Run and Controlled Minister was a missed opportunity by the Minister. If the Minister had properly engaged and had truly sought advice from small fishermen, he would have then realised that you cannot operate on a part time of-fice hours-based Monday to Friday only week at sea. Some Fishermen have been given a 30-hour per week tiny widow of opportunity to operate their now 5 day a week at sea cut from the 7 days which are needed for weather opportunities that they need to fish due to poor weather more often than not throughout the year. Weather may not be good Mon to Friday from 2pm to 8pm. Good weather does not operate Mon to Friday from 2pm to 8pm.

Failure to designate more ports in Co Donegal such as Magheraarty, Malin Head, Glengad fails to resolve the situation for these fishermen who will have to undertake a round journey/voyage of 6 to 7 hours from their home ports to their nearest designated port. **What was required in addition to yesterday's announcement, was a non-transferable transition licence, allowing those that had purchased a Northern Ireland Licence or by extension a UK licence but had for the duration of its use by the purchaser/boat owner and or his successors, who has remained domicile and a tax resident in the Republic: in such cases and as a consequence of Brexit, the Irish Government should have granted a transition licence to our citizens. I am calling on the Minister for the Marine to issue such licenses immediately before fishermen get lost at sea.** These fishermen were encouraged to expand, they purchased what was a licence you could use within the EU, but the UK decided to leave, the fishermen's circumstances did not change and as such they need to be accommodated by the Government due to the change of circumstances.

The real Beneficiaries from the announcement are the SFPA. Fishermen are just an inconvenience to many within this Government and within the Department of Marine. But, meantime regrettably we are getting more of the same, the same old from a Government that fails to understand and is overly dependent on a public service that has destroyed the Irish Fishing industry eventually more of the same becomes the end.

Fr John Joe Duffy, C.C.
Creelough, Letterkenny, Co. Donegal.

Photo: MFV 'Emmy Lou' at Merville

Points System for Serious Regulatory Infringements Established

“Government completely crucifying Irish fishermen to the proverbial cross”

Ireland’s points system for serious infringements of the Common Fisheries Policy (CFP), required under EU law, is now in effect. This follows the establishment and appointment of the independent Determination Panel made up of three legal professionals nominated by the Attorney General.

All EU Member States are obliged to establish a points system to be applied to the licence holders of fishing vessels when a serious infringement of CFP rules is detected. The points system is intended by the EU to be a more immediate and harmonised sanction so that regardless of where in the EU a serious infringement is committed, the licence holder will receive the same number of points.

The Determination Panel will consider suspected infringements that are notified to them by Sea-Fisheries Protection Officers and whether points should apply. Twelve serious infringements of the CFP are covered under the Irish points system with varying points applying, in keeping with the points systems already in place in other EU countries. Detailed rules regarding the effect of the accumulation of points are also included in the EU regulations, requiring the establishment of a points system. These include the suspension or permanent withdrawal of a licence. An independent Appeals Officer has also been nominated by the Attorney General and appointed by the Minister for Agriculture, Food and the Marine.

The Statutory Instrument for the points system that will be applied in Ireland was published last August in *Iris Oifigiúil*. It regulates the procedures around the points system including matters such as the notification to sea fishing vessel licence holders and the time limits that apply as well as the requirements around submissions, appeals and decisions. The Statutory Instrument also provides for the establishment of the independent determination panel and the procedures in relation to notifications to it of suspected serious infringements by the SFPA, submissions by the vessel licence holders and appeals officer in relation to a decision of the determination panel.

Commenting on the announcement, Independent TD for Donegal Thomas Pringle stated to the Marine Times; “The department is implementing without the consent of the fishing industry the penalty points system and shows once again the contempt they have for the industry.

“The only option now will be for an affected fishing business to challenge the operation and fairness of the system through the courts, once again the cost and uncertainty of the system is placed on an individual. This is what is wrong with how these was brought in and shows that this

government like all those before them have nothing but contempt for fishermen.”

In a statement to the Marine Times, Pádraig Mac Lochlainn TD, Sinn Féin Spokesperson on Fisheries and the Marine said; “It is seriously disappointing that the Minister for the Marine, Charlie McConalogue is proceeding with a penalty points system for fishers that he and his party voted down as unfair in the Dáil, when in opposition.

“The threshold for any conviction should be beyond a reasonable doubt and not on the balance of probabilities as this legislation allows for. These new laws have the power to take away the livelihoods of fishers and they must therefore, have the right to a fair process. I again appeal to the Minister to engage with the fishing industry representatives to work towards a just and fair penalty points system and to amend this legislation before it is challenged in the High Court again with further cost and embarrassment to the State”.

Rural Independent TD, Michael Collins has reacted angrily to the government’s formal establishment of the draconian penalty points system for regulatory infringements. Speaking from his West-Cork constituency, Deputy Collins stated: “Taoiseach Micheál Martin, while holding the agriculture, food and marine brief temporarily, signed the system of administrative sanctions into law on August 28th last, without the opportunity of any meaningful engagements with the fishing sector, even though his party had opposed this measure in 2018.

“Clearly, FF has done one thing in opposition and has taken a different position to hold onto power while in government. In doing so, the Taoiseach and Leader of Fianna Fáil has completely crucified Irish fishermen to the proverbial cross.

“The Penalty points system, signed by way of statutory instrument (SI) by the Taoiseach, is draconian and does not allow for the right of appeal, except through a court of law, and penalties can still remain on a licence if the case is thrown out.

“My Rural Independent Colleagues and I have used every available opportunity since last August to have this SI overturned.

“We supported a successful motion to have this same SI overturned in 2018, when the then Minister for Agriculture, Michael Creed, attempted to introduce the system. That annulment was supported by Fianna

Fáil. Then again last October, we supported the very same annulment motion. However, Fianna Fáil voted against it this time, signalling that the party has turned their backs on fishermen in a self-serving attempt to stay in power – irrespective of whose livelihoods they destroy.

“Since returning to government, Fianna Fáil has shafted all fishermen and women at every opportunity, namely with the signing of this SI into law and recently with a complete sell-out of the entire industry in the Brexit negotiations. This represents a traitorous attack on coastal communities, our fishing industry, our independence and on our national sovereignty.

“The people of West Cork and every coastal community are rightly furious at the manner in which the current government has done everything possible to eradicate the fishing industry in Ireland,” concluded Deputy Collins.

In the November issue of the Marine Times we covered the underhanded signing of the new Statutory Instrument for Penalty Points. The Taoiseach and Minister for the Marine were described then as “dismissive, contemptuous and glib” in their treatment of the fishing industry when the country’s four fish producer organisations reacted to the Government’s defeat of a Sinn Fein motion in the Dáil that had sought to annul the Taoiseach’s signing of the Statutory Instrument to reintroduce Penalty Points for fisheries offences.

The Irish South and West FPO; the Irish South and East FPO, the Irish Fish Producer Organisation and the Killybegs Fishermen’s Organisation, in a joint statement said: “As the Irish fishing industry teeters on the brink facing its biggest ever crisis in the form of

Brexit, our Government has incredulously decided to heap further misery on fishermen. The Taoiseach, Micheál Martin and Minister Charlie McConalogue voted against the same legislation just over two years ago when Mr. McConalogue said the then Government should listen to the industry.

“The response of both Minister Charlie McConalogue and the Taoiseach who signed the Statutory Instrument (SI), has been at best dismissive, at worst contemptuous and glib. At a time when our industry, which is worth more than €1.2 billion per annum to our economy, stands on the precipice facing its biggest threat since the foundation of the State with Brexit, it is simply appalling.”

In May of 2018 it was the Fianna Fail party with former TD Pat the Cope Gallagher tabling a motion on behalf of his party to rescind the recently published Statutory Instrument (SI) No 89 Of 2018 – which was set to introduce a penalty point system for fishing infringements. “I am determined that this SI will not see the light of day. The government needs to go back to the drawing board and ensure that the rights and entitlements of the fishermen are protected under Irish law. This SI is a step too far.”

The motion to defeat the SI was successful and voted for by now Taoiseach Micheal Martin who introduced the ‘new’ SI and the current Minister for the Marine Charlie McConalogue how times and perspectives change when in a position of power

“Who controls the past controls the future. Who controls the present controls the past.” — George Orwell



Killybegs - Photo by Ronan Cunningham



RNLI REPORT

Niamh Stephenson, RNLI Regional Media Manager, Ireland and the Isle of Man, reports on the challenges of maintaining a world class rescue service in the midst of a pandemic.

Restricted But Continuing

As a charity the RNLI relies on its volunteer lifeboat crew to provide a world class rescue service. In delivering this, training and assessment is at the heart of the lifesaving service. While the challenges of maintaining this under COVID restrictions are clear, the RNLI has been working closely on the design and provision of a course to cover lifeboat volunteers' core competencies in Ireland.

Recently, a team of the RNLI's Assessor Trainers in Ireland attended the National Maritime College of Ireland, refreshing their own qualifications and seeing first-hand the facilities available at the NMCI. Owen Medland RNLI Lifesaving Lead explains; 'there has always been a strong relationship between the RNLI and NMCI and we are excited about expanding the opportunities available to our volunteers in Ireland to complete such critical training which is already available through our own college at our Support Centre in Poole. The coming months will see this work come to fruition and it is a natural step which we are confident will build on the existing relationship between the RNLI, its people and the NMCI.'

As I write this we are still in January and our lifeboat crews have already had their first animal rescue and it was a 'woof' one too. Apologies for the pun but we love our four-legged friends and as we sadly know, our two-legged ones all too often get into trouble as they go to their beloved pet's aid.

Dun Laoghaire RNLI's inshore lifeboat was requested to launch by the Irish Coast Guard to respond to reports that 'Archie the dog' had fallen on to rocks at Dun Laoghaire's marina pier.

A volunteer crew of three launched the lifeboat and made their way to the scene, arriving in minutes. 'Archie' was stranded on rocks near the water's edge. The lifeboat crew made their way towards him and on to the rocks and helped lift him back up on to the pier above. Happily, he was in good health and none the worse for it.

As our volunteer lifeboat press officer for Dun Laoghaire RNLI, Liam Mullan said: 'It was much safer for our crew to approach rocks on a day like that by sea when compared to the risks associated with slips and falls from a person trying to make their way down to the water's edge to help'.

Take note and keep an eye on our 'pet' friends, who are making lockdowns all the more bearable with their company.

It's a tough time out there and it's tough for the lifeboat crews and their Search and Rescue colleagues. The service is continuing and the commitment from the volunteers to ensure it does so is incredible to see.

Soon it will be a year since I've been at a lifeboat station, due to the Covid pandemic restrictions and that is so sad, but I'll know they'll be there when this is passed, it just can't come soon enough.



Maila and Sissy on Inishbofin Island enjoying last months Marine Times

IFA AQUACULTURE

Irish Aquaculture Comes to Terms with the Reality of Brexit Complexities



Teresa Morrissey, IFA Aquaculture Executive says the past year has proved very difficult for some aquaculture businesses to stay afloat and the next few months don't look to be showing too many signs to alleviate this pressure, particularly for the oyster sector. Additional costs as a result of Brexit are of major concern. The IFA will continue to seek further support for the aquaculture sector.

On January 1, Brexit became a reality. After 4 years of anticipation of what Brexit reality might bring, there had been much speculation and as much forward planning, and attempts to navigate uncertainty as was possible.

Now, as I write, almost a month into Brexit reality the challenges and uncertainties facing the Irish Aquaculture sector are very real indeed, coupled with ongoing Covid-19 restrictions impacting production, turbulent markets, trade and ultimately income, have all combined and have proved a difficult start to 2021 for many in the sector.

Delays in logistics with transport and additional paperwork for UK customs for seafood product and trade travelling via the UK landbridge, has led to an increase in demand for direct ferry routes to the EU mainland. These direct ferry options have become a critical logistical solution for access to market trade with EU customers in the food sector in general, but even more so for the seafood sector given the volume of fresh product shipped on a weekly basis.

There have been also additional costs that have emerged as a result of Brexit, with expected additional costs in transport and logistics and somewhat unexpected costs (and unclarified costs) in the form of veterinary certification and inspections, upon entry into the UK as third country. Immediate clarity is needed from UK customs and Irish State agencies regarding proposed costs and fees for companies trading with UK customers that could be hit with extraordinary costs for inspections fees per consignment entering the UK on a daily basis. IFA is working with various State departments to seek clarity on these costs but, as has been, all too common in the Brexit narrative, answers are very slow in forthcoming.

Coupled with the continued uncertainty and sustained disruption of Covid-19 restrictions across most of the world, the past year has proved very difficult for some aquaculture businesses to stay afloat. The next few months as yet, however, don't look to be showing too many positive signs to alleviate this pressure, particularly for the oyster sector who are now facing a 2nd year of their production cycle with difficulties in finding and accessing markets for oyster

produce.

This will have a profound impact on the sector as numerous sites around the coast already have devaluing market size product that never made sale in 2020. IFA will continue to seek further support for the aquaculture sector.

With the recent announcement of €1bn. Brexit fund being made available to Ireland from the EU, IFA will work to ensure that the Irish Aquaculture sector avails of their fair share of this fund.

AGM Promise from Minister

At the 66th IFA AGM at the end of January 3 DAFM Ministers and the Taoiseach were in attendance throughout the day.

Minister McConalogue took questions from the committee chairs during the afternoon session, which included Aquaculture Chairman Michael Mulloy, who asked as to the commitment of an implementation plan to implement the recommendations of the aquaculture licensing review.

The Minister responded saying he recognised the difficulties over many years in clearing the backlog in aquaculture licensing, which has now been cleared for shellfish, and he is now focused on making progress with the finfish license renewals. Resources in DAFM had been committed over recent years to clearing the backlog for shellfish, these resources are now available to focus on finfish licence renewals and implementation of the aquaculture licensing review recommendations. Minister is committed to focusing on having a timeline for implementation and engaging with stakeholders such as IFA on how best to do this.

This is more positive language from DAFM than we have heard for quite a long time, so we are hopeful it will be matched by action!





IIMRO represents islanders from Donegal, Mayo, Galway and Cork
Report by Seamus Bonner, Secretary

A Welcome Change but More is Needed

We highlighted in last month's MARINE TIMES the difficulties faced by island fishers and the extra impact made by the designation of just two ports for landings by boats registered in Northern Ireland. This was a serious limitation and also potentially dangerous, with safety implications for boats and fishermen, so we were concerned on two fronts. The imposition of this restriction led to difficulties which were widely reported.



We welcome the decision by Marine Minister Charlie McConalogue to designate an additional five ports to the two originally announced – Killybegs and Castletownbere – for UK-registered Northern Ireland vessel landings for both IUU and NEAFC purposes. The five additional ports are Ros a Mhíl, Howth, Greencastle, Rathmullen and Burtonport. All seven are now designated for landings from vessels of any third country origin. When announcing them the Minister stated that he was “working to make sure the necessary notifications and requirements” would be in place to have these ports operational from Monday, February 1.

While we do welcome this, more must be done to provide facilities for the actual situation which fishermen experience. Under the new designations Ros a Mhíl and Howth will accommodate landings of demersal fish from vessels under 24 metres and will operate Monday to Friday from 10am to 10pm. Greencastle, Rathmullen and Burtonport will be designated for non-quota species landings from vessels under 18 metres and will operate from 2pm to 8pm from Monday to Friday.

There is no provision for weekend landings and this is a serious limitation on boats which need to land then to meet commercial arrangements for transporting catches to meet Monday market requirements. The hours specified are also restrictive. We need more flexibility to take into account the realities of fishing. We have requested that Magheraarty in Co. Donegal also be includ-

ed in the list of designated ports to facilitate landings there.

There should be a seven-day operation. There also needs to be provision for tides and the ‘tidal window’ allowing boats to get into port to land catches in different locations. The IUU regulation does allow for exemptions to notice periods so there is the potential for flexibility there.

Shutting-down at 8 p.m. on Fridays does not provide the flexibility we need. Not being able to land from 8 p.m. Fridays until Monday afternoon for example in Greencastle, Rathmullen and Burtonport is not sufficient.

