

Leading Journal of the Irish & UK Fishing Industries

2022  
Skipper  
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# The Skipper

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## 2022 Quotas Stalemate

Stalled EU-UK talks hinder  
TAC's agreements

**Guilty until  
proven innocent!**  
EU Commission refuses  
fishermen sight of  
contentious report



**LOCH INCHARD III**  
Offers more towing  
power and comfort

**SFPA REPORT**  
Commits to better  
goals with industry

Dawn Ross punches her way  
into Castletownbere Harbour  
during Storm Barra.  
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**Shetland's Antarctic III  
set for 2024 delivery**



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## COVER STORY

The December Council failed to agree yearly Tac's for 2022.

# EU-UK Fish Quota Negotiations stalled

## EU sets provisional Quotas for 2022

**D**ue to Post Brexit negotiations between the EU and UK on 2022 fishing quotas for shared fish stocks remaining deadlocked, the EU Council of Fisheries Ministers decided to set provisional fish quotas for EU fishermen for the first quarter of 2022 in the event that an agreement is not reached before the end of the year.

The Council of Ministers agreed to set provisional quotas for the EU industry, to the end of March, at the level of 25% of the 2021 quotas. Given the seasonal nature of certain fisheries, they ensured that the quotas made available for those fisheries that take place predominantly in the first three months of the year meets the seasonal patterns of these fisheries. The Council also agreed to apply the Hague Preferences, which benefit Ireland when stocks are at low levels

The final outcome was that the full 2022 annual quotas for mackerel, blue whiting and Norwegian herring were agreed as well as 70 per cent of the full year quota for Horse Mackerel.

In response to the outcome, **Minister for Agriculture, Food and the Marine. Charlie McConalogue** said, "It is regrettable that

the negotiations with the UK on fish quotas for shared stocks, which started on 11 November, could not be concluded ahead of the Council. These negotiations with the UK have proved to be very difficult and it is in Ireland's interest that the EU is not rushed into an unacceptable deal. To avoid any disruption to our fleets, we have agreed provisional fish quotas for the first quarter of 2022. The EU remains committed to securing a balanced and sustainable agreement with the UK."

In respect of the actions by Norway and the Faroes Islands, in unilaterally setting unacceptably high quotas for mackerel for 2021, **Minister McConalogue** said "I asked the EU to work with like-minded partners to secure fair and balanced mackerel shares for coastal states in 2022. I made clear that the EU must be prepared to take all appropriate measures if Norway and Faroes again set such unsustainable quotas for 2022. This level of overfishing resulting from these inflated unilateral quotas will, in short time, deplete this stock which is economically very important for our own fishing fleet."

Minister McConalogue also welcomed the commitment secured from the

Commission to examine and produce proposals, by the 31st of March next year, on the allocation and distribution of an EU mackerel quota fished by Danish vessels and historically linked to an agreement with Norway. The Minister said

"I was satisfied that the Council agreed that the mackerel quota in question has been suspended, pending the outcome of a thorough assessment involving the Commission and Member States. I will continue to engage actively on the issue and look forward to examining the Commission proposals."

## INDUSTRY RESPONSE



### IS&EFPO

**John Lynch, CEO, IS&EFPO expressed the view that quota talks between the EU and UK should involve more stakeholder input and begin earlier in the year to avoid the stalemate that has occurred.**

The IS&EFPO remain concerned with the announcement that provisional TACs set to be applied for the first three months of 2022 if agreement is not reached with the UK by the end of the year.

Should this occur it will make managing our demersal fisheries more difficult in particular in mixed fisheries where Cod 7b

to k, Whiting 7a and Cod 6a stocks are on bycatch quota because of zero TAC advice. Like last year most other demersal TACs will be at 25% of 2021 values for the first quarter of 2022. To help alleviate this situation the Minister has negotiated some seasonal allocations to allow for fisheries dependant on the first quarter of the year, in the case of demersal fisheries these are porcupine nephrops at 50% and Celtic sea whiting at 85% to allow for the spring fishery.

Ireland shares all bar three stocks with the UK and this leaves us particularly vulnerable in TAC setting under the Trade and Co-Operation Agreement (TCA). While TACs were not agreed between the EU and the UK by the 10th December the parties under the terms of the TCA are to redouble their efforts to reach agreement by the 20th December, however we consider that the system needs a reset in this area and that the dialogue with the UK and the opportunity for stakeholder involvement should commence earlier in the year given the difficulty in attaining any agreement with the UK.

We acknowledge the achievement of the Minister and his team in securing a commitment from the commission to examine the EU mackerel transfer to Denmark under a historical agreement with Norway. However we do not understand the Commissions willingness to accept overfishing of mackerel by Norway and the Faroe Islands. The commission have had no issue in withdrawing Ireland's control plan and forcing every fisherman in Ireland to weigh fish on the piers and harbours around our coast without warning or evidence of wrongdoing, while turning a blind eye to the massive overfishing of mackerel by Norway and the Faroe Islands. We the ISEFPO support the Minister in insisting that the EU must be prepared to take all appropriate measures if this behaviour reoccurs in 2022.



## KFO

### Festive cheer in scant supply at Fisheries Council

**Killybegs Fishermen's Organisation (KFO) CEO, Seán O'Donoghue** has welcomed a declaration issued by the Council of EU Fisheries Ministers aimed at resolving the mackerel dispute between Denmark and Ireland. However, he conceded that this agreement aside, it was a case of "little done, lots left to do" at the annual meeting of the Council of Fisheries Ministers.

Mr O'Donoghue said that this outcome provided an injection of confidence on the critical wider issue of burden-sharing whereby the industry here is seeking an equitable solution to the outrageous scenario which sees Irish fishermen saddled with 40% of the EU's fisheries loss to Britain, post-Brexit.

"We are confident that when all the facts are fully examined rather than the rhetoric, it will be shown that the incorrect methodology had been used by the Commission in setting the Danish mackerel quota in Norwegian waters, which will now be rectified for 2022. The declaration provides a roadmap to achieving this. This issue was a key priority for us and we are pleased that we have managed to eke out a fairly strong resolution thereon.

"Ahead of this Council, I had warned that the new system which sees Britain negotiate directly with the EU on fisheries quotas, means that the Council is now being held in a vacuum bereft of critical information regarding key stocks. A fundamental overhaul of the current system is urgently needed with fishermen entitled to some sort of certainty in order to manage their businesses for the year ahead.

"Of the 55 stocks shared with the UK which are important to the Irish fleet, only two, sole and plaice off the west coast of Ireland have had quotas set for the next year, meaning most of the Irish industry is again left to plan for 2022 without a plan.

"We had requested that the seasonality of our pelagic fisheries such as mackerel, horse mackerel, blue whiting and boarfish, which are mostly fished in the first quarter of the year had to be addressed if provisional 'Total Allowable Catches' (TACs) and quotas were set →

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**Merry Christmas**  
AND A PROSPEROUS 2022

Wishing all our readers a very Merry Christmas from all at The Skipper

for the first three months. Allowing only 25% of our quotas to be caught in this period is neither credible nor realistic. For the most part, this was achieved with mackerel, blue whiting and Atlanto Scandia herring set at 100%. Horse mackerel was set at 70% and regrettably boarfish at just 30% which is unworkable.

“Unfortunately, the Council did not address massive mackerel over-fishing by Norway and the Faroe Islands during 2021 which is jeopardising the sustainable management of the stock. However Minister McConalogue did reiterate his supportive position on this issue at Council, calling for a range of appropriate measures against Norway and the Faroes, if they continue set inflated, unilateral mackerel quotas,” concluded Mr O’Donoghue.



## IS&WFPO

**The future of our Industry remains bleak with scientific advice not conforming with the reality of what our fishermen witness**

**Patrick Murphy, CEO, IS&WFPO** believes the Danish Mackerel row may well herald the final nail in the coffin of Relative Stability and the deserved death of the Common Fisheries Policy.

As Christmas approached, that usual sense of “Déjà vu” experienced annually by the Irish Fishing Industry disappeared only to be replaced, once again with the dawning reality that nothing changes for Irish fishermen as we reached the conclusion of the December Council of Ministers.

Each year, we put forward credible, fair and sustainable requests for justifiable

Increases in a few key white fish stocks, Hake, Haddock, Monk and Sole in the Celtic Sea to the Minister of the day and his Department Officials team who are working close on thirty years in the Department of Marine, who negotiate with their European counterparts up and down the corridors of Brussels through the long hours of the night.

As in previous years, no tooth nor nail was spared in these negotiations but despite this Trojan effort, the usual disappointment is related back to us - only this year it comes to us online as Europe goes Digital in the age of Covid.

Sarcasm aside, the future of our Industry remains bleak with scientific advice not conforming with the reality of what our fishermen witness, which is the abundance of fish witnessed by our fishermen every day on our Irish fishing grounds.

There is clear and irrefutable evidence showing many stocks in Ireland’s EEZ could clearly allow for far higher Total Allowable Catches and sustainable Quota’s for Irish fishermen many of whom will be forced to leave the Industry if the Common fishery policy remains in favour of our visiting fleets.

We ask for no more that equal rights and equal opportunities for Irish Fishermen in Irish waters.

The Minister announced his battle for a return to Ireland of Mackerel quota of 12,000 Tonnes granted to Denmark by the EU some 40 years ago from the Mackerel Stock that spawns and breeds in our waters at a time when the North Sea Mackerel Stock had collapsed as a result of overfishing by Fleets bordering the North Sea. This figure represents some 10% of Denmark’s Mackerel Quota to be taken back from Danish fisherman in the North Sea and returned to Irish fishermen fishing in Irish Waters where under the current policy 23 boats benefit from 87% while 2,000

fishermen must share in a mere 13% of this valuable National Stock.

The possible return of this Mackerel to Ireland after such a long period away must surely be welcomed by all but the question must be asked why successive Irish Governments have failed for 40 years to seek the return of this fish to all Irish Fishermen.

So all credit and praise must go to the current Minister Charlie McConalogue for stepping up to the plate and finally we see our Minister batting for Ireland in Europe.

At this moment in our history when we are about to lose 60 Whitefish Vessels from a fleet of 180 vessels falling foul of a third decommissioning scheme all due to a lack of Quota, this taken from us under the unfair Trade and Cooperation agreement between the UK and EU.

The Irish South and West would ask our Minister McConalogue not to continue with the current unfair Mackerel Policy and only give 12,000 to the 23 Pelagic Boats, when none of them since their creation needed to participate in any of Ireland’s decommissioning schemes due to any loss of their 87% share of the Irish Mackerel Quota.

The Irish South and West make this request to the Minister because many of the 27 Polyvalent Pelagic Boats with only 13% of Ireland’s Mackerel Quota are being asked to Decommission to allow more White fish be available to the remaining whitefish fleet.

Surely, the Minister must now follow European legislation on balancing the opportunities for the entire fleet; justice must dictate a more equitable sharing arrangement be introduced by the Minister in allocating this return of our Mackerel to those within all sectors of our fleet this to include a fisherman in the smallest punt, all our fisherman identified by the Task force as being those in the greatest need.

The demersal sector has already seen their number slashed in previous decommissioning schemes implemented since 2006 and they now ready themselves to lose another 60 boats from the 180 left fishing.”

We paid the price of Europe agreeing a deal for a tariff free trade agreement and our fish was taken from us with our fleet destined to follow if our equal rights and equal opportunities are not afforded to Irish fishermen fishing in our Celtic Sea.

Let’s be clear: The fish we are asking for are only those found in our waters but once again we are informed this is too much to ask for in Brussels at this year’s December Council.

We share the Minister’s frustration that there is no agreement reached between the UK and EU, our fishermen are once again forced to plan for the year ahead on three months of Quota until such time as the Egos of our respective negotiators are massaged enough to allow them reach an agreement for both sides that will last until the end of December 2022.

Whatever the case, the loss of this 12,000 Tonnes of Irish Mackerel that was gifted to

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those Danish boats that have been fishing it for almost 40 years represents a cumulative loss of over half a Billion Euro to the Irish people and its reclaiming by Ireland for the benefit of all Irish Boats may well herald the final nail in the coffin of Relative Stability and the deserved death of the Common Fisheries Policy.



## IFPEA

### *Fisheries talks outcome proves once again the EU's lack of understanding of Irish fishing industry*

#### **Brendan Byrne CEO of Irish Fish Processors and Exporters Association calls for all of Government approach in order that we secure additional quota when talks resume**

As we enter the second year after the disastrous Trade and Co operation agreement (TCA) Ireland still has not secured one ounce of additional fish through the process of burden sharing, this proves once again that our EU colleagues simply do not understand the pressures the Irish Fishing industry is under at present.

There is little to be festively cheerful about regarding the fisheries council talks, but in reality, was it going to be any different? Had we really asked for any substantial burden sharing proposals in advance? The IFPEA concerns in advance of these talks was always, that with the complete lack of broad support in real terms for the burden sharing principle within our EU colleagues, that we could leave these talks in a worse position than entering them and unless we made creditable alternative proposals based on the principles of levelling up, so that over time we claw back that what we have unfairly lost then in these talks we could end up with nothing additional. Regrettably that seems to be the situation and all the time - time itself moves on.

We do welcome of course the fact that there is still light at the end of the tunnel in terms of Danish mackerel, and the critical period between now and the end of March 2022 must involve an all of Government approach in order that we secure this additional quota amounting to a possible 12,000 mt. But, even if we secure this additional quota it is still only a fraction of what is already lost.

The plight of the white fish sector still remains unresolved, and more than any other segment it requires additional quota and opportunity, and yet the talks outcome today has very little for them.

At present we have a crisis in the processing industry with scarcity of supply particularly in the white fish sector, and some operators having to ration their order books- so as to provide each customer with

something as opposed to failing completely to supply the entire customer base. This is the hard realities facing some processors at present and the backdrop in which we are operating as a fish processing industry. The same is the reality in the shellfish and nephrops sectors and yet we are failing to get active engagement from our EU colleagues on these matters. We cannot no longer stand idly by in a stupor and do nothing for these families and communities and that is not a singular political charge, this is a charge against us as a nation state.

It's no longer a case of moral support that we require from our EU colleagues, these are the same coastal members states that annually reap the benefits from the seas that surround our Island. It is time for us to get additional actual quota rights and increased fishing rights in the waters that surround our own island for the entire Irish fishing industry across the board. Zonal attachment has to mean something in terms of our rights, and it must be the basis of the way forward for dealing with the historical unfairness of the CFP since 1983 in addition to addressing the actual disproportionate losses of the Brexit deal 2020.

I am calling on a whole of Government approach to be manifested behind the efforts of the next 3 months, and that this approach be given the status of a national priority by the Government, for focus to be given on all segments of the industry and a concerted effort be made to once and for all addresses the unfairness of the TCA and the hard realities of over 40 years of fisheries neglect by successive Governments added Brendan Byrne CEO of Irish Fish Processors and Exporters Association.

Brexit was a once in a lifetime negative impact on the fishing industry let our reaction as a nation state be the long overdue fight back to secure the future of what is our best natural resource that we have failed since we joined the ECC in 1973. Our future generations deserve nothing less.



## IFPO

### *EU Fisheries December Council still suffering Brexit hangover.*

#### **John Ward, CEO, Irish Fish Producers Organisation that the December council is becoming a non event and quotas need to be finalised much earlier**

It is important that the Minister should return from the December Fisheries Council in Brussels with a good news headline and this year is no exception. This year it's the declaration by the Council of Ministers aimed at resolving the Mackerel dispute between Ireland and Denmark which may see Ireland benefit from an increased



**Minister McConalogue at the Council.**

Mackerel quota share in 2022 but I would suggest we don't get over excited as we have received nothing yet and recent dealings with the EU Commission do not foster optimism. However it is good to see our Minister is not afraid to make waves.

