

IRELAND'S LEADING MARITIME NEWSPAPER

# MARINE TIMES

OCTOBER 2021 - PRICE €3



Dunmore East RNLI welcomes new €2.4 million Shannon class lifeboat William and Agnes Wray 13-41 to Waterford. Full report on centre pages - Photo © Patrick Browne

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## Task Force Final Report This Month May Propose Cutting Irish Fleet

**Disagreement in Task Force - Is Marine Department Forcing Decommissioning? - EU Commissioner Doesn't Favour Full Reform of CFP**

See inside for full report and analysis by Tom MacSweeney



021 4315700  
 sales@chmarine.com

Newspaper for Ireland's Fishing, Marine and Coastal Communities

Published Monthly Volume 34 No. 05  
 ISSN 0791-1548 October 2021

Price: €3.00 - ISG. £3.00!

ISSN 0791-1548

9 770791 154114



## the fine Art of Marine Finance

by Art Kavanagh

### Priorities Lads!!!

Last month I was discussing the operation of 'Democratic Government' and wondering if we in Ireland actually live in a Democracy at all. I mentioned the various "Cock Ups" which have occurred in the past years and questioned if anyone had been held accountable.

If those of us out in the Real World made such cock ups we would either be sanctioned by our employers or for those of us who are self employed entry to a Black List would be assured - **Accountability and Reputation cannot be bought.**

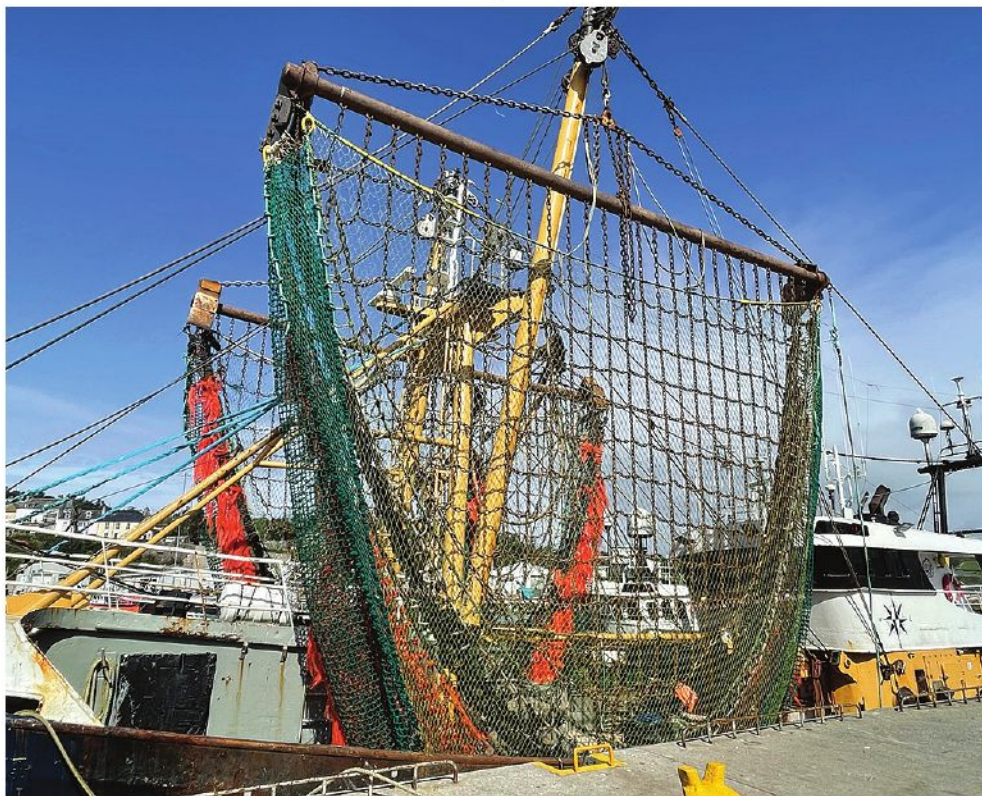
It must be earned and the Minister and his Department - irrespective of actual Department- must have the confidence of those he reports to represent.

Something happened in the past month which prompts me to return again to the responsibilities of Opposition Members of the Dail who appear to believe that their

function in life is to criticise at every opportunity.

In many cases criticism is well deserved as many hairbrained ideas come forward - but - if as an Opposition TD I know that something is wrong do I have an obligation to try to correct it?

Surely, I must know what the correct answer is - and given my salary and the fact that I was elected to contribute to the Governance of the Country- do I not have a moral and fiscal obligation to share the answer.



Gear up at Kilmore Quay - Photo by Brian Motyer

Muttering on local radio stations achieves nothing lads.

**If you have a good idea- PUBLISH IT!**

That way nobody else can claim credit for it.

At the moment, we have a number of serious issues which need to be addressed including the state of our Health System, Lack of Housing and from our Industry point of view improvements which might be made in the prospects for our Fishing Fleet. During the week commencing 13th September however Opposition Parties in the Dail were setting these matters aside to devote maybe two full days on a Vote of No Confidence in a Minister of the Government because he appeared to show favour in allocating a low value job without having run the full process of recruitment prescribed by law.

How many of us consider this a **PRIORITY** matter lads?????

Is this a good use of Government Time quite apart from apportioning the daily costs of the 166 TDs who should be attending the Dail along with their various expenses and daily allowances???

What result of any value apart from point scoring - or even maybe a resignation of two can come from it ????

Will it result in any change in the influence of the **Real Government** who in many cases make Sir Humphrey in "Yes Minister" look like a Choirboy???

Don't think so!!!!

oOo

Despite your concerns, you all continue to work and fish and that is a Credit to you .

Hopefully the final report of the Task-force will be satisfactory for you and that we can get the overall Industry pushing forward and frustrate the efforts of those whose main purpose in life appears to be the creation of further conditions and rules to make things more difficult.

We talk about rules and restrictions from "Brussels" and the "Department" but I have to recall a comment made to me many years ago when I was learning about the Fishing Business - by a well known and well established Fisherman who said that overborrowing was the most dangerous peril of all.

When I prepare a Fishing Plan for a new project, I will always have to satisfy myself that in addition to covering Loan Payments there is a decent surplus left for the fisherman.

There must be something decent in it for you Lads.

You must be fishing for the right reasons and simply to pay the Bank is not enough.

It must be worth your while in the short term- otherwise your head will go down from pressure.

If your head is down - you are looking at the floor.

You can't see where you are going and you will walk into something!!!

oOo

I was a Career Banker and Banking is firmly embedded in my DNA but at the moment lads I am ashamed of what is happening an Industry which was good to me and of which I was very proud.

I am looking at queries on various lending applications which cannot be answered even by someone with a Turbo Charged Crystal Ball. Absolute Rubbish Lads. I say to the Banks - if you are not interested in our Industry - come out and say it.

You won't do that - but you will procrastinate over lending decisions and then attach conditions impossible to comply with to any loan approval.

Attaching what are in many cases legally unenforceable conditions do not make the decision any better

I had to tell a young official recently handling a fishing case that if he does not know his business - not to make it sound like it may be our fault. It's not our fault if the Banks don't understand an Industry which has been very good to them.

I urge them to examine the Grading Profile of their Fishing Lendings and they will find that they match any other sector.

Better learn lads before you start to do more harm - because harm you are doing at the moment

**Take care everyone and stay safe.**

#### BIM New Fishermen Scheme

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## Labour Issues in Irish Fishing Industry Focus of New BIM Study

Bord Iascaigh Mhara (BIM), Ireland's Seafood Development Agency is inviting Ireland's fishing industry to take part in a survey of the labour force as part of a study on current issues facing the industry including recruiting and retaining crew.

The aim of the study, that began in May, is to better understand how crew members working on Irish fishing vessels are employed and how working conditions and benefits within the sector compare to competing sectors in the Irish labour market.

The study is also looking at the different terms of employment within the industry, comparing the relative advantages and disadvantages of different working arrangements for crew and their impact on tax, social welfare and benefits for crew members and their employers.

The perceived attractiveness of the industry as a place to build a career will be explored by comparing fishing sector

working conditions and overall benefits to other competing sectors of Ireland's labour market such as the construction sector.

Once complete, the findings of the study will help inform industry on courses of action that could be taken to improve the attractiveness of the sector to potential crew. The findings will also be used to assist BIM in its future development of training programmes.

**BIM is working with independent research organisation, Indecon, to deliver the study. For more details, please contact BIM Senior Economist, Richard Curtin E: [Richard.curtin@bim.ie](mailto:Richard.curtin@bim.ie)**

## Government Fails to Support Ireland's Fishing Industry – Again

Independent TD for Donegal, Thomas Pringle, has slammed the Government for again failing to support Ireland's fishing industry.

Deputy Pringle said: "I said it in the Dáil last week: The fishing industry has had no support from the Irish government and no support from Europe, either."

Another blow came earlier this year, when Norway unilaterally declared a 55 per cent increase in its mackerel quota. Following the EU/UK Brexit deal in December, Ireland already faced a reduction of 26 per cent of mackerel quota by 2026, with 60 per cent of the reduction applied this year.

Deputy Pringle said: "Minister McCool and the Government didn't talk to Europe – they just rolled over. Which is what they do for the fishing industry."

The deputy contacted Minister McCool about Norway's unilateral decision, and also raised the issue of Norwegian ships coming to Killybegs with mackerel for processing.

Deputy Pringle said: "What are they going to do? Kowtow to Europe, that's what."

In his response to Deputy Pringle, the minister acknowledged that mackerel remains Ireland's most important fishery, saying it underpins the important Irish pelagic fish processing industry in the north west.

The minister also said that he has called on EU Commissioner Sinkevicius to reject completely the unilateral action by Norway. He said that while the EU and UK have an agreed framework for fisheries, there is no such bilateral agreement between Norway (and Faroes) and the UK. This was the jus-

tification the countries used for increasing their share, he said.

**That's not good enough, Deputy Pringle said.**

The deputy has consistently raised the need for Ireland to renegotiate the Common Fisheries Policy, saying, "It is well beyond time that the wrongs that were done to our fishing community as we negotiated to join the EU were corrected.

"They won't do that – the will is not there. Sadly, that's the only solution," he said.

Deputy Pringle also noted that in recent weeks factories in Killybegs have accepted mackerel from Norwegian ships for processing. In his response, Minister McCool said landings by non-EU vessels can only take place in EU ports that have been designated for this purpose. Killybegs and Castletownbere in County Cork have been so designated, he said.

Deputy Pringle said: "The same people complaining about the quota Norway was giving itself accepted that quota to process it in Killybegs. I know they're caught between a rock and a hard place, but how can people stand up and fight for the industry when they're not willing to do it themselves?"

"Clearly from the letter, Minister McCool is saying there is nothing we can do about this and they're just rolling over on it – again," Deputy Pringle said.



**New arrival for the Kirwan family with the Ambitious II pictured at Killybegs following construction at Parkol. Best wishes to David, Niall and all the crew. Two new builds have been ordered for Cork - The latest Irish new-builds are for the Sheehy family & Barrack Point Enterprises Ltd. They will be delivered between 2022/2023 with the Ocean Crest to be completed in Denmark at Vestværfet ApS in Hvide Sande, Denmark during '22 and MFV Wave Crest to be completed in Killybegs by Mooney Boats during '23.**



## Mackerel Landings into Ireland by Norwegians Not Supported

The Irish South & East FPO and its members are asking the European Commission to take immediate action against Norway and the Faroe Islands to stop their unilateral decision to over fish the shared North East Atlantic Mackerel stock.

Speaking to the Marine Times, John Lynch of the ISEFPO said; "In May this year Norway and the Faroe Islands announced their intention to unilaterally increase their share of the mackerel quota by 55% and others will most likely follow suit. This will result in a massive over fishing of the mackerel stock with Norway taking almost 300,000 and the scientific advice being exceeded by up to 42% above what was agreed by the coastal states last November.

"This behaviour is not acceptable from

countries that promote themselves as responsible and sustainable.

"Norwegian vessels have recently landed some of this mackerel into Ireland and the ISEFPO does not support this activity.

"The European Union provides Norway with its most important market for its fishery products such as salmon and whitefish. The ISEFPO are calling on the European Union to act now and introduce trade sanctions on these imports to stop this illegal activity."

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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, says that the One Month Tie-up Scheme announced by the Minister for the Marine, following approval by the EU Commission, with a total budget of €10 million is "paltry" and €40 million less than "what is being robbed from our Coastal Communities each year forever" by the Brexit Agreement between the EU and the UK.**

## The Truth Behind Ireland's Fisheries Tie-Up Scheme and Soon To Be Announced Decommissioning Scheme

*"Those who fought for our Independence from Imperial Britain 100 years ago are surely turning in their graves...."*

According to Minister for the Marine, Charlie McConalogue, Irish Fishing will lose some 26,412 tonnes of EU Quota species each year on a phased basis up to 2026, valued at around €43 million per annum resulting from the Trade & Cooperation Agreement (TCA) made between the EU and UK on Christmas Eve last.

These figures do not include the loss of non-Quota species to Irish Fishing, particularly from the seas surrounding Rockall which increase our losses to some €50 million per annum.

The One Month Tie-up Scheme announced by the Minister following approval by the EU Commission at the beginning of September and which is due to be implemented between now and the end of December, has a total budget of €10 million.

This paltry sum is €40 million less than what is being robbed from our Coastal Communities each year – forever - by the TCA of Christmas Eve. Scrooge would be proud of this theft from the pockets of our Fishing Communities who live on the shores of some of the most extraordinarily productive Fishing Grounds in the world; and yet ...

Even this paltry Tie-up Scheme was required to be submitted to our EU Commission 'Lords and Masters' for their prior approval and a relaxation of Europe's State Aid Rules before Ireland could announce the spending of this once-off total budget of €10 million on our permanently and significantly adversely affected Fishing Fleet which numbers up to 2,000 registered vessels all around our coast.

This grossly disproportionate payment of some €50 million worth of Fish ordered to be made by Irish Fishing Communities to the British in each and every year stretching long into the future will result in huge losses to every segment of the Irish Fleet, both inshore and off-shore, small boats and large, with the scale of Irish losses somewhat acknowledged by the EU Commission with Ireland set to receive over one BILLION Euro or 20% of the EU Compensation Fund although, just how much of that figure will trickle slowly down to our affected Fishing Communities remains open to question.

The €10 million announced on this Tie-up Scheme is hardly to be described as an auspicious beginning!

The Irish South and West has consistently advised the Fisheries Task Force Steering Committee on how the businesses of all of Ireland's fishermen and the Coastal Communities from which they come have been grievously affected by Quota Cuts arising from Brexit, by adverse weather conditions and a dramatic collapse in the price of their produce on the Markets due to Covid.

Many Fishing businesses and fishing communities fear for their very future financial viability consequent upon the imposition of these enormous Quota Cuts

with Fishing Crews worried for their very futures with each passing day as they see the significantly reduced quantities of fish they are now allowed to catch as a direct result of the TCA agreement.

We in the Irish South and West feel this announcement of a spend of a paltry €10 million this year will come nowhere close to replacing the enormous and permanent losses suffered by our Whitefish and Pelagic boats as a result of our native natural resources being used as the bargaining chip by the heads of the European Union at the cost of thousands of Irish Jobs in Fishing Ports scattered all along our coast.

That Ireland's coastline is the most rural and remote in the entire European Union appears to be either forgotten or ignored by Policy Makers and Political Administrators at the centre of the European Project.

What we now fear is that far worse is to follow under the guise of a so-called "voluntary" Decommissioning Scheme that will remove dozens of Fishing boats from our Fleet and strip our coastline of hundreds of families who will be obliged to migrate to our already overcrowded and overpriced Cities. With talk of any such Decommissioning Scheme removing 50 or more Fishing Boats from our Fleet readers should understand just how critical is the position facing so many of our Coastal Communities.

That there is as yet no indication coming from either Government or from the EU

Centre of any envisaged rebalancing of the Fishing Quotas granted to each Member State by the Common Fisheries Policy so that Ireland receives a significant increase in the paltry Quotas we are left with post the Brexit TCA is sending a shiver through our Fishing Communities. All elected representatives would do well to sit up and take notice!

Let me assure the reader there will be nothing voluntary about any Decommissioning Scheme!

Without an immediate return of the fish that was wrongfully taken from our country, repeating the mistakes made in the Common Fisheries Policies of 1983, 1992, 2002 and 2013, we Irish are left to catch a miserable 15% of all Fish in our Waters with 85% reserved for EU Fleets coming to fish here from Ports stretching from northern Spain to Lithuania.

That this 85% of Irish Fish is reserved to Fishing communities in Spain and France and Holland and in Belgium, Germany, Denmark and Lithuania leaves our Irish Fishermen and Irish Fishing communities with no choice, but be forced out of the traditions of Fishing that have been passed down from father to son for generations since humans first arrived on this island some 30,000 years ago.

**Those who fought for our Independence from Imperial Britain 100 years ago are surely turning in their graves.**

## Sea-Fisheries Bill 'Fatally Flawed'

**Independent TD for Donegal, Thomas Pringle, said he did not think there was a need for the proposed sea-fisheries bill, calling it "fatally flawed". What's needed for a sustainable fishing industry, Deputy Pringle said, is a renegotiation of the Common Fisheries Policy.**

Addressing the Dáil during the second stage debate of the Sea-Fisheries (Miscellaneous Provisions) Bill 2021, Deputy Pringle said: "I think the bill is very fatally flawed, I believe, because it doesn't provide proper outlets for people to go to court and having their case met there." He said he expects the bill to end up in the courts after being passed, as expected.

The bill will be difficult for masters of vessels to manage, and he said fishermen will be looking to see the bill is implemented fairly.

Deputy Pringle said: "Because whether rightly or wrongly, the experience of many fishermen has been that the Government doesn't work with them but works against them in terms of how they go about their business. Fishing no doubt is at a difficult stage and has been at a difficult stage with Brexit and with implementation of these penalty points. But fishing has always been at a difficult stage. Fishing has always been put on the back burner and left on the back burner."

He said the only way for fishing to be put on a sustainable footing is through a complete review of the Common Fisheries Policy. He said wrongs were done even before Ireland joined the European Union, when the EU made the conservation of fishing stocks the sole responsibility of the European Commission.

Deputy Pringle said: "And why was that? It was because Europe was fully aware of what we were bringing to the table, and we weren't. There has to be a recognition that the fishing industry has been shafted by Europe and by lack of Government response and support for it over the years. And it's not any one government's fault, it's not any one individual's fault, but it's just the fault of the whole system and the whole system has worked against them."

He said fishermen need a government to go to Europe and change the balance of how things are decided, rather than having the Government go to Brussels each year, "and come back with less again and dress it up as a success".

If the CFP is not renegotiated, the fishing industry will continue to decline, "and it's going to get into a situation where coastal communities won't be able to survive," he said.

Deputy Pringle said: "I think it's symptomatic of the problems that are there that there's been so much resistance to this legislation, but I think this legislation is flawed and I think it needs to be rehashed and dealt with again. We have an opportunity now, in relation to fishing, if we can do this over the next couple of years, we can work together to make this happen. Unfortunately, I don't think the political will is there on the Government side to actually meet that."



Emma Lou at Ballycotton - Photo by Brian Motyer

# A Game of Two Halves

**New trials show that separating catches into two codends continues to be a sensible option for vessels targeting Nephrops and fish species.**

**Dr Ronán Cosgrove, Fisheries Conservation Manager, BIM**

BIM and Stephen Dirrane, owner of the MFV Kittiwake from Rossaveal, recently assessed the dual codend on the Galway Aran fishing grounds. Fishers targeting Nephrops and mixed demersal fish species in the area occasionally experience problems with large catches of gurnard. This makes it difficult to sort catches and negatively affects the quality of landings.