As we said last month island fishermen need a package of supports to keep their industry alive. While there has been movement on the designation of ports, which we have welcomed, we make the point again that the specific needs of small-scale, low impact island and inshore fleets must be given more attention. The restriction on hours and days and the lack of understanding of situations such as crews need to get home or tidal hours for landings are not helpful. These should be changed to give our fishermen more flexibility.

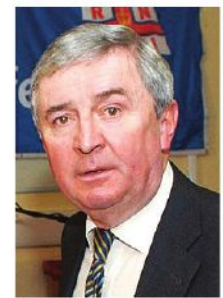
IIMRO had a constructive meeting with Minister McConalogue and his officials recently where we raised these and other issues which are being followed up on at present. It was agreed that these meetings are beneficial for all concerned and would continue in future.

MARINE TIMES

NEWSPAPER FOR IRELAND'S FISHING, MARINE AND COASTAL COMMUNITIES



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FISHERMEN WANT TO FISH

The fishing industry is justifiably proud of what it does. It provides food from the sea, a vital, necessary and proper use of Irish natural resources.

The primary duty of a government is to protect its people and its resources.

In the current Covid pandemic the government has repeatedly emphasised the duty on it of protecting the people when imposing severe restrictions on established freedoms.

Regrettably, it does not appear to have devoted priority to the natural fishing resources of the nation.

In the pages of this edition of the MARINE TIMES the disastrous effects of the Brexit ‘deal’ are outlined by the industry’s representative bodies.

The Taoiseach, Minister for Foreign Affairs and Minister for the Marine have all accepted that Ireland has been badly treated and at a worse level than they had first publicly stated in the aftermath of the ‘deal’ being agreed. They have made complaints to the EU, a Task Force is to be appointed, but what the industry wants is action, not another report to add to several previously completed which now gather dust in State files, with little action taken.

It is clear that fishing has taken the main Brexit blow against Ireland while other sectors of the economy have been more protected from the ravages that the fishing industry faces.

Why must fishing always suffer the most?

The message from the industry to government is clear - Ireland has been very unfairly treated. Other EU countries have fared much better. It is time that the EU, supposedly a community, showed what community really means and returned to Ireland our fair share of catch quotas which we definitely do not have.

To impose a tie-up or decommissioning scheme on the Irish fleet will be a declaration that the government is not protecting the fishing industry and Ireland’s natural resources.

That would be a failure of its primary duty.

Ireland has a right to have a strong fishing industry and the right to benefit from its own waters.

The message to government is simple and direct – **FISHERMEN WANT TO FISH.**

The government’s job is to ensure that they continue to be able to do so.

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The South - West View



Patrick Murphy
CEO Irish South and West Fish Producers' Organisation

Patrick Murphy, Chief Executive of the Irish South and West Fish Producers' Organisation in Castle-townbere pays tribute to Hugo Boyle, CEO Irish South and East FPO, who died last month. If the "practical and sensible proposed measures" Hugo had made for the industry were implemented, they would "mitigate the damage recent agreements have foisted upon us," he says.

A Strong Voice for Ireland's Fishing Industry is Now Sadly Lost

Hugo Boyle and I met for the first time at Minister Simon Coveney's announcement of the soon-to-be-implemented Landing Obligation at the Department buildings in Agricultural House, Dublin. I received a firm handshake and, together with reassuring words of welcome, all coupled with words of solidarity. Hugo made clear his offer of assistance if and when I needed it.

It was the sincerity in his voice that resonates with me, the big smile he gave me for which he was known all around the coast.

Hugo followed up on his offer of mentoring me with this coming into play at the first meetings we attended together when I started in my role as CEO of the IS&WFPO

There is one memory I have that stands out above all the rest.

Hugo's kindness was shown to me one night at the very start of my role within the IS&W when we landed very, very late back in Dublin Airport on one of our first trips abroad. Hugo, being the gentleman he was insisted on driving me to the hotel where I was staying and despite our tiredness, this detour, taking him at least an hour out of his way on his long Journey home came as he saw how nervous I was and not being familiar with my surroundings. He showed kindness and acted without a second thought for himself.

Our Industry is a complex one and for sure, a competitive one.

We have separate segments and different categories of vessels with different methods of fishing in inshore, trawlers, seiners, beamers, offshore, demersal, pelagic - the list is extensive and this will also divide us on our opinions. We are also directed at times to ask for access to fisheries that others may not wish to give up so it is inevitable we will not always be sitting in agreement with one another.

However Hugo Boyle's strong voice for Ireland's fishing Industry is now sadly lost to us and we as a country will be the poorer for it.

Hugo's commitment to the Industry was evident during his time as CEO in the manner in which he spoke for his members. His participation in meetings always commanded full attention from those present. He had no difficulty in clearly outlining his position.

During our Industry meetings in December and despite Hugo's poor health the practical and sensible proposed measures he made would, I believe, if implemented, mitigate the damage recent agreements have foisted upon us.

In that I am sure and I hope that one day, those in a position to act for the good of the industry do so.

Hugo's invaluable input was never more evident than during our online meetings with our Taoiseach Micheál Martin; Minister for Foreign Affairs Simon Coveney and our Minister for the Marine Charlie McConalogue.

The escalation of the spread of Covid 19 has dramatically altered the way our country's people are now living their lives.

In these uncertain times where the Covid pandemic prevents our ability to show, both personally and publicly our admiration and respect for Hugo and his family we hope that this will be rectified later on when we, as an Industry, community and fraternity can properly mourn the loss of those important to us who have died in the past year.

May you rest in peace my friend, for you can be sure we will keep you forever in our thoughts for I know you will be with us in spirit in the fights to come.

Do Chara Patrick Murphy

Marine Institute's 2020 Stock Book Now Available

The Marine Institute's 2020 Stock Book is now available online and via an interactive online application. Every year the Marine Institute produces an overview of scientific assessments and advice on 74 key fish stocks of interest to Ireland. The Stock Book is one of the principal annual publications of the Marine Institute, informing the Minister for Agriculture, Food and the Marine prior to the annual Fisheries Council negotiations. The Stock Book also serves as a valuable reference guide to a wide audience, including the fishing industry, managers, marine scientists, environmental NGOs, third level institutes and financial institutions.

The Stock Book, has been published by the Marine Institute since 1993 and in the last few years the publication has also been accessible via an online application (<https://shiny.marine.ie/stockbook/>). The app allows users to quickly access the latest and historic scientific advice on most devices with a web browser. Interactive features such forecast graphs showing the consequences of following the scientific advice or choosing other scenarios in terms of catch for 2021 and future stock size in 2022.

The Stock Book integrates scientific advice from the International Council for the Exploration of the Seas (ICES) with relevant information on Irish fisheries. Marine Institute scientists participate in, and lead, many international working groups at ICES.

Dr Ciaran Kelly, Director of Fisheries Ecosystem Advisory Services at the Marine Institute said, "The interactive app developed by the Marine Institute is shaping thinking on how independent scientific advice can be delivered to fisheries managers and other stakeholders in the future. Ensuring that the best available scientific evidence for decision making is easy to access and transparent to all."

The scientific advice and services provided by scientists to the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine, is a key

focus of the Marine Institute's Strategic Plan 2018-2022. "These scientific services are essential to supporting our sustainable ocean economy, protecting and managing our marine ecosystems and meeting EU obligations" said Dr Paul Connolly, CEO of the Marine Institute.

The Stock Book forms an important component of the sustainability impact assessment presented to the Oireachtas Joint Committee on Agriculture, Food and the Marine annually before the EU fisheries negotiations commence. There has been gradual increase in the number of stocks that are sustainably fished in line with Common Fisheries Policy objectives in the last decade. The two most valuable species for Irish fishermen, mackerel and many of the *Nephrops* (Dublin Bay Prawns) stocks, are sustainably fished. However, there are also a number of

cod, herring and whiting stocks that continue to remain at low levels despite management measures aiming to rebuild them.

The 2020 Stock Book is available electronically on the Marine Institute's website (<http://hdl.handle.net/10793/1660>) and as an interactive app (<https://shiny.marine.ie/stockbook/>). Most of the scientific work that delivers the Marine Institute's Stock Book is funded under the European Maritime Fisheries Fund scheme.



November 2020

The Stock Book
Leabhar Na Stoc

Annual Review of Fish Stocks in 2020
with Management Advice for 2021
Léamhnaíocht Eilimhíúil ar na Stoc Éisc in 2020
le Comhairle Bannadóirí de 2021

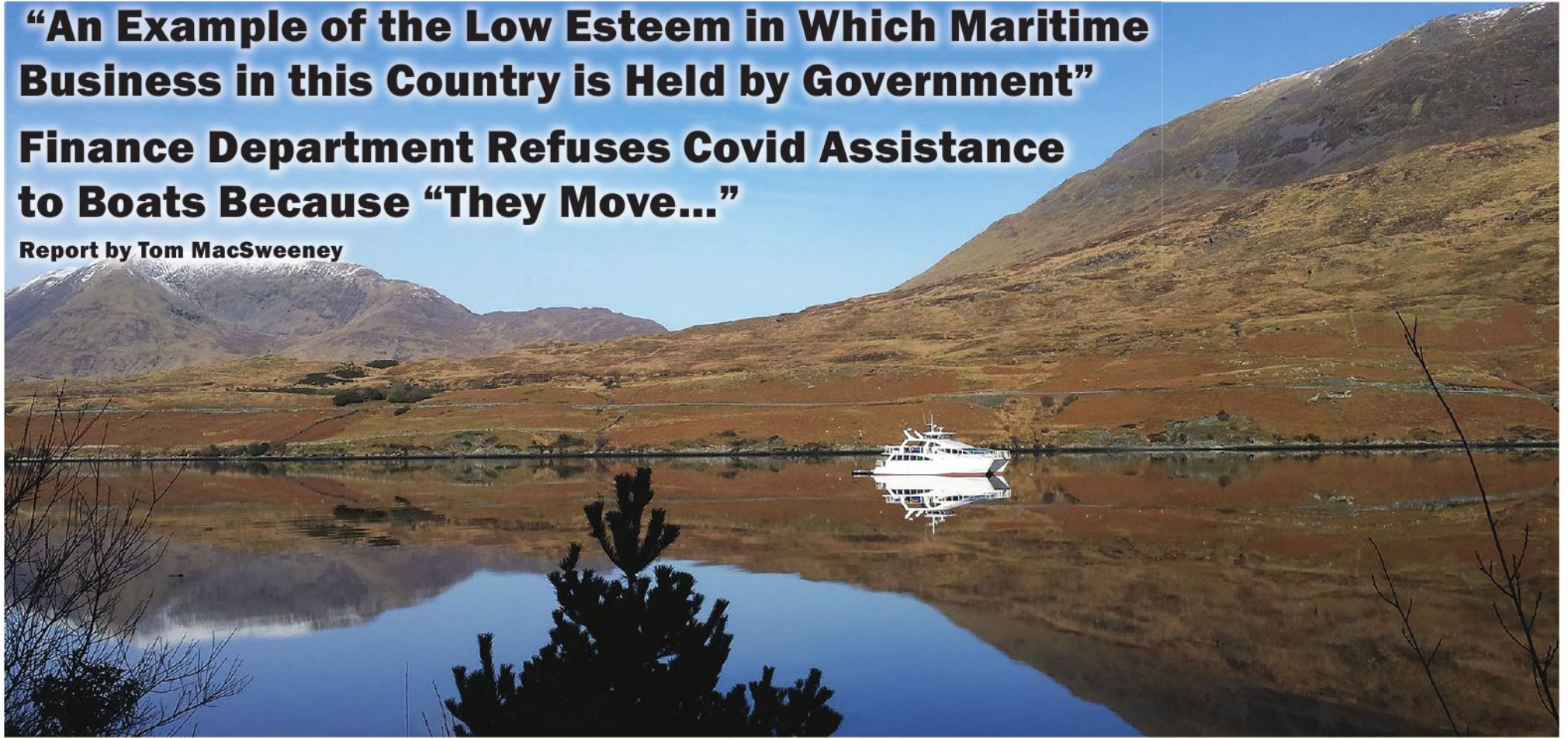
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“An Example of the Low Esteem in Which Maritime Business in this Country is Held by Government” Finance Department Refuses Covid Assistance to Boats Because “They Move...”

Report by Tom MacSweeney



To any reasonable, rational mind, it is obvious that the purpose of boats is that they move. They are built to do that. However, not to the minds of mandarins in the Department of Finance.

One of the most prominent marine tourism companies in Ireland has been refused Covid 19 financial supports, given to land-based companies, because it operates vessels. That they move has been the deciding factor in refusing assistance!

The Killary Fjord Boat Tours Company was set up twenty years ago in Ireland’s only fjord at Killary Harbour in Connemara on the borders of Galway and Mayo. It is based in the village of Leenane where it operates a catamaran tourist vessel. It also runs two boats in Dublin and the museum tall ship, *Jeanie Johnston*, moored at the Custom House Quay in the capital on behalf of Dublin City Council.

“Our boat-based businesses are in a plight due to their exclusion from the Covid Restrictions Support Scheme (CRSS),” the company’s Founder and Managing Director, Micheál Ó Cionna, told me.

“The particular businesses mentioned do not qualify on the basis that they could be moved, even if currently moored. Therefore, they are considered ‘mobile’ premises and do not qualify as a business premises,” the Department of Finance told me, after they said they had “checked with Revenue.”

Illogical? Boat businesses do not qualify as business premises! It seems so, particularly when the Department Press office added a perhaps unintentional pun, in its reply: “In designing the CRSS and providing for it in legislation, it was necessary to provide appropriate anchor points.”

The Killary Company operates the *Connemara Lady*, (22-metre, purpose-built catamaran, 150 tonnes, passenger capacity 150). It also runs Dublin Discovered Boat Tours boat, *Spirit of Docklands* (50 tonnes, 48 passengers) custom-designed for the River Liffey,

operating between Bachelors Walk and the East Link Bridge and *Cadhla* (50 tonnes, 65 passengers) custom-designed for the Grand Canal, operating dining cruises between Mespil Road and the Grand Canal Dock.



“The CRSS is completely focused on businesses which operate from a building. The legislation that underpins the scheme refers to fixed structures. The way we have been treated will apply to all marine tourism infrastructure throughout the country,” Micheál Ó Cionna says. “We have been excluded on the basis that our business has been construed as ‘mobile’ by the Dept. of Finance and as such deemed ineligible for this and other schemes. This is despite the fact that, while our business boats moves as they provide their service, we are bound by law, regulations and licensing to operate within a specified area at all times and cannot move from there.”

Therein is a problem of perception or understanding. My enquiries with the Department of Finance yielded little understanding of boats.

“They probably have no appreciation or understanding of the marine-related businesses that we are involved in,” said Ó Cionna. “Indeed, in drafting the Act why did they restrict it to buildings. It is a totally arbitrary decision the way they have designed the legislation with buildings in mind. It is completely illogical.”

He said that his company does get benefits from the employee wage subsidy scheme to retain ten of its current employees. But overall, as it excludes the business itself from assistance, “the domestic marine tourism infrastructure is being ignored. I find that shameful.”

Responding to Marine Times queries, the Department said: “In designing the CRSS and providing for it in legislation, it was necessary to provide appropriate anchor points. The first comprises the restrictions introduced by the Government under public health regulations to combat the effect of Covid-19. These restrictions result in particular businesses having to close for a period or in other instances that significantly restrict how customers may access a business premises. The second is that the business is trading from a business premises located in a geographical region that is subject to Covid restrictions.”

Under these requirements, I suggested, the Killary boating company would surely qualify, but then the Department added: “For the purposes of CRSS, a qualifying ‘business premises’ is a building or other similar fixed physical structure in which a business activity is ordinarily carried on.”

So, in an island nation the Department of Finance takes the view that boats do not qualify – because they move!

“The Government will continue to assess the effects of the Covid-19 pandemic on the economy and the Minister for Finance will continue to work with Ministerial colleagues to ensure that appropriate supports are in place to mitigate these effects,” the Department said.

Perhaps Minister Paschal Donohue and his mandarins might even concede that boats do move!