We are back to 3-month temporary quotas again for the first 3 months of next year unless some compromises are reached between the EU and UK in their bi-lateral negotiations which are due to finalise on December 20th. In the pre-council meetings held with Minister McConalogue we impressed upon him the seasonality of our Pelagic fisheries in particular and the necessity for us to have adequate quotas available for our fleet in the first quarter and he has largely delivered on this point with the exception of Boarfish.

On the Demersal sector we experienced tremendous difficulties earlier this year operating the 3-month temporary quotas and 2022 will be the same. We are extremely disappointed that our European partners and the Commission have ignored the situation for Haddock in 6a where ICES recommended a large increase but because it is aligned with Haddock in the North Sea we will only see a token increase. We do not accept the ICES advise for Monkfish, Haddock in 7a or Hake and this Council will bring no change and to make matters worse, the word on the grapevine is that the UK is proposing lower catches in mixed fisheries than ICES during the bi-lateral discussions with the EU.

The timeline for the negotiations between the EU and the UK has to change in the future and it makes no sense to have an EU Council on Fisheries while talks with the UK are taking place in tandem. It renders the EU Council largely a non event and this has to change. We cannot continue to have to wait for our final quotas as happened in 2021 not decided for months into the new year.

Finally I am glad that our Minister has taken up the baton of the unsustainable actions of both Faroes and Norway in awarding themselves unilateral additional quota for Mackerel in 2021 but Ireland seems to be fighting this battle on their own and silence from the EU Commissions is deafening. ■

# SFPA Commits To Better Relationship with Fishing Industry

## A new three-year strategy to work with key stakeholders

BY LORNA SIGGINS

**T**he Sea Fisheries Protection Authority (SFPA) has published a three-year strategy which promises to work “collaboratively” with key stakeholders.

The new strategy sets five goals, and says it was also developed in the context of its role in contributing to the UN Sustainable Development Goals. The UN goals set out a “bold vision for a safer, fairer, more prosperous and sustainable world” by 2030.

SFPA authority member **Tim Donovan** said that while the State body’s primary functions had not altered since the organisation was established in 2007, the SFPA’s environment “has changed substantially and will continue to evolve”.

“Our plan reflects this and underpins our commitment to promote compliance, safeguarding public welfare as well as the delivery of a sustainable, competitive, and innovative seafood sector,” he said.

“Ireland has a safe, innovative fishing industry that is recognised and respected worldwide, while its fish products are acknowledged globally as healthy and nutritious foods,” Donovan added.

“Robust confidence in an effective regulatory service plays a key role in maintaining that reputation and in ensuring fair and sustainable usage of a shared marine resource for which many compete. Good regulation is required to protect it and ensure fish for future generations as well

as ensuring consumers worldwide can enjoy Irish seafood safely,” he said.

**GOAL 1** commits the SFPA to delivering a “quality public service” and “regulate in a fair, objective and proportionate manner”.

**GOAL 2** “strengthen partnerships and re-defines relationships with stakeholders”.

**GOAL 3** aims to “promote and enable the use of data to enhance service delivery, inform decision making, support accountability and simplify engagement with stakeholders”.

**GOAL 4** aims to “sustain and develop strategic and operational capacity and capability to deliver organisational excellence”.

**GOAL 5** aims to “develop and support SFPA’s staff”.

The 2021-2023 strategic “builds on the work the SFPA has accomplished under previous strategic plans while recognising those areas where the authority would have liked to achieve more”, the SFPA said.

“The SFPA’s latest plan is also cognisant of the environment in which it now operates as well as recognising the need to continue to deliver on the significant organisational change programme that is currently under way,” it said.

“As a result of changes in EU fisheries and seafood safety law, EU regulators including the SFPA are required to adapt to the ways in which

the authority operates which includes the adoption of a risk-based approach to regulation,” it said.

“The regulatory environment continues to evolve, requiring further adaption by the SFPA. The expected introduction of a new EU fisheries control regulation, once finalised and adopted, will bring both challenges and opportunities to be addressed during the lifetime of this strategic plan,” it said.

“The new regulation is expected to modernise controls further, ensuring better quality and sharing of fisheries data and information – this includes modernising controls for the small-scale fleet,” it said.

“It will reduce the administrative burden while strengthening the enforcement provisions as well as supporting the implementation of the landing obligation and the important fight against illegal, unreported and unregulated (IUU) fishing,” it said. “The SFPA’s role in food trade compliance



**“Good regulation is required to protect it and ensure fish for future generations as well as ensuring consumers worldwide can enjoy Irish seafood safely.”**

Tim Donovan



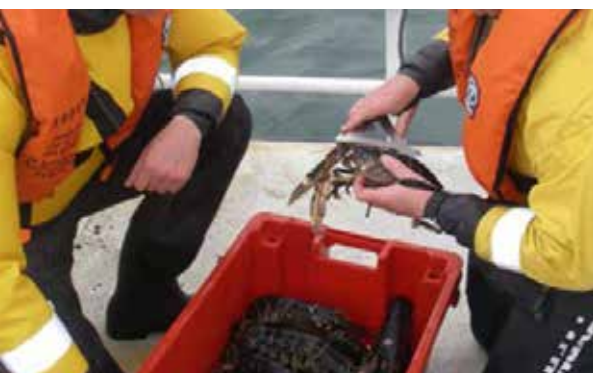


has grown significantly since its previous strategy was published, both in its technical reach and the percentage of overall official control activity involved in the areas of fisheries conservation and food safety,” it noted.

It says Britain’s recent departure from the EU is having a “significant impact, particularly in relation to catch and health certification of Irish fish exports as well as import controls”.

“This has resulted in an increased workload and an ongoing requirement for significant resourcing within the organisation. This is set to increase further with the advent from October 2021 of the requirement to provide export health certification for trade to Britain, and over the land bridge to continental Europe,” it said.

“Additionally, the development and launch



of the Marine Planning Framework and the introduction of marine protected areas in the near future ... are expected to draw further on the resources of the SFPA,” it said, while the Covid-19 pandemic was having a “significant impact”.

Earlier this year, five Irish industry organisations expressed no confidence in the SFPA amid consternation over the EU’s withdrawal of the control plan for weighing catches.

The withdrawal of the control plan removed the derogation to weigh catches away from the pier, and was described as a “bombshell” by the industry. Almost the entire fleet, including shellfish vessels, was affected, with the exception of bulk-stored pelagic species.

The European Commission’s move arose after a 2018 audit had identified “severe and significant weaknesses in the Irish control system” for the EU’s Common Fisheries Policy.

The audit conducted in Killybegs, Co Donegal, detailed irregularities, including the manipulation of weighing systems in some instances.

**A T A VIRTUAL “TOWNHALL” MEETING with Irish marine minister Charlie McConalogue, Irish Fish Producers and Exporters Organisation chief executive Brendan Byrne criticised the SFPA’s lack of engagement with the industry.**

The SFPA told *The Skipper* that it has submitted an updated control plan to the Directorate-General for Maritime Affairs, Fisheries Control and Inspections, European Commission and “it is currently being reviewed”.

“At the present time the SFPA is not in a

position to comment on a process that has not concluded,” an SFPA spokeswoman said on December 10th. The new three year strategy has been developed in the context of a critical review of the SFPA finalised last year by consultants Price Waterhouse Coopers (Pwc).

The review found that “relationships and trust have been impacted by a range of issues, including some long standing industrial relations issues which have not been resolved”. Pwc said the SFPA had “challenging” relationships with various stakeholders, which are affecting its performance, and it was “not operating as a cohesive unit”.

Pwc noted that trust was identified as an issue in the SFPA over a decade ago, when an employee opinion survey was analysed by Joe Wolfe and Associates in 2009. “The SFPA, as an organisation, needs to be reset and unified with a clear and agreed articulation of its mandate,” it said, and it “needs to focus as a priority on its primary functions”.

It recommended a “significant programme of change”, with an implementation timetable for “short, medium and long term” changes in a range of areas. “In essence, the SFPA needs a clear focus on an accepted vision and core mission, with agreed objectives supported by its core expertise,” it said. It recommended a strategy with an agreed set of objectives and action plans, and “key performance indicators” or KPIs which are “meaningful and quantifiable”.

“It is fundamental that this strategy is accepted and supported by key stakeholders, particularly staff,” the Pwc report said.

One of the Pwc report’s key findings, which it highlighted as requiring “significant and urgent attention”, was what it identified as a lack of cohesion and a “fundamental disconnect” between the port offices and management in headquarters in Clonakilty, Co Cork.

“Port offices are operating with a degree of independence which has been influenced by a range of factors such as a lack of clearly defined KPIs, delays in data availability in relation to key work outputs, limited quality assurance of port work, disconnected systems and a lack of effective monitoring,” it said.

“While the organisation structure is documented and job descriptions are in place, the structure and roles and responsibilities (including decision-making rights) are not always accepted and/or respected and the inter-relationships between roles are not always understood or considered,” it said.

It attributed the cause of the “disconnect between the port offices and headquarters in part due to “ineffective management control and a high level of individual port office autonomy”.

“To address this, roles and responsibilities need to be re-established, reporting and monitoring improved and the inter-relationships between the



## The Strategic Outcomes

**“Strategic outcomes” of the new SFPA strategy include continuing with the development and implementation of risk-based approaches to control, and continue to prioritise the inspection of higher risk operators and higher risk activities.**

- It also commits to developing “engagement strategies” with higher risk operators, and aligning SFPA resources to target interventions in recognised higher risk sectors.
- It commits to highlighting to industry and the broader public the priorities being inspected in 2021-23, and ensuring “fair, proportionate, and transparent control”.
- It commits from 2021 to publish on the SFPA’s website the number of risk based inspections of fishing vessels undertaken against targets set in the national control plan on a quarterly basis.
- It also commits to publishing on the SFPA’s website the number of risk based food safety inspections/controls undertaken against targets set in the seafood safety control plan on a quarterly basis.
- It commits to developing technological solutions that will enable “timely interventions as legislation changes and where monitoring difficulties arise”.
- It commits to ensuring proportionate enforcement, and working with policy

makers to develop approaches to deal with minor infringements – with “proportionate responses” in relation to the latter.

- It commits from 2021 to report the points issued for serious infringements on a quarterly basis on the SFPA’s website, along with enforcement responses to food safety contraventions on a quarterly basis.
- It says it will promote compliance through industry engagement and communication, and develop advisory notes to assist industry on how to comply with relevant requirements.
- It says it will develop and set performance targets for education and communication to promote compliance, and implement a research project that “identifies and addresses knowledge gaps (internally and externally) and helps to identify solutions to complex regulatory issues”.
- It says its website will be updated for all “targeted programmes”, “inspection focus” items and court outcomes (convictions, other), and will communicate via media releases when appropriate.
- It commits to provide more information to stakeholders and the public, and publish on the SFPA’s website documents for wider consultation.
- It promises to host webinars on issues impacting the sector, and invite the engagement of the public in the “protection of our maritime resources”.

roles need to be better defined,” PwC recommended.

“The SFPA should identify which roles are responsible for the performance of each activity, which roles are accountable, which roles need to be consulted, and which roles need to be informed,” it said.

“This will also be helpful to addressing silos and facilitating team-based and cross-functional working, balancing workload and defining responsibility for communication,” it said.

The PwC study noted a number of previous reviews have been conducted, and referred frequently to the EU audit of 2018.

Warnings of weaknesses in relation to pelagic monitoring had been flagged in a review of the country’s fishery control regime, commissioned in 2007 by the then Department of Communications, Marine and Natural Resources.

One of a number of issues raised in that EU audit, and identified by PwC, related to the vessel risk rating list/model, which was developed by a member of the SFPA management team.

PwC notes that it was “populated (largely manually) and maintained by the same manager using data from a number of systems”, and maintenance was labour intensive.

“Knowledge of the system appears to be limited to a small number of staff,” it said, and it noted the list was not connected to other systems, such as the

Integrated Fisheries Information System (IFIS), which is the main system for recording inspection work.

It also noted that the SFPA relationship with its consultative committee was strained, and said the authority should find a way of working with it that recognises “the operational independence of the SFPA functions as set out in legislation”.

The PwC report noted that the SFPA did not have an independently established board, and the legislation establishing it from 2006 did not provide for one.

It says the “parent department” – as in Agriculture, Food and Marine (DAFM) – may wish to consider establishing an advisory board.

It also said the SFPA should address the Sea Fisheries Protection Officer (SFPO) “dual role issue”, where the officers are scheduled to spend 50% of their time on port duties with the balancing 50% on specialist desk based administrative duties in headquarters.

The plan proposes a data strategy and inventory that will “enable the SFPA to improve how the authority collects, processes and disseminates data for the benefit of the organisation and its stakeholders”.

Its fifth goal, to make the SFPA an “authority of excellence”, includes a commitment to publish reports on the SFPA’s website on a quarterly basis,

“demonstrating progress made and indicative timelines for completion in respect of the organisational review”.

Implement findings of internal and external audits carried out by the internal audit function, the Office of the Comptroller & Auditor General (C&AG), DG Santé, DG Mare, FSAI and DAFM in accordance with timeframes agreed with the Audit and Risk Committee (ARC). Annual financial statements certified by C&AG by 30th June each year. Final combined English/Irish report submitted to DAFM within one month of the C&AG audit certificate. Implement outcomes of DG Mare Pelagic Audit and Administrative Inquiry as per agreed timeframes.

It says the SFPA “will have an innovative culture that will allow the authority to deliver value for money and respond to change in its operating environment”, and an innovation strategy will be in place by end of 2022.

It commits to improving its industrial relations framework, with “more timely resolution” of industrial relation issues, and an agreed industrial relations protocol will be in place “by 2022”.

It also commits to implementing the Irish Language Act as it applies to the SFPA, and provide services through the medium of Irish when requested with a particular focus on head office and port offices serving Gaeltacht communities. ■

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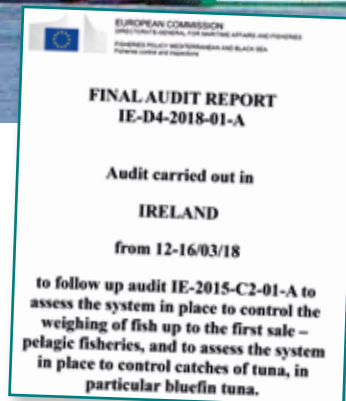
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The inability of Irish fishermen to be able to defend themselves is already having a huge impact.



# Guilty until proven innocent, the lot of Irish fishermen

EU Commission refuses fishermen sight of contentious report

**F**ishermen are demanding sight of a control audit report which allegedly makes a range of damaging allegations against the sector but to which they have been denied access for more than three years.

Killybegs Fishermen's Organisation (KFO) CEO, **Seán O'Donoghue** said the Commission is playing the role of judge and jury, with the fishing industry being refused the basic right to establish what it might stand accused of.

"Natural justice assumes an absence of bias and the right to a fair hearing but for Irish fishermen, it would appear that this is a bridge too far. This is borne out in the European Commission's sustained refusals

to release findings of an audit around fishing practices which concluded in 2018 and subsequently formed the basis of a new investigation into the sector.

"Since we've never seen the actual audit report nor the investigation's findings, we've only learned anecdotally that it found Ireland lacked a weighing system fit for purpose and permission for all fish to be weighed in factories was duly removed earlier this year. The only information fishermen have is coming from media reports and political utterances which hint at all sorts of horrific punishments coming down the track in the form of slashed quotas and massive fines.

"Our inability to be able to

**"Media reports hint at all sorts of horrific punishments coming down the track in the form of slashed quotas and massive fines."**

defend ourselves is already having a huge impact. The removal of the weighing permits in the factories last April was, according to the Commission, based on the findings of these reports. Fish must now be weighed at the point of landing which is wholly unworkable and having a detrimental effect on product quality, markets and operational efficiency.

"We met with the Commissioner for the Environment, Oceans and Fisheries, Virginijus Sinkevicius in Killybegs in September. To

the fore on our agenda was to formally establish what both the audit and the three-year inquiry have uncovered to date. Mr Sinkevicius claimed the inquiry was ongoing with the Irish authorities and much to our amazement, he said he wasn't aware that industry has been refused access to the information," said Mr O'Donoghue.