Used to minimise fish catches of all sizes in the Nephrops fishery, a commonly used 300 mm square-mesh escape panel (SMP) in the top sheet of the codend is apparently ineffective in reducing gurnards, possibly because they are a more bottom-orientated species.

Led by BIM's Martin Oliver, the trial showed an 83% separation of gurnard into the upper part of the dual codend. This greatly reduced catch sorting time and improved the quality of Nephrops landings.



Separated catches on board the MFV Kittiwake

The dual codend retained marginally less Nephrops compared with the 300 mm SMP. Consistent with findings from previous trials, this is likely due to small numbers of Nephrops passing into the upper codend and out through the larger T90 mesh.

This loss was at least partially offset by a doubling of market sized catches of hake, monkfish, flatfish and other commercial species in the dual codend. Again, due to highly effective species separation, fish

quality was greatly enhanced.

Relatively large quantities of gurnards retained in the upper part of the dual codend suggest that 90 mm T90 mesh may be ineffective in reducing such catches. This

may be due to unusual body characteristics such as large bony fins, spines and coarse skin.

Under the guidance of BIM's Matthew McHugh, Michael and Patrick Flannery from Dingle also recently tested the dual codend on board

the MFV Cu Na Mara. Initially interested in the bycatch reduction benefits, they liked what they saw in terms of fish retention and quality. They have since made up their own dual codends complete with stone traps and enlarged 120 mm T90 mesh in the upper codend to maximise quality and value of monkfish and other fish species. Larger T90 mesh sizes might also assist in reducing gurnard catches.

BIM and the Irish Fishing Industry



Cu Na Mara crew with a 120 mm T90 upper codend

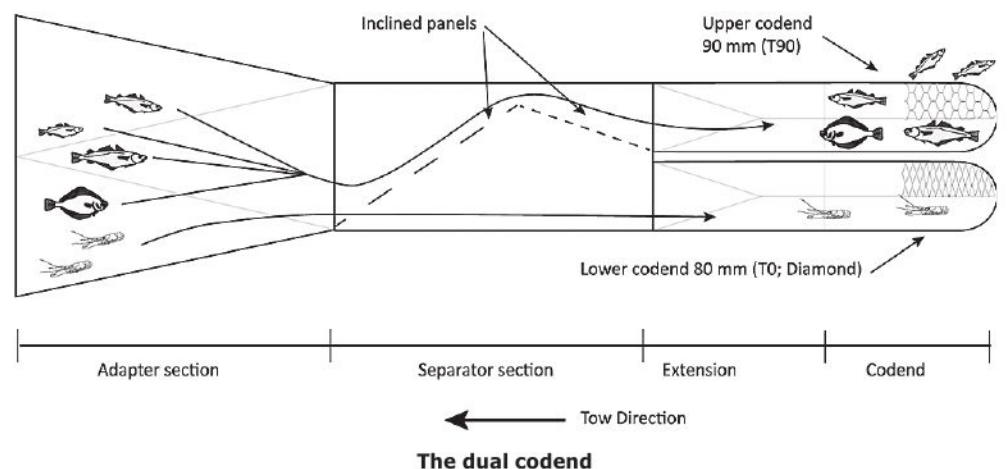
successfully modified and tested the dual codend to address landing obligation requirements. This resulted in its inclusion as a gear measure in the Celtic Sea since 2019. Following on from the successful BIM - Irish Industry post-capture survival study on Nephrops, the gear can be used in most areas as a selective gear option in line with the Nephrops survival exemption in ICES sub area VII.

The dual codend effectively separates most fish catches into an upper codend where T90 mesh of at least 90 mm reduces catches of small fish and retains market sized fish. Nephrops are retained in the lower 80 mm diamond mesh codend. The 300 mm SMP is also permitted in most areas and due to its simple design, is a popular gear option for those with a strong focus on

Nephrops landings.

Full reports on the Aran Ground trial and previous trials of the dual codend are available at: [www.bim.ie/publications/fisheries](http://www.bim.ie/publications/fisheries) For net plans or further information on the dual coded please contact [geartrials@bim.ie](mailto:geartrials@bim.ie)

BIM would like to thank Stephen Dirrane and crew of the MFV Kittiwake; Michael and Patrick Flannery and crew of the MFV Cu Na Mara for successful collaborations. We would also like to acknowledge the work of the Scottish Gear Innovation and Technology Advisory Group and MFV Amity who initially developed the dual codend for use in the North Sea. Thanks also to Daragh Browne, BIM, for technical assistance. This work is supported by the European Maritime and Fisheries Fund.



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# Ireland Demands Action Against Norway Mackerel – As EU Fails to Do Anything

Report by Cormac Burke, Chairman, Irish Fishing and Seafood Alliance (IFSA)

**Last May Norway and the Faroe Islands announced it was taking a huge increase of the shared mackerel TAC, with Norway increasing its share by 55% in defiance of the long standing Coastal States agreement (of which Ireland is a member).**

This has resulted in a new overall TAC for Norway in excess of 300,000 tonnes and currently there is a glut in the Norwegian pelagic processing industry so big that it is believed that Norwegian processors are running out of supplies of cardboard cartons (to place the frozen blocks of mackerel in) and this has led to thousands of tonnes top quality human consumption mackerel currently being churned into fishmeal for animal feed.

The reality is Norway engaged in sharp practice – but equally is the case the Irish failed to take counter action – as have the EU, its light feel kickback always from the EU in terms of fisheries

Given that the other members of the Coastal States and EU Member States are outraged at this ‘quota grab’ by Norway which will mean that everyone else will have to suffer yet another quota cut to balance the books if the overall quota is to remain within scientifically-advised MSY status, there has been much anger in the Irish industry that on Sept 6th 2021, two Norwegian vessels full of mackerel have been allowed to enter Killybegs Harbour to offload their catch.

While Norway is claiming that, despite disagreement with other nations, their mackerel is within MSY status, everyone else (within the EU at least) is classing it as ‘black fish’ i.e. illegally caught fish and therefore classing those vessels as being IUU (Illegal, Unregulated & Unreported) operators.

But, critically the EU control authorities are treating them as no different to any other mackerel quota from their own member states.

After these two vessels were turned away and were refused permission to land

in Iceland and then landed in Faroe Islands last week before catching a further 1,100 tonnes several days ago, some have commented that the Irish fish factory who bought this fish should not have done so - however, there are certainly some mitigating circumstances here, especially that the EU Commission, since this situation arose last May, have made no genuine attempt to challenge Norway on their self awarded quota increase and indeed there has been a serious lack of leadership from within Ireland’s own pelagic industry to advise Irish processors against dealing with Norwegian pelagic vessels - no leadership until now that is, when it appears that its too late on this occasion at least.

While Ireland’s catching sector will always be the priority in this industry, the fact remains that processors are facing a 12-month period of raw material supply reduction by at least 30% and when an opportunity arises for quality fish at reasonable price then they can’t be blamed, when they have not been advised to the contrary, to do the best for their company.

But surely the fault here lies with the EU Commission, Ireland’s Marine Minister and the Department of Marine for allowing these circumstances even take place.

However, without any action the situation was always going to arise whereby these fish would come on the open market and be eventually purchased, in good faith and without any malice intent.

In this instance, and with rumours of protests against the vessels being allowed to land in Killybegs, the Norwegian Government issued a statement to the Irish Government over the weekend to say that any interference of their vessels would be considered a diplomatic incident and, as

always, our Government and Dept Marine immediately caved in and panicked and instructed that there should be no effort of hinderance to the arrival and landing.

It’s just a pity that our Government wouldn’t show equal concern that the Irish fishing industry is in crisis as it does to the vessels and governments of other EU and non EU nations.

If, as earlier mentioned, our Minister and Department sent out a clear statement to the EU that Ireland will not accept what it sees as ‘black fish’ being brought into Irish ports then naturally the Irish processing sector would support this.

And, one must ask, if an Irish pelagic vessel tried to land mackerel that was clearly above and beyond the EU TAC, would he not be arrested and charged on the spot by Irish authorities?

Is this a further sign that the coastal states agreement is just not working.. that the EU quota policies are not working, that the marine sector is not as important to the EU as is having Norway part of the EEA?

If the EU Commission, and our own Dept Marine, had any backbone they would declare the Norwegian pelagic fleet as participants in IUU fisheries and then, under the EU regulation, no IUU vessel is allowed land its catch in ANY EU country, which would mean no landing of mackerel, blue whiting or sandeel by Norwegian vessels in

any of the EU nation’s ports.

And if Ireland is not happy with the lack of action by the EU Commission, it could take its own steps by demanding a national blocking of all Norwegian salmon imports into Ireland.

However, there is another point worth considering here - once Norway broke the Coastal States mackerel stock management agreement and gave itself a rise in quota, the other Coastal States’ member nations will have to carry the burden of the loss of quota — but with the U.K. no longer part of the EU, Ireland will, without doubt once again be set to be the biggest losers as there is ‘no appetite’ within the EU Commission or other Member States to support Ireland’s shocking loss of mackerel quota - just as there was no sympathy for Ireland when it was left with the lion’s share of the burden of quota loss as a result of the BREXIT fiasco.

This is set to become a very serious situation and while some are demanding blockades to stop these vessels landing in Ireland, other people are claiming it will cause huge disharmony among the Irish fishing and processing sectors, I believe that the opposite may be true as the pelagic sector, both catchers and processors, may now jointly demand immediate action from the Irish Government and the EU Commission to make an intervention.

The problem here is not as simple as who buys the fish from Norway, it is far more complex -- it’s our regulators failing to enforce, it’s our policy makers failing to take decisions and it’s our fishery representatives at producer level failing to drive home the message of equality and level playing field for all.

## YOUR INDUSTRY NEEDS YOU!

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

Established on February 12<sup>th</sup> this year as an independent nationwide voice for the fishing and seafood sectors in a bid to highlight this Government’s disgraceful neglect of Ireland’s marine resources and of the heritage and traditional rights of coastal regions, the IFSA has gained huge support already and has a strong social media following on the IFSA facebook group and the [www.irishfishingseafoodalliance.org](http://www.irishfishingseafoodalliance.org) website.

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

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

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

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



**Cormac Burke,**  
Chairman,  
Irish Fishing & Seafood Alliance (IFSA)  
087 3913117  
Email: [ifsacormac@gmail.com](mailto:ifsacormac@gmail.com)  
[www.irishfishingseafoodalliance.org](http://www.irishfishingseafoodalliance.org)



# Inshore Industry Raise Issues with Minister in Kerry

A delegation from the NIFA / NIFO recently met Minister Charlie McConolough TD and raised important issues in the industry with him as he paid a visit to Kerry as part of his ongoing coastal visits, dropping by Fenit, Dingle and Cromane.

The delegation of Kerry and West Cork based members of the NIFA / NIFO met the Minister along with representatives of the NIFF, other local politicians and some inshore fishermen through those local politicians, for a dedicated meeting relating to inshore fisheries.

The NIFA/NIFO delegation raised a number of important issues which were briefly discussed in the limited time available to the fishermen:

The importance of Inshore Fishing in general but especially in the Kerry context, the FLAG South West strategy was referred to, in which its analysis outlined that as of 2016, only 12 of the 258 registered fisheries and aquaculture vessels operating in the county were of over 18m in length. The fact that most of these vessels operate from small harbours dotted along the coast was outlined.

The lack of fishing opportunities available to the Inshore fleet was highlighted. How the fleet had lost opportunities such as salmon, bass, dogfish etc. over the past decades was described and the need to create new opportunities was pressed home. The importance of the 6nm limit, in terms of creating these opportunities was pressed on the Minister and he was urged to pursue the issue irrespective of the court's ruling which was handed down recently. The potential of making additional amounts of pelagic quota was raised as a potential opportunity. The potential of improvements in the Market for Spider Crab, was identified.

The abundance of Spurdogs off the coast, and the potential opportunity they created, was made clear to the Minister. The Minister was aware of our meeting with the Marine Institute scheduled for Monday the 20th. The view that the scientific advice was well behind the reality at sea was put to the Minister.

The issue of Crayfish Management was raised. Given that a public consultation was still running on the subject, the Minister outlined that he could not engage with individuals or particular interest groups outside of that formal consultation process while the consultation was open. This was something we had experienced previously on previous consultations with previous Ministers. The Minister was informed that NIFA/NIFO had made what we believed was a detailed, comprehensive, and balanced submission and that we had urged members to do similar and he was urged

to give them detailed consideration as part of the public consultation process. The importance of the crayfish fishery to Kerry was pressed on the Minister. The Marine Institute and local stakeholders updated the Minister on conservation initiatives and measures for crayfish along the Co. Kerry coastline and outline protection measures for Angel Shark, Skates and Rays, particularly in the Tralee Bay area. A public consultation on the crayfish fishery has been underway since 5 August, to gather views on measures targeted at eliminating the by-catch of endangered species while seeking to secure a viable and sustainable future for the fishery. The consultation concluded on 16th September.

The impacts of Brexit and the difficult financial situation in the Inshore Sector found itself in over the last two years was pressed on the Minister. The Interim report of the Seafood Sector Task force was welcomed, as was the Whitefish tie up scheme which is now open for application. The Minister was pressed on the need for a separate scheme for Inshore boats that would not be eligible for the Whitefish scheme and appraised of efforts to bring a draft recommendation to the Taskforce on the same. Should such a recommendation be included in the final report the Minister was urged to implement it without delay.

The use of 100mm mesh gillnets for Hake by French and Spanish Vessels off the SW Coast and our proposal to prohibit it was raised. As per the action points of the NWWAC meeting, where we tabled the proposal and pending the response from the EU Commission in terms of legal clarity as to which regulation was valid, the Minister was urged to pursue the issue should the opportunity arise at EU level.

Other representatives / attendees raised issues relating to the Marine Survey Office (MSO), which falls under the remit of the Minister of transport and therefore could not be addressed and harbour dues at the National Fisheries Harbours.

Commenting on the visits in Kerry, Minister McConolough said: "I have had constructive meetings with fishers, aquaculture farmers and other stakeholders during my visit to Kerry today, and I thank everyone for meeting me to discuss matters important to their communities. It is a great opportunity for me to hear directly from marine stakeholders who are central in ensuring the long-term vibrancy of our coastal communities."

# MARINE TIMES

## NEWSPAPER FOR IRELAND'S FISHING, MARINE AND COASTAL COMMUNITIES



Editor: Mark Mc Carthy  
T: 087 7989582  
[editor@marinetimes.ie](mailto:editor@marinetimes.ie)



Deputy Editor: Tom MacSweeney  
T: 074-9736899  
[tommacsweeneymarine@gmail.com](mailto:tommacsweeneymarine@gmail.com)

### The Political 'Shafting' of the Fishing Industry

Healthy disagreement is never a bad thing - as long as it is polite and, preferably, well mannered.

In this regard there will be little disagreement that fishing and politics are linked, but make poor bedfellows in this country where fishing is not of primary concern to the majority of politicians who form the current government.

The fishing industry needs stability and has been denied this by successive governments whose priority has been satisfying urban-centred demands, rather than protecting the coastal communities around the rim of Ireland.

The fishing industry has been used to pay for other benefits acquired from the EU, going back to the appalling entry agreement Ireland concluded with the then Common Market in the 70s. Billions of Euro have been paid to the EU through the fish catches taken from Irish waters which have enriched French and Spanish fishing fleets and industries, as well as others, to the detriment of Ireland.

A natural resource has been turned into a 'colonial' one for the EU.

There are politicians who say we should not look back, but forward.

That is difficult to do when the same mistakes made back then are repeated.

The Brexit Agreement with the UK replicates the 70s. Undertakings given to the industry were reneged upon because the government conceded to the EU in the Brexit deal which favoured nations other than Ireland.

Ireland's politicians and political advisors have, again, not given adequate attention to the Irish fishing industry or the coastal communities.

The outcome has been the 'shafting' of the industry which believed government undertakings given to it.

Industry leaders have explained, in detail, the disastrous effects.

It is notable how few government Ministers and government party politicians speak strongly in favour of the fishing industry which they have so miserably failed.



Someone with obvious good taste in choice of newspaper! Hanna Malone catching up on the August issue of the Marine Times. Hanna is the grand-daughter of Dave O'Neill, skipper of the Maria Magdalena.

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# 'Failure upon failure, loss after loss that is what Europe is to the fishing sector Commissioner!'



**Brendan Byrne CEO of the IFPEA**

## EU Commissioner arrives in Ireland as control plan is sent to EU

I am conscious when writing this article, that we are within 48 hours of a visit of the EU Commissioner for Environment, Oceans and Fisheries – Virginijus

Sinkevicius, who is a native of Lithuania, where he was previously Minister for Economy and Innovation in the national parliament between 2017 to 2019, he was a member of the Farmers and Greens Union party of that country. While welcoming him to Ireland, we will certainly be using the opportunity of his visit to Carlingford and Killybegs to inform him first hand of the negative impacts and complete failures of EU policy across all the sectors in Irish Fishing. Particularly, from a processing perspective the removal of the control plan last April, which has led to chaos across all sector since then.

Now that the new draft control plan is submitted to the EU, and we have had 6 months of operating without the right to weigh within our factories, as previously provided for within the derogation to weigh. It will be essential that our Minister, have his homework done and use his influence to obtain an interim arrangement from Commissioner Sinkevicius while he is in Ireland. The massive inconvenience caused by the removal of the control plan is not fully appreciated, but in terms of the shellfish and white fish processors, their existence has been complete hell since April 16<sup>th</sup> last. Minister Mc Conalogue has to seize this opportunity to make the case for the Irish fishing industry and secure an interim arrangement, in order that the autumn landings across all sectors of fishing can operate in a practical way, and similar to what all other coastal states in Europe are doing at present – weighing their catches in a safe, secure environment without any impacts on their quality – they are certainly not asked to weigh in the open elements of the weather without any facilities.

The Commissioner needs to also release all the information surrounding the decision taken by him to revoke the control plan and that must include the 2018 Audit and the 2019 Administrative inquiry and most importantly all correspondence between Department, SFPA and the Commission on this matter for the past 4 years, including minutes of any meetings that took place between all parties – all of this information has to be released to the industry without further delay.

The IFPEA believe that serious questions remain unanswered as to, how accurate was the information shared with Europe by the SFPA? Has it subsequently stood up to EU scrutiny? What exactly led the removal of the control and what is the present position regarding those accusations made in the administrative inquiry, who knew what and when they were told, or who in turn who did they inform, this could only be starting – as the vibes coming from Europe indicate

that a serious cock-up occurred pre-2020 on the part of the SFPA and that needless to say - would not surprise any of us... now, would it. Thankfully, there is a new regime starting at the SFPA so we can build on that renewal of personnel within their ranks because there is no confidence in the past.

Bottom line here has been consistently let's see the evidence and let's have full disclosure.

### BIM presents excellent paper on the future ambition of the processing sector

On many occasions, I am critical of individuals, the department, different organisations and politicians in general and the Government in specific terms but on this occasion after me doubting them some time ago, I must give praise to BIM in terms of their most recent body of work. Bord Iascaigh Mhara presented an excellent paper on future plans and needs of the processing sector within Ireland. I must compliment those that worked within a short time frame to research the information contained in the paper – over 54 projects were identified by BIM. Let's hope now that the seafood taskforce can match the ambition of the sector and provide supports from the Brexit Adjustment Reserve (BAR), it is an opportunity to chart a road map for the entire processing sector that will future proof the industry for the next 15 years.