Main photo: *Connemara Lady* in Killary Fjord, (www.killaryfjord.com); Inset photo: *Cadhla* (www.canalboatrestaurant.ie); Photo above: *Jeanie Johnston* (www.jeaniejohnston.ie) and *Spirit of Docklands* (www.dublindiscovered.ie)

Brexit Deal Fails Irish Fishermen

- Time to Get Back Our Fish for Our Fishermen



Killybegs Fishermen's Chief Executive Sean O'Donoghue identifies the "absolute priority" to fight for those families who are part of the 16,100 plus workforce at the heart of the Irish fishing industry along our coastline following the "duplicitous nature of the Brexit negotiations" which, he says, gives the UK "a windfall consisting of €42 million of Irish fish."

The Brexit Trade Agreement reached on Christmas Eve has failed Irish fishermen and is a bad fisheries deal. To put simply Ireland has taken a disproportionate hit compared to the other eight Member States that fish in UK waters with €42 million of the total €182 million transferred to the UK coming from Ireland.

Having borne the brunt of a Brexit deal for Irish fisheries, our sector is now determined on winning back quota from other EU Member States.

We were dismayed at the duplicitous nature of the protracted Brexit negotiations and how repeated guarantees given to Irish fishermen and very clearly set out in a formal EU mandate which was not changed were effectively shredded. Four-and-a-half years of 'cast-iron' agreements were for all intents and purposes, completely ignored in the end by the negotiators. We duly found ourselves within just days of the transition period drawing to a close being the last facet of a highly-complex deal to be ironed out even though we were assured otherwise on several occasions in the lead up to the deal that this would not happen.

While many businesses were hugely relieved to see a trade deal struck and we completely understand and appreciate their position, we in fisheries, were the sacrificial lamb of Brexit.

A total of €182 million of EU fish has been handed over to Britain while they have also been allowed retain another €80 million, which was originally intended as compensation for potential losses of fishing opportunities in Third Countries' waters when the Exclusive Economic Zones (EEZ) were extended to 200 miles in 1976.

This is rendered much more unpalatable by the fact that Ireland is absorbing the brunt of the losses.

This British windfall essentially consists of a staggering €42 million of Irish fish.

This is a completely disproportionate hit when compared to the eight other EU coastal states. €26 million of this relates to our vital, highly-valued mackerel catch while

Dublin Bay prawns - our second most valuable fishery - is set to haemorrhage €7 million.

The injustice doesn't stop there. We have taken a very heavy loss in our whitefish stocks (cod, haddock, whiting monkish and megrim), particularly in the waters off Donegal and in the Irish Sea as well as a massive cut of 96% of Irish Sea herring. Neither have our non-quota species such as crab, scallop and squid avoided a hit in terms of access to UK waters with our catches now constrained to average catches in the period 2012 to 2016. Furthermore, the review that will take place after five-and-a-half years and ten years has a very weak linkage to wider trade and economic areas which was a fundamental element of the EU mandate.

In redressing these huge cuts, we are not looking for financial compensation but an equitable burden sharing by the other Member States of our quota losses. We merely need fish (quota) returned in order for our industry to remain viable.

We have requested and expect that our Government will immediately work with us to resolve this very inequitable and unjust burden put on Ireland's fisheries sector. Based on a simple burden sharing equation with the nine Member States involved, Ireland should be incurring a loss of €21million - not €42 million.

What's perhaps most galling about the loss of 26% of our mackerel quota is that the fish are spawned in Irish waters.

While we cannot nor do not claim ownership of them, we're now being discriminated against catching the fish off the coast of Scotland when they are in their prime and at their most valuable as a result of the 26% reduction in our quota. In essence, we're providing the fish for Britain to net - we're a "mackerel maternity ward" for others to profit

from. We now have a miserly share of 16% whereas the UK - mainly Scotland - has 70%.

Now that the Trade Deal is done and will not be reversed our absolute priority is to fight for those families who are part of the 16,100 plus workforce at the heart of the Irish fishing industry along our coastline. Many have risked life and limb to develop viable businesses over generations and we don't intend to stand by and allow the rug be pulled from under them.

In the waters off Donegal alone for instance, an eye-watering 82% of stocks in tonnage and 70% in value of both pelagic and demersal species have been forfeited to Britain. The fishermen in the North West cannot remain economically viable with such a huge hit.

We have formally requested our Government to go back to Brussels and demand that the eight other EU coastal countries step up to the plate and take a proportionate hit on the Brexit deal. We believe that the pain must be shared pro rata, as was set out by the European Fisheries Alliance (EUFA) when it set out in its mission statement that no single sector should bear a disproportionate burden once Brexit was done.

There is a precedent for burden sharing going back to the mid-70s and incorporated in the agreed percentage quota shares set in 1983 which is commonly referenced as 'relative stability.' The UK was compensated by the EU to the tune of 26% (almost 90,000 tonnes of fish) for Jurisdictional and Third Country Losses experienced by the UK in the 1970s valued at €80 million. The UK managed to retain this as part of the deal. This compensation was provided by reducing the percentage quota shares of other Member States. This process was known as equalisation at the time, a problem that arose entirely as a result of the re-drawing of international boundaries at sea in 1976 with a consequent loss/gain of fishing opportunity, traditionally referred to as Jurisdictional and Third Country Losses/gains. At that time the European Commission introduced the concept of Jurisdictional and Third Country Losses/gains equalization, that is the redistribution of such losses/gains in an equitable manner across Member States.

In addition to this equalisation process, there are a number of other key areas that could be used in the burden sharing process such as Hague Preferences (additional quantities of fish that both UK and Ireland got under the Hague Agreement in 1976) and increases in the EU percentage share in the Coastal States negotiations that must also be actively pursued.

That's what must happen next, no more nor no less.

It's now time to fix Brexit for our fishermen and get back our fish.



Atlantic Quest SO 985 passing Butt of Lewis lighthouse heading for fishing grounds - Photo by Ali Finlayson

Potting Gear & Accessories

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 22" x 10mm x 16" Wide or 18" Wide x 14/16 Bar Base
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 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

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National Seafood Survey Deadline Extended

Survey Aims to Capture More Accurate Data on Importance of Inshore Fisheries

Bord Iascaigh Mhara (BIM), Ireland's Seafood Development Agency, has extended the deadline of its National Seafood Survey by two weeks in an effort to increase response rates. The survey is designed to highlight the importance of fishing to families and their wider communities in Ireland.

More than one in ten (14%) of Ireland's 1400 under 10m inshore vessel owners have already completed the survey. All remaining under 10 metre fishing vessel owners now have an opportunity to complete the survey until Monday, 8 February, 2021.

Vera O'Donovan, Regional Development Officer, BIM spoke of the importance of inshore fisheries to coastal communities in Ireland and said: "There are many competing interests for the marine resource. It's vital that inshore fisheries can co-exist in the marine space and have their economic and social contribution to rural society acknowledged fully."

Inclusion of under 10 metre vessel data will help to provide a more accurate account of the economic contribution that the inshore sector brings to coastal communities and to inform both National and EU policy makers.

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 is being posted to every active fishing vessel owner on the register and includes a freepost envelope for return.

The completed survey form should be returned by Monday the 8th February 2021.

For more information, please go to bim.ie/dcf



MFV Ros Ard off Dunmore East - Photo by William Power

Oireachtas Marine Committee Debate**Government Refuses to Seek Re-Negotiation of Common Fisheries Policy****Marine Minister says EU Nations Not Sharing Burden - Task Force Announced**

“No one is expecting other States to be coming forward to offer their fish. The principle of burden sharing within EU Member States has not been adequately respected. We are not at all happy in relation to the additional burden Ireland is taking.”

This statement to the Oireachtas Committee on Agriculture, Food and the Marine, by the Minister for the Marine was the first public admission from the government that there is no sense of ‘community’ amongst the big fishing nations who are members of the European Union.

“The outcome is not a fair reflection of burden sharing,” Minister Charlie McConalogue told the Committee in describing the Brexit deal effects on the Irish fishing industry. “It impacts more on our fisheries sector than other EU Member States will be taking. We bear the weight more disproportionately than other Member States.”

However, while criticising the attitude of other EU Member States, there was a contradiction shown in government policy when it turned down a call to seek a re-negotiation of the Common Fisheries Policy. It voted down a motion put forward in the Dáil asking it to seek re-negotiation to get a fair deal with Irish fishermen in Irish waters. There had also been contradiction be-

tween the statements made by the Minister and his colleague, Foreign Affairs Minister, Simon Coveney, after the announcement of the Brexit deal, where they put the impact on Irish fishing at a loss of €35m., which the Minister’s own Department in a later analysis stated to be €43m.

The Oireachtas Joint Committee on Agriculture and the Marine debate in late January heard concerns expressed about the creation by the Brexit Agreement of divisions between Republic and Northern Ireland fishermen. Big job losses in fishing and dependent coastal communities were outlined, the potential disaster of another decommissioning programme destroying the Irish fleet, difficulties for scallop fishermen in landing catches and consequent effects on processing factories were raised and the Minister announced a Task Force.

Extracts from the debate –

Deputy Michael Collins from West Cork made the point that is widely suspected throughout the Irish fishing industry - that

the Irish government placed all its trust in the EU Brexit negotiating team while the French government ensured the protection of its own industry, as a result of which the Irish industry suffered most:

“Mr. Barnier’s President, Mr. Macron, was not going to allow any deal until French fishermen were looked after. Unfortunately, it seems they and other European countries were looked after at a cost to Irish fishermen. No one seemed to want to take up the issue. We did not get anywhere in the negotiations. What can the Minister offer fishermen? I have been talking to people in the pelagic sector and they have told me they are facing wipe-out, massive drops in their income and job losses. The only thing they hear from Government is about a decommissioning and tie-up scheme. Surely, there is something better for Irish fishermen who want to see a future other than a tie-up and a decommissioning scheme. I do not want to hear about decommissioning because if that is the future for Irish fishermen, it is a very bleak one.”

Minister McConalogue maintained that the outcome achieved, despite what he described as a huge loss to Irish fishing, was better than no deal.

“The deal will see a 15% impact on our overall national quota between now and 2026. That is certainly higher than other EU Member States will be taking. I am certainly not happy with that situation. It is not an outcome I wanted or we fought for. We knew we were the nation that was most endangered from a fisheries point of view. The species that are important to us are the species that are most important to the UK as well. We were always very much concerned by that.”

In the days before the Oireachtas Committee meeting, the government parties had in the Dáil defeated a motion asking it to

re-negotiate the Common Fisheries Policy to get a fair deal and a fair share of the fish in Irish waters for Irish fishermen.

Padraig MacLochlainn, Sinn Fein Spokesman on the Marine asked Minister McConalogue if he would “re-negotiate a fair share of the fish in Irish waters for the Irish fishing industry.”

“I am really disappointed that the Government voted against an amendment to the motion on the EU-UK Trade and Co-operation Agreement in recent days which merely called for it to re-negotiate the Common Fisheries Policy to get a fair deal and a fair share of the fish in Irish waters for Irish fishers. That was all we were asking for. It was a very conservative ask and it was voted down. This is a serious crisis. The amount of fish we have lost is completely unsustainable. The message from people in the industry is that they are not looking for financial compensation. They are looking for a fair allocation of the fish in our Exclusive Economic Zone and in other waters under the jurisdiction of the Common Fisheries Policy. What has happened is that because fishing was the last item on the negotiating agenda there was a rush to get the deal over the line and our fishermen were sacrificed and they took a disproportionate hit. This is a profound injustice.”

Deputy Thomas Pringle asked if fishing was not one of the key objectives for the government?

“Our key Brexit objectives may have been achieved but fishing has been left to one side and left on its own. The Minister will have to go back into the Common Fisheries Policy negotiations to try to get, for the first time ever, a fair deal for Ireland. It is clear, from the way the rest of the countries dealt with the Brexit negotiations, that Ireland is being left behind with regard to fairness and equity within the EU, and always has been.”

The Minister replied: “None of us is expecting other Member States to be coming forward and offering us their fish. That is a battle and a challenge we will face. The Government has been clear about the importance of burden-sharing. If the outcome of the negotiations does not address that burden, then we will be in a situation at European level where will be engaging with other Member States about the challenge of applying burden-sharing. That is where matters stand. We must work to to ensure the sector is invested in and prioritised in the time ahead to make the absolute most of the very valuable resources we have.”

In relation to setting-up of a Task Force, Deputy Michael Ring said it should have representatives of the fisheries, not civil servants or people who would be dictating to the fishermen. It must be the people who are involved in the business, such as the processors and the fishermen themselves, who have a big say in it.”

The Minister said he would be “moving to consult with all stakeholders in the sector on the format of and terms of reference relating to the task force. The key objective is to have a full assessment of the impact on those who know best in terms of what the outcome of Brexit means for the sector and to ensure that this informs the way we move forward in terms of both supporting them in the time ahead and the national response.”

Girl Stephanie with a bag of mackerel with the Western Chieftain looking on - Photo by Tommy Dirrane



news from **Northern Ireland**
 editor@marinetimes.ie



Net mending on Ardglass pier - Photo by Christopher Feenan

Poots Seeks Fair Share of Fishing Quotas for NI Fishermen

Fisheries Minister Edwin Poots MLA wants Northern Ireland fishermen to get their fair share of additional fishing quota secured by the UK from the EU.

The Department of the Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra) has recently closed a consultation seeking views on how additional fishing quota secured from the EU might be distributed to England and the Devolved Administrations in future.

Speaking about the issue, Minister Poots said: "I have been concerned for some time about proposals by the UK Government to distribute any additional quota on a different basis than the established method, especially any method that would involve allocation in proportion to a devolved administration's sea area, as that would disadvantage our local fishing industry. I wrote to the Defra Secretary of State, George Eustice in October last year, as soon as the consultation was launched, and raised serious issues about what was being proposed. Since then I met with UK Fisheries Minister Victoria Prentis, in November last year and January this year, and again urged Defra to recognise our concerns. I and my officials will continue to lobby on behalf of the industry for fairness."

Describing the problem Mr Poots commented: "Our industry has invested heavily in fisheries both in the Irish Sea and around the UK, with vessels oper-

ating right round the UK coast. Whilst the bulk of quota will be allocated by the traditional Fixed Quota Allocation method, any additional quota secured from the EU above this, may be allocated differently. A methodology based on allocation by sea area adjacent to our immediate coastline would mean NI receiving a lower share of any additional quota in the Irish Sea and practically no share of additional quota outside the Irish Sea. For example, in 2018 the NI fishing fleet landed just over £58m of fish in total. Of that, £25m (43%) was landed into NI ports and £33m (57%) into EU and GB ports. I believe that each devolved nation should expect some Brexit dividend but any allocation method that means we are put at a competitive disadvantage is not acceptable.

"It is my strong view that that additional quota must first be allocated to ensure normal operation of the existing fleets in the Irish Sea and around the wider UK. My preference is to continue to use the existing Fixed Quota Allocation system as a basis for all UK quota allocation, however, we need to fully consider the proposals being developed to ensure that all administrations get a fair outcome. I don't think this will be possible until the Coastal State negotiations, which will set the total quota available for many species, have concluded. I will

continue to closely monitor both the negotiations and internal allocation discussions to ensure the best result possible for the Northern Ireland fishing industry."

Views Sought for MPA's and Scallop Enhancement Sites

The Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs (DAERA) has launched a consultation on the development of fisheries management measures for Marine Protected Areas (MPAs) and establishment of scallop enhancement sites in the Northern Ireland inshore region.

The consultation is aimed at organisations, groups and people who undertake activities, or have a general interest in the marine area.

Launching the consultation, Minister Edwin Poots said "The Northern Ireland inshore region supports diverse fishing opportunities that make important contributions to the economies of coastal communities. The introduction of changes

to fisheries management regimes are intended to support fishing at sustainable levels while protecting the marine environment."

In the Northern Ireland inshore region, fisheries management measures are proposed for nine MPAs, and the establishment of four scallop enhancement sites.

Minister Poots added: "The proposals outlined in the consultation reinforce Northern Ireland's continued support for the UK wide vision for clean, healthy, safe, productive and biologically diverse seas. I am keen to hear the views of stakeholders to help inform these fisheries management measures."

The closing date for responses to the consultation is 22 February 2021.