"The old adage 'innocent until proven guilty' is being applied in reverse here. It's high time for the Commission to play fair with Irish fishermen and give our much-maligned industry a chance to defend itself in order to work together to ensure fairness, sustainability, transparency and a seascape which gives those employed therein an opportunity to make a viable living in a post-Brexit world. This Kafkaesque charade in which we find ourselves, belies the very Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union which states clearly that the presumption of innocence should be respected. Unfortunately the experience of Irish fishermen has been a very different one," he concluded. ■

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# DANNY MURPHY

## Farewell To A Man Of The Sea!

**Founder of Ireland's first lobster cooperative**

**T**he flotilla of boats escorting West Cork fisherman Danny Murphy to his final resting place on Friday, November 5th, were testament to the high regard and stance the Heir Island and Skibbereen man was held in.

Danny Murphy founded and chaired one of Ireland's first lobster conservation co-operatives, which is still v-notching lobsters along our South West coast.

Today this has in turn created one of the largest fishermen's organisations at the time, i.e., the Southwest Inshore Fishermen's Association which had 300 registered and paid up members and successfully lobbied for the addition of 7000 GTs for unregistered vessels in the Irish fleet. This subsequently saw another sector being created, the P-licence that allows 410 families to continue their tradition of fishing using pots all around our coastline.

This family tradition of fighting for fishermen's rights is still carried on today by his son, Patrick Murphy, CEO of the IS&WFPO

Danny died unexpectedly on November 2nd, following a tragic accident. His final voyage began down the Ilen River from Old Court, to Heir Island and concluded at Cunnamore Pier, Roaring Water Bay.

Danny was one of the founder members of Skibbereen Rowing club and remained committed to the very successful club over the years. So it was fitting that members of the club, including Olympian Fintan McCarthy, formed the vanguard of his escort.

They were joined by West Cork ferries, and small boats along the route which was lined at piers and slips with others paying their respect.

Danny Murphy had been a committed community man all his life. He was one of those brave men who was on call the night the oil tanker, the Betelgeuse exploded in Bantry Bay in January 1979 with a massive loss of life. Following this tragedy, a new commercial marine enterprise was born, Aquaculture, in the form of mussel lines cultivation.



**DANNY MURPHY: A committed community man all his life.**

Danny started his farm in Roaringwater Bay a decade later and fought for the infrastructure needed to develop this industry which would grow to sustain up to 100 jobs in a calendar year by meeting with five different Ministers for the Marine.

Funding was finally awarded in 1996 to build a pier to service the men who built their businesses around that industry. Today that same industry is being farmed by a third generation.

Danny also fought for the electrification of Heir Island and the piping of mains water into Heir Island in the early 1970s. He was part of the legacy of men who manned small craft when pickings

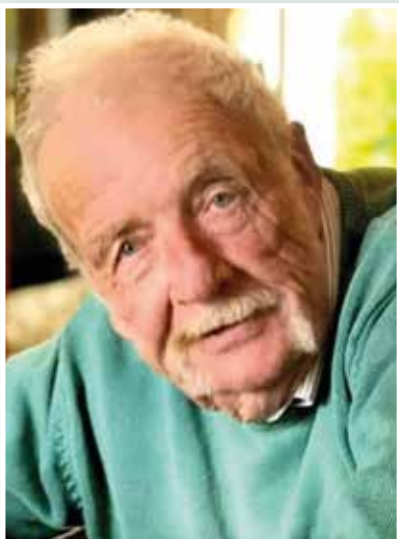
were lean. But he had the vision and tenacity to improve conditions for others. He was a very social man too and was a great dancer, nimble of feet and danced the night away on many occasions.

He was an avid fisherman and instilled his love of the sea, his belief in fairness and respect for others to his family. He was immensely proud of the achievements of his children and his extended family.

It was at Cunnamore Pier the last time I met him. He always was the utmost respectful man, although there was always a glint of mischief in his eyes and a smile on his lips which would often explode into laughter. **C.G**



**A flotilla of boats escort West Cork fisherman Danny Murphy to his final resting place.**



## OBITUARY

Pat got his Skippers ticket at just 16.

## Skipper Pat Moore

The 4th November 2021 was a sad day on the shore road of Killybegs, as mourners gathered to pay respects to a man whom they've known for a lifetime. The clouds hung low on this dull day as the foghorns blew to bid farewell to the passing cortege that carried the remains of a gentleman. That man was Pat Moore, husband, father, grandfather, skipper and a real character to all who knew him. Born on the 25th October 1941, he had turned the ripe old age of 80 just eight days before he passed away.

The name Moore is well known in the town since Pat's father pioneered his way to a fishing dynasty at the Killybegs port in 1930s, having left County Kerry. Throughout the decades since, the family were destined to fish multiple boats from the Port. Amongst these vessels were the 48ft *Mulroy Bay*, the *Vigilant*, the 56ft *Girl Eileen*, 70ft *Mulroy Bay II*, 80ft *Aqua Marine*, 50ft *Brothers Hope*, and the 56ft *Favourite*.

Pat was just 16 when he began fishing and acquired his skippers ticket along the way, and retired at the age of 60. Most of his fishing knowledge he inherited from his father and uncles. He fished off the Donegal coast right down to the Aran Islands and off Porcupine Bank. Pat skippered Willie Gallagher's 75ft *Carannodon* built in 1972, and often recalled boarding 200 boxes of prawns in one haul. He would tell stories of how the pier would be so busy in the spring times when you couldn't get moving for boxes of Cod and Herring piled all over the place, while the buyers ran around looking for more empty boxes. Sadly those days are now gone as the Cod fishery disappeared.

In 1965 Pat tied the knot with his sweetheart Brigid and bought his first boat, the 70ft *Magnificent* from his father Martin. He always did his own thing during his fishing career and in the late 1970s he was the first skipper to engage in weekend fishing out of Killybegs. It was a practice that immediately did not meet with universal approval however, but one year on other boats followed suit.

I am sure that there are many more stories to be told of his life in the fishing industry of Killybegs by those who knew him; we will save those for his crew of family and friends. To the Moore family we give our condolences to his wife Brigid, children Keith, Stevie, Samantha, Jason, Dionne, Gareth and Stephanie and families. *Condolences from all at The Skipper.*

## Killybegs Frustration as Herring Quota caught

There was great disappointment and frustration for three Killybegs vessels, (*Vigilant*, *Western Endeavour*, and *Atlantic Challenge*) that steamed over 1,200 miles up North in search of Scandi Herring. The *Vigilant* was only ten hours from the fishing ground when they received an email informing them that the Herring quota was caught.

The Irish skippers immediately stopped all progress and asked their fishing agents for an additional check of the information received. After barely 24 hour however, all doubts had been cleared and it was confirmed that the EU fleet had already fished 33,191 tonnes of herring in the Norwegian Economic Zone. The allocated quota was 29,667 tonnes, and the Directorate of Fisheries diplomatically reported to the European Commission that there is thus "0 tonnes remaining".

This called an immediate stop to fishing and "closure of the herring fishery", formally announced in J-Melding 217 with effect from 1 December. Thus the fleet that left Killybegs returned home without a fish in their tanks.

### Sprat Fishery

■ Meanwhile, the Sprat fishery has proved to be disappointing this season with boats having no show in Inver bay. However, small boats had no problems catching their Herring quota in Bruckless bay.

### Pelagic

■ The Killybegs fleet are tied up now having caught their Scad quota and now wait to start next year quota in January.

## OBITUARY

## A farewell to John Keeney

On the 15th November 2021, John Keeney passed away just two weeks after his friend and neighbour Pat Moore. John's career spanned over 30 years on the Killybegs pier and he worked under 6-7 Harbour Masters during this time.

John came from a large family of 12 and suffered ill health with chest problems all of his life. A true native of the Glenties, he returned from work in England in 1975 and then came to Killybegs where he found work in *Fintra House* as a bar man between 1976-77. He later met his love Patricia, who was also born in the Glenties, and worked in the *Bay View Hotel*, and they went on to marry in 1978. He worked for a short time on a boat in Killybegs called the *Slieve Bloom* and a year later in 1979, he started work on the pier where he remained until 2009.

When asked to describe John, his wife Patricia and daughter Dianne just smiled at each other. "He was a real character, always messing and laughing. He was the key keeper of the pier, full of chat and had a great knowledge of the boats and crews. He had a great interest in people, he loved them." It was evident in their fondness of him that he went too soon. They describe a funny man, a loving man and a family man. John had one wish and that was to be interned in his home town of Glenties. This wish was granted and along the way from Killybegs, Ardara and Glenties, he had a guard of honour from those who knew and loved a true gentleman.

John is survived by his wife Patricia and children Dianne, Laura, Shaun and Eimear and their four grandchildren, daughters and son-in-laws. *Condolences from all at The Skipper.*



A true gentleman and real character.



# Cephalopods and Crustaceans are sentient and can feel pain

**S**entience is the capability to have feelings. Pain, pleasure, comfort, joy, misery and excitement are some of the issues which are classified as sentient.

Now the prominent scientists at the world prominent Institute of the **London School of Economics** have deduced that **Cephalopods** (squid and octopus) and **Crustaceans**

(lobster, crab and prawns) are sentient and can feel pain, which has led to calls that such animals shall be treated humanely and not subjected to pain and other negative feelings.

This is no great surprise to those handling and processing crustaceans and the have for years now found humane means of stunning crab and lobster before boiling or otherwise

cooking for the table. However, as a consequence of this latest report, it seems that animal welfare should apply to these animals and it appears that a committee is to be set up to decide standards to apply upon which Government legislation is to apply to set handling standards and processing of these animals.

There is little doubt that the

boiling alive of lobster and crab will soon be outlawed and industry has in some part anticipated this and humane stunners are in wide use amongst the processing industry.

What is less clear is however, is how the law will apply in the case of Nephrops (prawns and scampi) where tailing at sea is the industry accepted norm and whole Nephrops being put on ice after some kind of chemical treatment, the main element of which is capable of corroding steel, never mind its sentient impact on langoustines.

Hopefully, the pledge is that normal fishing practice will not be upset, although the LSE report recommends that not only boiling alive but live dismemberment is be outlawed where a viable alternative exists. Presumably that covers trailing at sea, but what is the viable alternative for Nephrops?

On the octopus and squid issue the report concludes that there is no commercial method of alternative humane slaughter and recommends that more research be undertaken. The licensing of approved onshore handling operatives is under consideration to enact the findings of the report and subsequent legislation, but about the crew of a prawn trawler nothing is directly said but what yet may be construed?

Boiling alive of Lobster will soon be outlawed.



## Fishery largely dormant

Most boats remain tied up

**N**othing very different to report this month from last on the main prawn fishery. Boats remain tied up with the majority of foreign ones back to their own homeland for Christmas, optimistically hoping to return early in January if Covid, Border Force and other authorities allow.

A crew of Sri Lankan fishermen arrived in Northern Ireland in December to further add to the melting-pot mixture of labour in the fleet. It must have been a temperature shock as well as culture one for

them to go from the tropics to Northern Ireland in winter, as well as the tribal differences so different but in other ways so similar from their homeland!

There were very few boats that tried the prawns with fuel costs high disinclining any one from even trying to test the grounds. Reports are similar in the Clyde with one Portavogie boat under contract trying to justify the effort.

Meanwhile, the fleet based in the North Sea at Newcastle also found life more difficult with the weather dominated by storm A keeping the fleet

port bound, and even when they put to sea, there was little doing and prices on offer were not great either. Sometime soon after this barren spell the market and the demand must surely improve as cold stores empty and the economy bounces back as is predicted, although not promised. The Porcupine Bank seems to be getting continued attention although returns as in tonnages seem to have dropped off, probably due to a weather issue in an inhospitable area.

The Whitefish fleet were joined by two Portavogie prawners re-rigged with makeshift semi-pelagic gear getting an easier turn at the fish without making a fortune, whilst the regulars worked away again on the basic returns but at least getting a turn.

Scallopers are active and although it is anything but a

bumper season at least there is a positive return which is widely spread over the grounds and not confined to Manx waters.

The local boats at the pelagics are long finished their season with quota caught and looking for an early Christmas. There has been some activity with the smaller Irish boats delivering a mix of Scad, Mackerel and inshore Herring from a sentinel fishery on the North Coast. This keeps the factories going although they are reporting labour problems, but some local fishermen are taking advantage with the fleet tied up. On the inshore ground it is back to winter mode with lobster making good money and Brown Crab in the last few weeks of activity. Looking forward to the Velvets and Whelks with no great expectation. ■

## Quota and End Year Issues

Coming the year end the usual intensive round of meetings are coming up which for 2021/22 are more involved than usual with, post Brexit, the United Kingdom's new status as a sovereign coastal state, is now more involved than ever with negotiations involving Norway, Faroe, the EU and France (on its own) taking on new significance and the impact on local fisheries being more remote and in a way less contentious.

The Brexit bonus of increasing quota percentages year on year until 2026 allows for an easing of the quota impacts as 2021 proved fairly easy to survive with the notable exception of Cod, which seems to be giving everyone the same headache.

Northern Ireland has an uplift to look forward to and we are also spared again the historic abuse of the Hague Preference on this fishery. However, a 20% proposed cut would negate these benefits and make little sense in the overall by-catch fishery we are in at the present on this stock. On reflection the Cod Recovery Program instigated by the EU in the year 2000, with enthusiastic buy in from member states, has proved an object lesson in futility and when the legislative process and techno-science input is added



Prospect of a TAC increase for Irish Sea Herring.

to industry costs, its a costly initiative which seems to have no end. However it ends up this December/January it is difficult to see any positive.

Irish Sea Haddock is also seemingly on a downward path according to the science but revised thinking may help here, though Northern Ireland failed to catch its 2021 quota here so unless there is a resurrection of stock and fishing fortune, it is difficult to get wound-up about it. Otherwise the same applies to most whitefish stocks with 2021 quota uncaught and the larger fleet elements involved in guard work which is quota free.

Nephrops seem set for a fairly modest reduction although the prognosis for Irish Sea West is positive the under catch this year and the Brexit bonus should leave Northern Ireland with no year on year real quota reduction that cannot be absorbed.

Irish Sea Herring is a different case with the prospect of a TAC increase plus Brexit bonus giving the local boats something to look forward to and a potential problem of a widening of the fishery. Here because of the local geographic limits of the fishery, there should be no issues of international dispute as

affects the Mackerel and other pelagic stocks.

Access was always the Brexit downer for the Northern Ireland fleet and despite France trying to rewrite the Trade and Fisheries agreement there seems little prospect of returning to the old cross border freedoms. Such is Life!

We can look forward to new conservation initiatives from on high with Celtic Sea technical measures promised and no doubt the spin-off s will find their way north, as will other environmental initiatives and never mind the wind and tidal farms! ■

## Safety Initiative Roadshows

**The Seafish supported Northern Ireland Fisherman's Safety Forum in conjunction with the NI Training Association, Fishermen's Mission, RNLI, MCA, NIFPO, ANIFPO and Relate NI (a mental awareness body) undertook some seven roadshow events at the main and minor fishing centres in Northern Ireland in December.**

**The safety at sea message was enhanced by giveaway goodies such as a waterproof phone pouch, a MCA drills guide, an MOB ladder bag and a £400 grant to attend a Man Overboard training course in Cork in February 2022. The first venues were Bangor (Co Down), Donaghadee and Portavogie, followed by Kilkeel and Ardglass with Toombridge and Ballycastle also covered.**

**This follows activity in those ports previously of unannounced inspections by the Marine Coastguard Agency looking at crew contracts, log book entries, stability issues and whatever came to light. With the majority of the fleet tied up due to seasonal down time coverage was fairly complete.**



**NORTHERN IRELAND FISHERMEN'S SAFETY FORUM**  
MAKING FISHING SAFER TOGETHER



### ROCKABILL (NI) CLOSES

■ The Rockabill (NI) plants and reception centres in Northern Ireland closed in December with staff put on notice and local supply facilities closed. Ardglass, the first Rockabill facility to open, has been closed for a few years now, although the premises on Ardglass Harbour remain in place. The Kilkeel base wound down late in 2021, with one employee remaining, the rest paid off and the Portavogie operation seemingly also closed in December.



