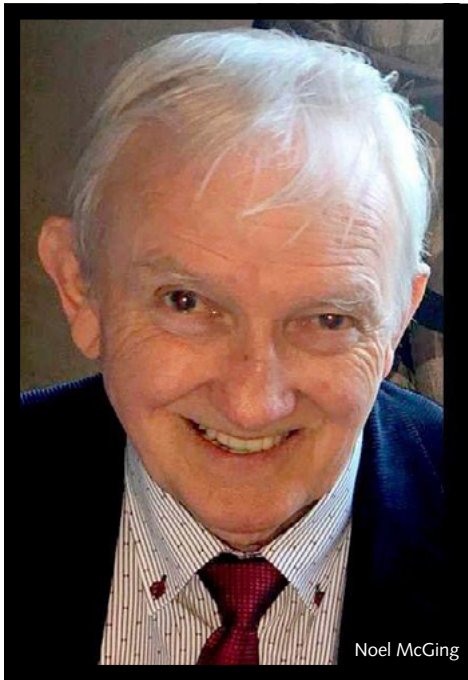




## Double Blow to Killybegs and the Wider Fishing Communities with Deaths of Local Men Noel McGing and Patrick Gallagher

The local Killybegs community was shocked and saddened when well-known local men, Noel McGing and Patrick Gallagher, passed away within the same 48 hours – close neighbours, close in age and well-known far and wide by the fishing industry in Ireland and further afield.

*Go ndéana Dia trócaire ar a anam uasal.*



Noel McGing

**Noel McGing**, aged 82, of Church Road, Killybegs, passed away on August 17 after a short illness.

Noel was born in December 1941, son of Daniel and Maureen McGing in Westport and grew up in a busy pub and shop where he and his brothers learnt about hard work and commitment. Noel and his brother were sent to Mungret College in Limerick but Noel's heart was in Westport where his love and interest in the sea was awakened. He enrolled in the Maritime College in Cork where he learnt about fishing but also made the friends and colleagues who would remain his closest companions throughout his fishing career.

In Killybegs he met Maire McCloskey, at that time working in the Bridport Gundry Net factory, and married in May, 1972. Noel and Maire went on to have five children, sons Garry, Marty and John, and daughters Olga and Mairead.

Noel had a very successful fishing career from which he

never really retired though his interest was confined to shore-side oversight in latter years when his sons carried on the fishing. He was a founding member of the Killybegs Fishermen's Organisation (KFO) in 1979 and Chairman for the first five years and was very active in the Pelagic Sectoral Committee. He hugely contributed to the overall development of the Killybegs fishing industry over his many years in the business. Noel had his first fishing boat in the late 1960s but his dream was to build his own boat which he achieved in 1976 with the launch of the "Olgarry" from Killybegs Boatyard. This boat served him well for 27 years until the replacement "Olgarry" was launched in Urk, Holland, and continues to fish successfully from its home port of Killybegs.

Noel was predeceased by his brothers Pat and Danny and grand-daughter Molly. He is survived by his wife Maire, sons Garry, Marty and John, daughters Olga and Mairead, daughters-in-law Lisa, Susan and Aileen, sons-in-law Stuart and Declan, grandchildren Orlaith, Aine, Eoin, Rosie, Bonnie, Bella, Andrew, Jack and Noah, brothers Frank and Michael, sisters-in-law, brother-in-law, nieces, nephews, relatives and friends.

**Patrick Gallagher**, Managing Director of Gallagher Bros (Fish Merchants) Ltd., passed away suddenly on August 19, 2023 at 77 years of age. He will be sorely missed by family, friends and colleagues alike. Patrick was an active member of the KFO particularly the Pelagic Sectoral Committee.

Patrick had, from his earliest years, a very keen interest in the Irish fishing industry and in Killybegs fishing in particular. Gallagher Bros was started in Teelin by Patrick's father and uncle, Jack and Phil Gallagher, consisting of a shop and a fish trading company. The business subsequently moved to Killybegs where it continued to grow and prosper. Patrick, with a strong academic background, originally had a career in teaching but joined his brothers Jackie, Frank, Tadhg, Michael and Eamon and sisters Mai and Anne, in the family business on the death of their father. The business progressed through the 1960s to the present day, engaging in whitefish hand filleting, smoking and freezing, mostly for the domestic market and the United Kingdom. Beginning with salting herring



Patrick Gallagher

on the pier in Teelin in the early '60s, the business progressed to processing and freezing all pelagic species in two plants in Killybegs and one in Teelin for markets in Europe, Africa and Asia.