### It's failure after failure and loss upon loss – is anyone going to shout stop!

Last week, I attended a virtual meeting of the association of European fish processors known as AIPCE -CEP, and the following information was shared in the form of a Eurostat presentation to the group, based on their figures and the data shared reflects the sad reality of how much we have sacrificed in order to become members of the EU – these figures are compiled on the basis of each countries throughput in processing for

two set years -2015 and 2020, as you can appreciate for Ireland they do not take into account the impacts of Brexit yet.

Ireland has experienced a decline in fish processing from €627 million to €325 million within the 5 years alone, we are one of four countries in Europe that has experienced a decline, albeit in the case of the Netherlands it is not an actual decline but rather a transfer of processing capacity to Poland.

The scale of decline within Ireland is shocking, our processing output has fallen by 51% in five years, while Sweden has declined by 18%, Denmark had a slight fall of 3.7%. Ireland accounts for 12% of European Union waters, yet we are only 1.36% of the processing capacity of Europe. This situation I am sorry to report will only deteriorate further, because the table below does not take account of the TCA/Brexit impacts – where we suffered further cuts of 15% between 2021/2026.

We are right to ask how did we get ourselves into this state of decline – we are the second lowest of the 13 surveyed states, only Finland is lower than us. We need to further query why are we in permeant decline for the past 5 years, indeed since our membership of the EEC in 1973 it has been one complete failure in terms of fishing. It's a question more of us should have been asking for the past 15 years – it is a question that should have been higher on the various political agendas since 1983, when the CFP came into effect. This has not simply happened today or yesterday – but it is now at a critical juncture, especially when, as it appears to me there is no corrective action being taken at political level. It is the one constant that forever baffles me, why after witnessing so much failure – nothing seems to change, we are pursuing the same lacklustre approaches that failed in the past, that are clearly failing in the present. Why are we not inserting a new focus or energy into our European approach – this is the basis of a national debate that needs to start because

more of the same is no longer an option.

Change has to be coming, it must be only a matter of when, and for the political powers that be or for those that are too long anchored in set ways or that complacency that we witness towards all mater, fishing will have to go - no nation can let this level of decline continue unchallenged.

For me as a newcomer, it is self-evident what needs to happen or to quote a line used at a recent meeting by an individual when addressing the exact same point as I make here “even Stevie Wonder could see this coming” by the way that guy was a great musician, then again was one of his hits called “we can work it out”?

The first thing about working anything out – is you must accept you have a serious problem in the first case, what is failing us in the Irish fishing industry, is those in authority are self-delusional in that they believe everything is honky dory and perhaps even some of them believe that they run a successful operation. We urgently need fresh thinking and a new focus, because based on the raw data we are getting from our European colleagues we simply are not at the races.

So, as I prepare to meet the Commissioner on the 27<sup>th</sup>, let's hope we achieve something as an industry. Let's hope our Minister Charlie Mc Conalogue has his ducks lined up so that we can obtain an interim management plan to allow the entire fishing industry to function as opposed to the chaos of the past 6 months. Let's hope we see “the actual mechanics of what burden sharing will look like”, and how they in the EU Commission propose to implement it before the CFP renegotiations start, as they are very much separate issues – the legacy of the unfairness of the TCA must be dealt with first before we examine the macro issue of CFP renegotiations.

In short – its much less talk from here and a whole lot more action please Commissioner Sinkevicius.

Countries and total processing outputs	2015 Total value €m	2020 Total value €m	Difference in € m
<b>EU (28) Total</b>	<b>21.045.996</b>	<b>23.747.015</b>	<b>+2.701.019</b>
<b>AIPCE members (13)</b>	<b>19.953.806</b>	<b>22.644.401</b>	<b>+2.690.595</b>
Spain	4.063.503	4.888.462	+824.959
United Kingdom	3.102.057	3.102.057	See footnote
France	2.877.185	2.978.948	+101.763
Poland	2.074.701	3.081.005	+1.006.304
Germany	1.840.822	1.946.503	+105.681
Denmark	1.362.357	1.326.680	-35.677
Italy	1.343.264	1.731.609	+388.345
Portugal	951.461	1.250.441	+298.980
Ireland	627.050	325.030	-352.020
Netherland	579.904	541.900	-38.004
Sweden	535.360	439.800	-95.560
Belgium	435.001	606.973	+171.972
Finland	161.141	273.652	+112.511

Source: EUROSTAT Databank (PRODCOM) / EUROSTAT-E-Mail on NACE 10.20.-

Data compilation: AIPCE-CEP- September 2021.

Footnote : UK figures in 2020 do not reflect total position due to Brexit returns not sent to EURO-STAT. Netherlands figure reflects transfer of processing capacity to Poland.



A man in a red shirt is holding a large salmon in a processing plant. The salmon is hanging from a hook, and the man is looking at it. The background is dark and industrial.

# Supporting the industry



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# RV Tom Crean Takes Shape with Hull of the Vessel Completed

Ireland's new state-of-the-art multipurpose marine research vessel, the RV *Tom Crean*, has recently reached a key milestone with the completion of the vessel's hull.

The RV *Tom Crean* consists of 32 individual hull units expertly assembled to form the hull of the vessel. This phase of the project involved upwards of 70 personnel working at some stages which included the joining of the hull units, installation of the vessel generation sets, electric propulsion motor, deck equipment and the vessel's unique silent seven-bladed propeller. The Wheel House will also be installed this week.

The vessel hull has also been painted in the familiar 'Signal green' colour, and features the vessel name *Tom Crean*. It is the colour used on the Marine Institute's two research vessels currently in operation, the RV *Celtic Explorer* and RV *Celtic Voyager*.

The construction of the new national research vessel continues on schedule and on budget in 2021, with the build process expected to be completed in summer 2022.

The new 52.8 metre modern research vessel, which will replace the 31 metre RV *Celtic Voyager*, will carry out a wide range of marine research activities, including vital fisheries, climate change related research, seabed mapping and oceanography.

Aodhán Fitzgerald, Interim Director of Oceans, Climate and Information Services, and Project Manager of the new vessel build said, "The construction of Ireland's new marine research vessel is making great progress, with the RV *Tom Crean* on track for completion in summer 2022. The next stage of the build focus will move towards the outfitting of the vessel interior, including laboratories, with the vessel's launch into the water scheduled for November 2021. The outfitting will then continue with the vessel afloat."

Spanish shipyard Astilleros Armon Vigo S.A. were awarded the contract to build Ireland's new state-of-the-art marine research vessel in 2019, following the completion of the design by Norwegian ship design consultants Skipsteknisk AS.

The RV *Tom Crean* will provide a year round service for expanded fisheries surveys, seabed mapping, deep water surveys and support increased research in the Atlantic Ocean. The new vessel will enable 300 operational days at sea each year, and up to 3,000 scientist days per year. The new vessel will also enable the Marine Institute to continue to lead and support scientific, high quality surveys that contribute to Ireland's position as a leader in marine science.

The new research vessel will be a modern, multipurpose, silent vessel, capable of operating in the Irish Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ). The new vessel will be able to go to sea for at least 21 days at a time and will be designed to operate in harsh sea conditions. Based in Galway, the vessel will be used by the Marine Institute, other state agencies and universities to undertake fisheries research, oceanographic and environmental research, seabed mapping and other multidisciplinary surveys. It will also maintain and deploy weather buoys, observational infrastructure and our Remotely Operated Vehicle (ROV) *Holland I*.

The vessel has been named the RV *Tom Crean*, after the renowned seaman and explorer who undertook three major ground breaking expeditions to the Antarctic in the early years of the 20th Century which sought to increase scientific knowledge and to explore unreached areas of the world, at that time.

The new research vessel has been commissioned with funding provided by the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine approved by the Government of Ireland.

To follow the build process for the RV *Tom Crean* visit the timeline at: <https://www.marine.ie/Home/site-area/infrastructure-facilities/research-vessels/tom-crean-timeline> or check out Marine Institute on Facebook and Twitter



## IFA AQUACULTURE

In her monthly column, IFA's Aquaculture Executive, Teresa Morrissey, has a direct question ....



## Will the Seafood Taskforce Deliver for Irish Aquaculture?

The Seafood Taskforce has had 13 meetings since it was first convened in March earlier this year, numerous discussions, proposals and submissions have taken place throughout that time, with a final report due to be finalised in the coming weeks.

The Seafood Taskforce report will contain recommendations regarding funding being made available for initiatives in the Irish Aquaculture sector required to overcome the impact of Brexit while achieving the objectives outlined the EU Strategic guidelines on sustainable aquaculture development.

Proposed initiatives should be primarily funded using the Brexit Adjustment Reserve fund to allow the Irish aquaculture industry to become more resilient, competitive and delivers the opportunity to grow sustainably. This represents an opportunity to invest in developing the Irish Aquaculture industry and accordingly offers mitigation against the negative impacts that have occurred in other sectors of the seafood industry due to Brexit.

This is all relatively positive language around the development of Irish Aquaculture and the role the sector can play in providing employment opportunities in the seafood sector for jobs displaced as a result of Brexit.

However, the true test of these recommendations and positive ambitions for Irish Aquaculture will only be borne out in the actions that should follow in order make such recommendations and proposed initiatives a reality. A vibrant, sustainable, resilient Irish Aquaculture industry is not only vitally important for coastal communities, but it is also attainable if the aspiration is matched by realisation of the potential of the sector – *Aquaculture is part of the solution.*

## Extension Of Export Controls

Controls on exporting animal products from the EU to Great Britain which were due to come into force on 1st October 2021 have been extended to 1st Jan 2022 and 1st July 2022.

It has been confirmed by DEFRA in the UK that proposed customs controls and checks for food imports into Great Britain have been deferred to be introduced on a phased basis starting on 1st Jan 2022 for pre-notification and 1st July 2022 for Export Health Certs, Phytosanitary Certs and physical Border Control checks. There will now be no change to trade controls for agri-food products with or via the UK until 1st January 2022.

## IFA Aquaculture AGM moves to Feb 2022

It was hoped the IFA Aquaculture AGM would take place in person at a suitable venue should Government restrictions allow. Having reviewed current Covid restrictions and the further easing of restrictions planned for late October 2021, the IFA Aquaculture Committee has decided to postpone hosting the IFA Aquaculture AGM until February 2022. This is in order to facilitate ease of planning, availability of a suitable venue and in anticipation of the lifting of all restrictions limiting capacity of attendees.

The 2-year term of the current IFA Aquaculture Committee is currently coming to an end and elections may be held for any vacancies on the Committee that may arise. Notice of the AGM and all relevant documents will be circulated to members no later than 14 days in advance of the AGM as per IFA Aquaculture rules.

Looking forward to seeing you all in person in February 2022.

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Cranny Road, Inver, Donegal F94 WC67



# From Castletownbere to the Richest Hill on Earth

West of Castletownbere fishing port on the western tip of the Beara Peninsula is the village of Allihies, located between an impressive rocky mountain range and the rugged Atlantic coastline.

A long way from there across the Atlantic, in May 1852, the Immigration Officer at the Port of St. John in Halifax, Nova Scotia, recorded the arrival of "the brig Garland from Berehaven, Ireland."

He made a note that "most of those on board were miners and their families, travelling onto relatives and friends in the US."

Sixteen years later, in 1868, the Catholic Curate in Allihies walked out of a stormy session of the Castletown Board of Guardians, declaring that "the treatment of miners in Allihies is such that a man who could work and remained in this country is a fool."

Rev. Fr. Moynehan reflected feelings throughout the coastal community that were underlined in the following years, between 1870 and 1880, by a big drop in the local population.

This is one of the fascinating stories which come to my attention about Maritime Ireland.

Skilled Beara miners crossed the Atlantic Ocean. Over a thousand of them worked on what has been called in American history "the richest hill on Earth" – at Butte in Montana - where huge deposits of copper and silver were discovered. In 1900 a quarter of the population in Butte were Irish.

History also records how immigra-

tion brought miners from Cornwall across the Irish Sea to West Cork in the 1800s to mine copper ore at Allihies and teach local people their skills. In 1812 John Lavallin Puxley established a company to operate the Berehaven copper mines. 297,000 tons of ore were exported by sea from West Cork to a smelter at Swansea in Wales. Allihies was a source of shipping and maritime employment.

In the late 19th century things changed for the worse. Copper ore was found in Africa, the Americas and Australia. This caused a fall in the worldwide price of copper. As profits fell for the mine owners, the workers suffered and there were a number of strikes for an improvement in working conditions. In 1884 the Allihies mining operations closed and its exports by sea ceased. At its peak the 'Berehaven Mines' had given direct employment to "as many as 1,200 men, women and children" according to records and more in the transport and shipping of the product.

That meeting of the Castletown Board of Guardians in 1888 was told that "the grinding poverty and exploitation of the Berehaven miners contrasts sharply with the wealth generated by the Puxley family."

Today, the remains of the copper mines can still be seen in Allihies. Its seafaring connections and the area's maritime history are recalled in the Copper Mine Museum in the village, which is using the historical connections to develop links with Butte and



Maria Ryan, Project Coordinator, pictured outside the Allihies Copper Museum with Tadhg O'Sullivan, Curator.

another location of the Beara miner emigres - Leadville in Colorado.

The coastal Parish Co-operative at Allihies is engaged in a partnership with Bord Iascaigh Mhara to build a Coastal Education Hub beside the museum. This partnership is going through the planning process. At present Hub activities are taking place from the museum.

"Support for local business and start-ups is at the core of Hub thinking," says Maria Ryan, Project Co-ordinator at the Museum. "The American connection has long been talked about in Allihies so the Cooperative decided to formalise links already by reaching out to Leadville and Butte and proposed a 'Sister City' twinning arrangement. This has proceeded apace and a delegation from Allihies was invited to Denver and Leadville to sign a Charter of Understanding. Ceremonies will be held in the U.S. and Allihies placing foundation stones for this relationship. Genealogy will form a central part. A dedicated space is being developed within the Copper Mine Museum to trace the many Irish who travelled to the U.S. through the 19th and early 20th centuries."

Maria was born and raised in Cork City and, after spending 33 years in Australia, came back to Ireland, settled in Allihies two years ago. "When I was growing up our family holidayed in the area. I love the remoteness and wildness of the sea. In the summer the area is full of tourists and people to meet. In the winter the weather changes to the well-known 'wild west' with the winds. I really enjoy walking at these times. It also becomes more personal and you really get to know people in each area within the Peninsula."

Showing the ability of West Cork coastal people, Maria has another talent and has started a project using used tyres collected from local garages to make tea cups and wishing-well planters. While in Australia she started to make 'pottery people' (pictured) which she sold at local markets and now from Allihies. Made from terracotta pots they are decorated to "whatever is on my mind at the time." 'Mrs Pots' as she refers to herself in this context can be found on Facebook at: <https://www.facebook.com/mrspotspeople/>

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- WEDNESDAYS 6 p.m.
- THURSDAYS 6 p.m.
- FRIDAYS 3 p.m.
- THURSDAYS 4.30 p.m.
- THURSDAYS 6 p.m.
- SATURDAYS 9 a.m. – SUNDAYS 5 p.m.
- FRIDAYS 4 p.m.
- MONDAYS 9.30 p.m.
- WEDNESDAYS 1.35 p.m. & 6.30 P.M.
- MONDAYS 5 p.m.
- FIRST FIRDAY OF EACH MONTH HOUR-LONG PROGRAMME AT 6 p.m.
- MONDAYS 5/6 p.m.
- SATURDAYS 9.30 p.m. SUNDAYS 5.30 p.m.
- SATURDAYS 9.30 p.m. SUNDAYS 5.30 p.m.
- SATURDAYS 1 p.m.
- SATURDAYS 1 p.m./WEDNESDAYS 10 p.m.
- SATURDAYS 2 p.m.
- TUESDAYS 6.30 p.m.



Maria Ryan as 'Mrs. Pots' with her 'Pottery People'

# Task Force Final Report This Month May Propose Cutting Irish Fleet

## Disagreement in Task Force - Is Marine Department Forcing Decommissioning? - EU Commissioner Doesn't Favour Full Reform of CFP

By Tom MacSweeney, Deputy Editor

*“Those who fought for our Independence from Imperial Britain 100 years ago are surely turning in their graves....”*

When he wrote those words the Chief Executive of the Irish South and West Fish Producers' Organisation must have been feeling pretty angry. Patrick Murphy's office is on the pier at Castletownbere fishing port in West Cork. It is only a few steps from where the fishing fleet is tied up. Many of the boats are tied to the pier because they are denied the right to fish. That is a scenario not exclusive to Castletownbere.

Skippers and owners who have found they cannot continue fishing since the impact of Brexit are considering whether they have a future in the industry.

The government is not seen by these fishermen as doing a lot to alleviate their fears.

The future could become more uncertain when the Seafood Task Force issues its 'final report' which, according to Bord Iascaigh Mhara, "is due to be published within the next month."

There are indications that it will say that decommissioning from the Irish fleet of up to 50 boats is necessary to match catching capacity with the quotas available. "Decommissioning" would represent compulsory redundancy, with an extensive economic effect on coastal communities, fishermen and their families.

BIM, the State agency assigned the task of supporting the Irish Seafood Industry which "helps to develop by providing tech-

nical expertise, business support, funding, training and promoting responsible environmental practices," is Secretariat to the Task Force.

The MARINE TIMES contacted BIM saying that, "from the BIM report to the Task Force, there seems to be an acceptance of the impact on the Irish fishing fleet caused by Brexit and that decommissioning will be proposed in the final report, particularly affecting the RSW fleet." We asked what is the "expectation of the impact of this on the Irish fleet – In the numbers of boats which would be removed from the fleet; the number of jobs lost and the impact on local communities?"

BIM responded that "it is not in a position to comment" ahead of the publication of the final report. "The Task Force will outline initiatives that could be taken to provide supports for development and restructuring to ensure a profitable and sustainable fishing fleet and to identify opportunities for jobs and economic activity in coastal

communities dependent on fishing."

"Supports for development and restructuring..." are interesting words in that statement. But what development and restructuring can "ensure a profitable and sustainable fleet and what jobs and economic activity" to be developed in coastal communities "dependent on fishing" when the bulk of those fishing opportunities have been ceded to other EU nations?

Undertakings have been publicly promised by Government to get the EU to recognise that "burden sharing" must be applied to all EU fishing nations because Ireland has been so badly treated, but there is no indication so far of a positive EU response.

**Bluntly put by a fisherman in Dunmore East, "Ireland is little more than the colonial waters of the EU for the benefit of other countries."**

The figures are stark – other EU nations - French, Dutch, Belgian, Spanish - have 85 per cent of the Total Allowable Catch Quota in Irish waters, while Ireland has just 15 per cent.. Belgium, with 0.1 per cent of EU fishing waters has a bigger quota for prime species in Irish waters than Irish fishermen.

The importance of waters off Ireland to other nations is underlined by the Spanish from the General Secretariat for Fisheries sending its oceanographic vessel, *Vizconde de Eza*, to carry out the Porcupine 2021 campaign, 'which it described as "assessing the demersal resources of this area, which It is a fishery of great importance for the Spanish fishing fleet."

Platitudes have been expressed about the plight of the Irish fleet.

EU Commissioner for the Environment, Oceans and Fisheries, Virginijus Sinkevicius on his visit to Killybegs at the end of September accepted that Ireland paid a "big price" in the Brexit deal. He said he would support the Irish position in "burden sharing," would work with the Minister and the industry but added that everyone would "have to work together to find the best way forward for the next generation."

"It is the present generation that needs a better deal. Will those experiencing the present hardships be around to benefit, if, there is any benefit," was the response of a Killybegs Skipper who preferred to remain unnamed.

