

## Five Fishing Organisations Unite for EU Change

**Dublin, 12 June 2024:** Five Irish fishing producing and processing seafood organisations have come together to demand change at national and EU level. They have issued a joint statement following a full day's collaboration in Dublin.

'Our objective is to work together on raising awareness of critical challenges impacting the sector at both national and EU level', they said in their statement. The organisations are The Killybegs Fisherman's Organisation (KFO), the Irish Fish Producers Organisation (IFPO), the Irish South & West Fish Producers Organisation (IS&WPO), the Irish South & East Fish Producers Organisation (IS&EPO), and the Irish Fish Processors and Exporters Association (IFPEA).

The organisations say they have 'committed to work closely together in a more formalised relationship. We aim to enhance our collective effectiveness as sectoral representatives by presenting a united front'.

Dominic Rihan, CEO of the KFO describes this as a "a first step in a fast-track process towards a more focused and coherent united approach". He said this was "to best represent our membership at both catching and onshore processing segments. We want to develop a national perspective and map a sustainable future for the sector that supports our coastal communities."

Aodh O'Donnell CEO of the IFPO supports the need for the initiative to collaborate. "Together, we can start a comprehensive wide ranging industry engagement. "It is heartening to have cohesion and commitment to a plan that will strategically drive us forward."

O'Donnell says the need for improved co-operation is imperative. "The situation is changing rapidly. We each have a responsibility to mediate, and to deliver better outcomes on a shared basis for our sector that is at a critical juncture. The work plan we agreed prioritises the re-establishing of an effective liaison process with the Marine Minister and his Department officials."

John Lynch CEO of the IS&EPO said he was "confident that we have a shared view of the essentials to deliver for our members. This is a significant step forward and together we will make progress to advance the sector. Positive change can be achieved if we put our shoulder to the wheel as an aligned group."

Brendan Byrne CEO of the IFPEA says his organisation is supportive of this move to develop appropriate collaborative strategies. "Having a road map is useful to move forward. A key outcome is a consensus agreement on the challenges we face in post Brexit and the need to radically reform the Common Fisheries Policy. The support of the Minister and his team will be key to developing a strategic approach."

Patrick Murphy CEO of the IS&WPO says the move to unite efforts and initiatives is long overdue. "Collectively we have a broad set of shared experiences and capacities. We have been very adversely hit by external factors such as Brexit and the reduction in quotas in recent years. Improved, effective engagement with the Minister and the EU at policy level is a starting point in our aligned workplan."

“The Irish fishing industry has been dealt a hammer blow by Brexit on top of the CFP, which is now outdated,” says Dominic Rihan of the KFO. “Therefore, this systematic engagement will help to drive and deliver positive change but is reliant on proactive engagement at national and EU Level.”

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