Patrick, a board member of BIM for four years, was innovative and ahead of his time in many ways with his understanding of the future and sustainability of the entire marine sector. Developments such as moving into aquaculture and endeavouring to have a supply of fish year-round to keep the employment constant in the processing plant, demonstrated his insight and commitment to continued improvement at all levels of the fishing industry.

Patrick leaves behind three daughters, Niamh, Alva and Kirste, six grandchildren Sennan, Aoibheen, Adah, Freyah, Roman and Daisy. Patrick was predeceased by his two sons Jack and Paul Gallagher and his brothers Jackie and Michael.

## Positive Environmental Credentials of KFO Vessels Further Confirmed

In the October 2022 newsletter we reported on the final results of the carbon footprint analysis of the KFO RSW fleet, which were undertaken as part of the Interreg Atlantic Area NEPTUNUS project. The project validated the low carbon footprint credentials of the pelagic sector and highlighted the comparative efficiency of small pelagics as a food source. It also established a baseline on which future improvements in efficiency could be judged. This was a good news story for the industry and the analyses formed a significant part of the BIM *Carbon Footprint Report of the Irish Seafood Sector*, which was published in February this year. It was also presented and discussed at the recent BIM Pelagic Information Session.

Since completion of the project, the KFO has worked closely with BIM to expand on the analyses and delve deeper into the data with a case study on one of the RSW vessels. This has involved analysing five years of fuel use and catch with a view to developing separate carbon footprints for each species. This is particularly relevant to the Irish industry as the close proximity of the fleet to the fishing grounds and the targeted and selective fishing approach used by the vessels distinguishes them from foreign fleets landing the same species. It is important to gather the data that will prove this and then to capitalise on this through effective marketing.

In addition, the KFO is investigating the potential for alternative fuels and exploring the options, potential and realities of decarbonisation and the energy transition. To this end the KFO recently hosted a visit by naval architects from Plymouth University to some members vessels. A project plan will be developed in the coming weeks and input from members will be welcomed into the process.

The RSW fleet is of course not the sole focus of efforts in this field and the NEPTUNUS project was recently extended to two of the KFO's other sectors – the demersal whitefish fleet and the vivier crabber fleet. This work was not as straightforward as that for the pelagic vessels as the demersal vessels targeted a much wider range of species and with a less uniform fishing pattern. In the case of the vivier crabbers there was also the very different gear types to take into account and the fact that the catch was maintained alive in vessel tanks. The initial analyses have now been completed and the results are very positive. The average emissions from the crustacean fleet were 1.87Kg CO<sub>2</sub> eq/Kg crustacean, while the emissions from the demersal fleet were 2.03 Kg CO<sub>2</sub> eq/Kg fish. As expected this is higher than the pelagic carbon footprint but relative to land-based animal protein production it again highlights the positive attributes of seafood and the role it could play in reducing carbon emissions.

2.03 kg CO<sub>2</sub> eq / kg fish



1.87 kg CO<sub>2</sub> eq / kg crustacean



## Designated Maritime Area Plan system Gives Seafood Industry Greater Voice in the development of Offshore Renewable Energy

Ireland has an obligation to adopt appropriate measures to facilitate implementation of the Maritime Spatial Planning (MSP) Directive of 2014 which includes an overarching framework for maritime spatial planning aimed at promoting the sustainable growth of maritime economies, the sustainable development of marine areas and the sustainable use of marine resources. To progress these many objectives in a manageable manner, while avoiding disadvantaging existing social and economic structures, the Government adopted a National Marine Planning Framework (NMPF) in 2021 which, in turn, will implement EU and national policies at sub-national levels with Designated Maritime Area Plans (DMAPs) which can be tailored to needs and conditions in specific maritime areas. While the development of such strategies is long-overdue and will be very welcome in many areas, this development has been largely driven by the need to fast-track the expansion of Offshore Renewable Energy (ORE).