“We need to do more to reach more vessel owners and skippers and get them to prioritise safety. Your catch is worthless if you are not coming home with it.”

Brian Johnson

# Fishing industry ramps up Safety Messages

New campaign from FISG aims to prevent further deaths

**Latest Home and Dry campaign from the FISHING INDUSTRY SAFETY GROUP (FISG) turns the spotlight on reducing capsizing incidents**

Ten commercial fishermen have tragically lost their lives in accidents at sea in 2021 making it the highest number of deaths in a decade, according to data from the Marine Accident Investigation Branch (MAIB). This compares to just 2 deaths in 2020 and double the yearly average over the past 5 years.

Today, the Fishing Industry Safety Group (FISG) has launched its latest **Home and Dry** campaign for the fishing industry with advice on how to reduce the risk of capsizing. This follows recent campaigns on wearing Personal Flotation Devices and avoiding falling overboard in its goal to make the UK fishing industry safer with zero preventable deaths on fishing vessels.

The Fishing Industry Safety Group (FISG), is a group of fishing industry organisations, charities, public bodies and regulators set up to improve the safety of commercial fishing at sea.



**Brian Johnson**, CEO of the Maritime and Coastguard Agency (MCA) and Chair of the FISG, says:

“We have lost too many lives to fishing over the years and our hearts go out to the families and communities that continue to be devastated by these losses. We know the industry have had a tough couple of years with the impact of the pandemic which may be leading to some people taking more risks.”

He adds: “The Home and Dry campaign has been running for 18 months and the campaign is making those who see it and engage with it more safety-conscious. Our last campaign on Man Overboard motivated them to buy new safety equipment which is great. But we need to do more to reach more vessel owners and skippers and get them to prioritise safety. Your catch is worthless if you are not coming home with it.”

The Home and Dry campaign on stability awareness is asking skippers and fishing vessel owners to educate themselves about stability on their fishing vessel and to do their own stability and freeboard checks this winter.

Johnson continues, “Stability is now regulated as part of the new code for small vessels under 15m, so the latest campaign is focused on how to keep vessels stable at sea and reduce the risk of capsizing.

We are highlighting the causes of stability issues at

sea and giving clear guidance on how you can do your own stability checks on your vessel. It is important that anyone working on a fishing vessel understands what the dangers are and how to fix them.”

## Fishing vessel stability support for the industry

FISG has produced guidance for the fishing industry on checking vessel stability which is available on the Home and Dry website ([www.homeanddry.uk](http://www.homeanddry.uk)). This includes videos on how to do a roll test and measure their freeboard, and easy-to-understand animations detailing the main factors that can impact stability on a vessel.

Stability Awareness training courses are also available across the UK with funding available to

cover the cost of the course.

**Ashley Mullenger**, from Wells-next-the-Sea, who decided to get ahead on some of her stability checks says:

“We decided to do a roll test to check the stability of our vessel. It was quick and easy and now we know how to do it for next time, and we know more about how far we can push it before the risk of capsizing. I think it’s important to know how to check your stability and know the different things that can impact it.”

■ All the stability information is available on [www.homeanddry.uk](http://www.homeanddry.uk) including links to videos and other safety resources.



**ROLL WITH IT.** Ashley Mullenger found taking the roll test quick and easy.



# Welsh Whelks to come under Quota Scheme

## New plans to safeguard and protect stock



**Lesley Griffiths MS, Minister for Rural Affairs and North Wales, and Trefnydd has announce a new**

### Whelk Management Scheme for Welsh waters

She said: "In 2019 I published the 'Brexit and our Seas' consultation as the first step in developing a fisheries policy which works for Wales. One of the key issues identified was the need for more modern and flexible management systems to ensure the sustainability of non-quota stocks."

"In light of this, in March 2020 I published a consultation on proposals for new whelk management measures

including:

- An authorisation scheme for all vessels taking whelks with pots in the Welsh zone,
- An annual limit on the total amount of whelk that can be taken from the Welsh zone,
- A flexible monthly catch limit for each authorised vessel.

"The consultation ended on 7 June 2020 and was later extended to 1 November 2020 because of disruption caused by the Covid-19 pandemic during the original consultation period. In total, 60 responses were received from a range of stakeholders and I am grateful to all those who took the time to respond. There was strong support in favour of



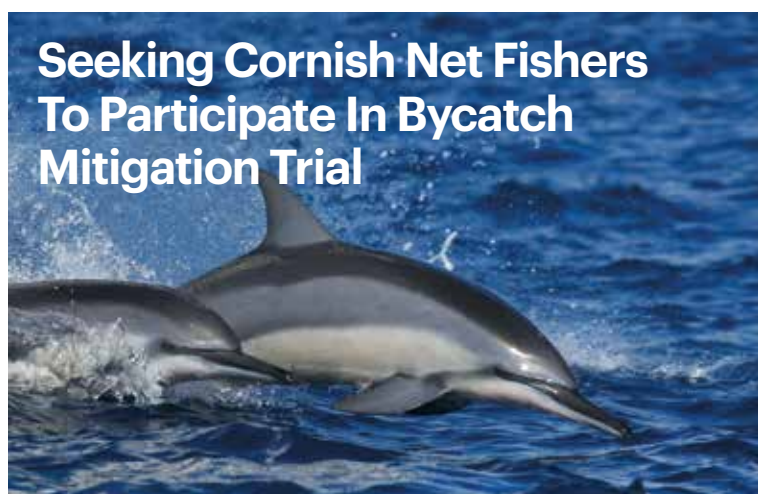
New adaptive management system in place for non-quota stock.

the proposed measures in the consultation."

"Today I am announcing the coming into force of the **Whelk Fishing Permit (Wales) Order 2021**. This Order will, for the first time, introduce an adaptive management system for a non-quota stock in Wales to enable more timely interventions in response to changes in stock levels and the environment."

"The Order will protect the whelk stock and the wider

marine environment in the Welsh zone. As a result, it will ensure the sustainability of the fishery so it continues to provide social and economic benefits to coastal communities in the future. I remain fully committed to introducing similar evidence based flexible management regimes for a range of other stocks to safeguard the marine environment and the fishing industry in Wales."



## Seeking Cornish Net Fishers To Participate In Bycatch Mitigation Trial

**In an effort to reduce the bycatch of dolphins and porpoises in static net fisheries, Clean Catch UK (CCUK) are looking to undertake commercial trials of Passive Acoustic Reflectors (PARs).**

PARs work in a similar way to "cats' eyes" in the road. Rather than light, the PARs bounce back the clicks emitted by a dolphin or porpoise, creating an 'echo'. This should alert the cetacean to the presence of the net in front of them. There are no batteries, no electronics, the PAR is simply attached to the headline.

Starting in December 2021, CCUK are seeking 10 vessels in the South-west using static nets (gill, trammel, tangle) to trial how effective, robust, and practical PARs are in the commercial fisheries.

PARs are designed to retro-fit to the headline of gill nets, trammel and tangle nets, either alongside floats – or replacing them. PARs either have the same buoyancy as headline floats or are available neutrally buoyant.

PARs would need to be retro-fitted to the headrope of some of your gear and shot alongside your unaltered gear whilst you go about your usual fishing. You use a simple app to record fishing activity and bycatch.

A small financial contribution of £50.00 per month is available in return for data submitted via the app over a 12-month period.

■ **Further information and how to get involved in the PAR project can be found on the CCUK website: [www.cleancatchuk.com](http://www.cleancatchuk.com)**

## All Change at MarineCo Ltd

**Dick James**, long term Director and for many years Chairman of MarineCo Ltd, the leading wholesale distributor into the UK fishing industry retired from the Board of Directors at the recent meeting of Directors held in Edinburgh on 17 November.

Dick held the position of Chief Executive of NIFPO for many years and recently retired from this full time role and has been followed by Harry Wick, who has also now joined the Board of Directors of MarineCo.

Tom Bryan-Brown, who many years ago had served under Dick at NIFPO takes over the Chair at MarineCo having held the post of Vice Chair for the past 6 years.

Dick said that he was particularly pleased to have been able to oversee the building of the new MarineCo warehouse in Saltash and felt that this was a natural time to step aside and allow a more youthful Board of Directors to implement their plans for growth utilising the wonderful new facility. He praised Chris Dinham, long term Managing



Dick James (right) hands over to Tom Bryan Brown.

Director of MarineCo as well as the hard working and committed staff. He wished the business every success for the future.

Tom Bryan Brown thanked Dick for all the years of guidance that he had brought to the Chairmanship utilising his very great and wide industry experience to ensure MarineCo was fit and ready for the challenges that are bound to be ahead. In time honoured fashion the new Chairman passed over a decanter set engraved with the 'of men and boats' logo, a link to the early days when this was the company logo.

Craig Rosie, who is Chandlery Manager at F.M.A Eyemouth Ltd was elected to the Vice-chairmanship. ■



**N**egotiating as an independent coastal State, the UK has agreed catch levels for 2022 with Norway and the EU that provide fishing opportunities estimated to be worth around £190 million to the UK fishing industry, based on historic landing prices. This will provide certainty and stability for the industry ahead of the new year.

The agreement signals the Parties' continued commitment to the sustainable management of North Sea cod, haddock, plaice, whiting, herring and saithe to ensure the long-term viability of these stocks. The agreement has also established plans to review the distribution and management of shared stocks such as hake – a measure that aims to safeguard stocks which are important for the whole UK catching sector.

Catch levels for five of the six stocks have been set in line with, or lower than, the level advised by scientists at the International Council for the Exploration of the Sea (ICES).

The catch levels agreed for 2022 (compared to 2021) are:

- **Cod rollover**
- **Haddock** +5%
- **Herring** +20%
- **Plaice** -12%
- **Saithe** -24%
- **Whiting** +25%

#### Reacting to the agreement UK Fisheries Minister Victoria Prentis said:

*"I am pleased to announce we have concluded trilateral negotiations between the UK, EU and Norway. We are proud to have led discussion to a positive conclusion as we seek to set a gold standard for the entire fishing industry. We are confident that this agreement has struck a balance that will benefit both our fishing industry and ensure our marine environment is healthy and viable long into the future."*

*"The UK Government has worked closely throughout the negotiations with the Scottish Government and other administrations to reach this consensus which seeks to benefit the entire UK fishing industry. An assessment on the number of individual TACs set consistent with ICES advice will be published on the conclusion of the UK's annual fisheries negotiations."*

#### Industry Reaction

**Elsbeth Macdonald**, chief executive of SFF, said: "The agreement reached through this three-way negotiation sets the 2022 TACs for some of Scotland's most important commercial stocks. The UK can now move forward with the bilateral discussions with our neighbouring coastal states about fishing opportunities and access arrangements for the year ahead, the aim being to provide clarity and certainty to the industry before the start of the new year.

*"While the industry is yet again faced with fluctuations in TACs based on scientific advice that in many cases doesn't reflect what fishermen see on the grounds, UK and Scottish government negotiators have*



Fairway steaming to the North Sea fishing grounds. Photo: Ivan Reid

## UK agrees Quotas with EU and Norway for North Sea Stocks

The UK has reached agreement with Norway and the European Union on catch limits for 2022 for six jointly managed fish stocks in the North Sea.

*worked hard to secure the best possible outcomes for our fleet, showing the benefit of the UK being at the negotiating table in its own right, which it could never be as part of the EU."*

**Shetland Fishermen's Association (SFA) has responded news of fisheries agreements for 2022 by demanding "a complete shake-up" of the scientific advice process that underpins international negotiations on fishing quotas.**

*"We're sick and tired of going through the same process every year," said Simon Collins, SFA Executive Officer. "Wildly erratic stock assessments – often both ways – are held up as sacred truths, despite massive revisions from one year to the next by the people producing them. We are then left working with our national governments to minimise completely unnecessary damage to a perfectly sustainable and valuable industry."*

Together with the Scottish White Fish Producers' Association, SFA called earlier this year for an independent panel of experts to examine the credibility of quota advice issued every year by the International Council for the Exploration of the Sea (ICES).

*"It's no good referring to 'the best available science' when that science simply isn't good enough. Given the lack of alternative views taken into account, it's also 'the worst available science'," added Collins.*

*"It's why we've ended up, despite the commendable efforts of Scottish and UK negotiators, with quotas for 2022 – particularly on North Sea cod – that bear little or no resemblance to the abundances of fish observed on our grounds. The outlook for our whitefish fleet in particular is very challenging as a result, and for no credible reason.*

*"The whole scientific advice process requires a complete shake-up, to the benefit not only of the fishing industry but*

***"Wildly erratic stock assessments – often both ways – are held up as sacred truths, despite massive revisions from one year to the next by the people producing them"***

**Simon Collins, SFA Executive Officer**

of our understanding of a dynamic marine environment.”

The SFA was quick to assert that the outcomes for quotas next year would have been even more testing had the UK remained in the European Union.

“We know from long and bitter experience how little account EU negotiators take of industry views and even simple common sense,” said Collins. “At least we now have negotiators in Edinburgh and London that work hard to get the best results they can in the circumstances, and to whom we can actually speak. In that respect at least we are looked upon with envy by our former EU colleagues.”

## Background

- This trilateral agreement marks the conclusion of one in a series of annual fisheries negotiations. The UK’s bilateral negotiations are underway, namely consultations with the Faroes Islands and Norway to agree quota and access arrangements for 2022, and consultations with the EU concerning TACs and management measures for the relevant stocks.
- This year the UK chaired the talks with rounds taking place in Edinburgh and London, maximising opportunities for face-to-face negotiations. Throughout the consultations the UK pressed for evidenced-based and pragmatic decisions to provide fishing opportunities whilst promoting the sustainability of stocks for the marine environment and industry.
- ICES produced a substantial increase in advice for a number of North Sea stocks, with haddock and whiting showing considerable expansion in their biomass. However, all Parties recognised that it would not be appropriate to take the full quota increase advised by scientists for these two stocks given their interactions with stocks like cod in the North Sea mixed fishery. Parties therefore agreed moderate increases in catches compared to 2021 to promote the health of all stocks in the fishery. The Parties have also agreed a catch level for North Sea herring below that recommended by ICES to deliver stability in the TAC.
- North Sea cod will be subject to the same tonnage limits as set for 2021. The agreed catch limit for 2022 is based on the published ICES advice, but is higher than that advice. This decision was based on the provisional landings data for the 2021 fishing year, which were not available when the advice was originally produced. This data suggests a realised fishing mortality in 2021 that is lower than that assumed for the published ICES advice. This catch level is predicted to allow the stock size to increase by a similar amount compared to following the published ICES headline advice. All parties will continue their individual management plans to protect the cod stock. The UK’s cod avoidance plan uses spatial measures and selective fishing gear to protect high abundances of cod and spawning grounds. ■

# EXTENDED PROTECTION FOR ENDANGERED FLAPPER SKATE

**T**he critically endangered flapper skate is to gain further protection following the extension of an urgent Marine Protected Area (MPA) within the Inner Sound of Skye.

The site protects a nationally important flapper skate egg nursery area which is the largest of its kind to be identified in Scotland. The original site was given urgent MPA status in March this year after more than a hundred eggs were discovered and to protect the fragile species a number of marine activities, including bottom contacting fishing, aquaculture, and construction, were prohibited within the MPA for an initial 12 month period.

Surveys have now discovered a significant number of flapper skate eggs to the north of the original urgently designated MPA and due to the vulnerability of the eggs, the site boundary is being extended to include them.

A public consultation will take place in February 2022 before a decision on the permanence of the site’s protected status is made.