The consultation document can be found at www.daera-ni.gov.uk/consultations/consultation-development-fisheries-management-measures-marine-protected-areas-mpas-and-establishment

News continues on page 15

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MFV "Tribute" B123 fishing off the Mourne mountains coastline. Photo courtesy Micheal Masson



Trouble for Lough Neagh Fishermen - Support Scheme Criticised and Exports to London Stopped

Lough Neagh fishermen can no longer send their catch to London due to Brexit protocol. There has also been criticism over the delay in implementing a £300,000 Covid-19 support scheme for Lough Neagh fishermen.

Eel fishermen on Lough Neagh can no longer send 20% of their catch to London, because eels are deemed an endangered species and their trade is very highly regulated. The regulations has also stopped the importation of juvenile eels from across the Irish Sea in Britain which are traditionally used to restock the lough.

The European Union bans the sale of eels outside of the EU and because Northern Ireland applies the protocol it now also must abide by these rules. Work was ongoing to address the situation on behalf of the Lough Neagh fishermen, but it could be the end of 2021 before the EU would look at the issue again.

SDLP's Patsy McGlone said he was contacted by "extremely frustrated" fishermen who had no income last year. A decision to introduce a support scheme for Lough Neagh was taken six months after it was first talked about, the Stormont committee heard. Official have labelled the development of the scheme as "tortuous" as they claim it has been difficult to agree eligibility criteria and it had required legal advice.

At the committee, Assembly members heard that in order to be eligible boats would have to show that they had been tied up during the fishing season.

Around 200 fishermen work the Lough, mainly fishing for eels, the majority of which is sent to the Netherlands which

would have been subject to lockdown and therefore affecting markets.

Officials have told MLAs that Agriculture Minister Edwin Poots had agreed to proceed with the scheme pending approvals from the Department of Finance and the money will come from the EU's European Maritime and Fisheries Fund and is expected to total £336,000.

Lower Bann Blueway Achieves Stage 1 Approval

The Lower Bann Blueway has become the first in Northern Ireland to be granted official Stage 1 Blueway Accreditation. Awarded through the Blueway Partnership made up of the main tourism and sporting bodies in both Ireland and Northern Ireland, the Blueway is assessed through an independent development system, ensuring an international standard is established and maintained.

This green light paves the way for the ongoing development of the Lower Bann Blueway, to offer a network of paddling, walking and cycling trails along the river, from where it leaves Lough Neagh at Toome, to where it meets the sea at the barmouth north of Coleraine. Visitors will be able to experience the beauty and majesty of the Lower Bann River, with activity providers on hand to meet the needs for equipment and guidance on water. A Steering Group has been established to develop the Lower Bann Blueway. Chaired by Waterways Ireland, the group includes Sport NI, Tourism NI, Causeway Coast and Glens Council, Mid Ulster Council, Mid and East Antrim Council, Antrim and Newtownabbey Council and the Honourable Irish Society, This group recognises that the Lower Bann Blueway represents one of the most exciting new opportunities for the area.

Blueways are recreational outdoor activity trails centered on the scenic environs

of the waterways of Ireland. They offer a range of activities, both on and alongside the water with cycling and walking complementing the paddling trails. They offer experiences that are safe and accessible to all.

The Lower Bann flows 60km from Lough Neagh at Toome to the sea at the barmouth between Castlerock and Portstewart and is the largest river in Northern Ireland. The river encompasses uninterrupted stretches of river, canals and lough Beg as it makes its way to the estuary and barmouth channel to the sea. The river corridor accommodates a wide range of recreational and visitor activities from gentle walks, canoe trips, paddle boarding, cycling, boating, waterskiing, wakeboarding organised boat tours and angling. The proposed trails on shore and on water would offer visitors a unique experience in accessing Cultural Heritage - Game of Thrones, Seamus Heaney; Natural heritage – eels and salmon; and Built heritage - Mountsandel Fort.

The Blueway brand provides a way to tell the unique story of the Lower Bann, and showcase a fabulous selection of places

to Go, Eat and Stay on a Blueway break. It will add a new dimension to the other Blueway experiences developed to date by Waterways Ireland throughout Ireland www.bluewaysireland.org

Numerous new businesses have already embraced the opportunity of getting behind a singular brand to represent outdoor recreation experiences on or close to the river – several new visitor experiences linked to the Blueway are already being hatched. For example a brand new water-based activity hub at "the Cutts", just outside Coleraine, will offer just the right balance of excitement and refreshment, with water-based activities like Stand-Up Paddling together with a welcoming coffee dock.

The Blueway offering along the Lower Bann serves to connect locals, visitors, history and a wide range of recreational activities for all to enjoy.

For more information on developing a Blueway visit www.bluewaydevelopment.org. To visit a Blueway visit BluewaysIreland.org



Silent Valley off Ardglass - Photo by Christopher Feenan

THE MARINE TIMES INTERVIEW

Do State Agencies Talk To Each Other? Why Is the Irish State Not Dedicated to Developing the Fishing Industry?

Do State agencies talk to each other or do “heads need to be knocked together” to get them to engage constructively with the fishing industry? This question is discussed in this month’s interview with marine scientist Kevin Flannery in Dingle, Co. Kerry. It emerges from the lack of official commitment shown after agencies were alerted to the arrival of anchovies and sardines in big numbers on the South/West coast. Shockingly, it has emerged that there was prior knowledge of the presence of these species amongst the agencies. Why is there not a determined drive by the State to organise and develop new fisheries. Why did the government allow Ireland to be pushed out of the Bluefin tuna fishery when the species is in big numbers in Irish waters, but Irish fishermen are prevented from catching them? Why are the State agencies not more active in support of the fishing industry? These are also issues raised.

Interview by Marine Times Deputy Editor, Tom MacSweeney

Kevin Flannery is in an angry mood, which I understand when I talk to him. He is one of the most renowned marine biologists in Ireland, a reputation earned for over 40 years, who fishermen from all around the coast contact regularly about what they observe at sea, such as changes in different species arriving.

“In the past year they have picked up anchovies and we haven’t recorded anchovies regularly ever in these waters and they were getting in the pots even and that is over a year ago. Then two pelagic boats around here fishing for sprat came across a shot of this fish and they sent me a photograph and I confirmed that they were anchovies. They rang the SFPA and they got clearance to land them because they’re a non-quota species and they’re new in here and under the landing obligation anyway they have to land whatever they catch.”

So the anchovies were landed and, in a month, between the Dingle boats and vessels in Baltimore and Castletownbere, Kevin said, between five and six thousand tonnes of anchovies were landed. Then boats “came across another mark” he said “and these were sardines/pilchards.

Watching BBC Television, Kevin saw a report about an anchovy fishery developing for sardines, off Cornwall, where fifteen vessels were engaged. “A beautiful fishery, a seine net fishery were the vessels engaged in it were making a good living and getting close on £2,000 sterling a tonne for anchovies, whereas the boats here were landing them but because there was no market, no organisation or anything done they were sending them to fishmeal for a couple of hundred Euros.

“This is an awful waste of a resource in my opinion. HELLO, the Department of the Marine, you are in charge of the resources of this country for the people of this country and it should be utilised properly. But when I went public on it I got a call that the Marine Institute in their survey last year came across marks of these all the way down off Dunmore East and Mine Head and all the way back



along and they had come across sardines as well. So somebody, obviously, wasn’t talking to the next person within the various departments. Like BIM stated recently that in relation to climate change that it would have an effect on the indigenous fisheries but they didn’t highlight the fact that now we have these species in our waters and there is a huge potential, a huge potential for the inshore fisheries even if you’re only allowed a closed box area like that we have for the herring, for the small herring men over in Dunmore East and allow them back fishing and develop a seine net fishery for them. This would be hugely advantageous for them and take the pressure off them and off other species like the herring. If they’re all the way from the Shannon, all the way around to Wexford and you have the sardines with it I can’t see why BIM and the Marine Institute and the Department shouldn’t say – ok let’s organise the fishery, let’s organise this resource, sustainable now for us, because they are exclusively inside the Irish six-mile limit and their our property for us to do what we will.

“The thing that bothers me mostly is that, all of a sudden the Spanish, the European boats will be in, claiming that the fish are their spawning stock and we do not have the right to them like they did with the bluefin tuna when we know full well that we have thousands of them off our coast. I have photographs myself with Dingle vessels with them that they landed in 1974, but yet we’re now not entitled in Ireland to catch one of them because we are told that

have and where we are. We must immediately utilise what has been identified, the anchovy and the sardine fishery that are now in our waters and in huge stocks.”

That all seems a bit of a ‘shocker’ hearing what you’re saying that the possibilities are not recognised by the State agencies when they should be?

“It came as a shock to me as well when I contacted the Marine Institute and they told me that they could send me photographs of the soundings and details of the survey they had done in October when they came across a great abundance of them. Either people aren’t reading it or maybe there is misunderstanding between the State agencies. When they come across a resource they should communicate the information that they found a huge stock. Is it that they do not contact, communicate with or inform each other? Is it a case that ‘the twain shall not meet? The Department, BIM, are they meeting at all? It shouldn’t be up to me and my colleague Declan Quigley and fishermen up and down the coast to all of a sudden find this and then conveying the information to the Department and State agencies should know this. Look at the potential.

“This is crazy, this is not managing the resource. Somebody needs to bang the table and bring these people together and bang their heads and say we need to know this when you come across a resource and we need to organise and people need to develop it – there is Bord Bia, BIM and the Department who should be in charge of all this. Maybe they have too much coming at them at the moment, but at least if you find resources, people should be told about it and we should be developing it. Look at the cuteness of other nations, Ireland is always left holding the baby. Why is this?

“Action to develop our resources is needed rather than tie-ups and decommissioning. In our waters we have resources, why is the State and its agencies not developing them?”

On that point I concluded my interview with Kevin Flannery, leaving me wondering why? Why is the Irish government not strongly committed to developing the fishing industry?

they’re not ours

“Why can’t we come along and do the same as Iceland and the Faroes and even now Greenland are doing where they take a hundred thousand tonnes of mackerel each and just give the fingers to Europe but we can’t do that because Europe would say ‘oh, we’re going to cut off your grants or we’ll cut off something or other we are giving to you.

“We don’t have people strong enough. The consequences of the Brexit cuts on mackerel and prawns might get someone to wake up in the Department and take a look at the resources that we have.”

Kevin goes on to refer to his colleague Declan Quigley in Howth, a regular contributor to the Marine Times, who has also reported new species.

“Quantities of bream and we picked up these octopus, Mediterranean octopus, down in Sneem, down in Goleen, down in Schull and Dingle that have potential for the pot men, because they are very lucrative fish. Between these species alone there is potential for fisheries development. There is an urgent need for the Marine Institute, if they do come across these species, to identify, suggest development, help fishermen to diversify, but the funding has to be put into it, but all we are hearing about is tie-up schemes and decommissioning which are not the answer for Ireland’s fishing industry, People have to be allowed to fish and we have to maintain and hold onto what we



Tom MacSweeney's Maritime Ireland Diary

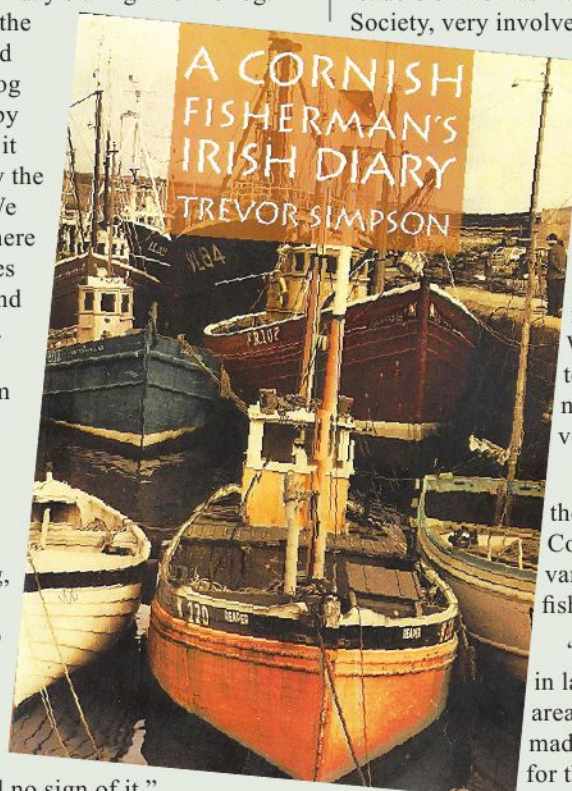


“We fishermen of North Cornwall knew the worst. The crawfish which had provided the bulk of our income were almost completely gone. What had been a sustainable, lucrative fishery, had been wiped out.”

WIPED OUT BY DIVERS – BLOCKED BY FOG FROM GOING TO GOLEEN

Fog is not pleasant at sea. From my own experience I know that! I’ve had moments that caused me the deepest concern!

So I found the opening sentences of *“A Cornish Fisherman’s Diary”* riveting: “I had been all day staring into the fog. This was not the first time I had been lost in fog and steering by compass, but it was definitely the worst time. We were somewhere between Wales and Ireland and heading west. There was a slight problem however and that was due to the fact that Ireland, according to my reckoning, should have appeared slap in front of us about two hours ago and, as yet, there was still no sign of it.”



Trevor Simpson sent me his book in the past few weeks, from his home in Dunmore East. I’ve known him for many years, great company when I met him in the port a few times, regaling me with

stories about fishing. Also, his commitment to lobster fishing made him one of the leaders of the East Waterford Lobster Co-op Society, very involved in the V-notching programme.

I hadn’t talked to him for some time, so it was a great delight to hear him on the phone as we recalled how he first arrived in Dunmore East, en route to Goleen in West Cork as his intended destination, but never completed that voyage.

Divers had destroyed the crawfish fishery in Cornwall. “Rubber suited vandals” the Newquay fishermen called them.

“Crawfish gathered in large groups on rocky areas on the seabed which made them easy prey for the divers who took everything. Our pots as

fishermen were selective and only caught crawfish that were feeding and in good condition. The divers just took everything, including the ones that were out of condition, those that were about to cast their shells

and ones that had already cast and were therefore dormant. We saw the evidence of this, knew what was happening, told those in authority, but nobody cared, not our Members of Parliament, not the Cornwall Sea Fisheries Committee, not anybody,” recalls Trevor.

The Torrey Canyon oil tanker disaster at the Seven Stones Reef in the Isles of Scilly in March 1967 added to the fishermen’s problems when the north coast of Cornwall was hit by heavy crude oil pollution. Once again, not a lot was done by official authority to counterbalance the impact on fishermen who changed their crawfish pots for ‘Cornish-type wire lobster pots’ and tried fishing again.

But the skipper for whom Trevor crewed decided to give up fishing. Trevor bought the 35ft. St.Ives Gig named, *Reaper*, from him. “A lovely boat and he offered it to me under such generous terms I simply had to buy her.”

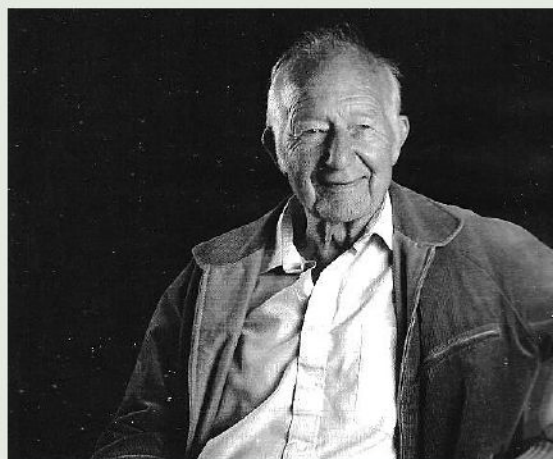
The first season with her was “as one might expect, a lousy season, the weather was bad and the lobsters were scarce.” That led to the situation aboard *Reaper*, described in the opening of his book, “somewhere off Ireland, hopelessly lost and a long way from home.”

“What was I doing, steaming blindly into the fog, leaving Cornwall and Newquay, a town that I loved and a charming little house where we were amongst friends and could have lived happily forever. I was taking a leap into the unknown. Pauline, my wife and I, didn’t know anyone in Ireland and we seemed to be the only two English people without claim to at least one Irish ‘Granny’. I suppose I was an economic refugee.”

His crew on the voyage from Cornwall to Ireland was a student named Martin who

had relations in Cork and would have the opportunity to visit them as their intended destination was West Cork. His comment had been: “The fog and the vastness of the ocean are doing my head in.”