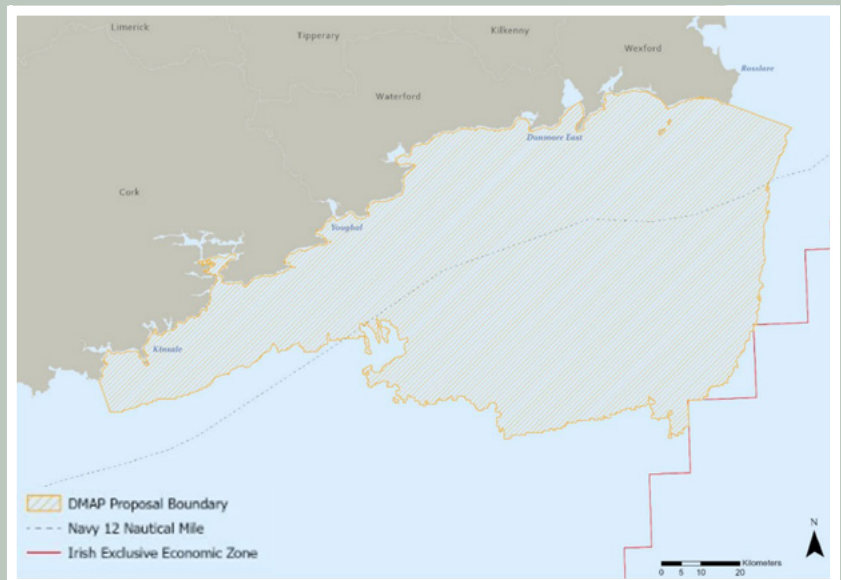
On July 5, the Minister for the Environment, Climate and Communications was designated by the Minister for Housing, Local Government and Heritage as the Competent Authority for establishing DMAPs for the development of ORE. In conjunction with this announcement, the South Coast DMAP Proposal for ORE was launched in which the government will seek to procure up to 900 MW of offshore wind capacity within the DMAP area. This represents a significant shift in marine planning, away from the developer-led approach used for Phase I projects and a first step into a systemic, plan-led, development of Ireland's off-shore wind potential.

Crucially, the policy shift ensures that:

- All future offshore wind development will take place according to a plan-led regime;
- The State will determine the appropriate location of all future offshore windfarms/grid infrastructure; and
- This use of forward spatial planning will take place according to an ecosystem-based approach, in line with the requirements of the NMPF and the MSP Directive.

The plan-led approach to Ireland's Marine Planning affords a complete change of tactics. The competitive "land-grab" developer-led system from previous licencing had created worry within the seafood industry and a log-jam of applications while the new plan-led application system should bring some order. At the same time the Seafood/ORE Working Group published its Summary Guide on Seafood/ORE Engagement in Ireland. This document was the result of extensive discussion between the seafood industry and ORE developers and provides ORE projects and seafood stakeholders with guidance on how to engage and co-exist in a meaningful and constructive manner throughout the lifecycle. The principles outlined in this document - Communication, Co-operation, Co-existence and Early Engagement - will of course apply to the new DMAP system and the engagement between the seafood industry and the governmental bodies involved.

Coupled with the move to plan-led ORE development it is a reassuring sign that the seafood industry is finally gaining recognition and a voice in the ORE discussion.



South Coast DMAP proposal for ORE shows 900 MW of offshore wind capacity, which the Government will seek to procure.

## KFO Partner in EU LIFE-funded "CIBBRiNA" Project

The EU LIFE funded "CIBBRiNA" (Coordinated Development and Implementation of Best Practice in Bycatch Reduction in the North Atlantic, Baltic and Mediterranean regions) project aims to achieve EU cross-border co-operation and fisheries engagement to establish regional monitoring programmes to achieve a steep change in the reliability of bycatch estimates. It also aims to develop, test, and implement effective mitigation measures for the incidental bycatch of marine mammals, birds, turtles and non-commercial

fish. The KFO along with the Danish Pelagic Producers Organisation, the Pelagic Freezer Trawler Association and the Scottish Pelagic Fishermen's Association are partners in the project and will be conducting the pelagic case study. During this six-year project the KFO will work with members to develop appropriate ways to monitor incidental bycatch in their fishing activities, and develop the evidence base that proves this is a very rare occurrence.