Environment Minister Mairi McAllan said:

“The flapper skate was once abundant in our seas but is now sadly depleted.

“The eggs discovered are very encouraging but they are also fragile – and, in a climate and nature crisis, we must do what we can to protect them.

“That’s why we moved quickly in March to offer protected status to the site where some 100 eggs were found. Now, with the discovery of over 400 more eggs within the original site and more than 700 more eggs to the north of the original site, we have decided to extend



Nature Scot team surveying Flapper Skate stocks.

that urgent protection to include the newly discovered eggs.

“I hope that our swift action will help this critically endangered species recover to healthy status in Scottish waters. This extension will ensure continued protection while public consultation on the permanence of the designation is ongoing and we will, of course, work with all stakeholders – including in fisheries – to manage the impact of any permanent protection.”

## Background

Flapper skate was historically abundant in the North-east Atlantic and widely distributed in the seas surrounding the British Isles, however its range has reduced significantly and catch rates declined throughout the 20th century. Part of the common skate complex (along with blue skate), they are on the OSPAR Threatened and/or Declining Species and Habitats List and the list of Priority Marine Features.

The Red Rocks and Longay MPA was designated urgently by Scottish Ministers in March 2021, following advice from NatureScot and using the powers under the Marine (Scotland) Act 2010. The urgently designated site can be in place for up to 2 years, and public consultation is required before the site

can be made permanent.

NatureScot undertook surveys between July and September 2021 and a significant number of flapper skate eggs were discovered to the north of the original urgently designated MPA boundary. Preliminary review of video footage from the locations surveyed provided counts of an estimated 725 eggs observed outside the original urgently designated MPA boundary, and an estimated 462 eggs observed inside.

Due to the vulnerability of the flapper skate eggs, NatureScot are advising the site boundary should be extended. The proposed extension would protect the eggs present outside the original urgently designated MPA boundary while continuing protection for the eggs inside the original boundary.

A new Urgent Nature Conservation MPA Designation Order was signed on 08 December 2021 and a new Urgent Marine Conservation Order (MCO) has been signed & laid in parliament today (09 December 2021). Both will come into effect on 16 December 2021 giving urgent protection to the extended area.

The public notification for the new urgent orders can be viewed at: <https://www.gov.scot/policies/marine-environment/marine-protected-areas/>



# New Antarctic III set for Spring 2024 Delivery

Zamakona to build replacement 69.6m pelagic trawler



The new trawler will be built entirely at the facilities of Zamakona in Bilbao.

**THE RECENTLY ordered new midwater pelagic trawler for a local fishing partnership will be the first in the Shetland fleet to fully comply with new environmental regulations for large marine diesel engines.**

Last month, Spanish shipyard *Zamakona* announced it had signed an agreement with *Fiskebas Fishing Co Ltd* to build a new 69.6 metre trawler to replace the fishing partnership's existing vessel *Antarctic II* (LK145).

To be built to a design from *Skipsteknisk* (Alesund, Norway), high focus has been given to efficiency in water circulation within the cargo tanks. The vessel will have accommodation for 14 crew.

*Antarctic II* engineer and company shareholder John Arthur Poleson said delivery of

the new vessel is expected to be in spring of 2024. He said potential delays due to Brexit and Covid had already been built into the schedule.

Poleson said the new vessel would follow the same particulars all the other recent newbuilds for Shetland partnerships had with an emphasis on reliability and fish handling.

As a commercial vessel built after January 2021 and operating in the North Sea and northeast Atlantic she will have to comply with the International Maritime Organisation's (IMO) NOx Tier 3 regulation.

This means the vessel will have to carry vast amounts of AdBlue (40 tonnes) for all her engines above 130kw of power output to reduce emissions of oxides of nitrogen of the exhausts.

**"There is nothing wrong with the vessel we have, but she is almost 20 years old, and it is the time where you start thinking about a new one."**

"There are just two small engines on board that will run without AdBlue, all the others will have that requirement," he said.

With the current *Antarctic II* built in 2004, Poleson said the time was right to upgrade the vessel and with it the business.

"Everybody wants to upgrade to have a good vessel to work with," he said. "There is nothing wrong with the vessel we have, but she is almost 20 years old, and it is the time where you start thinking about a new one."

"Keeping the boat any longer would mean it is worth nothing when you try and sell it.

"Fishing is going reasonably well, and we are getting good prices for the fish, so this is now the time to go for it, and it's part of upgrading your business."

He said the partnership intends to continue fishing their quota until early in 2023 after which the *Antarctic II* will be put on the market.

In December last year the business owning the largest local pelagic trawler *Altaire* confirmed that it had ordered a new vessel, while in 2019 three new pelagic trawlers – *Charisma*, *Zephyr* and *Adenia* – were delivered to Whalsay based fishing partnerships. ■

## FISH EXPORTER MADE £30,000 LOSS IN FIRST WEEK OF POST-BREXIT TRADING

■ NORTHERN Isles MP **Alistair Carmichael** has again pressed the UK government on the compensation scheme for fish traders post-Brexit after parliament heard an exporter from Shetland suffered a £30,000 loss in the first week of new arrangements earlier this year.

Carmichael said his constituent had to shift £50,000 worth of fish locally due to export problems – but only managed to sell it for £20,000 as a result.

"Had he left the fish to sit and rot, he would have got £50,000 in compensation but because he mitigated his loss he was told, "No. You have sold your fish, so you will not get a penny piece of compensation," he said in parliamentary debate on fisheries at the end of November.

"It all contributes to the feeling among the catchers and processors and exporters that they are just a wee bit too much trouble

for this government to care about."

Export bottlenecks emerged at the French border and on the UK mainland in January due to issues with health checks, IT systems and customs documents, leading to the Shetland fishing industry slowing down until a backlog cleared.

Carmichael got a commitment from fisheries minister **Victoria Prentis** to discuss again the administration of the compensation scheme set up by the government.

The MP also warned of a "total absence of any government strategy" on fisheries policy. Prentis encouraged Carmichael to wait for a joint fisheries statement which is due to arrive "very early in the new year".

"I am working on a draft at the moment, and in that will be the plan and a list of potential fisheries management plans," she said.

## Meeting to discuss the impact of discarded gear

■ A PUBLIC event discussing issues facing fishermen in the North Sea, particularly discarded gear, was held with Shetland's political representatives in December.

The event, being organised by local campaigner **Laurie Goodlad**, took place at the **Islesburgh Community Centre in Lerwick**.

"I'm working with local fishermen at the moment to try and raise awareness of the issues facing fishermen in the North Sea, particularly around the issue that some European boats are discarding fishing gear into the sea," she said.

"This is having a huge impact on wildlife, and the health of the oceans in general."

SFA believe the technological solutions for wind farms will not be available until after 2030.



## FUNDING BOOST FOR CULLIVOE

■ **PLANS for an expanded business park at Cullivoe, on the island of Yell, have secured a significant funding boost worth more than £500,000.**

Cullivoe is Shetland's third largest fishing port and it is ranked eighth in Scotland with annual fish landings totalling around £6.9 million.

Ten serviced sites for new or expanding businesses will be created following high demand from local companies, the majority of which operate in the marine sector.

The development is expected to lead to the creation of around 25 new jobs in the next three years.

The hope is that the revamped business park will be completed by the end of March.

Highlands and Islands Enterprise (HIE) is investing nearly £250,000 in site servicing costs, while *Marine Fund Scotland* has also awarded a similar amount.

The expansion will treble the size of the Cullivoe industrial estate, adding 12,000m<sup>2</sup> to the existing 5,810m<sup>2</sup> of land under community ownership by *North Yell Development Council* (NYDC).

NYDC director Andrew Nisbet said the community group is "extremely appreciative of the support and encouragement we have received".

He also said the project represents the first major community payback from its five-turbine Garth wind farm.

"This will allow our community to fulfil aspirations for the business park and marina development, that have been pursued for the last 11 years," Nisbet added.

"Demand for sites on the business park has been high, with all sites set to be occupied on completion."

HIE's Shetland area manager Katrina Wiseman said: "Extending the business park will enable the growth of businesses on Yell and create well paid jobs in the marine sector, ultimately supporting the retention of families in the island and attracting skills and talent to the area."

## Concern over rush to develop wind farms in rich fishing grounds

**P** **PLANS to locate floating offshore wind farms to the west of Shetland to provide electricity for oil and gas installations are being rushed through without proper consultation, Shetland Fishermen's Association has alleged.**

The organisation representing the local fishing industry has highlighted a series of "glaring flaws in the process" which, it says, could undermine the catching sector's fishing opportunities.

The concerns relate to the *Innovation and Targeted Oil and Gas* (INTOG) leasing round under which developers have been invited to apply for the right to build offshore wind farms to decarbonise the oil and gas industry.

So far two large project proposals for the area have surfaced, the 3 gigawatt/£10 billion *Cerulean* project earmarked for the west of Shetland and, more recently, the 10GW *Aker Horizon* project which plans to produce green hydrogen in the water to the north of the islands.

This leasing round is separate from the *ScotWind* rounds for offshore wind farms for domestic and commercial electricity production.

The SFA's policy offer Sheila Keith said the data on current and historical fishing activity in the areas under consideration is limited to bottom trawling and excludes seine netting, pelagic hauls, gillnetting and longlining.

It is also confined to activity Scottish vessels, missing out fleets from the rest of the UK, the EU, Norway and Faroe, she said.

"The Shetland fishing industry depends on these rich grounds to the west of the islands for catching, and is hugely concerned that proper assessment of the potential impact of INTOG offshore wind on fishing is not being made," Keith said.

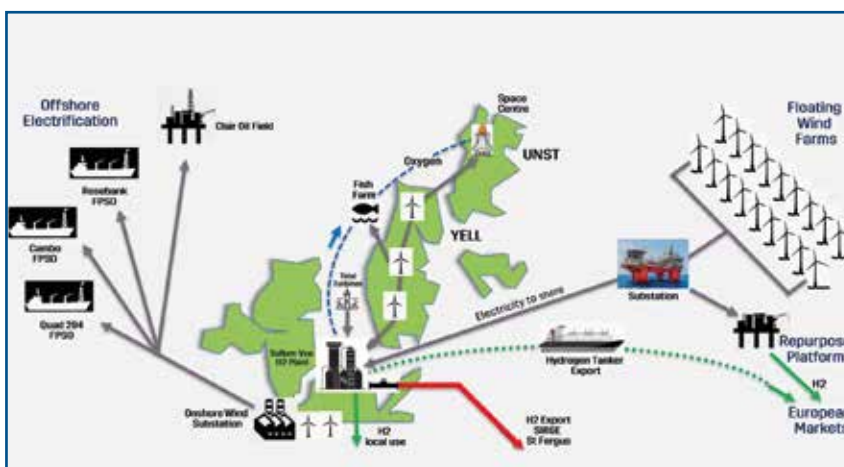
"While the fishing industry will always support the aim of lowering carbon emissions, the INTOG consultation is being rushed through with scant attention to detail, unlike *ScotWind* which involved widespread and detailed consultation.

"These are vast areas, with water depths of up to 200m. Floating wind technologies are in their infancy for those sorts of conditions and developers readily concede that technological solutions will not be available until after 2030.

"The whole process should be slowed down so that the industry can gather and fully assess fishing data from these areas.

"That way, existing fishing opportunities and activities can be safeguarded as required in the National Marine Plan." ■

**SFA have concerns plans for offshore wind farms are being rushed through.**





**ROBOT BOAT:** The impressive freezer trawler Baldvin Njálsson GK 400 has robotic equipment.

## New freezer trawler added to the fleet

In late November, a brand new freezer trawler, **Baldvin Njálsson GK 400**, arrived in Iceland for the first time. It replaces an old freezer trawler of the same name. The owner is **Nesfiskur**, a fishing company located in the village Gardur in Southwest Iceland. The vessel was built in Armon shipyard in Vigo, Spain, and was delivered on time according to contract without any delay despite the pandemic. The price was over 5 billion Icelandic Krónas (34 million Euros).

### Automation in the last room

■ **Baldvin Njálsson GK 400** is 66 meters long and 16 meters wide, powered by a Wärtsilä 2,990 kW main engine, and designed by **Skipasýn** in Iceland. The 1,720 cubic meters last room is equipped with robots and other automatic gear to make work easier for the crew. The ship accommodates 26 people. Twice as many crew members will be registered on the vessel, meaning that half of the crew will be on leave every other fishing trip. The ship is very fuel efficient, with a propeller of five meters in diameter and a towing power of 80 tons.

### A family company

■ **Nesfiskur** is a 35-year-old family run company with a staff of 300 people. It operates four trawlers, two boats fishing with Danish seine and two small long-liners. Furthermore it runs four fishing plants in three different towns. The company's current quota is

around 11 thousand tons (cod equivalents).

### Freezer trawlers still necessary

■ This is the second new freezer trawler to be added to the Icelandic fleet in recent years. Most of the new trawlers that have been built during the last decade have been fresh fish trawlers because it has been considered more profitable

to process cod in land-based factories and export it in the form of fresh products rather than frozen ones. However, there is yet a need for freezer trawlers. An important market for onboard frozen cod and haddock products still exists and some fish species such as redfish and Greenland halibut render more money frozen onboard than frozen on land.

### The Viking bow has proved itself

■ Four years ago, fishing company **Samherji** in Akureyri, North Iceland, received its last out of three fresh fish trawlers built in Cemre Shipyard in Turkey. The vessels are sister ships designed by **Skipataekni**



The design of a Viking bow from 850 years ago is still relevant today.

in Iceland, 62 meters long and 13.5 meters wide.

### "Ships should not look like this"

The ships have proved to be very successful in every way, according to fleet manager Kristján Vilhelmsson. When the first ship arrived in port the innovative shape of the hull and especially the bow undeniably caught special attention and a negative response from some ("ships should not look like this"). According to the designers the bulbous bow shape, coupled with anti-rolling implementations, provide considerable behavioural improvements to the vessel in rough seas, eliminating slamming, and providing softer and smoother movements to the obvious benefit of crew and catch alike. The designers point out that the bulbous bow is logical and can be found on early vessels from the Viking era as well as across nature in the shape of larger animals.

### Incredible difference

Skipper Guðmundur Freyr Guðmundsson asserts that the construction of the vessels is revolutionary. "We hardly notice when we are out in rough seas. The movement of the ship is softer and more comfortable, the difference is incredible. That certainly means a lot to the crew." ■

*"The movement of the ship is softer and more comfortable, the difference is incredible."*



**TAKE A BOW:** Three sisters, Bjorg, Kaldbakur and Björgúlfur of fishing company Samherji.

# Supporting the industry



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**BIM** Ireland's  
Seafood  
Development  
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# SKIPPER EXPO SHOW NEWS

## UL Sport Arena – the perfect venue for 2022

Irish Skipper Expo 2022 will be held in the exciting new venue of the UL Sport Arena in Limerick.

**UL Sport Arena**, based in the grounds of the University of Limerick, will hold all the exhibitors in one spacious hall, enabling more and even bigger stands than before, and providing a much better overall visitor experience. A large outside display area located adjacent to the visitor entrance will offer an opportunity to showcase much larger products and boats.

The venue offers many other benefits, including onsite catering and bar facilities, its ease of accessibility and excellent car parking facilities. There is an excellent road network to UL, which is located just off the M7, and Shannon Airport is only 35 kilometres from the show venue, from where there is an excellent range of scheduled flights.

Sharon Boyle, Commercial Fishing Manager for expo organiser, Mara Media, said: "We are excited by the new venue because it offers many benefits for both exhibitors and visitors. The expo will be a great

place to do business, which is especially important because of the challenging recent period we have all faced. It will also provide the ideal venue for the fishing industry to network and socialise."

Sponsored by Irish seafood development agency, BIM, and leading marine insurer Cavanagh Hooper Dolan Insurances, Irish Skipper Expo 2022, will be held at UL Sport Arena in Limerick on 25th and 26th March, opening times 10am – 6pm on Friday 25th and 10am – 4pm on Saturday 26th March. Entry is free.