However, the fog started to get patchy. They saw two men in a punt, hand-lining for mackerel, who confirmed they were off the coast of County Waterford and gave them directions to Dunmore East, which proved to be only a short distance away. When they tied up in that harbour, shutting down *Reaper’s* engines which had been “running continuously for twenty hours or so,” Dunmore became home. For several subsequent days fog prevailed. Local people advised him not to head onwards to Goleen!



Why Trevor decided to head for Ireland, brought his family to Dunmore, adjusted to a harbour which never dried out, unlike Newquay; tides that seemed to run opposite ways to which

he was used in Cornwall; to fitting in with the local community and its ways to become a big part of its fishing industry is fascinating, a humorous and informative story. *“A Cornish Fisherman’s Irish Diary”* was published back in 2017. I’d never read it and I’m still enjoying going through its almost 200 A4 pages as I write. He has written other books and is writing another at present.

“Fishing for a living in a small boat is, by its very nature, repetitive,” says Trevor Simpson. “In order to be successful you have to keep on doing the same things again and again but actually, doing it is never the least bit boring.”



A lifestyle summary from a fisherman!

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.
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ICCB Orders Innovative New Chartwell Landing Craft to Bolster Offshore Fleet

Irish Commercial Charter Boats has contracted Arklow Marine Services to build the adaptable 12m aluminium vessel

Landing craft certified by MSO, bolstering Irish offshore supply chain

Irish Commercial Charter Boats (ICCB), Dublin's premiere boat charter company, has ordered a bespoke 12m landing craft from Chartwell Marine, a pioneer in next-generation vessel design. The vessel will be built at the Arklow Marine shipyard and looks set to hit the water in summer 2021.

With a number of large-scale energy projects on the horizon in Irish waters, the vessel has been developed by Chartwell Marine to meet ICCB's expanding operational requirements, including surveying, assisting with cable landing and transporting supplies and personnel to near-shore offshore installations. To ensure maximum versatility in the shallow waters around the East Irish coast, the vessel has a shallow draft and can operate in depths of 0.8m.

In response to calls for greater manoeuvrability and operational versatility, Chartwell has delivered a market first design, with the vessel set to be fitted with two OXE diesel outboard engines. A spare engine can be carried onboard, allowing for emergency replacement offshore if required. Diesel engines have lower emissions than petrol for this operational profile, but Chartwell's configuration offers the flexibility to easily install electric outboard motors and batteries when the technology matures – future proofing the vessel against more stringent emissions requirements.

Arklow Marine will begin construction of the landing craft, to be built out of

aluminium, in January. The increasingly affordable metal is fast becoming a gold standard in offshore vessel construction for its weight reduction and corrosion resistant properties, saving money for vessel owners and operators. As an additional benefit, the vessel can also be recycled at end of life.

Having witnessed a slowdown in the wake of the pandemic, this order brings some welcome vigour to the Irish vessel building sector. With seven offshore wind projects fast tracked for development, Ire-

land's vessel builders are set to benefit from a further boost as the maritime supply chain ramps up. Crucially, the vessel has also been MSO-certified, paving the way for the next generation of efficient, flexible vessels.

Andy Page, Managing Director, Chartwell Marine, said: "ICCB is one of the select few operators in Ireland with the expertise to support offshore operations. We've designed the landing craft with ICCB's specific operational needs on the Irish coast in mind. The business has brought together a world-class skillset and will be optimally placed to support Irish offshore wind from its base on the East Coast."



Eoin Grimes, Director, Irish Commercial Charter Boats, continued: "We're excited to help drive the development of the next generation of Irish offshore support vessels. Chartwell Marine's vessel offers us unparalleled manoeuvrability and versatility, especially in the shallow waters around Ireland, which will be vital as we continue to diversify our offering to the offshore energy market."

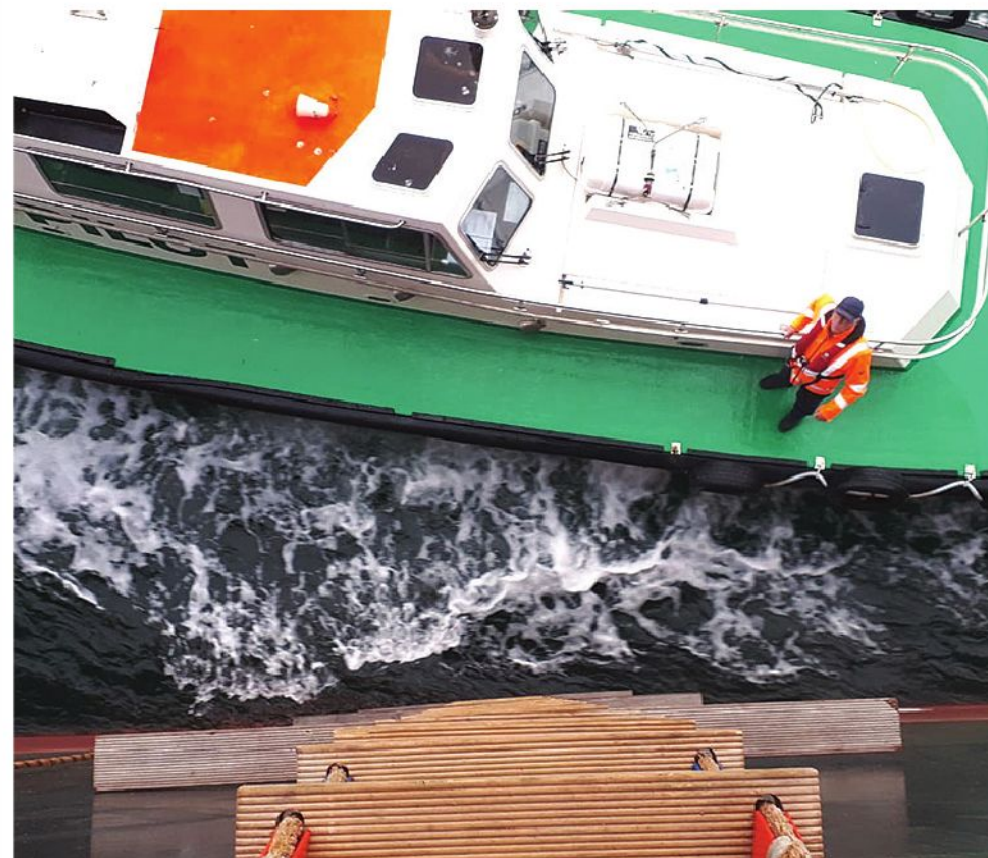
Billy Tyrrell, Director, Arklow Marine Services, concluded: "Ireland needs offshore support services in increasing quantity and the sector is poised for rapid growth. We're proud to be playing a key role in building out that all-important maritime supply chain. It's also critical that vessel platforms built now, such as ICCB's landing craft, are ready to respond to changing emissions requirements. Chartwell Marine has a track record of workboat designs that are optimised for efficiency and performance."

Chartwell Marine is a pioneer in next-generation vessel design. A reputed naval architect with an industry-leading track record designing award-winning high-speed vessels, Chartwell Marine supports ambitious boat builders and vessel operators around the world with specialist, independent design and consultancy services. To find out more about Chartwell Marine,

please visit: <http://www.chartwellmarine.com/>

Irish Commercial Charter Boats was established in 2011 to serve the growing offshore industry on Ireland's east coast, expanding their fleet and range of services as their clients' needs became more diverse and complex. They support industrial and corporate business with services such as safety boats, guard boats, crew transfer, and offshore logistics. To find out more about ICCB, please visit: <https://iccb.ie/about/>

Arklow Marine Services offers expert services to the marine industry in Ireland and abroad, from boat building, repair and refurbishment, to offshore operation and maintenance (O&M). A family run business, it has been in operation in Arklow, Co. Wicklow, for over 150 years. Boat building and marine engineering are still at the core of what the business does, but a strong general engineering division developed within the business, which can also offer general engineering services to the food, petrochemical, construction and other land-based industries. To find out more about Arklow Marine Services, please visit: <https://arklowmarine.com/about-us/>



Joefy Murphy pictured on his last day as coxswain of the Dunmore East pilot boat. Joefy has been a fisherman most of his life, fishing out of Dunmore East and has been for the last 11 years working as skipper of the pilot boat for Port of Waterford. Photo courtesy of his crewmate John Glody who would like to wish Joefy all the best in his retirement.

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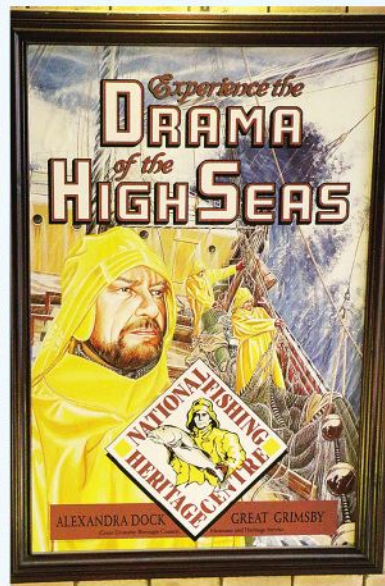
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Richard Mc Cormick back at the wheel of the Ross Tiger, half a century later; 127 foot (39m) long 355 ton Ross Tiger GY 398 now moored tranquilly outside the Heritage Centre; Engine room, Deck and Fore Gallows with inset photos from back in the day.



(Clockwise): Mates Teatime, Museum Poster, Fishroom, Terraced house with netmending display, Chart Table and Radio Shack





The Maritime Heritage Column

Grimsby's Fishing Heritage Centre

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

Grimsby's Fishing Heritage Centre which opened in 1990 is justifiably renowned for its historic artefacts and preserved fishing vessels. Attracting 80,000 visitors a year, it realistically portrays the hardships of working aboard Grimsby trawlers from the North Sea to the Arctic Ocean from whence many fishermen never returned. Having fished from this 'World Premier Fishing Port' aboard six Grimsby

trawlers in the early 1970's to gain experience on larger fishing vessels, Grimsby Town will always be fondly remembered. However, the deep sea fishing industry has completely disappeared since the Icelandic Cod Wars heralded the era of expanding Exclusive Economic Zones.

The Heritage Centre accurately reflects the social authenticity of Great Grimsby Town in its heyday through the reconstruction of a typical terraced house with its outdoor lavvy and coalhouse. The fisherman looks out the window awaiting his taxi to take him to the North Wall for another 3 week trip to the Arctic. His wife patiently braids a section of trawl netting in the back yard to supplement his uncertain income because trawlermen sometimes settled in debt. Life was harsh, and anecdotally it was said that in times past, when washed overboard, a fisherman's wages were stopped the minute 'he left his ship without permission'.

The magnificently restored 46 ton sailing beam trawler and longliner *Perseverance* GY 411 built in 1914 in Boston Lincolnshire, berthed alongside a reconstructed quayside, is a wonder to behold for all heritage sail enthusiasts. Witnessing one of the most dangerous occupations in the world in action is created by furnishing the original interiors of salvaged steam trawlers with lifelike mannequins dressed as fishermen opening a codend, gutting fish and mending a trawl, while the ships cook braces himself in his galley as the ship rolls sharply, all enhanced by strategic lighting and authentic audio sensory effects.

The highlight of a visit is the 127 foot (39m) long 355 ton *Ross Tiger* GY 398 now moored tranquilly outside the Heritage Centre and claimed to be the earliest surviving diesel engine side trawler in the UK. The first of a dozen very successful 'Cat Class' side trawlers built for Ross Trawlers Ltd in Cochrane & Sons of Selby in 1957, she was powered by a 780 HP Ruston seven cylinder diesel engine and fitted with previously unheard of luxurious features like central heating, flushing toilets, baths and even a shower.

Having completed 13 consecutive fourteen day trips aboard *Ross Tiger* with Skipper Billy Hodson and Mate Stan Johnston in 1971, stepping aboard her after half a century felt strange. *Ross Tiger's* engine was eerily silent while

there was no evidence of the ghosts of her numerous fourteen man crews over her 30 year fishing career, including three fishermen lost overboard. However, the excellent guided tour by Skipper John Roberts who had once commanded *Ross Tiger* quickly revived memories of *Ross Tiger* in her heyday.

While regular watches were observed during two days steaming to the fishing grounds, once fishing commenced, life aboard *Ross Tiger* became an endless 24/7 routine of all hands hauling and shooting the trawl every three hours. Then followed an endless cycle of gutting, bulk packing and icing fish in the hold and mending damaged trawls while somehow finding time to eat and catnap in between hauls. These seaworthy vessels fished all weathers and physical exhaustion from working incredibly long hours with skippers occasionally 'flogging the clock' was normality. Steaming home after a successful trip was always relaxed. Fishing gear was mended and stowed and infected hand wounds were cleaned and disinfected. After forty eight hours ashore it was back to sea again.

The multi-award winning Grimsby Fishing Heritage Centre is a credit to North East Lincolnshire Council's creative presentation of irreplaceable fishing vessels and artefacts. The visitors experience is greatly enhanced by knowledgeable ex-fishermen guides who remind visitors of all ages of the bravery and skill of generations of Grimsby trawlermen, thousands of whom tragically lost their lives bringing home the catch. The Grimsby Fishing Heritage Centre is therefore well worth a visit for anyone seriously interested in fishing heritage, which is so often overlooked.

For more information on the Grimsby Fishing Heritage Centre visit their website at www.fishingheritage.com



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



Grimsby's Fishing Heritage Centre; MFV *Perseverance* and Skipper John Roberts



Museum displays of Netmender, Codend Aboard, Gutting Fish and the Chef in Action



International Fishing and Maritime News

EU Claims That Sustainable Fishing Has Helped the Fleet

The 2020 Annual Economic Report on the EU Fishing Fleet claims that more sustainable fishing and lower fuel costs helped to mitigate the socio-economic impacts of the Covid pandemic.

The European Commissioner for the Environment, Oceans and Fisheries, Virginijus Sinkevičius said that the report showed that 'sustainability pays off'.

"During times of crisis, our fishing fleets must stay on the path of sustainability. It builds resilience and accelerates economic recovery," he said.

The report states that the industry made a net profit of €800 million in 2018 with the trend continuing into 2019. Fleets operating in areas where stocks are maintained at sustainable levels fared better than those that still face overfishing.

Covid-19 interrupted positive trends in recent years and projections show decreases of 17% in landed value, 19% in employment and 29% in net profits compared to 2019.

The report also said that the economic performance and salaries of EU fishermen and women are improving where stocks are managed sustainably.

Large Producers Excluded in UK Government Brexit Compensation Scheme

While UK seafood industry bodies have welcomed confirmation of a stg£23m government fund to compensate exporters who face losses as a result of post-Brexit regulations, the scheme appears to exclude larger producers and processors and it is also unclear whether hauliers will be compensated for losses.

The Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA) said that compensation would be targeted at fishing export businesses who can "provide evidence of genuine loss in exporting fish and shellfish to the EU."

Support would be available immediately and paid retrospectively to cover losses incurred since January 1, the UK Government stated, but DEFRA qualified that "the scheme will be targeted at "small and medium enterprises" and the maximum claim available to individual operators will be £100,000. The Marine Management Organisation will administer the scheme on behalf of exporters across the UK. The Government has promised to consult industry across the UK and to work with the devolved administrations on the eligibility criteria. UK Environment Secretary George Eustice said the £23m scheme will provide "crucial support for fishermen and seafood exporters, who have experienced delays and a lack of demand for fish from the restaurant industry in the UK and Europe."

Scotland Suffering Biggest Hit

The Chief Executive of the Scottish Salmon Producers Organisation, Tavish Scott, has warned of continuing difficulties for salmon exports.

"The salmon farming sector is worth £300m every year in exports to Europe. Our sector simply wants the ability to successfully sell fish into this European marketplace. That objective has been riven by difficulties since January. Sorting out these endless problems for exporting salmon companies should be the top priority of

government."

Donna Fordyce, Chief Executive of Seafood Scotland, responding to the UK Government's compensation package said that money "will offer a much-needed sticking plaster covering the losses over the last few weeks, but to completely staunch the wound, the sector needs a period of grace during which systems must be overhauled so they are fit for purpose. It is also essential that groupage returns to a fully operational state as a matter of urgency. Larger companies and smaller shellfish boats are still vulnerable and will be hoping that they can access support too."