The Commissioner was accompanied by Marine Minister Charlie McConalogue and met industry representatives. The MARINE TIMES understands that he was told strongly that the Common Fisheries Policy would

have to be changed, reformed to remedy the damage done to the Irish industry.

He does not favour such a reform which, if to be effective to remedy the damage to Ireland, would impact negatively on the nations benefiting from their higher quotas in Irish waters. It was too early to consider a reform, the time wasn't right, but "I'm looking forward for a review and then we'll see if we need a massive change in the CFP," he said.

So is there any hope of a realistic reform of the CFP?

"The Commission are saying that they're only producing a report and they are not talking about any revisions and that is something that we are not prepared to accept," says Killybegs Fishermen's Organisation CEO Sean O'Donoghue. "We will expect that other Member States and in particular our own Minister's involvement to ensure that this becomes more than a report. We want to see significant changes in the CFP going forward from 2023-2024."

That had been hoped for in the expected review next year.

"What is failing us in the Irish fishing industry, is those in authority are self-delusional in that they believe everything is 'honky-dory' and perhaps even some of them believe that they run a successful operation. We urgently need fresh thinking and a new focus," says Brendan Byrne CEO of the Irish Fish Producers' and Exporters' Association. "Failure upon failure, loss after loss, that is what Europe is to the fishing sector. Change has to be coming. It must be only a matter of when and for the political powers that be, or for those that are too long anchored in set ways or that complacency that we witness towards fishing will have to go. No nation can let this level of decline continue unchallenged."

In bureaucratic fashion, Commissioner Sinkevicius made a point in Killybegs of the Brexit Adjustment Reserve Fund and that Ireland is "receiving the largest part of the funding and has the greatest flexibility in using the money," thus putting it up to the Minister and the Irish government to decide how to use it.

He distanced himself from giving anything other than platitudinous "support to the Minister" in finding a way to ease "burden sharing among the Member States" and in regard to any changes in the CFP 'passed the buck.' That is up to the Council of Ministers and not to him alone as a Commissioner, he made clear.

It would seem that the CFP Review due



Photo by Richard Guildea

next year will not be the rigorous overhaul that would benefit Ireland.

IFPEA CEO Byrne has raised the question of what the actual mechanics of burden sharing will look like and asked how the EU Commission would implement it before the CFP renegotiations start.

Minister McConalogue described the Commissioner's visit and his meeting with industry representatives as showing the Commissioner's "understanding" of what the Irish industry faces over the Brexit deal.

"There's a disproportioned impact on our fisheries sector from Brexit and it's really important that is recognised as part of the CFP review and the impact it has on the Irish industry."

Not everyone who met the Commissioner commented afterwards, but one of those present, who didn't wish to be named put it this way: "He knows very well that the industry here is not satisfied. We want something done about it, not pious expressions of support."

The Chairman of the Irish Fishing and Seafood Alliance, Cormac Burke, was not allowed attend the meeting between the Commissioner, the Minister and industry representatives.

For this report the MARINE TIMES submitted questions by Email to the Minister's office about the Task Force, seeking comment.

We said that "from the BIM report to the Task Force, there seems to be an acceptance of the impact on the Irish fishing fleet

caused by Brexit and that decommissioning will be proposed in the final report, particularly affecting the RSW fleet? What is the expectation of the impact of this on the Irish fleet – in the numbers of boats which would be removed from the fleet, the number of jobs lost and the impact on local communities affected?

"There are understood to have been disagreements at the Task Force about the proposals to assist the fishing fleet and dissatisfaction that the concentration has been on 'bigger boats' and that the demersal fleet has been given a supportive arrangement to tie-up but the pelagic fleet has not?"

"Have Department of the Marine officials taken the view that the only future for the Irish fleet is to have less boats and that the fleet must be cut to conform with an EU attitude to reduce the Irish fleet?"

"What is the view of the Minister of the impact on Irish fishing ports, the fleet, fishermen, their families, the seafood industry if the Irish fleet is forced to reduce the number of boats. Does this not mean that non-Irish boats will have more opportunities to fish in Irish waters?"

No reply had been received at the time of going to print with this edition.

For more see: SOUTH WEST VIEWPOINT from Patrick Murphy on Page 4

"Failure upon failure, loss after loss that is what Europe is to the fishing sector" – Brendan Byrne CEO of Fish Producers and Exporters on Page 8

## Taoiseach Must Intervene in Case of Arklow Fisherman

**Sinn Fein TD for Wicklow John Brady has called on the Taoiseach Micheál Martin to intervene between the Department of Transport and Department of Agriculture and Fisheries to determine why the Irish government has failed to offer compensation to Arklow Fisherman CJ Gaffney despite being offered a solution on a plate by the EU Commission.**

Teachta Brady said: "CJ Gaffney is an ordinary individual, who purchased a fishing trawler the Mary Kate WD30 in 2007 in good faith. It was deemed fit for purpose by several surveys and passed as seaworthy by the Marine Survey Office.

"It was subsequently found to have serious stability issues - tests showed 20 tonnes of unaccounted steel were in the vessel. The family spent considerable funds trying to rectify the serious issues. The funds ultimately were exhausted, leaving the family without a boat or any finances.

"This issue was found to be a fault with this particular type of vessel across Europe, and indeed many EU states have taken action to protect their own fisheries.

"The European Commission previously informed Mr Gaffney that while the issue was outside of their remit, the Irish government would be able to draw down EU funds from the European Fisheries Fund to compensate Mr Gaffney, given the very

unique circumstances of his case.

"The Irish government has failed to do this, and what we have witnessed is a case of 'passing the buck' developing between government departments, as they work to avoid taking responsibility for the matter.

"I have written to the Taoiseach and have asked that he intervene to outline which government department is the competent department to deal with the CJ Gaffney's case. The Taoiseach needs to outline what steps that he is prepared to take to ensure that the matter is brought to a satisfactory solution.

"The Taoiseach previously gave the Gaffney family a commitment a decade ago in the Arklow Bay Hotel, that once in power he would get the issue sorted.

"Now is his opportunity to sit down with Minister Charlie McConalogue, and Minister Eamon Ryan to determine which of them will get this mess sorted to allow the Gaffney family to get on with their lives."

# Sinn Féin **STANDING UP FOR IRISH FISHERMEN**

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### Key Commitments

- Campaign for our fair share of the fish in our Irish waters
- Seek the renegotiation of the Common Fisheries Policy (CFP) with a complete review of current quotas and total allowable catches (TACs)
- Establish a Department of Fisheries and the Marine, with a dedicated Minister of State that will stand up for Ireland's fishing and coastal communities

For more information visit [www.sinnfein.ie/policies](http://www.sinnfein.ie/policies)

**Chris MacManus MEP**

Sinn Féin MEP for Midlands Northwest



**Pádraig Mac Lochlainn TD**

Sinn Féin Spokesperson on Fisheries & the Marine



Captain Shane Begley, Principal at BIM National Fisheries College of Ireland, Castletownbere, Co Cork with staff from the college, Bere Island Boatyard and Daretech Technologies.

## news from **Castletownbere** Helen Riddell

### **New Diving Barge for BIM**

An Bord Iascaigh Mhara (BIM), Ireland's Seafood Development Agency, officially launched its new diving barge at Castletownbere on Friday the 17th of September.

Its spacious deck area includes state of the art on board facilities including a decompression chamber, surface supplied diving station, welfare accommodation and hybrid battery power system.

BIM runs two diving programmes at its National Fisheries College of Ireland (NFCI) in Castletownbere, Co Cork - Surface Supplied Diving Operations and Commercial Scuba Diving Operations. Its Surface Supplied Diver programme is the only one in Ireland and is recognised by the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) in the UK.

The barge began life at Dublin Port but had no longer been in use in the last number of years. It was bought by BIM in 2020 for €1 and moved down the coastline to Co Cork where the team at Bere Island Boatyard reconditioned it to its current glory, under the guidance of Ian Mannix, BIM Skills Director, Captain Shane Begley, principal of BIM's NFCI and Brian Murphy, Senior Diving Instructor on the programme.

Ireland's aquaculture industry is the

main employer of commercial divers in the country. Divers working in the industry are required by law to hold a commercial diving qualification. 16 adults are registered to take part in BIM's commercial diving programme next month. For more details on the programme, visit [www.bim.ie](http://www.bim.ie)

### **Beara Education Training Board**

The Beara Education Training Board will hold a number of classes over the coming months including art, computers, healthcare, cookery, and English language classes.

All courses will be run in line with national Covid-19 guidelines. For further details please contact Noreen by phone, text or WhatsApp on 086 8239147 or email on [noreen.murnane@corketb.ie](mailto:noreen.murnane@corketb.ie)

### **Dr Cranna**

Dr EJ Cranna, who has served the people of Beara for the past fifteen years as an out-of-hours doctor has retired to his native South Africa.

His HSE colleagues praised him for his dedication and commitment and wished him a happy retirement.

### **Beara Film Fest**

The organisers of the Beara Film Fest have announced that this year's festival will go ahead on Friday October 1st and Saturday October 2nd in the for-

mer St Peter's Church, Castletownbere. Doors open at 6.30pm each evening for a 7.15pm sharp screening.

Beara is well represented in this year's festival, featuring up and coming local director Finbarr O'Donovan, Droum Cross with his short Oilean Bheara, Fionn Walshe from Inischara with his short featuring the Dursey Island cable car and Martin Val-lery, Clonakilty with his short Schmuck featuring in the lead role, local actor Ger O'Leary. Saturday night's screening is fully booked, however, a number of tickets are still available for the Friday night screening, priced €5 each and can be purchased from MacCarthy's Bar and from Castletownbere Library.

All proceeds from ticket sales will go to the Cork Street Café for Corks Homeless, a voluntary organisation based in Cork City that feeds the poor and homeless.

Beara Film Fest is supported by Cork County Council Arts Grant Scheme 2021 and Creative Ireland Arts Grant Scheme County Cork 2021, and sponsored locally by Murphy's SuperValu, Castletownbere and the Castletownbere Development Association. The festival is not just unique to County Cork but is the only one of its kind in Ireland.

### **Christmas Newsletters**

The Castletownbere Development Association are producing the 2021 Castletownbere and Rossmacowen Annual

Newsletter and are seeking submissions. Family news items such as weddings, christenings, sports photos, local events news are all welcome. The deadline for all submissions is Monday October 25<sup>th</sup>, they should be sent to [ctbannualnewsletter@gmail.com](mailto:ctbannualnewsletter@gmail.com) A confirmation email will be sent by the editorial committee to acknowledge each email received.

Bere Island Projects Group will be publishing the 2021 Bere Island Christmas Newsletter and are seeking contributions, such as family news items and photos, stories of Christmases on Bere Island from days gone by and updates from all island clubs and organisations. The deadline for all submissions is Friday October 22nd, they can be emailed to [bericonservation@gmail.com](mailto:bericonservation@gmail.com) or dropped into the Projects Group office.

### **Allihies Men's Shed**

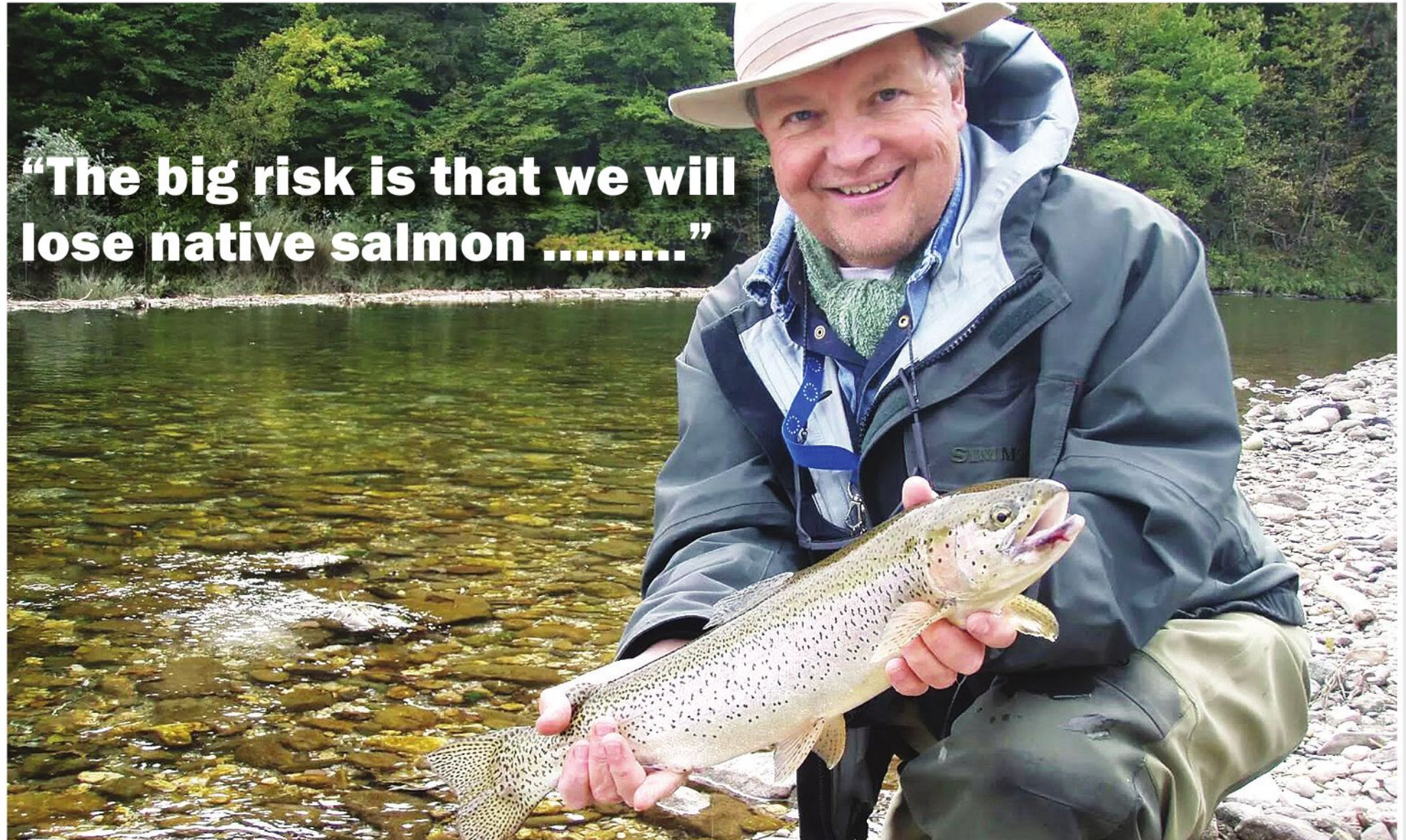
Allihies Men's Shed are looking forward to restarting their workshop activities following a long break of nineteen months due to Covid-19 regulations.

The group are hoping to complete their traditional boat restoration project over the coming months with the hope of launching the boat next spring. The shed is open every Thursday from midday for tea, coffee and a chat. All are welcome to attend and all safety measures will be in place with hand sanitizer at the main door.

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# THE MARINE TIMES INTERVIEW

**Ken Whelan is one of Ireland's best-known and leading fisheries scientists. He has extensive international experience and has worked with commercial fishing and the recreational angling sector in studying salmon, about the survival of which there has been controversy and bitter disagreement between the two sectors. In this month's interview he discusses the threats to the future of salmon with MARINE TIMES Deputy Editor, Tom MacSweeney.**



**“The big risk is that we will lose native salmon .....**”

**“There were very large commercial fisheries for salmon in years past in many countries. Ireland was one, so was Canada, there was a fishery in Scotland and fisheries in Norway and Russia,” Ken Whelan recalls.**

“To a very large extent most of the bigger commercial fisheries have, in fact, been closed down. That was a huge change. I worked for a whole Summer with the commercial fishermen down in Kenmare, (Co.Kerry) and I saw the skills and the expertise that these fishermen had and that was replicated all over the country,” he tells me. “I saw that also at a later stage in Donegal, the ability to make nets and boats and to lose all that was absolutely tragic, but there was no option but to remove those nets because the numbers of salmon were plummeting. Even with the commercial nets to a large extent gone, we are still seeing a situation where survival at sea of the salmon is extraordinarily poor.”

The survival of salmon, a species which is regarded as a ‘premier’ fish, is in doubt, particularly the native species in Irish waters. The core issue is whether salmon, which have been around in various forms for millions of years, will have the time to adapt to the threat they now face from changes in the oceans.

Ken Whelan has spent a lifetime in fisheries scientific work. He has been Chief Executive of the Salmon Research Agency, Director of the Marine Institute, Adviser

to various Government Departments on salmon, fin fish aquaculture, fish habitats, freshwater and recreational fisheries, was Chairman of the International Atlantic Salmon Research Board and President of NASCO, the North Atlantic Salmon Conservation Organisation established in 1984 to “conserve and restore Wild Atlantic Salmon.”

Discussing salmon leads to controversy, criticism, disagreement over policies to protect the species and impinges on salmon farming, effects on the wild species, escapes from aquaculture projects.

It is evident that there is a threat to the future of the species. Ken Whelan has no doubt about that. He refers to the Newport Research centre run by the Marine Institute at Burrishoole in County Mayo, which I have been to. From research data going back to the 50s, he tells me: “We can see what has been happening. There has been considerable change over the decades in the seas, in air temperatures, water temperatures, currents, the movement of the seas.”

Irish salmon are Atlantic salmon and spend their juvenile phase in rivers before migrating to sea to grow and mature. To complete their life cycle, I was told at Burrishoole, they must return to their river of origin to spawn.

“When salmon were doing really well, back in the 60s, my Dad used to tell me about frying salmon instead of cod with his fish and chips. If you look at the catch records you can see why. We were probably seeing one million salmon off the Irish coast at that stage. There are probably

somewhere in the region of 250,000 salmon coming back to the Irish coast now. In terms of the number of salmon at sea there would probably have been between eight and ten million at its peak in the 60s from all countries in the North Atlantic. We are now down to less than three million. The numbers are very stark. That’s why people have taken extraordinary action to see can the stocks that remain be conserved and protected.”

So will salmon survive the challenges they face, even if they have been around for millions of years?

“They are really good at adapting, but the question is do they have the time? That is worrying because of the pace of change. At the moment we’re focusing on where the salmon live. In terms of adapting to very warm conditions in Ireland, France, Spain for example, they’re probably at great risk as a result of increasing temperatures. They are doing relatively well in the Northern countries so the temperatures changes that we see in the oceans are not as severe for the stocks that live in the rivers in Northern Norway and in Russia. What I think is that if conditions continue to remain suitable in those areas we may very well lose some of the population of salmon that live in our particular area. Salmon will continue to survive and will take their time and adapt. The big risk is that we will lose them from our rivers. We need to get as many high quality smolts out into the ocean as we possibly can, to some extent at least answer the effects of the changes in the oceans and balance the losses at sea.”

# Dunmore East RNLI Welcomes New €2.4 Million Shannon Class Lifeboat to Waterford



Photo © Patrick Browne



(Above): A proud day - Coxswain Roy Abrahamsson with his daughter Eva.  
(Below): Deputy Coxswain Neville Murphy with his wife Melissa and three children Ben, Eoin and Dylan. [All photos © Patrick Browne]



A new addition to lifesaving in the South-East of the country, arrived on Sunday 26th September, when Dunmore East RNLI brought their €2.4 million Shannon class lifeboat to its new home. A six-person lifeboat crew from Dunmore East RNLI travelled to collect the state-of-art lifeboat from the RNLI's All-Weather Lifeboat Centre in Poole earlier in the week, before making the journey home onboard the new vessel.