Mara Media will provide regular updates on Irish Skipper Expo 2022 the over the coming weeks and months.

More information at [www.theskipper.ie](http://www.theskipper.ie) or contact Sharon Boyle on +353 868401250



NEW VENUE: UL Sport Arena in the grounds of Limerick University.



## Visitor Registration for Irish Skipper Expo 2022 now open!



FREE REGISTRATION: Beat the queues and register online.

Visitor registration for **Irish Skipper Expo 2022** is now open, offering the perfect opportunity to beat the queues during what is anticipated to be a busy show. Following the success of the visitor registration at the Scottish Skipper Expo, the service will be available for the first time at Irish Skipper Expo 2022, Limerick.

Entry to the event is **free**, and while visitors can turn-up on either day and register, it makes sense to register your attendance online beforehand, so as to ensure there is minimal waiting time at the entrance, thus enabling more time to browse the numerous stands at the show.

**Register your attendance via The Skipper website now to beat the queues at the show**

Online registration can be accessed via The Skipper website at: <https://theskipper.ie/irish-skipper-expo/>





Seas of Solutions CEP Paul Smulders.

## Seas of Solutions delivers safer fishing

Irish Skipper Expo 2022 exhibitor **Seas of Solutions** is a new organisation based on the foundation of globally recognised safety electronics brands McMurdo, Netwave and Kannad Marine, and with a vision to support safer sailing, anytime – everywhere.

From their Netherland headquarters, Seas of Solutions B.V. purchased Orolia Maritime’s innovative emergency readiness and response brands in April this year, establishing *Netwave Systems BV* and *McMurdo Ltd* under the Seas of Solutions umbrella.

With a reputation for innovations that include Galileo powered 406MHz distress beacons, the world’s first *Return Link Service PLB*, a unique AIS EPIRBs range and the newly upgraded NW6000 VDR and retrofit solutions, Seas of Solutions offer reliable, innovative marine electronics that help improve robust data capture and maximise crew survivability.

**Sean McCrystal** of Seas of Solutions says: “One of the main reasons we are attending Irish Skipper Expo 2022 is the new European Return Link system

(RLS) that allows signals back to distress beacons for the first time. Ireland is one of the first countries to accept RLS beacons

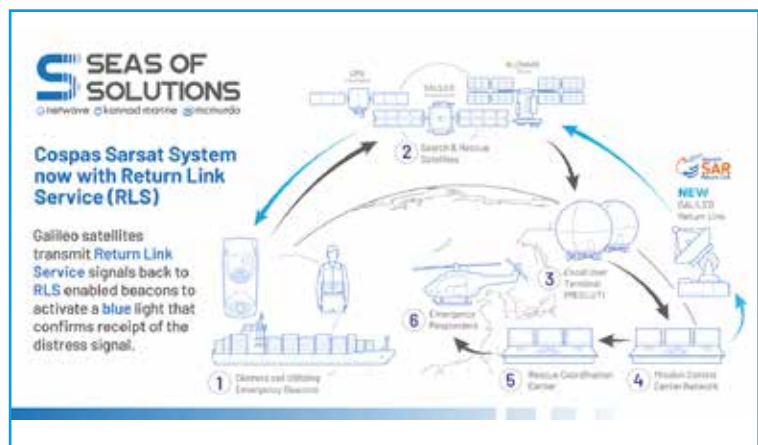
and the discussion we are having is about why people should upgrade their existing beacons to get the benefit of faster detection, greater location accuracy and the reassurance signal that comes from RLS.”

He adds: “Irish Skipper Expo 2022 enables us to showcase our next generation of products, with a new



*FastFind AIS MOB* joining the *FastFind RLS PLB* in celebrating the brand’s twentieth year, while the *Netwave Compact* offers a commercial grade VDR software for inland waterways, fishing, and workboat vessels. The new solution is designed for ease of installation and offers dynamic sensor connections to capture the vessel data offering the most critical operation value.

“A dedicated, marine focused organisation, our aim is to utilise our industry knowledge, unparalleled sales and service network and newly refined structure to offer our partners and customers the dynamic response they need for maritime safety.”



# The Skipper



## Irish 2022 Expo Dates

● YOUR INDUSTRY ● YOUR SHOWS



## UL SPORT, Limerick

25-26th March, 2022



### SHOW OPENING HOURS

Friday: 10am-6pm Saturday: 10am-4pm



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**Web:** www.theskipper.ie

[www.theskipper.ie/events](http://www.theskipper.ie/events)





Figure 3. Northern Stone Crab (MFV Quest T508, NW Blaskets, Co Kerry, 10.11.2021)

# Northern Stone Crab

Portáin Cloch an Tuaiscirt (*Lithodes maja*) a gabhadh amach ó Oileáin Basket, Co Chiarraí

During August and November 2021, three specimens of the **Northern Stone Crab** (*Lithodes maja*) were captured in pots NW of the Blasket Islands (c.52.09oN, 10.54oW), Co Kerry. One specimen was taken by the MFV *Megan Sophia* (S712) (Skipper: Liam Flannery, Dingle) on 19th August (Fig. 1), and two more by the MFV *Quest* (T508) (Skipper: Peter Hand, Dingle) on the 3rd and 10th November (Figs. 2-3). All of these crabs were transferred alive to Dingle Oceanworld (<https://www.dingle-oceanworld.ie/>), where they are currently on display.

A least four more specimens of Northern Stone Crab were captured in other areas around the Irish coast during 2021, including three by the MFV *Eblana* (D379) (Skipper: Brendan Lynch, Howth) while demersal trawling at a depth of 86 m in the Celtic Sea, SE of the Kinsale Gas Field, Co Cork (51.29oN, 7.32oW) on 21st March, and another on 25th May by the MFV *Realt an Oileain II* (G733) (Skipper: David Heaney, Clifden) while potting at a depth of 120 m west of Inishturk, Co Galway (53.67oN, 10.42oW).

Northern Stone Crabs have rarely been recorded from Irish waters. Indeed, prior to the mid-1960s there was only one

authenticated record; on 29 June 1901, the partly digested remains of a specimen was discovered in the stomach of an unidentified fish captured at a depth of 182 m on the Porcupine Bank (53.4oN, 13.6oW). Since then, only 30 specimens have been recorded southwards of latitude 55oN. Over 50% (16) of the specimens have been reported from Co Kerry,



Above: Figure 1. Northern Stone Crab (*Lithodes maja*) MFV *Megan Sophia* S712, Skipper Liam Flannery) WNW Blaskets, Co Kerry.

Figure 2. Northern Stone Crab (MFV *Quest* T508, Skipper Peter Hand) NW Blaskets, Co Kerry.

particularly off the Dingle Peninsula. Elsewhere, there are only isolated records from the west and south coasts including NW Donegal (Tory Bank), NW Mayo (Downpatrick Head), Galway (Aran Islands & Inishturk), and Cork (Bull Rock, Cape Clare, and the Celtic Sea).

The Northern Stone Crab is an amphiboreal cold-water species ranging from Spitzbergen (80oN) to the south of Ireland (c.50oN) in the NE Atlantic, and from SE Greenland southwards to Maryland, USA (Baltimore Canyon; 38oN, 74oW) in the NW Atlantic.

It is possible that *L. maja* may be more abundant and widely distributed in Irish waters than the current paucity of records would suggest. Although it's apparent rarity southwards of latitude 55oN may simply



reflect limited recording effort in suitable habitats, the use of inappropriate survey methods, the species cryptic behaviour and/or non-commercial interest, it may also reflect a genuinely low abundance, and/or patchy distribution. The species is likely to be encountered more frequently by potters fishing in deeper offshore waters. ■

## GET IN TOUCH

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

# Marine Institute launches 2021 Stock Book

29th edition of the annual book on impartial scientific fishing data

**T**HE MARINE INSTITUTE has launched the 2021 *Stock Book*, the annual publication which provides the latest impartial scientific advice on the status of 74 key fish stocks of interest to Ireland. It is available for download or through an interactive online application ([www.marine.ie](http://www.marine.ie)).

This is the 29th edition of the annual book, which also contains the latest management advice used by decision makers to set sustainable catch levels and fishing quotas for 2022. The publication is an invaluable reference guide to a wide audience, including the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine, the fishing industry, marine scientists, environmental NGOs, third level institutes and financial institutions.

In 2020, Irish vessels landed approximately 190,000 tonnes of wild caught fish worth more than €250 million at first sale. This, in turn, supports a valuable processing industry and other activities in our coastal communities.

Ensuring long term sustainability is a key objective of the Common Fisheries Policy and all stakeholders. To that end, every year, the Marine Institute undertakes an extensive data collection programme – multiple scientific surveys cover approximately 327,000 square nautical miles over 263 days, equating to 1,545 scientist days-at-sea.

Onshore and at sea sampling programmes measure over half a million fish and estimate age for a further 50,000 individuals across all commercial

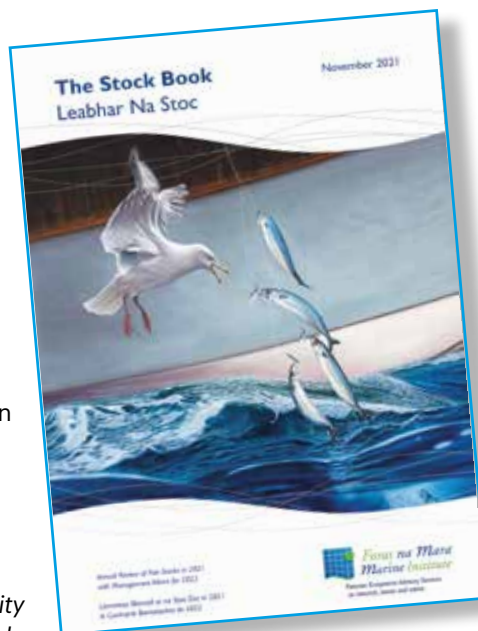
species. Irish data is compiled with that from other countries through the intergovernmental organisation ICES (*International Council for the Exploration of the Seas*). Marine Institute scientists play a key role in carrying out the assessments and developing the scientific evidence and advice at ICES. The *Stock Book* integrates the latest scientific advice from ICES with relevant information on Irish fisheries.

**The Minister for Agriculture, Food and the Marine, Charlie McConalogue TD** said, “I am impressed by the quantity and quality of data collected by our marine scientists in the Marine Institute. This work must inform all aspects of fisheries management and support the effective protection of our marine ecosystem in the seas around our coast and for the fisheries on which our fleet are reliant. It is important that the results of all the work is made accessible to industry and other stakeholders and I very much welcome the *Stock Book* for 2021 which I have now received.”

**Michael Gillooly, Interim CEO of the Marine Institute**, said, “The seas around Ireland are among the most productive and biologically sensitive areas in EU waters. The Marine Institute conducts comprehensive and broad science programmes in order to



**DATA COLLECTOR:** Dr Ciaran Kelly, of the Marine Institute, says the interactive app is easy to access.



sustainably monitor and develop this valuable resource.

“The scientific advice and services provided by our scientists to stakeholders are essential to supporting a sustainable ocean economy, protecting and managing our marine ecosystems and meeting EU obligations. As part of the services provided, our scientists also participate in, and lead, international working groups that assess fish stocks and provide scientific advice on how many fish can be safely removed from this renewable resource. This is essential in sustaining our ocean economy for our coastal communities.”

**Dr Ciaran Kelly, Director of Fisheries Ecosystem Advisory Services at the Marine**

**Institute, said,** “The interactive app developed by the Marine Institute is shaping thinking on how independent scientific advice can be delivered to fisheries managers and other stakeholders in the future ensuring that the best available scientific evidence for decision making is easy to access and transparent to all.”

The gradual increase in the number of stocks that are sustainably fished, in line with Common Fisheries Policy objectives, has continued. Stocks of haddock, anglerfish (or monkfish), megrim, tuna, and some of the Nephrops (Dublin Bay Prawns), have increased in recent years and continue to be sustainably fished. Work also continues on stocks such as cod, herring and whiting. ■

■ **The 2021 Stock Book** is available electronically on the Marine Institute’s website – <http://hdl.handle.net/10793/1726> and as an interactive app (<https://shiny.marine.ie/stockbook/>). Most of the scientific work that delivers the Marine Institute’s *Stock Book* is funded under the European Maritime, Fisheries and Aquaculture Fund (EMFAF).



## COMPETITION WINNERS

# Photos of the Year

IN ASSOCIATION WITH



Over the past year our readers have entered the Photograph of the Month competition in association with Guy Cotton and Swan Net Gundry, and sent in their best fishing related snaps. Shown here are our 12 monthly winners during 2021. Congratulations to Overall Winner Sean O'Flaherty who has won overnight accommodation at the Irish Skipper Expo 2022.

Enter the new 2022 competition on page 34



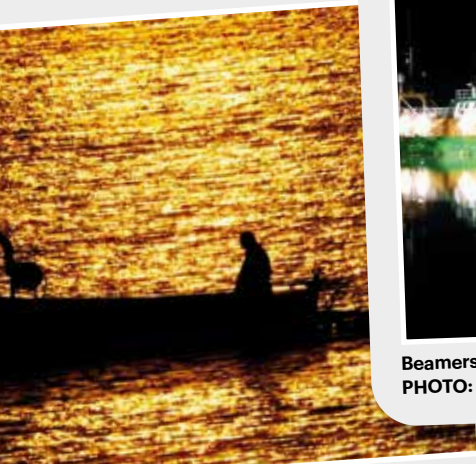
**OVERALL WINNER:**  
Sean O'Flaherty  
*The Kennedy towing in the sunshine.*



Carmarose fishing for Scad off the West Coast of Donegal.  
PHOTO: PAUL DIRRANE



IOLAIR heading out past Bere Island.  
PHOTO: ANNE MARIE CRONIN



Alan (Natch) McLoughlin heading out on his boat at sunrise. PHOTO: COLETTE MCLOUGHLIN.



Beamers at Kilmore Quay. PHOTO: ALAN HINCHY



Boy Jason Steaming on a fine January morning. PHOTO: ALAN O'SHEA



Kilmore Quay Beamer Rony hauling gear. PHOTO: ALAN CULLETON



Celtic Mor steaming past Rathlin Island. PHOTO: Douglas Cecil



Landing Herring at the slip in Killybegs Harbour. PHOTO: JASON O'BOYLE



Sarah David fishing in the Bay of Biscay. PHOTO: DONAL HURLEY



Boats tied up at Belmullet, Co Mayo. PHOTO: MONIKA REGECIOVA



Mary J off the Waterford coast as the sun sets. PHOTO: DAN BATES



# Loch Inchard III

## New Loch Inchard III offers more comfort and towing power

**WORDS:** QUENTIN BATES

**PHOTOS:** PHIL LOCKLEY & GARY SUTHERLAND

**S**kipper Ian Mackay and his crew steamed *Loch Inchard III* home from Polruan in Cornwall to Kinlochbervie through some windy weather, reporting that the new trawler performed well and was comfortable.

*Loch Inchard III* replaces the Mackay family's *Loch Inchard II*, a wooden-hulled trawler that was built for them in 1984, making the switch to a new steel trawler a real leap in terms of comfort and efficiency.

According to Alasdair Honeyman of **Marine Design International (MDI)**, this is a design derived from the successful Napier designs of *Oruna* and *Demarus* originally developed by the Napier company, which subsequently became part of MDI, and this design is under the **MDI Napier** name.

He said that when Ian Mackay came to them



**Stern view.**

for the design of a new trawler, he was looking for a greater level of crew comfort and enough bollard pull to tow a pair of trawls effectively.

'We carried out a bollard pull test at the yard in Polruan and the predicted 11 tonne pull turned out to be a steady 12.20 tonnes,' Alasdair Honeyman said.

'It's the first of its type, and while *Loch Inchard III* is bigger than the trawler it replaces, it's not the biggest in its class. This is the biggest

MDI fishing vessel design for UK waters for around twenty years.'