American Agencies to Work Together Against Illegal Fishing

The US National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) has signed a memorandum of understanding with the US Agency for International Development (USAID) to combat illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing across borders and promote sustainable fisheries abroad.



The two agencies plan to work together to support developing countries as they strengthen their own assessment, monitoring and enforcement capabilities; promote innovations in combating IUU fishing through alliances with other governments and the private sector and increase incentives for compliance and consequences for violating fisheries rules.

"Together, our two agencies are well positioned to help nations combat IUU fishing practices which have emerged as a leading maritime security threat and are associated with human rights abuses and other forms of transnational crime," said retired Navy Rear Adm. Timothy Gallaudet, PhD, Assistant Secretary of Commerce for Oceans and Atmosphere, who is also Deputy NOAA Administrator. "We will make every effort to stop IUU fishing through diplomacy, enforcement, and science."

The partnership builds on NOAA's larger work with the US State Department and US Coast Guard under the Maritime SAFE Act, which was signed into law last year.

Salmon Price Stagnation

January saw stagnation on the international market for salmon. The market was down in Norway and Iceland, with the international difficulties caused by the Covid 19 pandemic a major cause.

Reports suggesting a resurgence of coronavirus in some parts of China affected demand there along with tougher import restrictions imposed by Beijing authorities reflecting seafood, consumers in China being more wary of what they buy because of the pandemic. With much of Europe in lockdown analysts did not predict a sus-

tained increase in demand or prices until restaurants start to reopen. The emergence of new mutant Covid strains and the likelihood of tougher restrictions on hospitality from the Biden administration in the US were also not helping the salmon produce market.

Canadian Salmon Farmers Supported by Agriculture

The Canadian Government has come under strong criticism from the agricultural sector who are supporting British Columbia salmon farmers in their battle with the government which intends to close 19 fish farms in the Discovery Islands region.

The President of the Canadian Federation of Agriculture, Mary Robinson, has told Prime Minister Justin Trudeau, that his government is contradicting the principles of transparency, consulting with Canadians and making science- and evidence-based decisions, which it had avowed.

"The decision to close the salmon farms seems to contradict these principles," she wrote in a letter to Trudeau. "The nine peer-reviewed studies carried out for the Department of Fisheries & Oceans into salmon farming in BC and the decline in wild salmon numbers concluded that the Discovery Islands salmon farms had a 'less than minimal' potential impact on wild salmon. Because the farms passed this high bar of performance, the process for renewing federal licences should have been fair and taken into account this performance, the science, and community impact. Unfortunately, it did not.

"Your decision affects up to 25% of the salmon production of BC, affecting around 1,500 jobs. Your government should immediately develop a growth plan for the aquaculture sector to support sustainable growth. A government department must be identified to explicitly champion the economic growth of the aquaculture sector."

This intervention is seen as a major condemnation of the Canadian government by a powerful agricultural group.

Traceability System for UK's Marine By-Product Supply Chain

The 'SeaTrace' project launched in the UK aims to examine the existing marine by-products supply chain, identify data that needs to be recorded and exchanged and define a robust electronic traceability system. Marine by-products such as head, fins, skin and bone are increasingly used in fish oils and cosmetics and, most importantly, in feed for farmed fish and seafood. The challenge is to find the ideal traceability system for such a fragmented and paper-based supply chain.

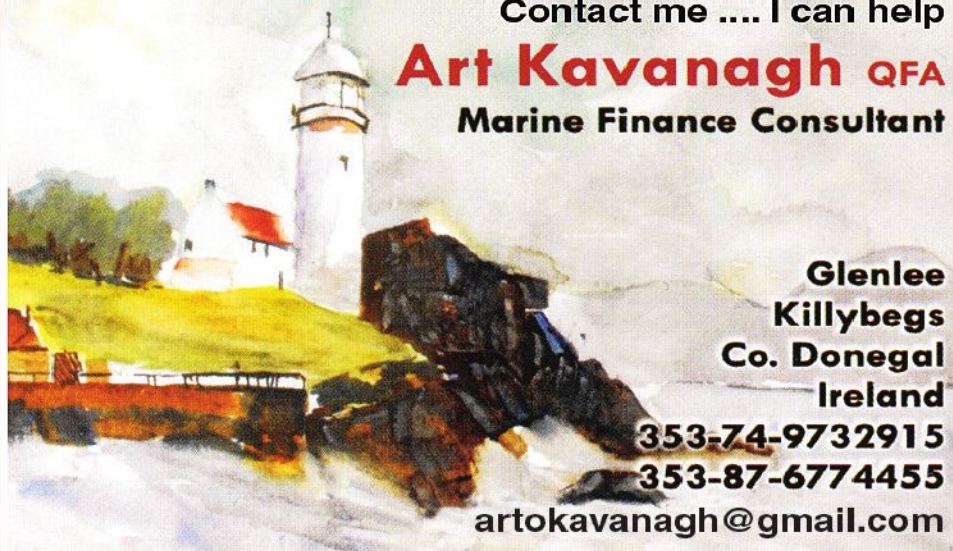
HSSMI and MarinTrust have begun

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a three-month feasibility study, funded by the UK Seafood Innovation Fund's Centre for Environment, Fisheries and Aquaculture Science (CEFAS), to define a traceability system for the UK's marine by-product supply chain.

Sea-Trace will assess different tracking systems such as RFID, Barcode and QR code in combination with cloud data storage architectures like blockchain technology. This combination can connect fragmented pieces of the supply chain, increase the transparency of material flows and enhance data security. The study will start by assessing current methods and systems already in place and then identify the key data and events that need to be recorded. It will then analyse technological solutions available on the market to determine which will enable the most viable system. Rather than adopting one single technology based on its perceived benefits, Sea-Trace is to conduct a comprehensive evaluation of a range of technologies.

Norway Testing Floating Solar Power

Norway would not be classed as a particularly "sunny coastline" but the country's energy producer, Equinor, is engaged in a project to test floating solar power off the not-so-sunny coast. It has partnered with Moss Maritime to start testing a floating solar farm off Frøya Island, about 200 miles south of the Arctic Circle along the western coast of the country.



"If we succeed here, we can succeed anywhere," the leader of the company's technology unit said. Planned to measure 80 square meters, the plant will be less than 3 metres above the surface at its highest point and, according to plans, be tested for a minimum of one year. Any power produced will be transmitted to the Frøya power grid. Equinor says the floating plant could be operational as soon as late this summer, making it the world's first pilot project for floating solar power in rough waters. The purpose of the project is not to see how much energy it can produce, rather how weather conditions impact power production. Weather data shows that Frøya sees sunny days only about a handful of times per month, compared to a place like Arizona where the sun shines every day.

Equinor is also involved in testing the capabilities of floating solar power in two locations outside Norway - calm waters off Sri Lanka and on a lake in the Netherlands, each testing different concepts that could help in future projects.

Cleaning-Up Plastic

The largest container shipping company in the world, Maersk of Denmark and the Dutch non-profit

organisation 'The Ocean Cleanup' are extending their partnership to rid the world's ocean of plastic pollution.

Founded in 2013, The Ocean Cleanup's mission is to develop and advance technologies to cleanup plastic pollution at sea and also stop the inflow via rivers. Over the last several years the company has been developing a large-scale system that essentially concentrates floating plastic for removal. The company then uses the plastic to create products that help raise funds for its efforts. It now employs a team of 95 engineers and researchers.

In 2018, Maersk Supply Service partnered with 'The Ocean Cleanup' to help support the first deployment of the system in what is known as 'The Great Pacific Garbage Patch,' reputed to be the world's largest accumulation zone of ocean plastics, 1,200 miles off the coast of California. Although that first deployment revealed some issues with the system, engineers have worked to refine it and introduced "Interceptors", which can be stationed at the mouths of rivers to prevent plastic pollution from entering the sea. The company says that it "continues to aim for the removal of 90% of ocean plastic by 2040."

Aquaculture UK Postponed Until May 2022

Aquaculture UK – the UK's most important aquaculture exhibition and conference – has been rescheduled from May 2021 to May 2022.

The show, which was due to take place on 19-21 May, will be deferred to the new dates of 3-5 May 2022 at the Macdonald Resort in Aviemore, Scotland.

The decision follows the ongoing impact of the coronavirus pandemic and comes after close monitoring of information from the government, as well as consultation with the aquaculture community.

Event director Cheri Arvonio says: "Although all the signs are positive for a restart of events from Easter, we feel running Aquaculture UK in May is too early. We want to give everyone the best possible chance for a great show, so it is important we have a clear run into the event.

"We want to make the right decision for our community and having consulted with our exhibitors, visitors and partners, we've decided the best action to serve everyone is to postpone the show to its regular home in the show calendar year.

"We're disappointed not to be able to bring everyone together as soon as we'd hoped. But we're committed to delivering an event in 2022 that provides the community with the most effective opportunities for networking, education, and interaction – and we're confident that the move to next May means we'll be able to return with the best show possible.

"The good news is that we won't be letting our May 2021 dates pass without marking the occasion. We'll be launching a virtual sustainability seminar in the coming weeks to provide a much-needed platform for the industry to connect.

"We're also excited to announce that Aquaculture UK will be launching a news-

letter in the next few months. Aquabuzz, the bi-weekly newsletter will give the aquaculture community an excellent opportunity to share news, communicate about products and services, and stay connected at a vital time for our industry.

"Finally, we're so grateful for the incredible and continued goodwill and support the industry has shown us during these difficult times. We're looking forward to working together over the coming months to ensure that Aquaculture UK continues to be the celebration and gathering the industry deserves and can be proud of. And more than anything, we look forward to seeing you – in person – in May 2022."

For more information, please visit www.aquacultureuk.com

New study finds Scottish pelagic fisheries have low carbon footprint

A new study has found that Scottish caught pelagic fish such as herring and mackerel have a low carbon footprint compared to other types of food production, making them a good food choice for the environmentally conscious consumer.

This study, just published, "The environmental impacts of pelagic fish caught by Scottish vessels" was carried out by Frances Sandison as part of her PhD studies and funded by the Scottish Pelagic Sustainability Group, Shetland Islands Council, University of Aberdeen, University of the Highlands and Islands, and Shetland Fish Producers' Organisation.

Her study found that Scottish-caught pelagic fish have a lower carbon footprint and environmental impact when compared to other seafood products. This includes UK farmed salmon, which is 7.2 times higher, and Norwegian caught cod and haddock, which are 3.5 and 3.9 times higher than Scottish caught pelagic fish.

This extended her earlier finding at the NAFC Marine Centre (which is part of the University of the Highlands and Islands)

which revealed that the carbon footprint of the Shetland mackerel trawl fishery was much lower compared to land-based meat production, including chicken, beef and pork. Seafood production in general has a lower carbon footprint than land-based meat production.

This confirms that sustainably managed Scottish pelagic fish represents a climate smart food source that helps deliver targets for achieving net zero carbon.

Frances Sandison says: "In Scotland we have access to a fantastically low impact, highly nutritious, locally caught source of protein. Compared to other meat sources the choice is clear for the environmentally conscious consumer – we should be eating more local pelagic fish."

Her environmental impact study also found that fuel consumption in the fishing phase is the main contributor of carbon emissions. Enhancing fuel efficiency through innovations in vessel design and fishing practices, and a transition to alternative fuel sources are part of the Scottish pelagic sector's efforts to minimise emissions.

Ian Gatt, chairman of the Scottish Pelagic Sustainability Group, said: "We congratulate Frances on the successful completion of her research. For the Scottish pelagic sector there is a lot at stake with climate change, given that mackerel and herring have an established global trade that helps ensure food security as an affordable and nutritious protein in many parts of the world. Scottish fishermen have invested heavily in modern vessels and fish handling systems, and processors in the latest equipment, to ensure a high quality, low carbon footprint product that can be delivered to market in the most efficient manner.

"As such, Scottish mackerel and herring production really do tick all the right boxes when it comes to sustainability, nutrition, and low carbon footprint."

The full study can be read here: <https://authors.elsevier.com/a/1c15GbiU1p3iu>



The 94m trawler Dirk Dirk one of the biggest trawlers in Europe recently anchored in Berehaven Harbour in Castletownbere exchanging engine parts. The vessel was also accompanied by the larger 143m Margiris. Photo courtesy Anne Marie Cronin Photography

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news from **Castletownbere**

Helen Riddell

Aidan Cremin RIP

Tributes from throughout the Beara Peninsula were paid to Garda Aidan Cremin who died suddenly on January 19th. Castletownbere RNLI station said "Members of Castletownbere RNLI were shocked and saddened to learn of the sudden death of Garda Aidan Cremin. Aidan had a great sense of community and always was courteous, professional and supportive in all his dealings with the lifeboat station. Ar dheis Dé go raibh a anam."

Adrigole GAA Club paid particular tribute to their friend and club member. "We at Cumann Luthchleas Gael Eadargoil, are devastated at the news of the untimely passing of Aidan Cremin affectionately known to most of us as "The Sherriff". To his family, his mother Eileen, brothers Séan, Michael, Brian and Padraig we extend our heartfelt sympathies and deep gratitude that we were able to be part of Aidan's life, as a club and a community he felt so at home in for the last 13 years. His loss is going to be immense to us as a Club and a parish and something we will feel for many years to come. He has however left a huge legacy for which we will be eternally grateful to him for. Ar dheis Dé go raibh a anam."

A private family funeral for Aidan took place in St Mary's Church, Beaufort, Killarney followed by burial in Aghadoe Lawn Cemetery. Pre-deceased by his father

John, Aidan is survived by his mother Eileen, brothers Sean, Michael, Brian and Padraig, sisters-in-law Nina and Ruth, niece Róisín, nephews Aidan and Nando.

Beara student wins BT Young Scientist & Technology Exhibition Award

Beara student Cathal O'Sullivan was announced the overall winner of the ABP Farm Safety Award at the 2021 BT Young Scientist and Technology Exhibition (BTYSTE) with his innovative project, titled 'Preventing machine accidents with warning systems'. Cathal impressed the judges with his innovative and forward-thinking project that is designed to prevent accidental injuries and deaths from farm machinery. Cathal from Beara Community School in Castletownbere designed a device that alerts users when they are too close to spinning machine parts, preventing them from accidentally coming into contact with them.

COVID-19 Supports

Castletownbere Development Association and GAA clubs throughout Beara are available to help the local community in providing help with grocery collection, medication pick-up, fuel delivery, checking in on neighbours and undertaking any other tasks where necessary during the current time. 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

Beara Further Education Centre

The Beara Further Education Centre are running an online learning course starting on February 10th. The short course will teach basic IT skills and give participants tips on online learning, the basics of Microsoft office and navigation an online platform. For further details contact Noreen on 086 8239147 or email noreen.murnane@corketb.ie

Super Trawlers

On January 23rd, two of Europe's largest factory trawlers made their way into Berehaven harbour. The Lithuanian registered Margiris, and the Dutch registered Dirk Dirk anchored in Berehaven to exchange engine parts.

Allihies Parish Co-Operative Society Limited

Allihies Parish Co-Operative Society Limited are inviting applications for the position of Caretaker at the Allihies Copper Mine Museum Building. This position

is part funded under the Community Services Programme. A full job description is available from the office. Curriculum Vitae together with a letter of application should be sent to – Allihies Parish Co-Operative Society Limited, Allihies Copper Mine Museum, Beara, Co Cork or by to email allihiesparishcoop@gmail.com

The closing date for receipt of all applications is 5pm on Friday February 12th 2021.

Coastguard Callout

Castletownbere Coast Guard team attended their first call out of 2021 in the early hours of Sunday January 17th. The team were tasked to assist with a transfer of an injured crewman from a fishing vessel, which was due to arrive at Dinish Island. The Coast Guard crew met the vessel upon its arrival to Dinish just after 4am and assisted Castletownbere ambulance personnel in transferring the crewman off the boat and into the ambulance. The casualty, who had injured his arm, was taken to Cork University Hospital for treatment.

BIM

In line with Government guidelines the Regional Fisheries College in Castletownbere is currently closed. Updates on training courses will be given as soon as they become available.