A warm welcome awaited the crew as lifeboats from Kilmore Quay and Fethard RNLI formed a guard of honour, alongside the station's retiring Trent class lifeboat *Elizabeth and Ronald*, which has been on service since 1996. Irish Coast Guard Helicopter Rescue 117 was also in attendance overhead as was Dunmore East Coast Guard and the local Fire Service.

The new lifeboat is to be named *William and Agnes Wray* and it's the first of its class to be based in the south-east. Its arrival was a particularly special day for two of Dunmore East's lifeboat crew. Coxswain/Mechanic Roy Abrahamsson brought the new Shannon class lifeboat into Dunmore East harbour, just as his late father, Coxswain/Mechanic Walter Abrahamsson, did before him, when he was onboard the Trent class lifeboat which came to Dunmore East in 1996. This is also the third all-weather lifeboat that Brendan Dunne, a volunteer crewmember with the RNLI for 36 years, will have served on. Brendan was lifeboat crew on the Waveney Class *St. Patrick* and the Trent class *Elizabeth and Ronald*.

The arrival of the new lifeboat means a demanding training schedule for the entire station in the weeks ahead. The Trent class lifeboat *Elizabeth and Ronald* will remain on call until lifeboat crew are familiar with their new lifeboat, and they officially inform the Coast Guard that the *William and*

*Agnes Wray* is on service, and that *Elizabeth and Ronald* has been stood down.

The Shannon class lifeboat is the first modern all-weather lifeboat to be propelled by waterjets instead of traditional propellers, making it the most agile and manoeuvrable all-weather lifeboat in the RNLI's fleet. The naming of the Shannon class of lifeboat follows a tradition of naming lifeboats after rivers and it's the first time an Irish river has been chosen. It was chosen by the RNLI to reflect the commitment and dedication of Irish lifeboat crew over generations.

Commenting on the arrival, Dunmore East RNLI Coxswain Roy Abrahamsson said, "This is a very proud moment for the lifeboat crew, the station's fundraisers and the community of Dunmore East. While we have huge affection for our current Trent class lifeboat, which has served us so well and brought many people home, we are thrilled to receive a state-of-the-art Shannon class lifeboat, the first of its type to be based in the South-East. It's a huge investment by the RNLI in lifesaving for this area and will help us to continue to save lives at sea for generations to come."

*The Marine Times extend their best wishes to all at Dunmore East RNLI and indeed the wider RNLI family around the coast - a big thank you for your tireless and selfless work.*





(Above): Crewmembers of Dunmore East RNLI, Brendan Dunne and (Below) Peter Curran.

Crewmember Alex Colman with his wife Gillian and daughter Juliet. Photos © Patrick Browne



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## Mixed Reaction to €10m Support Scheme Which Only Covers Demersal Fleet

The European Commission's approval of a €10 million support scheme to support the fishing industry over the bad Brexit deal applies only to demersal fleet and does not cover the pelagic fleet which suffered the most severe affects.

The Chief Executive of the Killybegs Fishermen's Organisation welcomed the scheme, with reservations over the delay in implementing it and the exclusion of pelagic boats.

"We can now bring in the temporary tie-up scheme for 220 demersal vessels that can tie-up for a month between October and December of this year and will get a fair compensation for that month," he told the MARINE TIMES.

"The Minister and Government had accepted the Task Force recommendation that we would have a temporary tie up scheme for the demersal vessels for the end of this year. Because it is coming under the Brexit Adjustment Reserve Fund it had to get State aid approval from Brussels, France had already got aid. They submitted their application earlier this year and they got approval in April.

"We were looking for this to happen earlier. I'm happy that we got this approval disappointed though that it didn't come earlier, so that we could have started the scheme on the first of September and October.

"The other thing to note is that while, obviously, we welcome this very much, it only covers the demersal fleet. It does not cover the pelagic fleet which has suffered the huge losses, two-thirds of the losses are by the pelagic fleet and we are certainly insisting that there has to be a scheme to cover the pelagic fleet as well.

"This paltry sum is €40 million less than what is being robbed from our Coastal Communities each year – forever - by the TCA of Christmas Eve," said Patrick Murphy, CEO Irish South and West FPO, commenting on the scheme. "Even this paltry Tie-up Scheme was required to be submitted to our EU Commission 'Lords

and Masters' for their prior approval and a relaxation of Europe's State Aid Rules before Ireland could announce the spending of this once-off total budget of €10 million on our permanently and significantly adversely affected Fishing Fleet. It is hardly to be described as an auspicious beginning."

The Department of the Marine said that the "aim of the scheme is to save part of the Irish reduced fishing quota for other vessels, while the beneficiaries temporarily suspend their activities. The compensation will be granted as a non-refundable grant, calculated on the basis of gross earnings averaged for the fleet size, excluding the cost of fuel and food for the crew of the vessel. Each eligible company will be entitled to the support for up to a month in the period between 1 October to 31 December 2021."

Minister for the Marine Charlie McCauley said the scheme will help mitigate the impacts of quota cuts on the fishing fleet arising from the Trade and Cooperation Agreement agreed in December between the European Union and the UK. "The scheme delivers on a recommendation of the Seafood Sector Task Force in its June 2021 Interim Report. It is targeted at white fish vessels in the Polyvalent and Beam Trawl segments. It invites vessels in the polyvalent and beam trawl segments to tie-up for a one-month period during October to December. These vessels would tie-up at the quayside and cease all fishing activity for that month. In return, the vessel owner would receive a payment compensating for the lost fishing income. The vessel owners will in turn be required to distribute one third of that payment to crew. The following payment rates will apply."

**The Scheme will be administered by Bord Iascaigh Mhara. Details at <https://bim.ie/fisheries/funding/>**



**BIM's Taste the Atlantic Ambassador Programme is an exciting initiative created by Bord Iascaigh Mhara in partnership with Chef Network to drive awareness of the provenance of Irish seafood among young and aspiring chefs. All of the Ambassadors will receive one-to-one mentoring with one of Ireland's leading seafood producers along the Wild Atlantic Way. (Above): Chef, Sarah Browne, was paired with Mulroy Bay Mussels and is pictured here with husband and wife team Hugh and Brigid Wilhare of Mulroy Bay Mussels. Mulroy Bay Mussels, is a family-run business, dedicated to the sustainable production of high-quality mussels for over 30 years. Mulroy Bay Mussels supply their product to many restaurants along the Taste the Atlantic route.**

**(Below): Lucas Serpa Maciel Lisboa is originally from Brazil and having moved to Ireland is Junior Chef de Partie at Bunnyconnellan Coastal Restaurant in Myrtleville, Co. Cork. Lucas has been paired with Anthony Cresswell of Ummera Irish Smokehouse. For nearly fifty years Ummera has built up an enviable reputation for producing some of the finest smoked salmon available, using Irish organically reared salmon.**



## Installation of Roger Casement Statue at Dún Laoghaire Baths

The long-anticipated statue of Roger Casement has been lifted into place at the end of the new jetty at the Dún Laoghaire Baths project which is currently under construction. The statue was commissioned by Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown County Council and commemorates Casement who was born in Sandycove in 1864, became an early international human rights campaigner and who was executed for his part in the 1916 Rising.

Speaking at the arrival of the sculpture to the site, An Cathaoirleach Lettie McCarthy, said 'I am delighted to see this sculpture of Roger Casement being lifted into place. It is a remarkable piece that will undoubtedly become a focal point of interest. Its arrival also marks further progress on the redevelopment of the Dún Laoghaire Baths area.'

The statue was created by sculptor Mr Mark Richards FRSS following an open competition and is a representational bronze, standing over 3m tall.

Works at the Dún Laoghaire

Baths site are now significantly advanced. Completion was expected in December 2021 but due to Covid and other site factors, the project is likely to be delivered in late Spring 2022. When complete the project will provide for the continuing public use of the area. The current projected cost is €13.5m which includes the refurbishment of the existing Baths Pavilion, constructing a new jetty to give easy access to the water for swimming and the creation of a new route between Newtownsmith and the East Pier. This walkway will be at a level that will create a safe and secure walk offering panoramic views over Scotsman's

Bay. The form of this walk will reflect the original rocky shoreline and the historic alignment of the old gun battery that was originally located on this site. The walkway will incorporate sitting and viewing points and the land adjoining this walk will be re-graded to create sloping grassed areas. The scheme also includes the refurbishment of the historic small gazebo situated along this route.



The former Pavilion building has been

substantially refurbished to provide studio space for artists and to provide gallery and café facilities overlooking Scotsman's Bay. The original Baths entrance along Windsor Terrace is being restored to provide access to the building while an outdoor 'café terrace' linked to the new café will provide an attractive sitting area for viewing, eating and relaxing.

The Pavilion will also provide a new public toilets Changing Places facility and will be accessible for wheelchair users.

## Bord Bia & Aoibhín Garrihy Team Up to Promote Irish Whitefish

### New campaign highlights quality and versatility of Irish whitefish

As Ireland's seafood industry continues to face challenges in the wake of Covid-19, Bord Bia has teamed up actress and presenter Aoibhín Garrihy to launch a new campaign to encourage consumers to buy and eat more locally caught more Irish whitefish.



Tadgh O'Meara, Kish fish with Aoibhín Garrihy at Howth to promote Irish whitefish.

Although the whitefish market was significantly challenged by Covid-19, the Irish market was a lifeline for fishermen and producers as retail sales benefited from increased seafood consumption. Bord Bia is calling on consumers to continue to embrace Irish whitefish and try something different with locally caught hake, haddock and whiting.

As part of the campaign, Bord Bia has partnered with actress, presenter and Doolin dweller, Aoibhín Garrihy to promote the many benefits of eating Irish whitefish. Aoibhín, whose family has long been involved in the Irish fishing industry, travelled to Howth, Co. Dublin to meet with Tadgh O'Meara, owner of Kish Fish, one of Ireland's leading seafood suppliers, to learn about what makes Ireland's coastline so plentiful in quality whitefish.

Speaking about her participation in the campaign, Aoibhín commented, "As the last 18 months has given me a renewed appreciation for all that our wonderful coastline has to offer, I'm delighted to work with Bord Bia to discover what makes Irish whitefish like hake, haddock and whiting such a high-quality and nutritious ingredient. It was really interesting to learn that Ireland's unique position on the west coast of Europe means it enjoys some of the richest fishing grounds in the world and it's clear that Irish fishermen and fishmongers work incredibly hard to ensure consumers have access to

the freshest whitefish. During this process I've seen that there are so many different ways to cook with whitefish and I can't wait to try some new recipes in the kitchen this autumn!"

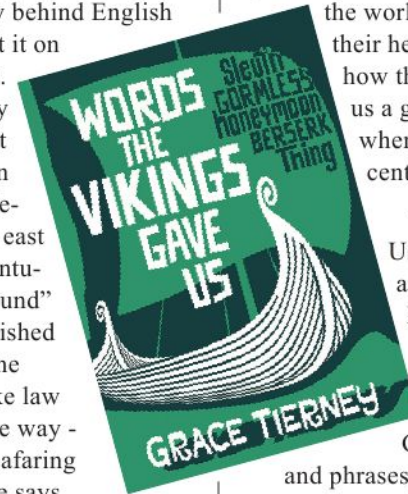
Bord Bia Brand Manager Hylda Adams explains the backdrop to the campaign: "Although whitefish exports for 2020 fell by 8% compared to 2019, it was really encouraging to see the Irish public continue to support the sector through domestic consumption. During this campaign we're calling on the public to get cooking with Irish whitefish and try it in a new dish. Bord Bia's Thinking House found that since September 2020 there was a steady increase in people eating whitefish at home at least once a week. We hope to see that trend continue, as more consumers become inspired to try out our range of recipe ideas and add Irish whitefish to their diets."

Packed with protein and low in fat, Irish hake, haddock and whiting is quick and easy to prepare, making it an essential part of a balanced diet. From hake, broccoli & cheddar cheese bake to whiting with a herb crust, Bord Bia has a suite of delicious whitefish recipes on [BordBia.ie](http://BordBia.ie) that are perfect for those who want to cook simple yet nutritious meals or a showstopping main when entertaining family and friends. Log on to [BordBia.ie/Fish](http://BordBia.ie/Fish) or search 'Bord Bia Fish Recipes' to discover recipe inspiration.

## Words the Vikings Gave Us

Grace Tierney, an author writing in Stamullen, Meath, has released her third book about the history of words. This time she's exploring the influence of Old Norse and our Viking heritage on the English we speak today. Grace, a native of the Viking city of Dublin, who moved to the Meath coast in 2005 says she was surprised by how much of an influence the Vikings had on how we speak.

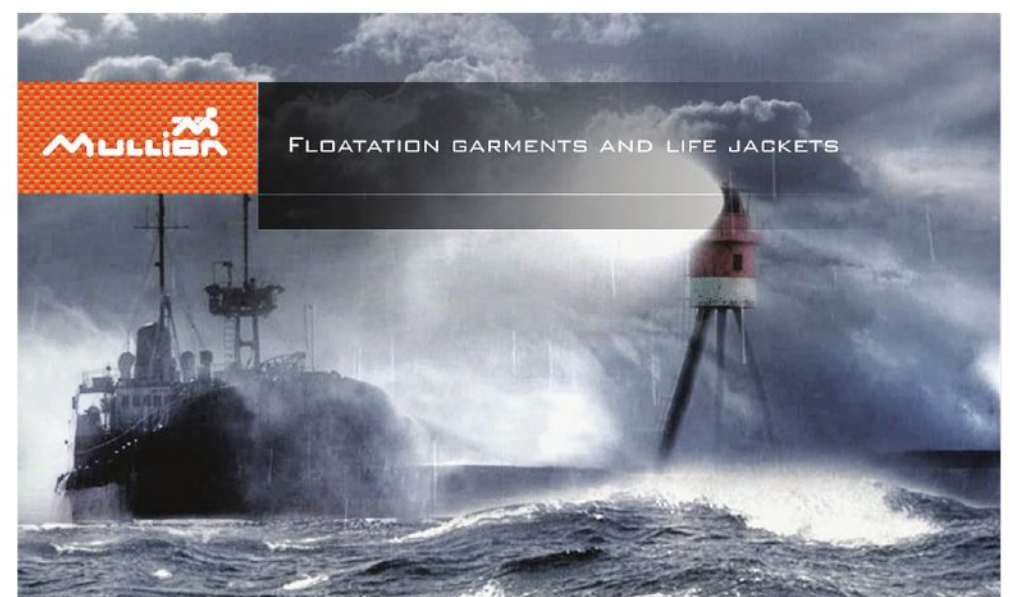
"I've been blogging every Monday ([www.wordfoolery.wordpress.com](http://www.wordfoolery.wordpress.com)) for 12 years about the history behind English words, and chatting about it on LFM radio each month. Viking history shows they were much more than just raiders. They traded down the Silk Roads, built settlements from Russia in the east to Canada in the west (centuries before Columbus "found" the Americas), and established the oldest parliament in the world giving us words like law and ombudsman along the way - not exactly the lawless seafaring hooligans we expect," she says.



modern approach to women's rights, the operatic costume designer who convinced the world Vikings wore horns on their helmets (they didn't), and how the word enthralling gives us a grim glimpse into the time when Dublin was a slave trading centre.

"Words The Vikings Gave Us" is out now in paperback and ebook (Amazon, Kindle, Kobo, signed copies from the author's blog, etc), along with her earlier books - "Words the Sea Gave Us" (nautical words and phrases, with a side order of pirates) and "How To Get Your Name In The Dictionary" (the stories of the people whose names entered the dictionary, from Casanova to Zeppelin).

What's next for this self-confessed word geek who writes her books while mentoring writers in Louth and Meath on the National Novel Writing Month ([www.nanowrimo.org](http://www.nanowrimo.org)) challenge every November? She's already researching festive traditions, words, and phrases for the next book in the series, "Words Christmas Gave Us".



## Designed for and by fishermen

For further info contact Adrian Towey

Sioen Ireland

**SIOEN**

Tel: 074-95 31169

Fax: 074-95 31591

[adrian.towey@sioen.be](mailto:adrian.towey@sioen.be)

[www.mullion.be](http://www.mullion.be)

# Marine Meets Medtech at the National Aquarium of Ireland

## CÚRAM launches new exhibit showing how medical device research is aided by marine resources

CÚRAM, the SFI Research Centre for Medical Devices based at NUI Galway, has launched a new public exhibition showcasing how marine resources can aid medical device research.

Guest speakers attending the launch were Mayor of Galway City, Collette Connolly and Filmmaker Ken O'Sullivan.

The marine-inspired display at Galway Atlantaquaria, the National Aquarium of Ireland, shows how scientists are studying sponge slime to fight cancer and harmful microbes; using algae for controlled release of medicine; and copying barnacle glue to create surgical glue.

Visitors can browse information panels, tanks and models of marine resources that are used in medical device research.

Professor Abhay Pandit, Scientific Director at CÚRAM, said: "We're delighted to partner with Galway Atlantaquaria to showcase an exciting aspect of medical device research and we look forward to continuing the collaboration and developing the exhibit and associated educational resources for schools and families over the coming years."

Liam Twomey, Director at the National Aquarium, said: "Galway Atlantaquaria continues its collaboration with state and semi-state organisations. Our technical know-how and good design links with Anchor Studios have resulted in a superb new exhibit that has already started to draw attention from aquarium visitors. We look forward to continued engagement with CÚRAM over the coming years."

CÚRAM's research is focused on developing innovative and smart medical devices and implants that will benefit patients with chronic ailments such as cardiovascular, musculoskeletal and neural diseases.

This new exhibit investigates how marine-inspired medtech research can heal the body. It also ties in with Galway Atlantaquaria's education programme and reinforces the message of the importance of ocean health and conservation.

The exhibit is located on the upper floor of the National Aquarium and is fully accessible.

Dr Sarah Gundy, CÚRAM's coordinator of content development for the exhibit, said: "If we lose the biodiversity of our oceans, we also lose potential ways to help fight diseases. Keeping our oceans healthy helps us discover new ways of developing medical therapies, which, in turn, keeps us healthy."

Dr Nóirín Burke, Director of Education at Galway Atlantaquaria, said: "Working with the team at CÚRAM on this exhibit has been such a positive experience. The oceans are part of our lives, from the air we breathe, the water we need to survive, and the food we eat. The connection between the ocean's health and our health cannot be overstated and launching an exhibit which helps people explore this relationship is so important for the aquarium team."



Mayor of Galway City, Colette Connolly with Dr Nóirín Burke of Galway Atlantaquaria, Filmmaker Ken O'Sullivan and Professor Abhay Pandit, Scientific Director of CÚRAM, NUI Galway.

# Exploiting Irish Fishermen - the EU's Common Fisheries Policy

Irish Fishing Communities have documented their stories to raise awareness amongst our TD's and the general public of the continuing theft of our greatest natural resource by our EU neighbours.

Following on from the protest flotillas held in Cork and Dublin earlier this year. Irish Fishermen have enlisted the help of Sean Moroney, Santander Media from Kilmore Quay to document and highlight the continuing issue of the unfair and disproportionate share of fish that Irish boats can catch in our own waters.

Sean Moroney is the creator of The Fishers Voice, a social media initiative created to garner support for the plight of Irish fishermen who feel they go unheard by our government and representatives. With the support of Niall Duffy, Editor of The Skipper, Sean travelled the country to record the voices of Irish fishing communities in crisis.

The result of this collaboration is a 26 minute documentary that was screened to TD's and media on 29<sup>th</sup> September at Buswells Hotel before being released on social media to the public.

Five months in the making, this documentary lifts the lid on decades of unfairness, whereby the EU, under the Common Fisheries Policy, allocated the lion's share 85% of the Total Allowable Catch (Quota) to the mainland European countries, despite the majority of this fishing taking place in Irish Waters.