This is also the largest new build to emerge from the **C Toms & Son** in Polruan. The 16.50 metre *LOA Loch Inchard III* has been built from a kit, CNC cut and rolled in Holland and trucked to the yard in Cornwall for assembly. The new trawler turned out to be too big for the yard's construction hall, and while the hull was put together under cover, it had to be brought

### Loch Inchard III – UL44

**Homeport:** Kinlochbervie

**Owner:** Ian Mackay

**Designer:** Marine Design International (MDI) Napier

**Boatyard:** C. Toms & Son

**Length overall:** 16.5m



Wheelhouse displays.

**“The crew have told us that there’s no engine noise in the accommodation – and crew comfort was one of the main requirements in designing Loch Inchard III”**

**Alasdair Honeyman**



Crew mess.



Captain and crew.

outside for the wheelhouse to be lifted into place.

Loch Inchard III has a 478kW at 1600rpm Baudouin 6M33.2 main engine and a 295kW Baudouin 6W126 APU, both supplied by Proteum, the UK and Ireland distributor for Moteurs Baudouin, plus Watermota supplied a Doosan AD 136TI developing 80kva at 1500rpm. All of these are raw water cooled.

The Baudouin main engine powers a Reintjes reduction gear to turn a 2100mm, four-bladed propeller inside a double curvature high-efficiency nozzle, both supplied by Kort Propulsion, who also delivered the triple foil section rudder and the KT-120 hydraulic tunnel thruster. Steering gear is from Wills Ridley.

Placing the engine room forward, on the Oruna pattern, brings a number of advantages.

This puts the fishroom and tank space amidships, making trimming the vessel much easier, plus it moves engine noise as far as possible from the accommodation area.

“This moves noise, fumes and heat away from the crew, which provides them with more comfortable accommodation. The crew have told us that there’s no engine noise in the accommodation – and crew comfort was one of the main requirements in designing Loch Inchard III,” Alasdair Honeyman said.

“The forward engine room is a departure from recent trends and although this comes with some compromises in machinery space and exhaust routing, it is fundamental to the clean hull lines aft and the reduction of trim throughout each trip so that the carefully considered hull continues to perform when loaded, hopefully to a deep draught.”

Accommodation is laid out with a galley/mess area and a skipper’s cabin with en-suite facilities at deck level, and three two-berth crew cabins below.

The deck equipment is from Thistle Marine, with a pair of 12-tonne, 3TW-12 single barrel winches located forward under the shelterdeck, while the mid-wire winch is located under a shelter behind the wheelhouse. All three are controlled by a Scantrol autotrawl system. Trawl blocks and sheaves are supplied by Flemings Fairleads (F.R. Belbin)





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Best Wishes to Skipper Ian Mackay & crew with their new vessel **Loch Inchard III**

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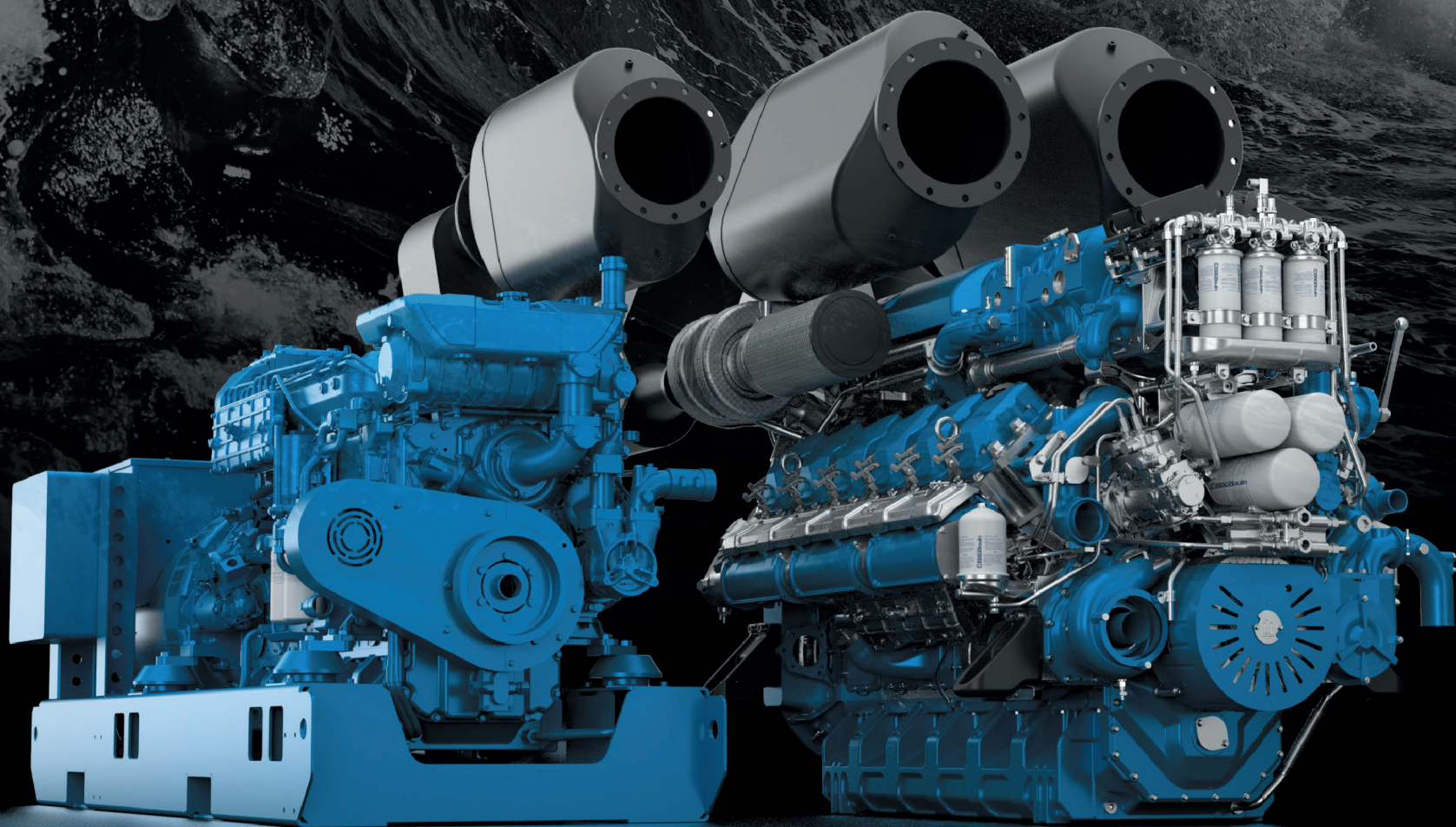



Congratulation to Ian and crew.

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The twin 10-tonne SND-20 split net drums have a 2.20 metre outer diameter and are located at main deck level. A 13t/m Thistlelift MKB13 powerblock crane is mounted on the gantry aft with a reach over every area of the trawl deck aft.

A gilson winch lifts the codends over the hatch on the starboard side for catches to be dropped into the hopper below, and a 6t/m Guerra folding knuckleboom landing crane type M65.20A1 is mounted on the port shelterdeck top for discharging iced catches from the 500-box fishroom.

The catch handling deck is arranged with a transverse sorting and gutting belt, with three fish washers and space for baskets for sorting catches. An icemaker on the port side of the main deck feeds an ice locker in the fishroom with fresh water ice, and *Loch Inchard III* has a 20 tonne fresh water capacity to ensure both the domestic supply and enough to keep the fishroom stocked with ice. ■

## The Electronics Package

### Echomaster Marine supplied the complete package of electronics on Loch Inchard III

Speaking to The Skipper, Andrew Masson, UK Sales Manager at Echomaster said:

*“Ian Mackay, owner of the Loch Inchard III has been a long-standing customer of Echomaster Marine with his previous vessel: Loch Inchard II; and it was a privilege to have him entrust his new-building Electronics to Echomaster Marine. Building a new vessel in Polruan Cornwall at the opposite end of the Country from the vessel's home port and Echomaster Marine's Offices in NE Scotland was certainly a challenge given the current climate. However, Echomaster Marine engaged with the builders – C. Toms and Son and the various 3rd Party Contractors to ensure the Electronics were ready well before actual Sea-Trials took place.”*

#### The complete list included:

##### Radio Comms/Safety:

- 1x JRC JSS2150 MF/HF DSC Radio
- 1x JRC M423 VHF DSC Radio
- 1x Sailor RT6210 VHF
- 1x ICS NAV6+ Navtex
- 1x Icom GM1600MED Portable Liferaft Radio
- 1x VEP-8 GPS EPIRB

##### Internet/Voice Phone:

- 1x Excel@sea KA band 60cm Intellian antenna with Wifi Network and Cordless Phone
- 1x Thuraya MarineStar Satellite Phone as a back-up

##### Internal Intercom:

- 1x Phontek CIS3101 10 Station system with Deck, Cabin and Engine Room Substations
- 1x Laptop for Customer's Electronic Logbook software

##### Navigation:

- 1x Koden MDC 5006F 6kw Bar antenna Black Box Radar with Chart Overlay, MARPA target tracking and AIS target display
- 1x Koden MDC5005 4kw 3ft Radome Black box Radar with Chart Overlay, MARPA target tracking and AIS target display
- 2x Furuno GP39 GPS Navigators with RD33 Repeater Display
- 1x JRC JLR-21 GPS Compass
- 1x OLEX 3D Seabed Mapping system
- 1x Sodena Easywin Chartplotter with Tide Predictions and AIS
- 1x Customer Owned Sodena Easywin Chartplotter
- 1x Customer Owned DECCA Fishmaster Mk2 Chartplotter
- 1x LCJ Ultrasonic Anaenometer

##### Autopilot Steering Control:

- 1x Navitron 921MkII Autopilot with Wheelhouse 920NFUI Aft Control at Trawl operator Console. Kobelt NFU outside beside Power block Controls.
- 1x 920 WA Watch Alarm with additional Echomaster 3rd stage timer alarm system for Mess and Crew Cabins.
- 2x Navitron 920 RAI Rudder angle Indicators and 2x Navitron 920DHR Mk2 Digital Heading repeaters located on the Wheelhouse Forward Eyebrow Console and at Wheelhouse Aft Trawl Control Console on a Roof mounted pod

##### Fish-Finding:

- 1x SIMRAD ES80 with 1kw 38/200khz Combi Transducer
- 1x Hondex HE2900B Black Box Echosounder with 28/55khz 3kw Dual Frequency Transducer.

(The Hondex HE2900B is an all new for 2021 Black Box Echosounder from Hondex



Engine room.

with built-in Bottom Hardness evaluation . Depth and Hardness Data can be sent to an OLEX 3D Seabed Mapping system). *Loch Inchard III* is the first trawler to use this Echosounder in the 28/55khz frequency )

##### Catch Management/Box Packing:

1x Marel M2200 Marine Stabilised Scale in Fishroom with Box label Printing, all controlled by Marel Innova Marinepack Software in Wheelhouse.

##### Satellite TV:

1x Intellian i6PE 60cm antenna feeding Mess Freesat TV, Skippers Cabin Freesat TV and 22" General Purpose monitor in wheelhouse.

Skipper TV and Mess TV can display Sodena Chartplotter and MDC5006F radar screens remotely

##### Trawl monitoring:

Scanmar Scanbus 365 double distance system (not Echomaster Supply- Supplied by Scanmar UK)

##### Vessel CCTV:

1x HIKVision 16 channel NVR with 13 Cameras in various Deck and Engine Room Locations, including a camera in the shaft tunnel to observe the Deep-Sea Seal on the Prop Shaft.

##### Wheelhouse Displays:

9x 19" Neovo X Series Displays arranged in forward Console, 5 x17" Neovo Displays arranged vertically either side of aft wheelhouse winch control levers

3x 17" Neovo X Series Displays arranged on Wheelhouse forward eyebrow console for Hondex Echosounder and CCTV cameras

1x 22" Display for Marel Innova Packing Software

1x 49" Freesat Tv in Messdeck

1x 32" Freesat Tv in Skippers Cabin

Instrument Data Distribution to/from the various sensors/ systems undertaken by 7 Actisense NMEA0183 Data Buffers located inside Front Console



Congratulations and Good Fishing to Ian Mackay and crew on your new vessel *Loch Inchard III*

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# Monthly Competition

IN ASSOCIATION WITH



Send in your best fishing related photo and you could win a Sotra Fleece by Guy Cotten plus the chance to win overnight accommodation at the Irish Skipper Expo 2023.



■ The subject of the picture must be related to the Fishing Industry (your vessel, your catch, a stormy day at sea...etc). Each month, the best photo will be published in *The Skipper* and the winner will receive a prize, courtesy of Swan Net Gundry Ltd and Guy Cotten. Images sent in might also be used in other areas of the magazine if suitable.

■ SUBMISSION GUIDELINES: Simply get your phones and cameras out, and send us your hi-res photos by email to [editorial@maramedia.ie](mailto:editorial@maramedia.ie) and don't forget to mention your name and details, as well as a brief description of the scene depicted. The photos must be taken by the person sending it to us, and it is understood that they are free of copyrights.



PHOTO OF THE MONTH

**WINNER:**  
**Patrick Healey**

*Breizh Arvor at the porcupine.*

### THE MONTHLY PRIZE

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**Skipper**

PLEASE NOTE: The Skipper reserves the right to use your images for future use and possible publication.

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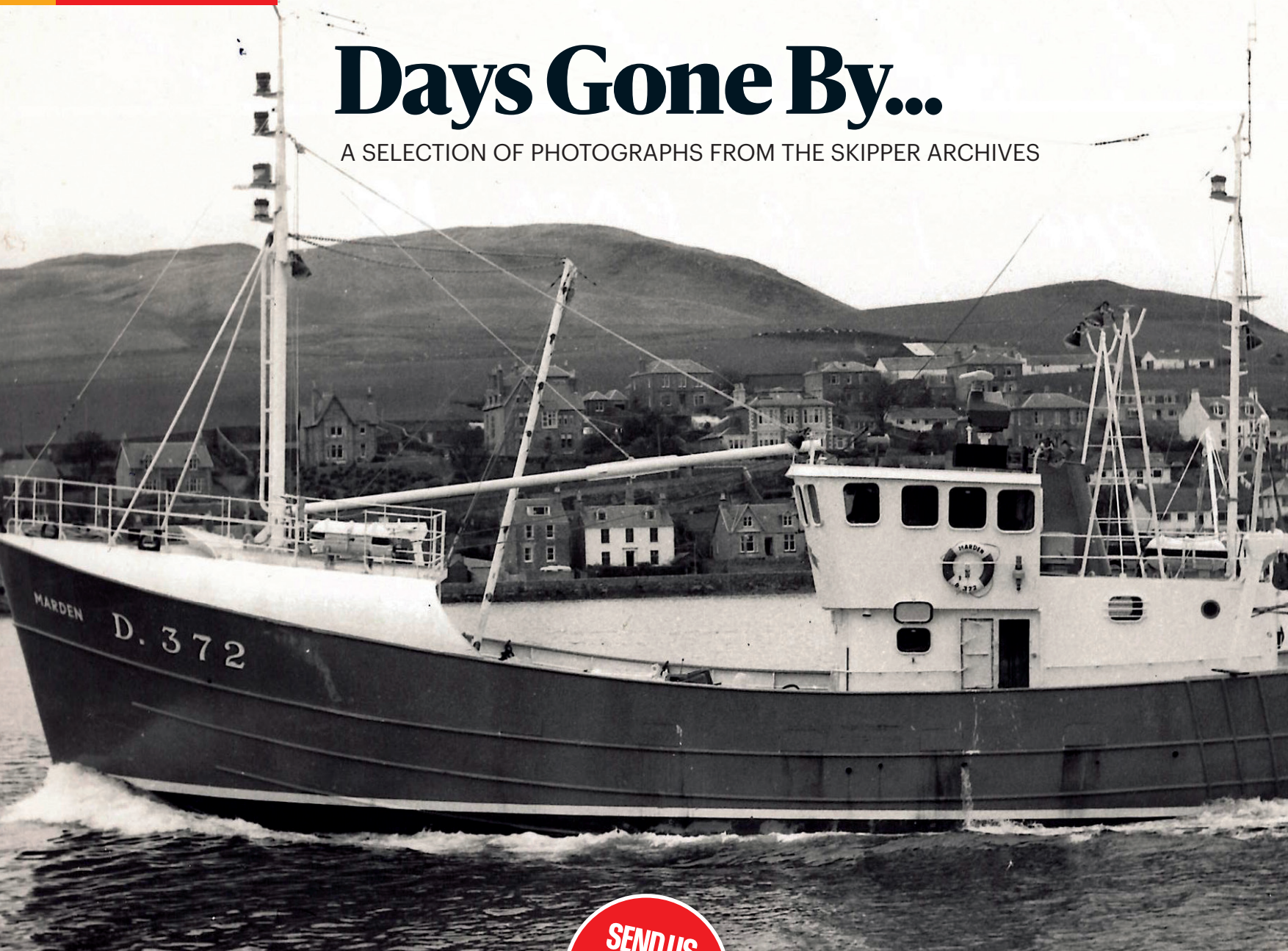
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# Days Gone By..