Western Venture at Ballycotton harbour on a cold winters night - Photo by Brian Motyer

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Fisheries Taskforce Welcome News

Cork South West Deputy Christopher O'Sullivan has praised a decision by Minister for Agriculture and the Marine, Charlie McConalogue, to urgently set up a fisheries taskforce to help the sector weather the post-Brexit trade deal.

The taskforce is expected to be made up of Irish fishermen and women, frontline fish producers and retailers as the industry attempts to stymie the loss of millions of euro.

"The minister in the Dáil agreed to my request to establish a taskforce to deal with the severe impact of Brexit on the fishing industry," Deputy O'Sullivan said.

"It is a necessary and positive step to help soften the blow of Brexit and to urgently respond to the undue burden and hardship falling on our fishing sector because of the Brexit deal."

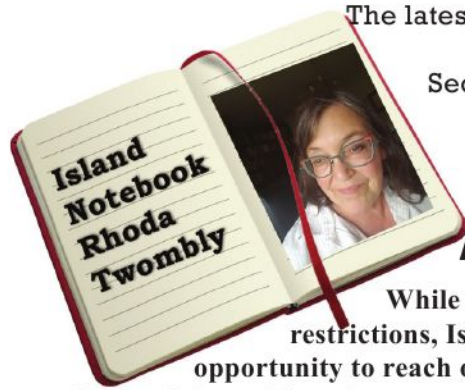
Minister McConalogue told the Dáil

he'll be meeting over the coming days with stakeholders from across the industry to discuss terms of reference for the group.

"The loss of fishing rights because of Brexit will severely damage not just the industry, but whole communities in the coming weeks and months," Deputy O'Sullivan said.

"News of a dedicated taskforce is a positive step.

"Our fishermen and women know their trade better than anyone else, and their contributions will certainly help ease the burden and help map a new route through the unfair post-Brexit deal."



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

Workshops Highlight A 'Vision for The Islands'

While we have all been "housed" by Covid-19 restrictions, Island community groups have seized the opportunity to reach out to residents by conducting on-line interactive workshops. These have proven valuable in pinpointing how Islanders see the future of their Islands, where they would like to be in the years to come and the most prevalent challenges to progress.

As a member of ESIN (The European Small Islands Federation), Comhdháil Oileán na hÉireann hosted and participated in the workshop "A Vision for the European small Islands." The results of the workshop will feed into the European Commission's Long-Term Vision for Rural Areas and will give an overview of how the islands should develop over the next 20 years.

The ESIN workshop concluded that housing is key to increasing island populations currently and into the future. This issue spans the European small islands. While it is recognised that tourism is an important source of income, this depletes the

housing stock available to island residents. The presence of holiday homes/second homes can also be detrimental as they are inhabited for only a few months of the year, at times by owners who do not necessarily want to be part of the island community. Some of these properties are rented-out for the off-season, which creates an insecure housing situation for people who want to be full-time residents.

Added to this is the fact that government policies which deal with island housing are lacking. Financing is also an issue as it is more difficult to acquire loans for island properties.

Maritime Safety Legislation: Dail Committee Reject Ministerial Proposal

The Oireachtas Business Committee has rejected a proposal by the Minister for Transport to waive pre-legislative scrutiny of amendments to legislation governing the investigation of marine casualties.

In mid-December Minister Eamon Ryan wrote to Ceann Comhairle, Seán Ó' Fearghaill TD and members of the Committee requesting the waiver under Standing Order 173 of the Oireachtas Rules of Business to cover amendments to the Merchant Shipping (Investigation of Marine Casualties) Act 2000 stating that the matter was urgent and in the national interest.

International maritime lawyer, Michael Kingston, whose father was killed in the 1979 Whiddy Island Betelgeuse oil tanker tragedy and maritime Barrister Ciaran McCarthy, challenged this.

They claimed, in letters sent to Business Committee Members in January that there were failures under the Current Act "so serious in nature that it would be completely wrong to waive pre-legislative scrutiny."

They also submitted a report commissioned from Marine Hazard Limited into the operation Marine Casualty Investigation Board (MCIB).

Mr. Kingston has been strongly critical of the Board and has sought a Garda inquiry into allegations he has made about MCIB reports.

The Transport and Communications Committee of the Oireachtas had been delegated the task of analysing the request

and advising the Business Committee. It is understood that they also rejected the Minister's request.

"This unanimous rejection of Minister Ryan's request to avoid pre-legislative scrutiny is a great day for Ireland and those who have endured loss where the State have absolved themselves of any responsibility and had no empathy for those in grief," Mr. Kingston said after the rejection decision.

"It is up to us in Ireland to force change and that is what some of us who have got together and found the courage are doing."

The legislation referred has been described as aiming to rectify Ireland's breach of international regulation following a Judgement by the Court of Justice of the European Union which found conflict of interest in the membership of the MCIB'S board. Two members appointed by the State resigned subsequently.

There has been no comment from the MCIB or the Department.

At time of going to press with this edition it was reported that Mr. Kingston and Department of Transport officials might be called before the Oireachtas Transport Committee when an examination of the proposed legislation is discussed.

Importance of Broadband

Good broadband is now equivalent to electricity in importance for the future development of the islands. The importance of stable, fast broadband has been highlighted by Covid-19. Not only is it vital to remote working, but also underpins provision of health and social care (e-health) and also increases possibilities for education.

Comhdháil Oileán na hÉireann subsequently held a similar workshop for the residents of the offshore Islands. There was a strong turn-out with constructive discussions on the positive aspects of island life and where Islanders would like to see improvement into the future. In common with other European small islands, local democracy was noted as important in the continued development of strong island communities: increased inclusion and participation of young people in the governance of islands will be crucial as well.

Island-Proofed Policies

Housing was again noted as the most important factor in maintaining and increasing island populations: this underpins many other challenges e.g., education, health and employment. Creation and implementation of island-proofed policies is also seen as important as is increased involvement of young people in community decision making. The Smart Islands Scotland-Ireland project started as an international LEADER exchange project where Islanders visited both countries exchanging ideas and discussing shared challenges. With Covid, Stage 3 of the project had to move on-line. This process of two workshops in each of the four island counties plus two or more sessions to create links across the islands forming networks that can take specific actions forward. This program will not conclude until March but thus far has been very well attended with a strong presence of younger Islanders and many not consulted about the future of their communities.

Máire-Uí Mhaoláin, CEO of Comhar na nOileán CTR, writes: Many participants work on the mainland during the week, returning at weekends and during the holidays to re-acquaint themselves with their Island

communities. However, due to the Covid crisis, many of those are now based on their islands working remotely from home. "

A participant stated "Working successfully from home has been a surprising advantage of Covid and both my employer and myself can now see that it can be achieved very successfully if not more productively and cost effectively from a remote location".

Comhar na nOileán & Comhdháil Oileán na hÉireann recognised this opportunity to support young people in contributing to local development in their island communities through community initiatives and/or enterprise and to share knowledge and experience of innovation to enable island communities across Scotland and Ireland to learn from each other and not least around attracting and supporting young people.

Strong Response to Workshops

There has been a huge response to the workshops from the 20-40 year old age group, many of whom expressed an interest in moving back to the Islands or living and working on the Islands. Covid 19 has provided the perfect opportunity to 'try-out' remote working either full-time or some type of hybrid arrangement where people would only be required to attend mainland offices once or twice per month. Every cloud has a silver lining and this one is proving very beneficial and a great opportunity to reverse the downward trend of population decline on the Islands and attract our highly qualified innovative young people back to live and WORK on the Islands.

These workshops, both European-based and Irish, have been hugely beneficial in pin-pointing how Islanders see the future of their home-places and what is needed to get there. The level of attendance, enthusiasm and positivity is encouraging as is the eagerness of younger people to get involved. Comhdháil Oileán na hÉireann, while feeding the information gathered into the EC-based project, while also holding more open workshops in the months to come.

So for now, it's slán from the Islands.

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.

Doran's are offering a service to assist skippers in complying with these regulations and to give them a "Go to Person" to act as a buffer between the MSO, SFPA, HSA and BIM etc. Talk to us today for a no obligation assessment.

Contact us to learn of our extensive range of services - Let us be your "Go to Person" to ease the burden on busy Skippers and Owners.

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Let us help you and your crew stay safe at sea

Howth harbour - Photo by Richard Guildea

news from **Howth** Tracey Floyd



Between Brexit, Quotas, Penalty Points and Covid it's hard to keep your chin up nowadays. However around the coast in most ways it's business as usual. Everyone is working away and attempting to comply with last year's regulations under SI188 and subsequent Marine Notices, following on from the ILOc188.

Dorans Skippers Mate have been receiving a lot of questions in relation to: Crew Lists; Crew Agreements; Basic Safety Training; Social Welfare Insurance; Medicals ENG11; New Logbooks; Grievance Procedures; Work Time Directive.

Not all of these questions can be answered as yet but for some clarification and to assist you to have the necessary to do what you can and to ensure compliance to the best of your ability, here are some hints and tips that might help.

Social Welfare Insurance

This is a tough one right now due to the fact that no actual package exists with any of the companies currently providing cover.

I believe that DND Insurance has already sent a proposition to their underwriters for approval. At time of writing this is still pending and initial estimates suggest that this will be expensive and in some cases prohibitively so. The suggestion is that there will be a yearly charge per crew person named.

An alternative suggestion is that an Escrow account be used to facilitate the requirement. This would require an upfront payment held in bond which would be returnable if not used up until the sale of the vessel. There would also be a yearly fee made payable to the broker.

I believe that either option will need to be approved by the MSO and so for

now we will just have to wait and see what transpires.

Basic Safety Training

There have also been some questions around Basic Safety Training. Due to Covid there are currently no courses available. In instances where training is required for a renewal you may wish to reference the recent Marine Notices from the DTTAS No. 14 and No. 15 of 2020 which offer a six month grace period for revalidation of Certificates.

In cases where a first certification is required you should access the BIM website and complete the Training Registration Form. If emailed back to John Connaughton you will then be booked on the first available course once this pandemic subsides and training resumes.

Medical Certificates ENG11

This area of compliance is yet another casualty of Covid and yet the ENG11 is yet another piece of legislation which must be complied with. Dorans Skippers Mate has been in contact with doctors in an attempt on behalf of vessel owners to make appointments however below is an email stating the current position of medical practices for the duration of Level 5 lockdown.

"Thank you for your call today and your enquiry re examinations for the fishing crew. I have raised this query with our GPs today and am advised that due to the current pandemic situation that the surgery is at present only dealing with clinically essential consultations at the surgery. All other similar type consultations involving examinations for licensing purposes, such as Driving Licence medicals are having their renewal deadlines extended during this period."

While this is non negotiable under the current circumstances, the problem that you as vessel owners will face however is the

response from the department which states.

"The Marine Notice cannot provide "cover" for those cases where a fisher has not had a medical examination. In cases where a MSO surveyor finds that a fisher has never been issued with a med cert, a deficiency will be recorded."

Once again it should be noted that there is a facility in the Marine Notices for the delay of a renewal certificate but where no certificate has been received this does not apply. You should also note that once the service resumes with the doctors and prior to making an appointment with them fishers/vessel owners should be registered on seafarers.ie and the appointment will be made through the crew person's ID number for processing.

Renewal GNIB Cards

Due to Covid 19 it is not possible to attend for renewal of GNIB to Burgh Quay for those living in the Dublin area. If this applies to you you can check out <http://www.inis.gov.ie/en/INIS/Pages/registration-letter-renewal> for online renewal.

In the case of other regional areas appointments are still available in the local immigration offices. Be warned that applications must be made a minimum of 2 weeks prior to the expiry of the card and up to 10 weeks prior to the expiry of the GNIB card.

Crew Lists

These crew lists are required for all vessels and a copy should be sent to shore prior to departure for all trips. They can be sent to either the business address of an agent. In the case of an incident or accident they will be required by MRCC or Marine Survey Office to ascertain the details of all persons on board.

Your crew list should contain the Departure Date and Port of Departure along

with your destination fishing area.

They should also contain the Name, Address, Phone, Email, DOB for each crew onboard. Next of Kin contact details for each crew should also be included in this crew list.

These should be done for every individual trip and can be sent digitally to your shore point. You may be asked for proof of this if you are boarded.

Crew Agreements

These are required for all crew aboard a vessel. They should contain payment terms for the crew along with other minimum requirements.

Logbooks

The department is currently revising these Logbooks in line with the requirements under the ILOc188 and subsequent SI's and Marine Notices. To date these have not been made available.

Grievance Procedures

Each vessel is required to have an Official Grievance Procedure for their crew. In the event of a dispute this procedure should be followed for the protection of both the crew and the vessel owner.

Work Time Directive

As always the work/rest hours should be completed one month in arrears for each crew person. The minimum requirement is 6 continuous hours and 4 continuous hours in every 24 hour period. The hours should be signed and agreed by the crew and the skippers. In addition you should note that a copy of these hours should be given to the crew for their records. For clarity it would be best if these are sent digitally for future review.



Baby lobster was caught while shrimp fishing in Carrigaholt Bay, Co Clare on New Years Day. In the picture is Dara and Liam Flaherty on board their dad Mike's boat Lily K S629.

Oceans of Online Learning Available at marine.ie

Dive deep into an ocean of online activities and resources available from the Marine Institute's Oceans of Learning series. With over 130 resources available at www.marine.ie everyone can now engage with our ocean from anywhere.

The Marine Institute's Oceans of Learning series offers free videos, interactive activities and downloadable resources exploring Ireland's marine resource - from the food provided by our ocean, our rich marine biodiversity, changing ocean climate, ports and shipping, coastal communities as well as the impact the ocean has on our health and wellbeing.

Dr Paul Connolly, CEO of the Marine Institute said, "Our Oceans of Learning series highlights how the ocean has an impact on our lives every day. From providing food, transport and employment to the influence it has on our climate and weather, as well as our health and wellbeing. In a challenging time, our online learning resources make it easier for those of all ages to learn about our ocean from home."

Discover more about Ireland's marine research vessels and jump aboard the RV *Celtic Explorer* and take a virtual 3D virtual tour. Dive below the ocean surface and discover what lies beneath with the Smart-Bay Observatory, find out how the Irish Marine Data Buoy Observation Network provides crucial data to improve weather forecasts, and explore the science behind Irish seafood.

A highlight of the Oceans of Learning series is an exclusive Irish interview with Kathy Sullivan - the first person to ever experience travelling to both deep space and the oceans deep. Kathy shares her remark-

able history-making story, offering unique insights into her exploration at the extreme frontiers, recalling the experiences of walking in space and charting oceans.

The Marine Institute's Explorers Education Programme also offers lesson plans about the ocean, for teachers, parents and primary school children to use while they are doing their school work from home. For second level students the documentary series *Ireland's Deep Atlantic*, supported by the Marine Institute, features in online classroom resources for Junior Cycle students. Lesson plans and resources on the RTÉ Learn website explore sustainable development, the impact on the environment, the 'Real Map of Ireland' and the importance of our ocean territory.

The Oceans of Learning series has been supported by a wide range of government departments, state agencies and organisations around Ireland. The Marine Institute worked with the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine, Bord Iascaigh Mhara, Bord Bia, The Commissioners of Irish Lights, National Maritime College Ireland, Galway City Museum, GOAL, Met Éireann, NUI Galway, Port of Cork, Port of Galway, Seavite Skincare and Údarás na Gaeltachta.

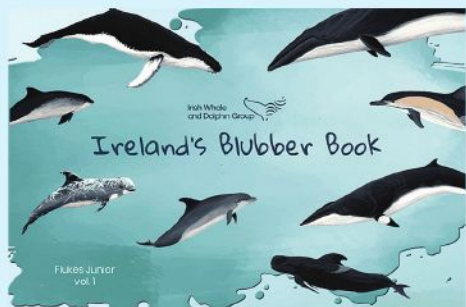
To access all the Marine Institute's learning resources visit www.marine.ie and follow the Marine Institute on Facebook, Twitter and Instagram.

New Educational Resource

The Irish Whale and Dolphin Group has launched a new educational resource for young and aspiring marine biologists.



"Ireland's Blubber Book; Flukes Junior Vol 1" is a comprehensive workbook on cetaceans found in Irish waters for primary school children aged between 9-12.