You will see the effect on entire coastal communities of Irish fishermen denied the

equal rights and equal opportunities to fish in our own Irish Waters, while having to watch French, Dutch, Belgian, Spanish and other EU vessels land tens of thousands of tons of fish on Irish piers and drive them away in trucks, for processing in Europe, all with the full backing of the Irish government over decades.

Belgium, as a case in point, has 0.1% of EU fishing grounds while Ireland has 10%. Yet the Belgian fleet has a greater quota for some prime species in Irish waters than local Irish fishermen.

In the documentary, individual fishermen and business owners, who rely on the fishing industry for their income, speak out about how the continuing lack of access to the raw material i.e. fish in Irish waters is causing a crisis in our coastal communities where some towns derive as much as 90% of the local economy from fishing.

From the Malin Head Peninsula in Donegal to the Beara Peninsula in West Cork, our fishing communities have been suffering in silence for too long. With this documentary they finally feel their story is being told.

Search on Facebook, Twitter and YouTube for 'The Fishers Voice' to see the documentary or visit the Marine Times website [www.marinetimes.ie](http://www.marinetimes.ie)

# Dunmore East RNLI Receives €31,050 from Sales of the Book 'Dauntless Courage'

Dunmore East RNLI was delighted to receive monies raised from the sales of the book *Dauntless Courage* by author David Carroll.

'Dauntless Courage': Celebrating the History of the Dunmore East RNLI, their crews and the Maritime Heritage of the Local Community, was written, published and sold out during lockdown. Restrictions and lockdowns made it impossible for author David Carroll to be in Dunmore East while writing his book but, thankfully, David and his family were able to visit the Dunmore Lifeboat station recently, where he was wholeheartedly welcomed by the volunteers of Dunmore East RNLI.

David Carroll the son of Captain Desmond Carroll, a former Harbour Master in Dunmore wrote a book on the history of the Dunmore East RNLI Lifeboats and the community from which the crews are drawn. David grew up in Dunmore East and whilst moving from the village in his 20s to pursue a career he has always retained a great love for the maritime heritage he inherited growing up in the village.

After several years of researching and writing, it has been a labour of love for author David Carroll to produce such a fine book, with all proceeds going to the RNLI. A publishing committee was formed and consisted of members of Dunmore East RNLI and a total of 66 businesses contributed to the cost of printing, therefore 100% of the price of the book is going to the RNLI. Recently David was finally able to hand over the huge cheque to the very appreciative volunteers of Dunmore East RNLI.

David Carroll, author of *Dauntless Courage* said: 'I felt very privileged to have been invited to write a history of the Dunmore East Lifeboats. I enjoyed every single minute carrying out the necessary research and writing the various chapters, but the success of the book is down to all the volunteers and the great team, organised



by Brendan Dunne who promoted, packaged, and distributed the book in difficult circumstances. A special word of thanks is due to all who gave us permission to use their interesting photographs

and wonderful paintings. Our printers, DVF Print and Graphic Solutions, designed and produced a magnificent book that we all can be proud of and will be a fitting testament to all who served in the station since the *Henry Dodd* first arrived in Dunmore East.

Brendan Dunne, Dunmore East RNLI Crewmember, said: 'As volunteer crew of the Dunmore East lifeboat we are delighted with David's book *Dauntless Courage* and grateful for such a significant amount being raised for our charity. The book itself is well written and researched. It truly captures the legacy of those that have crewed the lifeboats here since 1884 and of the life-saving and maritime heritage of the village. It ensures their contribution to saving lives at sea in all weather conditions will not be forgotten'

Photo: Dunmore East RNLI Fundraising Branch Treasurer Ann Sheehan receiving cheque from author David Carroll also in photo is Anne Smith & Shirley O'Neill.



## IRISH WHALE AND DOLPHIN GROUP IWDG NEWS

*Pádraig Whooley, IWDG Sightings Officer, updates the story of 'Wally the Walrus' as it has become known and says that it highlights the need for wider discussion as to what it tells us about the health of our seas. As well as the Walrus, there is much more happening in the seas around Ireland. IWDG has confirmed sighting of a new whale species for Ireland, the Arctic bowhead off Carlingford Lough, Co. Louth, a Beluga whale off Dunseverick, Co. Antrim and Arctic pinnipeds, namely hooded and bearded seals.*

Since the start of summer the Irish Whale and Dolphin Group (IWDG) has received and validated hundreds of cetacean sighting and stranding records from the public, researchers and boat operators alike. All of this data, once validated, is invaluable as these sightings go towards Ireland's longest established, continuous dataset, which dates back over 30 years. This data is used in many ways, but most importantly it is this data that enables IWDG be a voice for Ireland's cetacean and basking shark populations when it comes to protection of both these magnificent animals and their habitats.



Photo by Charles Coughlan

At a glance we can see that this summer alone we have documented no less than nine species in Irish waters and although most of these are the "usual suspects" that we've come to expect, they also include the planet's largest animal, the mighty blue whale, the second biggest fish, the planktivorous basking shark and of course a rarely seen walrus.

There's probably no need to rehash the story of this Arctic vagrant here, as it has been headline news since it was first reported to the IWDG on March 14 hauled out on Valentia Island, Co. Kerry. Its quizical expression and boat sinking antics have filled column inches and Gigabytes of disk space on social media platforms in the six countries it has travelled through over the past six months (Ireland, Wales, England, France, Spain and now Iceland), during a 5,000+ km saga that has taken it as far south as Bilbao and only this week within striking distance of the Arctic Circle, with its arrival in Hornafjörður, in southeast Iceland on September 19.

Since returning to northern latitudes (a relative term if you're a walrus) reaching landfall at Clonea Bay, Co. Waterford on August 2nd, it was a little like Groundhog Day. This was a story that was always going to pull at the heartstrings of a certain animal welfare cohort and the calls for action based on concerns that it was exhausted, in poor shape, emaciated, stressed or even injured were predictable. And of course all this shaped the narrative that somehow this walrus needed human intervention, which ranged from building it a pontoon to act as a safe and comfy sofa to haul out on, so it could rest with-

out causing damage to local boats, to the extreme end of the spectrum, where there were calls for a rescue and repatriation back home, wherever that might be. In fact it needed none of these things and just needed to be left alone.

IWDG believe that wildlife is resilient and rarely benefits from our meddling. The notion that an aquatic Arctic mammal that has evolved to survive in the harshest of environments, ever needed us to build it a pontoon, seemed wide of the mark, as it increased the risk of it becoming too comfortable, which would likely encourage it to remain longer; neither of which were in its best interest. We all presumably wanted the same thing which was the safe return of this individual to its Arctic home, under its own steam. The bigger and more worrying question is what sort of a home will be waiting for it, if and when it does return finally to what should be Arctic pack ice?

It's great to see people getting exercised about wildlife and IWDG took some online criticism for daring to reveal the Walrus' latest location.

We believe that people have a right to witness such rare events, responsibly, and have been over the past 30 years the strongest advocates of whale watching, particularly in places like the Irish southwest, and so we didn't buy into the philosophy that its location needed be kept secret.

Given the wildfire nature of social media today, this was never going to be possible anyway. By the time we wrote about any location, local boat owners were already out in numbers for a closer gawk and that all important selfie. However, we consistently

asked people to observe it from land using optics and to be mindful of the predicament the walrus was in and not to approach it on boats due to the risk of disturbing it while hauled out.

Some of the idiotic behaviour I observed in West Cork exposed just how far removed some people have become from the natural world.

This presence of a walrus along the Irish south coast should raise lots of flags for us, and

for anyone still sceptical about climate change and how it is impacting on the marine environment in particular, this is a really good case study. Fragmentation of Arctic sea ice may well be the reason why this sub-adult walrus ventured so far from home, and although

this is by no means the first walrus record for Ireland, the previous one being in Clew Bay, Co. Mayo in April 1999, it will indeed be interesting to see if we record an increase in walrus sightings in the years and decades to come.

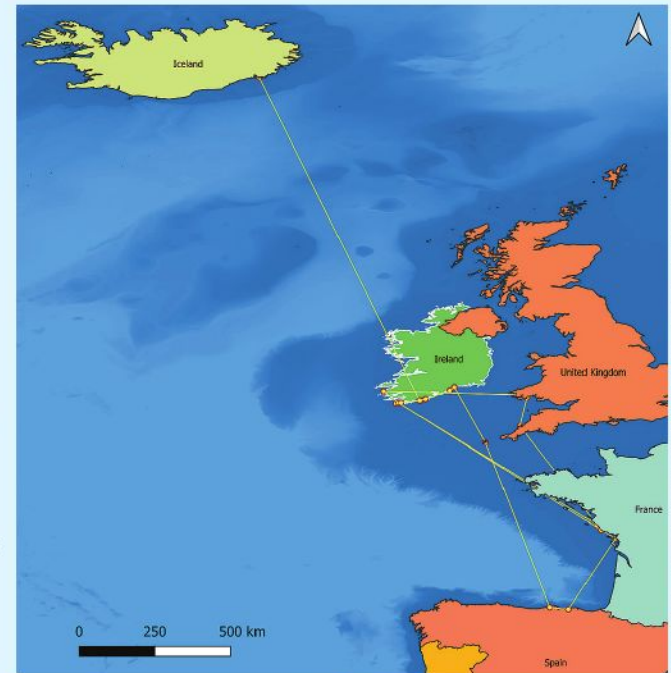
In recent years IWDG has confirmed sighting of a new whale species for Ireland, the Arctic bowhead was photographed in May 2016 off Carlingford Lough, Co. Louth. July 2015 produced a record of a beluga whale off Dunseverick, Co. Antrim and since then there have been quite a few Arctic pinnipeds, namely hooded and bearded seals. As I type there is also at least one Californian gray whale (also called "Wally") swimming between the Mediterranean and the Atlantic and the only access for them to the Atlantic is through the northwest passage which seems to be sufficiently ice free now in summer to allow these leviathans return to the Atlantic, where they've not been recorded since the 18th Century.

So this walrus is in good company and is joining a host of marine mammal species that may be actively seeking a new home, well outside their normal range. But it's not just Arctic species that are on the move. In mid August my wife while walking on Long Strand in West Cork, saw a Portuguese Man O' War washed up. Now there is nothing that unusual about seeing this tropical and potentially dangerous siphonophore washed up along the Irish Southwest, as in recent years this has become something of an annual event as southerly gales have seen thousands of them wash up on our beaches during autumn; but this is the earliest record to date for this species.

So things are changing in our marine environment and changing fast, as different prey and predator species react to these new conditions. This may impact on our native species, the "Usual Suspects" we referred

to earlier, as they'll have to adapt to living with these exotic visitors or risk being forced out themselves.

It has never been more important that organisations like IWDG with All-Island networks of volunteers and established biological recording schemes are out there recording these changes year after year and decade after decade. We'd ask Citizen Scientists fortunate enough to see whales, dolphins, basking sharks (or indeed walrus) to report your observations using our



new mobile Reporting App, or by simply clicking on the "Report a Sighting/stranding" links on [www.iwdg.ie](http://www.iwdg.ie). Your sightings are important and are a key monitoring tool that enables us track the movements of these highly mobile marine mammals as

they pass through our productive inshore waters.

At time of writing, there is currently a second walrus, a female, off the Netherlands which in recent weeks has also been seen off Germany and Denmark.

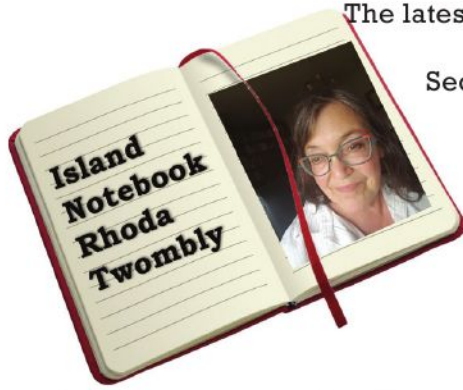
### We indeed live in interesting times.

List and map of confirmed walrus sightings, courtesy IWDG

1. Valentia Island, Co. Kerry, SW Ireland, March 14th 2021, © Alan Houlihan
2. Broadhaven, South Pembrokeshire, Wales, UK March 20th © Gareth Davies
3. Tenby bay, South Wales, UK, March 29th to April 19th
4. Padstow, Cornwall, UK May 19-20th
5. Saint-Gilles-Croix-de-Vie, France May 26th
6. Les Sables d'Olonne, France, May 27th
7. La Rochelle, France, May 28th- May 29th
8. River Nervion, Bilbao, Spain June 4th- June 6th
9. Santander, Spain, June 7th
10. Helen's Scilly, UK, June 17th-July 30th
11. Clonea Strand, Co. Waterford, Ireland, August 2nd Aug 2001 © Cormac Walsh
12. Ardmore Bay, Co. Waterford, Ireland, August 3rd -5th Aug 2001
13. Broadstrand, Courtmacsherry bay, Co. Cork, Ireland, August 8th
14. Dunnycove, Clonakilty Bay, Co. Cork, Ireland, August 9th
15. Castlepoint, Roaringwater Bay, Co. Cork, Ireland, August 17th
16. Crookhaven/Mizen area, Co. Cork, Ireland, August 18-30th
17. Höfn, Hornafjörður, SE Iceland, September 19th © Lilja Johanndottir

Walrus Map, ctsy Patrick Lyne, IWDG

[www.iwdg.ie](http://www.iwdg.ie)



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

## European Vision for The Islands

ESIN (the European Small Islands Federation) of which Comhdháil Oileán na hÉireann is a founder member, held its 20th AGM as a blended live and digital event.

Delegates travelled to Brittany and on to Ile aux Moines, one of the 15 islands of the Îles du Ponant, combined population of nearly 16,000. The Îles du Ponant organisation was also celebrating their 50th year anniversary so the ESIN representatives were able to join in their discussions and festivities. Additionally, trips had been organised to visit nearby islands, their businesses and farm enterprises.

The centre of the ESIN AGM were reports from the organisation's working groups: culture, branding, policy, funding and energy. It is important to note that ESIN, through its energy working group, is included in a clean energy Horizon 2020 project being conducted by the energy group NESOI. Previously, the small (population less than 5,000) European islands were not considered for such projects and it is heartening to see that the value and capability of our islands is being considered.

The ESIN Policy working group conquered an ambitious work plan for the past year, organising a hugely successful workshop on small islands focusing on European rural vision. Information gathered fed into the work of European Network for Rural Development (ENRD) and their Rural Vision Week.

This led to the ESIN group being asked to hold a presentation at the event's fringe festival. The group is now looking into

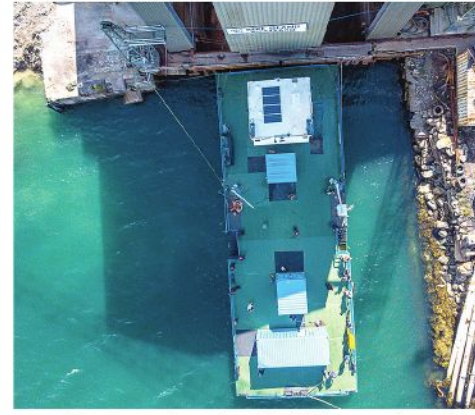
development of green ferries as well as hoping to organise a conference on remote working on islands.

Comhdháil Oileán na hÉireann will participate in the Conference on the Future of Europe (COFOE), being led in Ireland by the Minister of State for European Affairs, Thomas Byrne, T.D., who will meet with several groups to gather opinion on where the EU is doing well in certain areas and where there is room for improvement. The topics chosen by Comhdháil to focus on are health, a stronger and fairer economy, social justice and jobs, digital transformation, education, culture, youth and sport.



A huge round of applause to Fran O'Boyle who designed and painted the fabulous mural on Donegal's Oileán Ghabhla (Gola). I am sure other islands will follow suit, hopefully telling their island's story with equal charm and beauty.

BIM are no doubt very pleased with the work done by Bere Island Boatyard to recondition an ageing barge previously owned by Dublin Port to a new diving barge largely powered by renewable energy.



BIM notes that the "facilities on-board include a decompression chamber, surface supplied diving station and welfare accommodation - all of which will strengthen our commercial diving training for men and women working in Ireland's seafood industry." Another feather in the cap of this island-based company. Well done to all involved!

On a personal note Inishlyre, my own island homeplace, had a very special visit from friends Tom and Kathleen MacSweeney who were staycationing in the area.

We enjoyed a wonderful time of chat and laughter - so special to finally meet face-to-face after years of corresponding through the airwaves and the Marine Times. Tom has championed the challenges facing our islands for many years and it was an honour to meet him at last. Had I known they were celebrating their 55th wedding anniversary I would have baked a cake: maybe next year! Congratulations to a lovely couple.

\*\*\*

Although the Covid restrictions caused the early part of the season to be severely curtailed, the rest of the season saw the islands lit up with visitors galore. Irish holidaymakers made a point to visit the islands - many for the first time.

We look forward to welcoming them back in 2022 so they can experience the beauty and welcome of our offshore islands.

But till then, it's slán from the islands!



Tom and Kathleen MacSweeney at Inishlyre Island, Clew Bay, with Joachim Gibbons, Clew Bay Islands Postman aboard the 'Finnaun of Inishlyre'



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# WEAR IT!!!

# International Fishing and Maritime News

## New EU Study Has Reservations About Implementation of the Landing Obligation

The European Commission's Directorate-General for Maritime Affairs and Fisheries has completed a new study of the Landing Obligation, the conclusion of which is that "control and enforcement remain challenging."

Member States have not adopted the necessary control measures and significant undocumented discarding of catches occur, according to the study which focused on the effectiveness and efficiency of traditional versus modern control tools to monitor the landing obligation. Remote electronic monitoring (REM) tools are the most effective and cost-efficient means, it says, though acknowledging that reasonable concerns were raised by stakeholders about privacy and costs.

REM has been trialled by various Member States, but not been rolled out on a large scale. In its proposal for a revised fisheries control system currently negotiated with the EU Council and Parliament, the Commission supports the use of modern control tools. The study says there are shortcomings of traditional control tools, such as at-sea inspections and dockside/auction inspections of landings and logbooks "as they only provide a snapshot of compliance at the time of monitoring."

"Discard rates do not yet show clear trends or patterns as a result of the landing obligation," it says. "There is a lack of evidence of changes in discarding practice, and that discarding is still taking place. Stakeholders contributing to the study identified a number of possible explanations, including complex legislation and regulation and the substantial adaptation to be undertaken on board vessels."

Suggestions of the study about correcting "these challenges" is through improved logbooks and trainings.

"While stakeholders have already worked on this during the transition phase, further room for improvement remains," according to the study.

The landing obligation has been fully in force since 2019 after a phasing-in period from 2015 with the objective to gradually eliminate discards by avoiding and reduc-

ing as far as possible unwanted catches by ensuring that all catches are landed.

The study was commissioned to "improve understanding of the measures put in place to facilitate implementation."

"Effective control and enforcement are essential to the success of the landing obligation. Due to failure to adopt the necessary means, such as REM, indications point towards widespread non-compliance and prolific, undocumented illegal discarding of catches."

The Commission says it will use the findings in discussions with scientists, Member States, Advisory Councils and the European Parliament and in the course of preparing the report on the functioning of the CFP by the end of 2022.

### Norwegian Salmon Exports at Record Levels

Elsewhere in this edition of the MARINE TIMES there is an examination of the future of salmon as a species. However, in Norway where the wild species may still be around in good numbers and may even acquire salmon moving out of Irish waters due to climate change in the oceans the national Seafood Council is trumpeting the importance of farmed salmon.

