



Killybegs Fishermen's
ORGANISATION LTD.

Press release

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KFO Chief Executive to leave position at year end

Seán O'Donoghue to step down after 23 years at the helm

The chairman of the board of the Killybegs Fishermen's Organisation has announced that long-serving CEO, Seán O'Donoghue is to retire at the end of the year after more than two decades of tireless and unparalleled service to the industry.

Ciarán Doherty said that Seán O'Donoghue has left a remarkable legacy and navigated a series of challenges and hurdles that few could have anticipated when he took over in 2000.

"Seán has spent a total of 43 years working in fisheries and there are few if any, who have the level of knowledge, experience and competency around an industry which plays such a key role in our economy and indeed for those of us in coastal communities, our daily lives.

"We are fortunate to have had him steer the KFO through countless and often-tense negotiations and of course the defining moment of a generation, Brexit and the ramifications which it has had for Irish fisheries," stated the chairman.

Commenting, Seán O'Donoghue said: *"I've been privileged to work with many excellent people who have been fiercely committed to the betterment of Irish fisheries. That involves leaving the industry in a better place than where we found it and I believe that through our work on more sustainable fisheries, reducing our carbon footprint while simultaneously fighting the corner of our phenomenal fishermen, we've achieved that.*

"I think there's an appreciation of the changing dynamic of fisheries. We have had to adapt, pivot and modernise and we are currently on that journey with typical zeal and determination. Brexit caused untold angst and strife but if there's one thing about all those associated with Irish fisheries, there's a pride and a resilience which always shines through."

Seán O'Donoghue leaves his position on December 31st 2023 with an announcement to be made on his successor next month.

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NOTE TO EDITOR

Seán O'Donoghue is a graduate of Civil Engineering from University College Cork (UCC) and is CEO of Killybegs Fishermen's Organisation (KFO) since 2000. He has a long-established career in fisheries management, working in the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine as well as the state seafood agency, Bord Iascaigh Mhára (BIM) for 20 years prior to taking up his present position with the KFO in 2000.

He has played a key role in a number of important fisheries issues such as the renewed Common Fisheries Policy, Technical Conservation Measures, fleet restructuring, quota management, Total Allowable Catches (TACs) and quotas negotiations and a range of other Common Fisheries Policy issues.

He was central to all fisheries negotiations around Brexit and a founder member of the European Fishing Alliance (EUFA). He is a key player in a number of important fisheries areas both at national and European level and has been influential in ensuring the interests of the fishing industry are represented as necessary.

He is chairman of the Pelagic Advisory Council (PelAC) and an Executive Committee member. He is an Executive Committee member on three other Advisory Councils – namely the North Western Waters Advisory Council (NWWAC), Markets Advisory Council (MAC) and Long Distance Advisory Council (LDAC). He was chairman of the European Association of Producer Organisations (EAPO) for seven years and is currently a member of the Executive Committee. He was a board member of BIM for nine years and the Marine Institute (MI) for five years. He is also chairman of Bio-Marine Ingredients Ireland Ltd. Seán has worked closely with the Marine Institute since its establishment and has promoted better dialogue between fishermen and fisheries scientists through a series of research projects. Under his guidance, the KFO has been a proactive partner in a number of EU-funded projects: Profet Policy, ACRUNET, MYFISH EfficientShip Neptunus and CIBBRiNA which reflects the significant expertise he can proffer to important science-industry projects and more recently on a number of stock genetics projects.