It has been created to support the aims of the National Strategy for Education for Sustainable Development. By equipping learners with the relevant knowledge (the what), the key dispositions and skills (the how) and the values (the why), it is intended to motivate and empower them

throughout their lives to become informed active citizens, who take action for a more sustainable blue future.

Teachers can use this resource in a classroom setting, by going through the content and worksheets themselves. The IWDG are also happy to facilitate virtual workshops making the experience even more interactive and engaging. Interested schools can contact the IWDG education and outreach officer Sibéal at education@iwdg.ie to enquire about using this new book in their classroom.

The book is also available on the IWDG shop (www.iwdg.ie) for children to enjoy learning about whales and dolphins from home.

Dolphins Around The Coast

There were many sightings of dolphins reported early in the year from many locations around the coast. The biggest number was put at 150, reported from Arthurstown in County Waterford on January 9. On several days in early January a total of

up to 100 were reported in Rosscarbery Bay in West Cork. These sightings were all identified as common dolphins, with a group of 40 sighted off the Waterford coast at Helvick Head and Dunmore East and 27 off Cushendall in County Antrim amongst the sighting reports received by IWDG. Bottlenose dolphins were seen at Sleah Head in Kerry, very close to the shore.



The first stranding reported for this year was of a pilot whale emaciated calf at Trawalua Strand, Co. Sligo, on New Year's Day.

With most of the winter now behind us, we are busy writing up our findings and updating the All Irish Humpback whale Photo ID catalogue.

We are delighted to be able to say that

our gallery of all 109 individual humpback whales recorded to date in Irish waters is viewable on this link <https://iwdg.ie/photo-identification/> During another great humpback year past, the catalogue which started the season with 97 individuals has grown by 12% to 109 animals during 2020. During our Covid induced shorter field season (April-October 2020) we photo identified 42 individuals, of whom 30 were inter-annual re-sightings from previous years (71%) and the remaining 12 were new animals previously undetected.

It is quite possible that we still have some humpbacks at our higher latitudes, getting in some late season feeding before heading towards warmer climes on their southbound migration to the breeding grounds. It is also entirely possible that there are cohorts of younger and also older "post productive" animals for whom the rewards of such an arduous undertaking are less obvious, and some of these may stay much closer to Irish waters over the coming months. These may well be among the "early arrivers" we see showing up off the Southwest headlands in places like West Cork and Kerry as early as late March/early April in recent years.

www.iwdg.ie

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



Handa Isle at Killybegs - Photo by Ronan Cunningham

Without the Political Will to Support Fishing, A Separate Department Won't Help

Independent TD for Donegal, Thomas Pringle, said that unless the Government shows the political will to fight for the Irish fishing industry, creating a separate department for the industry won't help.

Speaking at the Joint Committee on Agriculture and the Marine, Deputy Pringle said: "We had a department of the marine for many years, but the reality is there's no political responsibility. Having a department won't make any difference in relation to that because Fianna Fáil and Fine Gael have never put fishing at the heart of their demands and that's the reality of the situation."

Deputy Pringle said if the Government had shown the political will, "it wouldn't matter if we had a department of the marine or not."

During the committee meeting, Deputy Pringle twice asked Minister Charlie McConalogue how Michel Barnier, the EU's chief Brexit negotiator, and the EU fisheries commissioner had responded to Irish concerns around fishing during Minister McConalogue's recent meeting with them.

In both instances, the minister did not answer the deputy's question, "which I think is telling in itself," Deputy Pringle said.

In the committee meeting, Deputy Pringle said the minister will have to go into Common Fisheries Policy negotiations, "and actually try and get for the first time ever a fair deal for Ireland out of it. It's clear from the way the rest of the countries dealt with the negotiations on Brexit that Ireland has been left behind in terms of fairness and in terms of equity within Europe and always has been."

He wished the minister luck in the

negotiations, saying the issue "is vitally important for our communities right along the coast". Deputy Pringle earlier had called on Government to push for renegotiation of the Common Fisheries Policy.

Deputy Pringle also called on Minister McConalogue to include fishing crews and representatives of workers in fish factories in the task force he is planning to establish on the fishing industry and its future.

"I think their voices are to a large extent lost in this discussion and they're the people who will be immediately impacted straight away in relation to the changes that are taking place here as well," Deputy Pringle said.

Minister Designates Seven Irish Ports for UK Registered Northern Ireland Vessel Landings

'Government should have been prepared with third country ports' Pringle

The Minister for Agriculture, Food and the Marine Charlie McConalogue T.D., announced that he has decided to designate five additional Irish ports for UK registered Northern Ireland vessel landings for both IUU and NEAFC purposes.

The five new ports designated are Ros a Mhíl, Howth, Greencastle, Rathmullan and Burtonport and join Killybegs and Castletownbere which continue to be designated

for landings from vessels of any third country origin.

Under the new designations Ros a Mhíl and Howth will be able to accommodate landings of demersal fish from vessels under 24 metres and will operate Monday to Friday from 10am to 10pm.

Greencastle, Rathmullan and Burtonport will be designated for non-quota species landings from vessels under 18 metres and will operate from 2pm to 8pm from Monday to Friday.

From 1st January 2021, the United Kingdom is a third country and subject to Illegal, Unregulated and Unreported (IUU) legislation and North East Atlantic Fisheries Commission (NEAFC) requirements. This means that any UK, including Northern Ireland, registered vessels must comply with third country landing requirements when landing in the EU, including Irish ports and is a direct result of Brexit and included in the Protocol on Ireland / Northern Ireland. Up until a conclusion of an agreement on the future relationship between the UK and the EU on Christmas Eve, it remained unclear whether Northern Ireland vessels that had access to Irish waters would continue to do so.

The Minister commented, "this is an important decision which will allow fishers in small vessels to continue their livelihoods in a safe manner."

He went on to say "following Brexit, it is important now more than ever, to support our fishers and fishing communities and to do all we can do help them continue their livelihoods."

Any UK Northern Ireland registered boats landing into any of the seven Irish ports will have to comply with additional documentary and procedural requirements than before Brexit. Designation of ports is within the State's authority, but all requirements and protocols are subject to EU

and international law and must be strictly adhered to to gain entry to ports.

The Minister concluded, "I thank the SFPA for its work to putting in place the arrangements necessary to provide for these additional port designations and I am glad that the outcome will mean that many of those fishers who were unable to operate following the outcome of Brexit will have now have the capacity to access a number of extra ports."

Independent TD for Donegal, Thomas Pringle, said the Government should have been prepared with more designated third country ports before this week's announcement. "This is welcome news, but this situation should never have arisen. The Government should have designated these ports in Donegal while the Brexit talks were ongoing.

"It's good to see the Department has listened to fishermen and to their campaign, but the Government knew this was coming for more than three years and should have already been prepared for it."

Deputy Pringle said that designating only the two ports, "was never a feasible situation for UK-registered vessels that are Irish owned and operated".

Deputy Pringle had called earlier for the government to designate more third-country ports in Donegal and around the Irish coast to facilitate Irish fishermen who operate UK-registered vessels. He said that Donegal would benefit from up to seven such ports, saying the situation could be reviewed over time and the designation removed from some ports, if necessary.

Deputy Pringle said: "There was always the concern that the Government would do the minimum to get them over the line. This will make a difference for Donegal-based fishermen who now don't have to travel to Killybegs to land, but we will have to wait and see if it is enough."

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Hugo Boyle – A Great Exponent of the Values of the Fishing Industry

Having decommissioned his fishing boat the De Linn after a successful fishing career of more than 40 years, Hugo Boyle joined the Irish South and East Fish Producers' Organisation (IS&EFPO) as CEO in 2015.

Hugo was, from the start, a great addition to the PO, who with his work ethic, intellect, honesty, and good humour brought the issues of the IS&EFPO to the fore in the institutions both at home here in Ireland and in Europe.

Greatly respected by all who met him, the many letters of condolence and calls to the PO since Hugo's sad and untimely passing bear witness to this, and are replete with words such as professional, honourable, decent, and friendly.

Hugo truly was a good person and he will be sorely missed by many for a long time to come. Certainly his loss will be felt right across Ireland's fishing industry, not least by the fishermen and women of the south-east with whom and for whom he worked so tirelessly.

A cliché at this stage perhaps, however in Hugo's case very true; Ní bheidh a leithéid arís ann. Hugo's loss will be felt right across the industry and we will find it very hard to replace him. We believe we speak not only for the PO, but for the whole of the island in that.

We would like to take this opportunity to express the sincere condolences of all in the IS&EFPO to Hugo's wife Ellen, daughters Alison, Denise, Elaine, Aisling, brother Francis, and all of Hugo's wider family. At the age of 69, he has gone far too early. May he rest in peace.

Ar dheis Dé go raibh a anam.

John Lynch,
Chairman ISEFPO

The fishing Industry lost a good friend in Hugo Boyle. He was a former member of the IFPO until he retired from active fishing but the sea kept a hold on him and he returned as CEO of the Irish South & East PO.

He seen another side of this Industry in this role and used his vast experience to make invaluable contributions



to the myriad of meetings on the administration side. His infectious good humour and big smile will be missed by all his friends. Ar dheis De go raibh a anam.

John Ward,
CEO, Irish Fish Producers Organisation

My abiding memory of Hugo Boyle is the day I met him on the pier at Rossaveal. It was a typical 'nasty weather West of Ireland day' and Rossaveal was doing it mightily – wind whipping down the pier, driving the rain before it. Not an ideal day for doing a television interview.

As my cameraman and myself sheltered in the car, along the pier came a man with a briefcase. Not exactly what we had been expecting on this type of day when we were wondering where to get shelter to record our planned interview with Hugo.

That was solved by following him across one boat, down the side of it, up the side of his with our television gear and into the wheelhouse, where I learned a lot that afternoon about the realities of fishing. Hugo was clear, precise, to the point, about the challenges and difficulties and why he was looking, then, at leaving the industry. As marine correspon-

dent with RTE at the time it was, I noted, direct and to the point. Clear, honest, outspoken, the characteristics which I came to appreciate the more I came to know him.

Skipper and boat-owner, he moved onto become CEO of the Irish South and East Fish Producers' Organisation in which role I talked to him often. Hugo was always, in my experience, direct and to the point, careful to get his exact view across, always with empathy for fishermen and their families, understanding from his own experience the uniqueness of their work.

Every time I talked to him, I appreciated his dedication, how he elucidated the situation of the industry, that the State and its agencies should listen to fishermen and the importance of the industry to coastal communities and to the national economy.

He was a wonderful person to know, a great exponent of the values of the fishing industry as he dealt with its seemingly intractable fisheries problems. He looked for solutions in a calm and determined way, always considerate of other opinions, willing to listen and discuss.

His death is a great loss, coming at a time when the industry needs very much the great work he did for it.

To his wife Ellen, daughters Alison, Denise, Elaine and Aisling, brother Francis, sons-in-law, brother-in-law Eugene, sister-in-law Marie, grandchildren, relatives and friends, deepest sympathy.

Tom MacSweeney

Interviewed in our July 2020 issue of the Marine Times Hugo concluded by saying; "What I would like to see happening is a dedicated Department of the Marine and a Minister for the Marine, covering all aspects of the marine sector, including the fishing industry. The marine is spread across so many departments that it is not properly dealt with or recognised for its importance. We need dedicated, committed attention to the marine sector and that it is not spread over so many departments."

It would be a fitting tribute to him if someone in Government circles started paying heed to his words.

Ar dheis Dé go raibh a anam

Government Must Provide Supports for Fishing Communities Impacted by Brexit

Cork South-West TD Holly Cairns has called on the Government to put crucial supports in place for the coastal and island fishing communities that have been impacted by Brexit.

Holly, who is the party's spokesperson for the Marine, said: "We are all aware of the considerable concerns of the fishing sector, which will see a total loss of €43m due to Ireland surrendering a greater percentage of quota than most other EU states.

"The European Maritime, Fisheries and Aquaculture Fund is a crucial support for sustainable fishing and the economic development of coastal areas. Its predecessor has proven vital in fostering innovations to develop sustainable markets for small-scale and island fishing communities.

"The Minister needs to say when the text of the new scheme will be available to stakeholders and if he will provide stop-gap investments for current projects, as the Government is doing with the Leader Programme.

"There are also ongoing issues around the designation of ports for landings of UK registered Northern Ireland boats. The excessive re-registering costs are simply not an option for many without assistance. In addition, the requirement for 24-hour notice of landing is simply unworkable.

"The Minister needs to ensure the further designation of ports to those already announced and use exemptions to notice periods until those working in the fishing sector have had a chance to adapt to new arrangements.

"The Government needs to address the loss of 15% of our quotas. We should also be told if it intends to establish a decommission scheme. Previous schemes have been at the cost of small-scale and inshore fishing – the type of fishing we need to promote – and to the advantage of larger commercial

fishing. Any potential decommissioning scheme needs to prevent this inequity and not allow the sector to become dominated by a small number of big players.

"I welcome the Minister's willingness to

consider a task force to focus on supporting the sector, which I have been calling for since early in the pandemic. The industry is facing a series of unique challenges that need tailored solutions."



Realt Ara passing Butt of Lewis lighthouse. Photo by Ali Finlayson



Golden Bells II and Tribute arriving back at Ardglass - Photo Christopher Feenan

Full TACs for This Year to Be Negotiated in March

Full-year TACs (Total Allowable Catches) for the EU fishing industry in all fisheries must be negotiated with the UK before the end of next month.

Existing provisional fish quotas set at the December Council meeting of Fisheries Ministers were only for a three-month period ending in March.

Forthcoming discussions between the EU Commission and the UK on setting Total Allowable Catches and fish quotas for 2021 will be the first formal discussions under the new EU/UK Trade & Cooperation Agreement.

New procedures for interactions with the UK are being put in place by EU Member States' for these negotiations.

"As this is the first year of EU/UK discussions on future Total Allowable Catches in our shared fisheries, Ministers

at Council must have a direct engagement in the negotiations," says Marine Minister Charlie McConalogue, "to ensure that the fishing industry and other stakeholders have confidence that their concerns and voices are heard and understood.

"Ireland is fully committed to respecting setting quotas in line with fishing at maximum sustainable levels (MSY) where this is known. For other stocks all available data and information must inform TAC setting.

"In relation to the package of fish quotas being transferred from the EU to the UK under the new Trade & Cooperation Agreement. Ireland's concerns in this respect have been raised at the highest level."

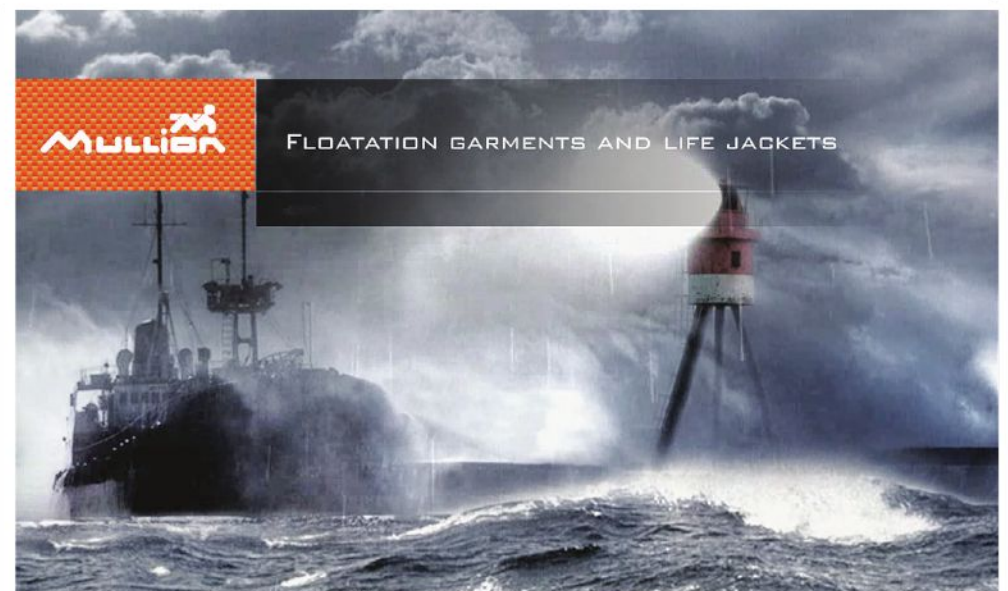
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