"Throughout the pandemic, salmon has consolidated its position as a simple and accessible product that can be prepared at home and this seems to continue even now that the restaurants have reopened," it says announcing that exports of Norwegian salmon have hit record levels, "paving the way for a bumper run-up to Christmas."

Exports totalled 31,151 tonnes for one week in the middle of September, the highest figure yet for a seven day period and almost 20% up on the same week last year. The value from that figure is put at €150m), 28.6% higher than 12 months ago.

Seafood Council Analyst Paul T. Aandahl said: "Never before has more salmon been exported in a single week than in week 36 this year. Seasonal conditions with higher salmon production in the autumn, combined with a general growth in demand in the markets have contributed to this record. Normally, the top weeks for salmon exports are just before Christmas. These are record volumes in the early autumn. Several weeks of high exports are expected further into the autumn."

The main markets for fresh whole salmon were Poland (+21%), Denmark (+2%), France (+21%), the Netherlands (+19%) and Spain (+14%).

The Norwegian government has launched a new permit scheme for opening up so far undeveloped areas suitable for aquaculture. The government says the scheme has been tailored to meet future environmental challenges.

"While the government is keen for the industry to expand, it will have to be under stricter requirements," said Fisheries and Seafood Minister Odd Emil Ingebrigtsen.

"We have natural advantages for producing more of the healthy seafood that the world needs.

### Scottish Government Takes Declining Salmon Stocks Very Seriously

Remaining on the subject of declining salmon stocks, the Scottish Government has announced a stg£550,000 fund, including stg£150,000 provided by Crown Estate Scotland, for research into the impacts of climate change and pollution on wild salmon and on ways to mitigate the effect which will include planting trees by rivers in order to create shade for the fish.



The study will involve sampling of juvenile and adult salmon by local Fisheries Trusts and Boards to collect scales and other biological information from fish captured in rivers throughout Scotland. The data will be used to help target interventions to conserve salmon and increase the numbers and size of wild fish leaving rivers for the ocean. Over the last 40 years, salmon numbers returning from the sea to Scottish rivers have declined by around 40%.

"The study fund will help to better understanding of the pressures on wild salmon, where high river temperatures during the summer are a pressure. Priority stretches of waterways are being identified to target tree planting, providing shade and encouraging survival and growth of salmon," according to Scotland's Rural Affairs Secretary Mairi Gougeon. "Salmon mortality at sea has increased in part due to the effect of climate change on ecosystems and shifts in locations where food is abundant. It is vital to address the double challenges of climate change and biodiversity loss."

### Belgian Fleet Revives and Uses Dun Laoghaire

Belgian beamers have been seen a few times in recent months in Dun Laoghaire, causing various comments and observations. The first of a new generation of Belgian beam trawlers was seen there in late August.

The new 'state-of-the-art' 38-metre beamer Z98 Windroos was from Zeebrugge and had been named by the Flemish Minister of Agriculture and Fisheries. According to information her area of operation for fishing for sole, plaice, skate or monkfish will be the southern or central North Sea, the Irish Sea and the western waters or the Bay of Biscay.

It seems that Dun Laoghaire Harbour is seen by the Belgian fleet as a strategic EU location in the middle of the Irish Sea which has been previously overlooked by commercial fishing fleets. Since Brexit Belgian fishermen have taken advantage of the Dublin Bay port to unload catches. Z98 Windroos is the third new Belgian beamer this year. Belgian industry sources said this development is coming after many years without vessel replacement.

### Bizarre Killing of Penguins

Rangers from the South African National Parks organisation discovered 64 dead penguins in a colony near Cape Town in Table Mountain National Park. The deaths have been blamed on the Penguins being stung in and around their eyes by Cape honeybees.



Penguins are a protected species in South Africa and are listed as endangered on the International Union for Conservation of Nature Red List, with around 42,000 mature individuals globally. The deaths occurred suddenly with no external physical injuries were observed on any of the birds, the Parks organisation said.

### Big Bank Funding for Mowi

Six international banks have loaned €1.8 billion to Mowi, the biggest fish farming company in the world these days it seems, certainly with financial power.

The deal has been described as a 'green' facility giving access to near, two billion Euros. The company said the new arrangement is linked to its "sustainability targets" and will last for five years in a "significant step towards our goal of 100% green financing."

Interest payments will be linked to Mowi's performance against indicators consistent with the company's overall environmental, social and governance strategy, it says.

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surface, yet only 2% of our calorie intake is seafood. This means there is great potential for the oceans to produce more sustainable food. This plan will allow us to achieve our goal of producing more food from the ocean thus meeting the demands of a growing population while respecting the planet and helping local communities to flourish," said Catarina Martins, Chief Sustainability Officer at Mowi.

### Tuna To Move Offshore from Pacific Islands

Global warming will force Tuna stocks away from Pacific Island states and into the high seas according to a study by a number of government and technical agencies, ranging from the Pacific Islands Forum Fisheries Agency to Conservation International.

Ten islands are particularly likely to be affected and their economies could suffer, according to the study, which says catches could decrease sharply.

### Pelagic and Demersal Surveys Will Be Carried Out in Algerian Waters

Surveys are to be carried out to improve the management of fish stocks. The General Fisheries Commission for the Mediterranean has signed a Letter of Agreement with Algeria for joint pelagic and demersal surveys in Algerian waters with the National Centre for Research and Development of Fisheries and Aquaculture.

"Surveys-at-sea will provide essential information on these stocks, including population distribution and demographic structure. This is critical to assess the status of resources and to precisely estimate the population and fish community levels," according to the Commission.

### Australian Fisheries to Become More Variable

Fisheries are likely to become more variable, affecting when, where and how many fish are caught according to a new publication produced by the Australian Fisheries Management Authority. The 'Adaptation of Fisheries Management to Climate Change' book is intended help Australia's fisheries plan for climate change.



CSIRO, Australia's national science agency, worked with the Institute for Marine and Antarctic Studies (IMAS) and the Fisheries Management Authority (AFMA) to produce the book whose lead author, Dr Beth Fulton of CSIRO, said that Australia's marine environment was "changing faster than ever, leading to a complex set of challenges for the fishing industry, including on ecosystems, fish biology, operations, infrastructure and safety."

### Faroe Islands Cod and Haddock Sustainable

The Faroe Islands Sustainable Fisheries (FISF) cod, haddock, tusk and ling fishery has achieved Marine Stewardship Council certification for cod and haddock.

The achievement expands the current MSC certification for ling and tusk and is a significant milestone for the Faroese, who rely heavily on exports for jobs and income. To help manage fish stock sustainably and achieve the certification, the fishing industry urged the Faroese Government to change the law. In December 2020, Jacob Vestergaard, Minister of Fisheries, introduced a scientifically-based management plan limiting the number of fishing days for cod and haddock. The fishing industry also created the FISF, a new unified fishing body aimed at raising fishing management standards in line with MSC standards. "That we have been able to achieve this goal is because the Faroese authorities have listened to experts to implement a management plan," said Durita í Grótinum, CEO of FISF.

### Greece Mussel Harvest at Risk



A Summer of scorching heat has destroyed half of this year's mussel crop and destroyed 90 per cent of the seed for next year, according to stock reports. Mussel farmers across the Aegean Sea are reporting empty shells.

### New Zealand Government Supports Open Ocean Aquaculture

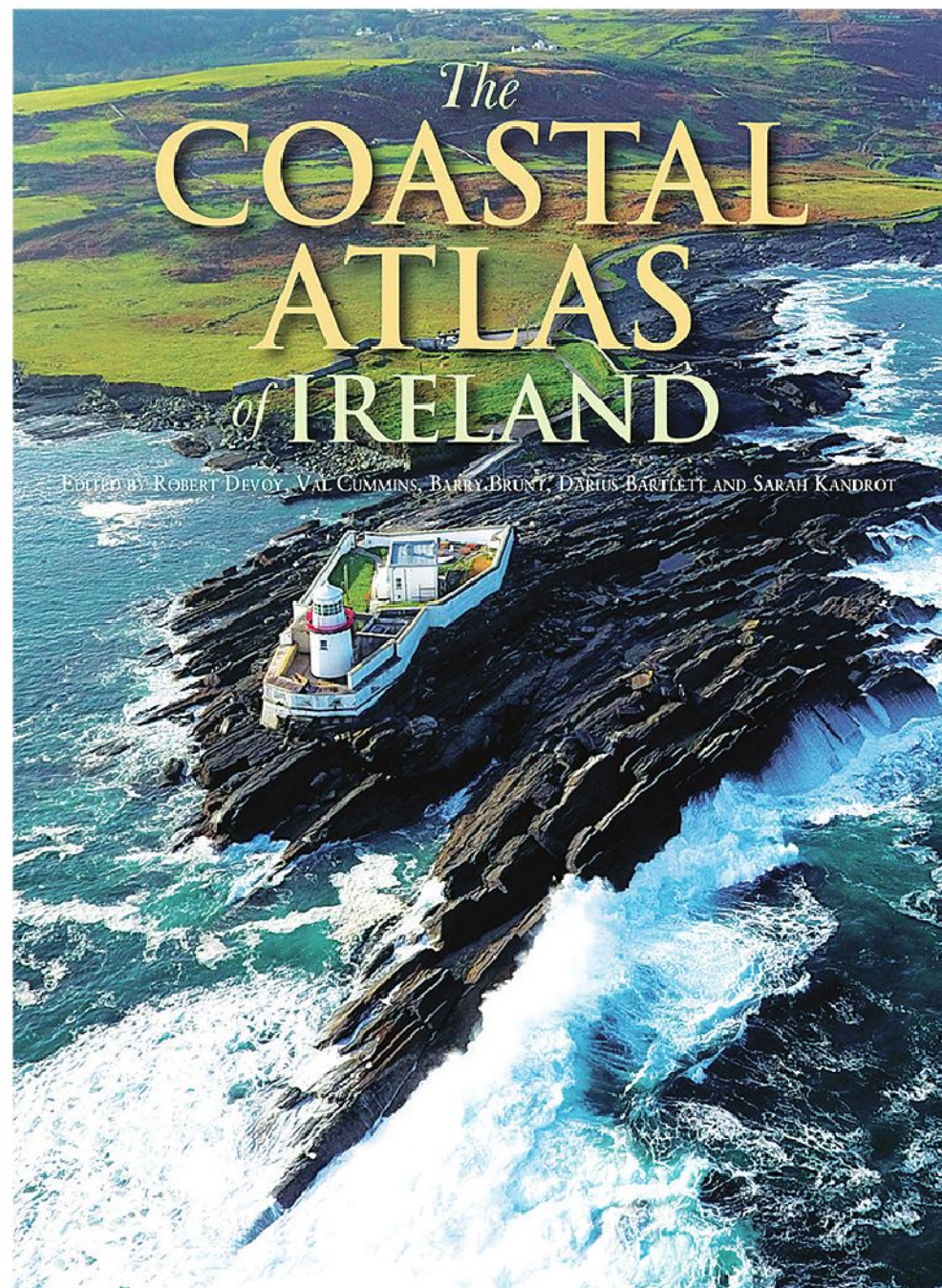
A five-year project to develop New Zealand's offshore seaweed and shellfish aquaculture industries has received government funding. 'Anchoring our Open Ocean Aquaculture Future' is the name of the project headed by the Cawthron Institute. It is intended to "deliver the knowledge and technology New Zealand needs to accelerate and scale-up its shellfish and seaweed open ocean aquaculture systems."



"Open ocean aquaculture has long been recognised as a major global opportunity for sustainable food production and New Zealand is well-placed to capitalise on this potential and diversify investment options for industry. Our aquaculture industry can grow rapidly in response to increasing international demand, but it is constrained by limited sheltered inshore farm space. There are large tracts of consented space available offshore and in the open ocean, but robust farming technology is required if we are to develop successful aquaculture operations in exposed and dynamic waters," said the institute.

## Cork University Press Unveils The Coastal Atlas of Ireland

The latest in the award winning Atlas series at University College Cork (UCC) has just been published. The Coastal Atlas of Ireland is a celebration of Ireland's coastal and marine spaces and examines the shaping of the coastline of Ireland as a whole, from both the physical and human environmental perspectives.



Ireland has a spectacular coast and, with some million square kilometres of resource-rich marine territory, **The Coastal Atlas of Ireland**, draws on written contributions from over 140 authors from across the island of Ireland and beyond. Published by Cork University Press, the Atlas takes an explicitly all-island approach and is visually stunning with wonderful cartography.

It is organised into six sections, comprising a total of 33 chapters, with 950 pages that take the reader from the distant geological past, by way of the prehistoric era and a focus on the island's physical environments, through time and the human colonisation of Ireland, to the complex cultural and economic landscapes of the near past through to the present day. It concludes with an assessment of the importance of coastal and marine environments in understanding the island's development, appreciating the present, and contemplating future opportunities and challenges.

Edited by Robert Devoy, Val Cummins, Barry Brunt, Darius Bartlett & Sarah Kan-

drot, the atlas presents views of the island's coastal future: where will the coast and its people be in 2200, or even next year, and what will its different landscapes look like.

Commenting Professor John O'Halloran, President of UCC stated "**The Coastal Atlas of Ireland** is a stunning and accessible celebration of Ireland's beautiful coast. The Atlas series at UCC is a brilliant example in the translation of university research to inspire interest and engagement with learning. The contribution of these series to a greater understanding of our geography and history is only now being understood."

Mike Collins, Publications Director at Cork University Press stated "some 50-60% of Ireland's population is intimately linked to living in the coastal zone, and the Atlas will provide readers with a fascinating and comprehensive excursion through time and space along Ireland's coastline."

**The Coastal Atlas of Ireland (€59) is available in bookshops or online at [www.corkuniversitypress.com](http://www.corkuniversitypress.com)**



## RNLI REPORT

**Niamh Stephenson,  
Ireland Media Manager for the RNLI**

# Stephen Wynne of Dun Laoghaire, His Rescue and His RNLI Career

**A former boss of mine used to start every meeting with the ‘Hatches, matches and dispatches’ news; covering babies born to the team, to marriages celebrated and finally retirements and moving jobs.**

If we started RNLI meetings in this way, I fear we would never move on to any other business.

The amount of service, stories and general memories could fill a lifetime. We said farewell to another wonderful volunteer recently as Stephen Wynne from Dun Laoghaire RNLI stood down as Lifeboat Operations Manager, but thankfully he is staying with the RNLI as a Deputy Launching Authority.



Stephen Wynne was one of the first Lifeboat Operations Managers I came to know when I joined the RNLI and along with his colleague in Howth, Rupert Jeffares, took good care of me as they both realised I did not know my port from my starboard and I certainly didn't know my maritime alphabet. Great hilarity followed when I would spell out something for clarification (always important in transcribing information for a press release) using words that were nowhere near the accepted alphabet. I promised I'd learn it and I'm sorry to say I still haven't done it.

In preparing the press release for his retirement, my colleague Nuala McAloon learned something that neither of us knew

about Stephen.

Over half a century ago, Stephen was rescued from a capsized dinghy which inspired him to join a lifeboat crew.

He steps down from his senior role after holding the position for over three decades.

Stephen was rescued from a capsized dinghy outside Dun Laoghaire by the then Coxswain, the late Eric Offer and his crew on the Waveney class lifeboat which was the first class of lifeboats operated by the RNLI capable of operating at speeds in excess of 10 knots.

Stephen joined the RNLI lifeboat community in 1975 and became a crew member in 1977. He later became a Deputy Launching Authority in 1987 and became Honorary Secretary, a position known now as Lifeboat Operations Manager, in 1990.

I loved the many chats with Stephen over the years and there was no mistaking who it was on the phone with his deep voice. We met every Christmas Eve at the end of the pier in Dun Laoghaire as the lifeboat crew remembered those lost during the Kings-town lifeboat disaster in 1895 and indeed all those lost at sea. Stephen is unflappable with a strong sense of humour and the most wonderful manner. I was always thanked for any help I gave and thankfully always forgiven for any oversight.

Dun Laoghaire RNLI welcomes a new Lifeboat Operations Manager as Ed Totterdell takes up the role. Ed was a Deputy Launching Authority at the station and thankfully shows the same patience with the Media Manager.



**Fethard RNLI marked their 25th anniversary of their reopening with a spectacular search-and-rescue demonstration off Baginbun Beach in Wexford.**

## Fethard

You may have missed a lovely anniversary celebrated by a lifeboat station recently. Not if you lived near the Hook in Wexford though, as Fethard RNLI marked their 25th anniversary of their reopening with a spectacular search-and-rescue demonstration off Baginbun Beach in Wexford.

The Wexford based lifeboat station had been off service for a period of 82 years before locals were successful in getting the historic lifeboat station re-opened with an inshore lifeboat in 1996. There is a lot of tradition at this lifeboat station and the family links go back generations.

The exercise involved Fethard RNLI and their flanking lifeboat stations, Dunmore East RNLI and Kilmore Quay RNLI, along with Fethard Coast Guard and Rescue 117. The weather held off and the crowd watched a scenario which saw the three RNLI lifeboat crews work as a team to form search patterns to locate survivors of a fictional light aircraft, which had reportedly come down just off Baginbun Head. When located, the casualties were brought ashore where the volunteer crew of Fethard Lifeboat administered casualty care and transferred them into the care of Fethard Coast Guard.

In the final part of the exercise, Waterford-based Coast Guard helicopter Rescue 117 flew overhead; in this scenario the helicopter crew would have airlifted the casualties onboard to receive more urgent medical care and transport to hospital.

These events are really important for us to mark as they also bring an opportunity to give out important Water Safety advice and messages. The team also handed out free waterproof pouches to water sports enthusiasts for the safe keeping of their mobile phones when they are out on the water. There is an increase in these activities and these small items can literally be a lifesaver.

Huge credit to all in Fethard, they had a wonderful team organising it. It was also great to see some new volunteer lifeboat crew there. Walter Foley, the Lifeboat Operations Manager for Fethard RNLI told me they had signed up during the pandemic, a really great sign for the future.

## Achill and Fenit

**Finally, I owe an apology for something in my last column.**

I blamed a typo in my head when I was asked if the new Lifeboat Press Officer for Achill Island RNLI, Eilish Power, had moved from Achill Island to Fenit RNLI, as I referenced her as being attached to that station. A volunteer from Achill had spotted it and wondered if she was losing their wonderful new Lifeboat Press Officer. No, you are not. We have two wonderful LPOs in those stations and both Eilish and Jackie are wonderful volunteers at Achill and Fenit. This is what happens when you have 46 lifeboat station names in your head. Maybe I should go and learn my maritime alphabet now to make up for it!

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**WATER SAFETY IRELAND REPORT**

**Water Safety CEO Suggests It May Be Time for Mandatory Enforcement of Wearing Lifejackets**

*“With so many people staycationing at home this Summer we have seen far too many drownings....” writes the Chief Executive of Water Safety Ireland, the statutory agency promoting water safety in Ireland, in his monthly column for the MARINE TIMES.*

**CEO John Leech gives analysis of drownings and emergency rescue incidents during the past Summer when there were calls for rescues made to beach lifeguards, to the RNLI, the Coast Guard and Community Rescue Boats.**

During the heatwave in July, in seven days there were nine fatal accidental drownings and numerous rescues by our hard-working and dedicated lifeguards, members of the RNLI, Coast Guard and Community Rescue Boats.

Three of the fatal drownings were in the North of Ireland, one was coastal at Killeel, Co Down, the others were inland at Scarva, Co Down and at Lough Melvin in Co Fermanagh, these were all believed to be swimming accidents.

In the Republic there were four fatal drownings in lakes, one in Swan Lake Co Cavan, one in Lough Gowna, Co Cavan, one in Lough Allen, Co. Leitrim, and one in Hollywood Lake in Co Monaghan.