A SELECTION OF PHOTOGRAPHS FROM THE SKIPPER ARCHIVES



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OLGARRY SO 591, SLIGO



The Golden West at the Blessing of the Fleet 1961

Crew Members: Thomas Murrin (Skipper), Charlie Murrin (Killybegs), Kieran Harvey (Killybegs), Con McGuinness (Killybegs), Charlie McHugh (Ardara), Paddy Hunter (Dungloe), Michael Connaghan (Achill).

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■ If you have copies of any images that you would like us to include in our Days Gone By page, please email them to: [editorial@maramedia.ie](mailto:editorial@maramedia.ie).

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**KILMORE Quay Co-op CRAFTSMEN-MADE NETS AND GEAR FISH**

THE IRISH **SKIPPER** JOURNAL OF THE FISHING INDUSTRY

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No. 217


FEBRUARY 1982

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**NEW - TYPE 45 FOOTER DESIGNED BY TYRELL**


## TOO MUCH FISH BROUGHT INTO INTERVENTION

### Urgent need for exports



A completely new design of 45-footer launched at Tyrell's yard in Arklow last month for Thomas Conneely, Aran Isles, which is powered by a 200 h.p. Caterpillar and is fitted with equipment usually found only on larger craft. (For specification see page 9)

#### May become next Minister



Denis Gallagher, the Mayo T.D. who is likely to be Minister for Fisheries if his party, Fine Gael, wins the forthcoming General Election. Last month, before the Budget debate resumed, Mr Gallagher, the P.P. for his constituency, was Opposition spokesman on Fisheries.

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salutes the Irish fishing fleet for making 1981 the most successful mackerel fishery yet.

We are proud that our gear has taken more than half of the tremendous catch.

Congratulations and good fishing for 1982.

#### Price of ice to rise

R.I.M. has applied to the Department of Trade, Commerce and Tourism for an increase in the price of ice. An increase of 64 is sought, bringing the price to £14 per tonne for bulk lots of 10 tonnes and upwards. Pro-rata increases will be sought for smaller lots.

A R.I.M. spokesman said that the reasons for the increase was to reduce the loss on ice plant operation, which amounted to about £40,000 in the year ended 31 December, 1981.

The last increase was in April 1981, and this was based on costs as at October, 1980. Since then costs have risen by over 25% the spokesman said.

The price of ice at comparable U.K. ports is about £20 per tonne, likewise at Dublin wharves it has been about £18 per tonne over the past year.

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#### 20 SPANIARDS FINED £538,650

Twenty Spanish trawler skippers who appeared at Galway Circuit Court last month on charges of fishing within the exclusive limits of the State, were ordered to pay £538,650 in fines and satisfaction of costs and charges.

All of the men pleaded guilty and were ordered by Judge Gertran Eganada to pay fines totalling £355,000 and fulfilment of costs and charges in the value of £183,650.

The 20 skippers were all arrested within the Irish exclusive 200-mile fishery limit on different dates between August 1980 and December 1981.

#### Weather service appointment

Dr J. R. Bates, son of the Kilmore Quay skipper, Mr Bates, has been appointed Assistant Director of the Irish Meteorological Service.

Dr Bates returned from Switzerland to take up the appointment. He was there on a secondment arrangement with the international weather service.

#### £2,200 CHEQUE FOR FUND

West Sligo Fishermen's Association has handed over a cheque for £2,200 to the Killala Bay Fund started only last year after Sean Foy and his eldest son, Declan, and Michael McLaughlin lost their lives when

## From The Skipper Archives

February 1982

**MAIN HEADLINES:**

- IFPO worried about amount of fish being brought into intervention.
- New 45 footer launched at Tyrell's yard, Arklow, delivered to Thomas Conneely, Aran isles.
- 20 Spaniards fined £538,650 for fishing within exclusive limits.
- Swan Net Ltd, salutes Irish fleet for making 1981 the most succesful mackerel fishery.

www.theskipper.ie

The Skipper/January 2022

37

Atlantic Fisher T.116

Photo: Fintan Harrington



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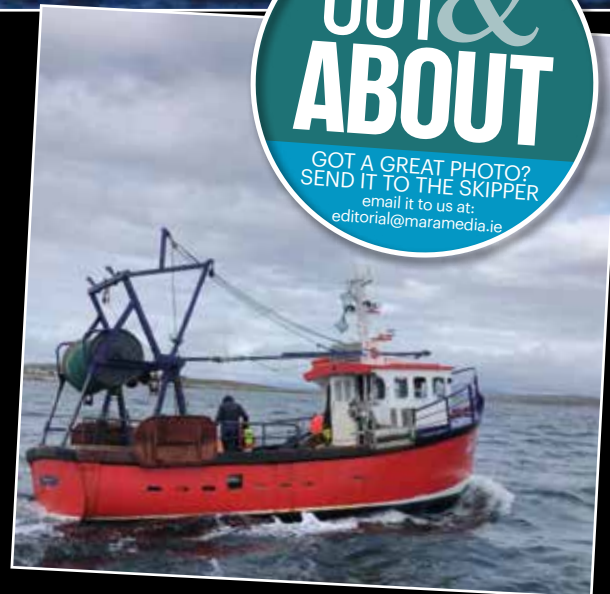
Sunrise on board the Staronia I.

Photo: John W Power.



South of Mizen Head the Evie S608.

Photo: Corey Griffin



Flowing Tide steaming home to Casla Bay.

Photo: Aodhan Griffin



Traditional Ring netting herring in Inver bay.

Photo: Paucic Rose

Boarding the net at Castletownbere.

Photo: Niall Duffy

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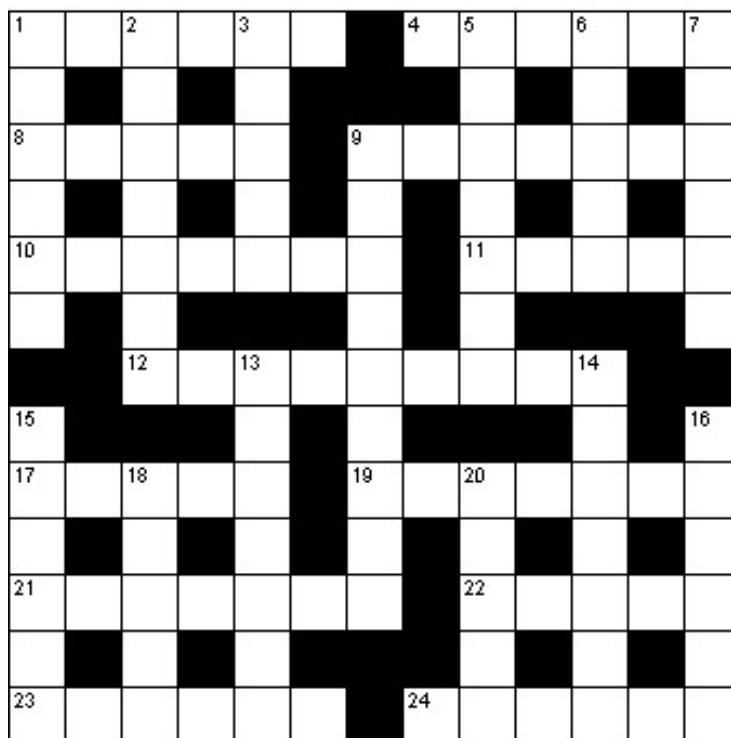
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**ACROSS**

- 1 Astounded (6)
- 4 Source (6)
- 8 Donkeys (5)
- 9 Diplomatic (7)
- 10 Monarchical state (7)
- 11 Midsection (5)
- 12 NCOs (9)
- 17 Looked at amorously (5)
- 19 Exonerate (7)
- 21 Science of living things (7)
- 22 Red-breasted bird (5)
- 23 A score (6)
- 24 Former Spanish currency (6)

**DOWN**

- 1 Northernmost American state (6)
- 2 Toxic element (7)
- 3 Alleviated (5)
- 5 Soft Italian cheese (7)
- 6 Achieve great things (2,3)
- 7 British naval hero (6)
- 9 Not permanent (9)
- 13 British soldier, formerly (7)
- 14 Capable of being solved (7)
- 15 Water ice (6)
- 16 Rupture (6)
- 18 Slack (5)
- 20 Twilled fabric (5)



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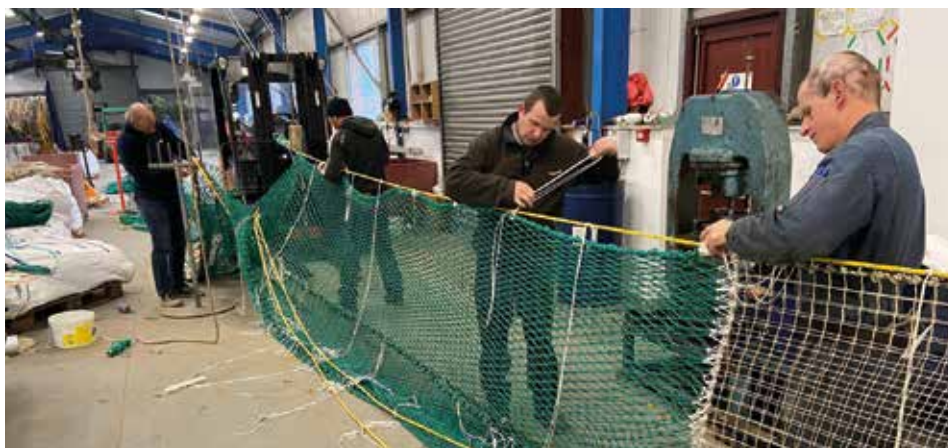
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# Good news for fisheries sustainability

Dr Ronán Cosgrove, Fisheries Conservation Manager, BIM



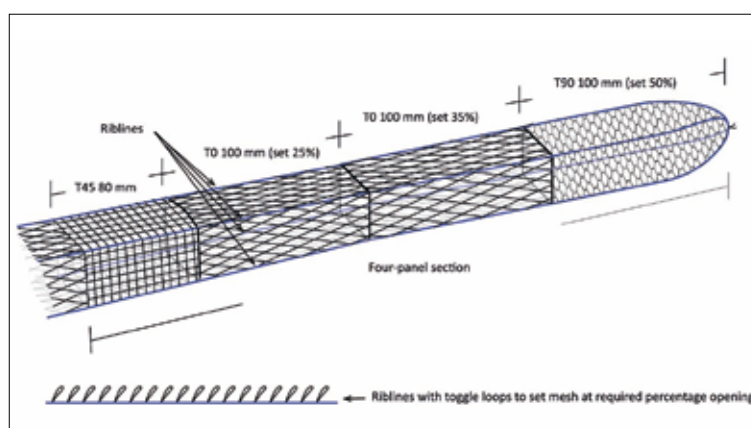
All hands on deck at Swan Net Gundry.

**R**ecent reports point to substantial improvements in global fish and marine life sustainability.

Two papers published under the Nature portfolio of scientific journals demonstrate the benefits of steady increases in the levels of fisheries management and marine conservation interventions since the 1980s. These measures have helped reduce overfishing and boosted recovery to the point where two thirds of large-scale commercial stocks are exploited at sustainable rates. The number of marine species at risk of extinction has decreased while populations of marine mammals such as humpback whales and several seal species have significantly increased.

While it's a case of much done and much more to do on the latter, climate change is the "critical backdrop against which all future rebuilding efforts will play out". Threats such as increased ocean warming, acidification, sea level rises, and ancillary impacts will need to be dealt with through effective mitigation of greenhouse gases and development of carbon capture and removal technologies. If successful, "substantial recovery of the abundance, structure and function of marine life could be achieved by 2050".

Closer to home, the latest edition of the Marine Institute (MI) Stock book includes a positive assessment of Irish fisheries. The number of sustainably fished stocks rose from 33 in 2020 to 35 in 2021 with gradual progress towards long-term sustainable utilisation of the resource base since 2012. A variety of management measures are likely behind this progress, with increasingly high-quality scientific advice



Drawing of the modified T90 codend by Dr Matthew McHugh, BIM.

from the MI no doubt playing its part.

Gear selectivity also helps develop sustainable fisheries. As outlined in the stock book, increases in mesh size and introduction of large square-mesh panels are likely to have contributed to observed reductions in fishing mortality in some fisheries.

BIM's latest gear collaboration with Industry has further boosted the performance of the highly selective T90 codend, a key gear measure in the Celtic and Irish Seas. Previous BIM trials have demonstrated the benefits of T90 or mesh turned 90° compared to standard diamond (TO) mesh. Due to increased mesh openings, T90 consistently reduces catches of small fish. Thanks to increased water flow through the open meshes, greater quantities of larger market sized fish are swept into and retained in the codend.

**L**ed by BIM's Daragh Browne and teaming up with an Irish seiner and Cathal Boyle and colleagues at Swan Net Gundry (SNG), a new four-panel 100 mm T90 codend design with shortened Dyneema® ropes fixed along each of the



Hauling the modified T90 codend.

selvedges was tested. Known as riblines or lastridge ropes, this gear modification has been trialled in Canadian and Icelandic fisheries and was successfully tailored to the Irish seine net fishery with extensive design input from SNG. The ropes are shorter than the stretched mesh length and aim to optimise mesh openings and water flow along a series of sections with different mesh sizes and orientations.

Haddock is a key target species for seiners with additional monthly quotas allocated to this fleet. Conducted on a self-sampling

basis due to Covid restrictions, a comparison of the new T90 codend compared with a standard two-panel T90 codend demonstrated a 70% reduction in small grade haddock, and 157% and 133% increases in medium and large-grade haddock. Very few undersize fish occurred in either gear as expected with 100 mm T90 codends.

While price data have yet to be analysed, large haddock are worth substantially more than small haddock meaning the new gear greatly assists in maximising the value of available quota. Major reductions in small fish also reduces fishing mortality likely leading to improved sustainability of the haddock stock. Additional benefits include improved fish quality due to the stable four-panel codend shape and smaller quantities of fish lifted aboard; reduced fuel use and carbon emissions through increased catch efficiency; greater gear durability as the riblines relieve pressure on the codend meshes. It is hoped that these developments will drive further uptake of T90 codends in Irish fisheries.

The Nature papers are entitled "Identifying management actions that promote sustainable fisheries" and "Rebuilding marine life". The MI stock book is available at [www.marine.ie](http://www.marine.ie).

BIM would like to thank the skipper and crew of the trial vessel and the team at SNG for a successful collaboration. The vessel name is excluded due to use of economic data.

■ A full report on this work will be published on [www.bim.ie/publications/fisheries](http://www.bim.ie/publications/fisheries) in January. This work is supported by the European Maritime and Fisheries Funding. ■