There were two coastal fatal drownings - a man in his 50’s at Dollymount strand in Dublin and another man in his 60’s at Tramore beach, Co Waterford.

Whilst these all appear to be bathing and snorkelling related drownings, we cannot be sure until the Coroners make their reports known to the public.

Six out of 10 drownings occur in freshwater where, very often the water is unclear, and people swim beyond their depth, get into difficulty and drown, the other hazard associated with freshwater drownings is entanglement in weeds and this situation has deteriorated with the advent of invasive weed species that have established themselves in our rivers and lakes from Europe and Asia.

The Coast Guard has seen a major growth in demand for assistance this year and up to the end of July had co-ordinated responses to a total of 1,763 incidents, an increase of 400 for the same period last year and 150 more than any year over the last five.

There have been 47 fatal drownings so far this year, that is 14 more than for the same time last year, which is concerning. We fear that we could end up with more drownings than last year when we had 76,

which was the lowest since 1936.

Over the course of the summer all the people who drowned were not wearing a lifejacket. However, that said, overall, we have seen a positive response to the public’s usage of lifejackets which is now close to 80%. Fifteen years ago, it was closer to 60%, our challenge now is to target the last 20% of our population. More enforcement is required to get these people to wear them, who appear to be unaware of the risks they are taking and overestimate their abilities and majority of which are male.

So perhaps it is time now to prioritise water safety in Ireland even more than ever as we did with road safety in the past, in particular, the enforcement of wearing a lifejacket and making water safety and swimming skills a mandatory part of our Primary School curriculum and not discretionary as it is at present.



**Dublin Bay Old Gaffers Association Donate €8,000 to Howth RNLI**

When Covid 19 hit last year, fundraising for Howth Lifeboat through street flag day collections, St. Patrick’s Day Irish Coffee Mornings, Golf Classics, Boat Jumble Sales and Vintage Car Runs all came to an abrupt halt, Dublin Bay Old Gaffers Association came to the rescue by organising a winter series of Zoom talks for their members and others.



The talks were presented by a range of interesting speakers: Dennis Aylmer, Michael Weed, Mark Sweetnam, Ed Maggs, Cormac Lowth, Gary McMahon, Peter Lyons & Adrian Spence, Mick Brogan, John Leahy, Jarlath Cunnane, Rob Goodbody, Joe Walsh, Richard Nairn, Sean Walsh, Sean Cullen, Brian O Gaiblin and Rik Janssen.

The fantastic result from these very interesting presentations was a donation of €8,000 from Dublin Bay Old Gaffers Association to Howth RNLI who continue to rely on voluntary contributions and legacies for income. It is only through donations such as this that the RNLI are able to provide our volunteer lifeboat crews with the boats, facilities, equipment and training that are essential to save lives at sea.

Howth RNLI presented DBOGA with

a Letter of thanks from the Institution for their generous support.

Dublin Bay Old Gaffers Association held their annual race at Howth Saturday 4th September with 12 boats competing having sailed from Strangford, Ramsey - Isle of Man, Poolbeg Yacht & Boat Club and Dun Laoghaire to compete. The fleet raced back to Poolbeg Lighthouse on Sunday 5th September.

Dublin Bay Old Gaffers Association will be kicking off this winter’s fundraising programme for Howth RNLI with another series of talks beginning in October.

Dublin Bay Old Gaffers Association can be proud that their generosity will help Howth RNLI to continue to respond quickly and efficiently to those in danger on the sea, today and in the future.

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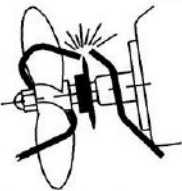
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# A Summer Mini-Miracle!

## 'Seoltóir Na Gaillimhe – The Galway Sailor'

### Mini Sail Boat Found Washed Up in Norway

The Marine Institute's Explorers Education Programme and Educational Passages are delighted to report that the 1.5 metre unmanned mini sailboat called 'Seoltóir Na Gaillimhe – the Galway Sailor', that was deployed in June, was recently found stranded on the Bunes Beach above the Arctic Circle in the Lofoten Islands, in Norway.

After travelling over 3,000km from Irish waters in the Atlantic to Norway, the 'Seoltóir Na Gaillimhe – the Galway Sailor' was found by the Bjørnsen family and friends while on holidays on the Lofoten Island over the summer.

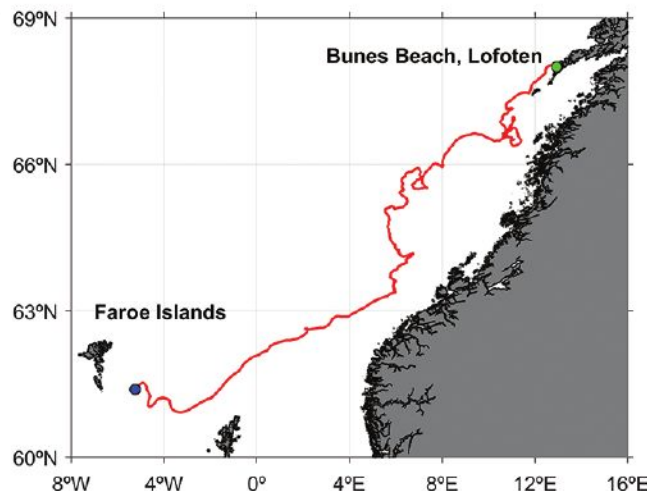
Mr Lars Bjørnsen said his daughters were thrilled to discover the mini boat washed up on the remote Bunes Beach, "our neighbour had found the boat and my three girls were so excited to join him to open the hatch of the boat to see the Irish messages and 'treasures' inside. We were able to read most of the letters that had been written by the students at Kilglass National School in Galway, although some were a little wet. The girls were also delighted with the Irish candy and crisps – which survived the voyage."

"Bunes Beach is quite isolated on the western side of Reinefjorden on the Moskenesøya island, Norway. You can only get there by ferry and then have to walk 3km to the beach. It is a beautiful beach in a bay surrounded by mountains and steep ridges. However, not many people get to go there on a regular basis. Therefore, the fact that we found the Galway Sailor mini boat, that had made its way into the bay and then washed up on the shore with little structural damage is amazing for such a small boat," Mr Bjørnsen further explained.



The 'Seoltóir Na Gaillimhe – the Galway Sailor' is a 1.5 metre unmanned mini sailboat that was provided to Kilglass National School in County Galway, as part of a collaborative school project, coordinated by the Marine Institute's Explorers Education Programme and supported by the international Educational Passages programme in the USA. The project was also funded by EU Interreg iFADO (Innovation in the Framework of the Atlantic Deep Ocean) project, in which the Marine Institute are partners.

Welcoming the news of the boat being found, Mick Gillooly, Interim CEO said, "The Explorers mini-boat project is a great example of marine science literacy and engaging with the community at a local school level in



Ireland as well as across the ocean in other countries. For school children, this project provides an exciting way of seeing real life examples of how the ocean has an influence on all our lives, how it connects us, as well as learning how the ocean influences our weather and climate, and the types of technology used at sea. The Marine Institute are delighted to have been involved with this project and look forward to supporting this collaboration involving the Explorers Education Programme team, Kilglass National School, the Research Infrastructures team at the Marine Institute, as well as Educational Passages in the USA with the ongoing mini boat adventures'.

The mini boat was equipped with a sail and a satellite tracker, which allowed the students at Kilglass NS to track it as it sailed across the ocean, using the international Educational Passages tracking system. Mr Peter Kane, who was the school teacher leading the project at Kilglass National School in Ahascragh, Co Galway was thrilled with the news from Norway and thanked the Bjørnsen family for their lovely message sent to the school children in Galway. "It is truly a mini-summer miracle! Everyone at Kilglass National School are so delighted with the news that our mini-boat 'Seoltóir na Gaillimhe' has been found in Norway. When the mini boats are found after their travels, this highlights how the ocean connects us all".

The Explorers Education Programme's marine project involved over 100 children taking part in science, geography and art activities learning about the ocean; as well as preparing the mini boat for its journey. The students painted and decorated the boat, created artwork and good luck messages, and named the boat 'Seoltóir Na Gaillimhe – the Galway Sailor', which recognises the tradition of fishing in Galway. The mini boat was launched by the Marine Institute's RV Celtic Explorer near the M6 Data Buoy, in the Atlantic Ocean during a scientific survey in

June.

Peter Kane also commented on the collaboration with the Marine Institute's Explorers Education Programme, highlighting the importance of marine themes used on the curriculum in Ireland. "The Educational Passages mini boat programme brings children, schools and countries together in so many different ways, from building the boats, tracking them at sea, to finding them in new countries when they reach land."

"When the 'Seoltóir Na Gaillimhe – the Galway Sailor' last reported its GPS location near the Faroe Islands in June, we didn't know whether the boat had been damaged or was still drifting with the currents and winds. We were therefore thrilled to get a call from Cassie at Educational Passages to let us know that 'Seoltóir Na Gaillimhe – the Galway Sailor' made it back to land in Norway," Mr Kane said.

The Marine Institute's ocean modellers have since provided a map showing the likely journey of the 'Seoltóir Na Gaillimhe – the Galway Sailor' after it lost its GPS tracking signal. Knowing the last coordinates, as well as where the boat was found, the team were able to produce a map showing the boats likely movement based on the currents and wind direction at the time. It was estimated that the boat travelled over 3000km from when it was deployed in the Atlantic.

Mr Kane further said, "we were also excited to find out that our boat had also set a new record for the most northern journey ever made by one of the unmanned mini-boats with Educational Passages. We now look forward to the next stage of working with the Explorers Education Programme and linking our students with the local Norwegian Primary School, who have taken over the boat's next new adventure." For further information about the updates with 'Seoltóir Na Gaillimhe – the Galway Sailor' see: [https://educationalpassages.org/boats/seoltoir\\_na\\_gaillimhe/](https://educationalpassages.org/boats/seoltoir_na_gaillimhe/)

Engaging in the Educational Passages mini-boat Program, the iFADO consortium of researchers are launching a total of five mini-boats this year around the Atlantic from Ireland, Portugal, Spain, France, and the UK. To learn more, and track all these boats together, visit <https://educationalpassages.org/events/ifado/>.

The Explorers Education Programme is funded by the Marine Institute, Ireland's state agency for marine research and development.



Where it all started from: 6th class students (from the same pod) Sophie Kelly, Rosie Dolan, Ruby Glynn, Naomi Faulkner, Olivia Cotton from Kilglass National School in Co Galway pictured delivering their 1.5 metre unmanned mini sailboat called 'Seoltóir Na Gaillimhe – the Galway Sailor' to the Marine Institute's research vessel, RV Celtic Explorer, in Galway Harbour. Marine Institute scientists deployed the mini-boat from the RV Celtic Explorer into the Atlantic Ocean, near the M6 Weather Buoy, during the Atlantic In-situ Marine Scientific Infrastructure Replacement survey.

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# Cuckoo Wrasse (*Labrus mixtus*) Captured by the MFV Argonaut IV off Co Cork

Declan Quigley reports

On 17 September 2021, the MFV Argonaut IV (DA22) [Skipper: Jonathan Kirwan, Clogherhead, Co Louth] captured a female Cuckoo Wrasse (*Labrus mixtus*) measuring 24.7 cm total length (TL) and weighing 190 g while demersal trawling at a depth of 102 m in the Celtic Sea (ICES VIIg, 31E1; 51.3333°N, 8.1333°W) off Co Cork (Fig. 1).



Figure 1. Female Cuckoo Wrasse (*Labrus mixtus*) captured by the MFV Argonaut IV in the Celtic Sea off Co Cork (17.09.2021)

The specimen was retrieved and photographed by crewman Anthony Conlon who kindly arranged for its collection at the Fisherman's Catch ([www.fishermancatch.ie/](http://www.fishermancatch.ie/)) in Port Oriel, Clogherhead, Co Louth, a very popular fish shop established during 2009 by John and Michelle Kirwan who are also the owners of the Argonaut IV.

Cuckoo Wrasse range from Norway (Trondheim) southwards via the Mediterranean (but not the Black Sea) to NW Africa (Senegal). Although the species is relatively common in Northern European waters, little is known about its biology.

Cuckoo Wrasse are one of the most colourful of the 7 Labrid species recorded from Irish waters. The colouration of the sexes is remarkably dimorphic. Females and juveniles are predominantly yellow-orange, sometimes bright red, with three dark brown spots near the end of the dorsal fin (Fig. 2). Males are vivid blue with yellow-orange dorsal and anal fins (Fig. 3).



Cuckoo Wrasse occur either singly or in pairs in rocky inshore areas (40-80 m) with dense algal cover during the summer months, and retire to offshore reefs (down to 200 m) during the winter. During the breeding season (May to July), the male builds a nest made of algae in sedimentary depressions and guards the eggs (c.1000/nest) until they hatch. The juveniles adopt a pelagic phase before finally settling in demersal habitats.

While all Cuckoo Wrasse appear to be born as females and mature at 2 years of age and c.16 cm TL, some females subsequently undergo sex-inversion to become functional males (diandric protogynous hermaphrodites) when they are >4 years old and c.26 cm TL.

Cuckoo Wrasse are relatively slow-growing - the maximum reported TL for males and females is 41.0 cm and 30.0cm respectively - and long-lived (up to 17 years). The species is generally thought to be an opportunistic active predator, feeding primarily on crustaceans, gastropods, worms and fish. However, they are also occasionally found scavenging on bait in lobster pots.

Although Cuckoo Wrasse are not commercially exploited, the species is not infrequently captured by recreational anglers. Since 1973, a total of 551 specimens weighing  $\geq 0.567$  kg have been recorded by the Irish Specimen Fish Committee (ISFC) [Fig. 4]. Although the annual number of specimens recorded over the last 48 years has fluctuated widely from year to year, there was a significant increase in the numbers recorded between 2009 and 2012, with Red Bay, Co Antrim accounting for 70% (73). While Cuckoo Wrasse are widely distributed around the Irish coast, they appear to be particularly common in the NE, with Co. Antrim alone accounting for 68% (374) of the all the specimens (Table 1).

The vast majority (84%) of specimen Cuckoo Wrasse were captured during July, August, September and October (Fig. 5), which apart from coinciding with the main angling season, suggests that post-spawning males remain in inshore waters during this period.

The current Irish record Cuckoo Wrasse weighing 1.106 kg was captured by Brian McLoughlin off the Causeway Coast, Co Antrim during



Photo William Power

Figure 4. Annual number of specimen Cuckoo Wrasse (>0.567 kg) recorded between 1973 and 2020 (ISFC)

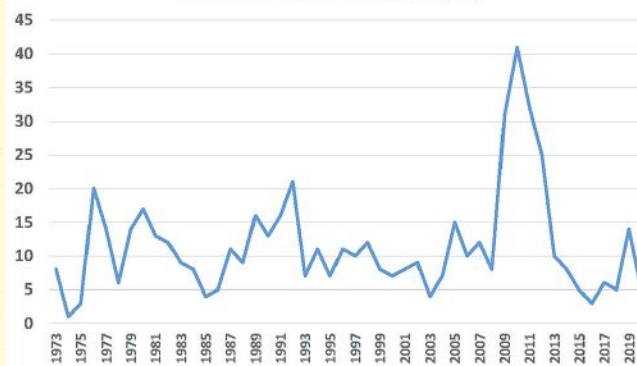
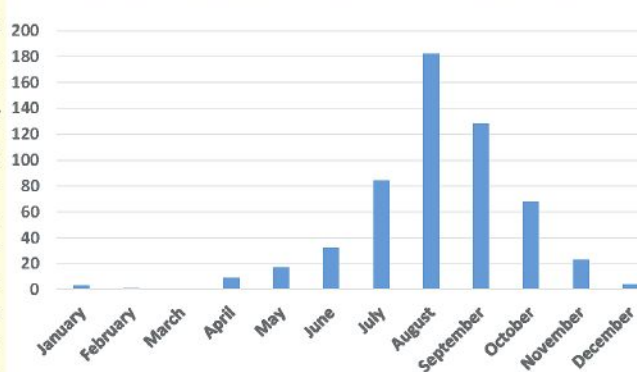


Figure 5. Monthly distribution of specimen Cuckoo Wrasse (ISFC)



September 1998. However, 94% of the specimens weighed <0.8 kg. The current UK record, weighing 1.126 kg, was captured off Dungeness (Kent) during 1998. Considering the available TL data on the Irish specimens (mean 36.5 cm; range 32.5-41.0 cm; N=145), it seems likely that they were all mature males.

Due to their sedentary behaviour, often frequenting the same inshore breeding areas throughout their lifetime, Cuckoo Wrasse are particularly vulnerable to over-exploitation, particularly by anglers. A detailed analysis of the ISFC data suggests that up to 95% (276) of local populations in some areas of Co Antrim (e.g. Causeway Coast, Ballycastle, Red Bay, and Larne) may have been substantially exhausted by 2012. Indeed, over the last decade (2013-20), only 15 specimens have been recorded from these areas. The large-scale cropping of mature males is likely to have had a negative impact on the reproductive capacity of these isolated populations which may take years to recover. Presumably in an attempt to address this issue, the ISFC recently introduced an alternative length-based qualification ( $\geq 35$  cm TL) [along with high quality photographic evidence] for specimen Cuckoo Wrasse during 2018. This new length-based rule means that specimens no longer need to be brought ashore to be weighed on certified scales, a process that undoubtedly accounted for significant and unnecessary mortality in the past.

Declan is always interested in receiving reports about unusual and/or rarely recorded species from Irish waters ([declanquigley2021@gmail.com](mailto:declanquigley2021@gmail.com); 087-6458485).

Table 1. Distribution of Specimen Cuckoo Wrasse

County	Number	%
Antrim	374	67.9
Wexford	43	7.8
Cork	28	5.1
Mayo	28	5.1
Donegal	25	4.5
Kerry	25	4.5
Galway	8	1.5
Waterford	8	1.5
Clare	5	0.9
Sligo	5	0.9
Down	1	0.2
Dublin	1	0.2
<b>Total</b>	<b>551</b>	<b>100</b>



Castletownbere Harbour- Catherine Turner

## Large Trawlers Fishing Inshore Hugely Concerning

The decision of the Court of Appeal to allow large trawlers fish in Ireland’s inshore waters is deeply disappointing and hugely worrying, according to Social Democrats Fisheries Spokesperson Holly Cairns.

A Department of the Marine Policy Directive, which banned large trawlers over 18 metres from fishing inside a six nautical mile zone, was overturned by the High Court in October 2020, due to a breach of fair procedures in the consultation process. Minister McConalogue appealed that decision and a stay on the ruling was granted in March. However, this has now been lifted in advance of the judgment of the Court being delivered.

The Court’s decision means that large trawlers can resume trawling with immediate effect and no longer require an authorisation to fish for sprat inside the six nautical mile zone.

Deputy Cairns said: “This is a really worrying and disappointing development. We are still awaiting the Court’s final ruling on the ban, but it’s clear that this development will have an immediate negative im-

pact on the ecosystem of our coast. The ban on trawling by vessels over 18m in coastal waters is designed to ensure sustainable fishing and to protect the livelihoods of small-scale and island fishers who rely on inshore fishing.

“I raised this matter with the Minister as recently as last week to ensure that it was being responded to appropriately. While I welcomed the decision to appeal the High Court ruling, it is unclear if the Minister has pursued simultaneous actions to address the underlying issues with the original policy directive.

“There is a real risk that if the Court of Appeal’s final decision is against the ban then the whole process will have to start over again and years of progress will be lost. I hope the Minister has a contingency plan in place.”

## Government Fails to Support Ireland’s Fishing Industry – Again - See page 3

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