On September 29 the KFO welcomed members, non-members and processors to the KFO boardroom for the BIM Pelagic Information Session. The aim of the workshop was to inform the industry of the ongoing projects that BIM and the Marine Institute have been undertaking with significant input from the KFO. Foremost was the discussion on the mackerel tagging project and the setting up of tag scanners in the Killybegs processing plants. Killybegs Seafood and Arctic Fish Processing Ltd. each had a scanner installed last year and reported a high number of recaptures in quarter-one this year. The data gleaned from these recaptures will be used as a direct input into the mackerel assessment next year. The aim now is to encourage more processors to get involved and have scanners installed, the costs of which are entirely covered by the project. It is hoped that by the end of next year most of the mackerel landings into Killybegs will be scanned for tags, which would represent a significant data input into the assessment.

The Marine Institute also presented an update on exploratory mesopelagic surveys they are undertaking. Significant marks of pearlsides were observed off the west coast during the last survey and analyses are underway to assess the viability of these for a target fishery. There was a presentation and discussion on the role of mesopelagic fish faeces in the "biological carbon pump."

BIM then presented an overview of their 2023 Carbon Footprint Report of the Irish Seafood Sector Report, which highlighted the low carbon footprint of Irish Seafood, particularly when compared to terrestrial agriculture. The analyses also included a comparison of the carbon footprint of Irish caught mackerel to other EU and non-EU countries, with the Irish mackerel ranking significantly better compared to all. This is a good news story and seasonal, local products with a low carbon footprint and high nutritional value such as Irish seafood should be highlighted, supported and celebrated.

Finally the workshop heard of the emerging issue of the catch welfare of wild caught fish and the development of the Catch Welfare Platform (CWP) project, which emphasizes the importance of a collaborative effort involving seafood-related industries, research organizations and retail to address this issue on a global scale. The primary objective is to establish and coordinate the CWP as a network of multidisciplinary teams aimed at expediting the transition in world fisheries towards practices and technologies that enhance the welfare and quality of the catch. The kick off meeting is taking place in Bergen from November 20-22 and it is important that the KFO takes part and plays an active role in this process. More information is available at <https://catchwelfareplatform.com/>.

The Pelagic Information Session was an informative and useful meeting to keep the industry up to speed with ongoing work and developing issues. It may be useful to convene another meeting next year as these projects and issues develop further.

On September 29 ICES released the catch advice for the Widely Distributed Stocks. Full advice sheets are available on the ICES Latest Advice webpage (<https://www.ices.dk/advice>) and interactive versions on the advice Xplorer app (<https://ices-taf.shinyapps.io/advicexplorer/>). Overall, the prospects for 2024 are again a mixed bag with more negatives than positives.

Species	Stock code	Stock	2024 advice (tonnes)	%Change from 2023 advice
Cod	cod.27.46a7d20	North Sea, West of Scotland, eastern English Channel and Skagerrak	≤ 22,691	-
Blue whiting	whb.27.1-91214	Northeast Atlantic and adjacent waters	≤ 1,529,754	+12.5
Boarfish	boc.27.6-8	Celtic Seas, English Channel and Bay of Biscay	≤ 27,349	+20
Herring	her.27.1-24a514a	Norwegian Spring Spawning	≤ 390,010	-24
Horse mackerel	hom.27.2a4a5b6a7a-ce-k8	Northeast Atlantic	0	-
Mackerel	mac.27.nea	Northeast Atlantic and adjacent waters	≤ 739,386	-5

The zero TAC for Western Horse Mackerel is again advised by ICES. As the KFO highlighted at all levels last year, there is an urgent need to benchmark the assessment and this is now likely to take place at the start of 2024, though the final dates have still not been confirmed by ICES. Central to the benchmark is the question of stock identification and the KFO-led genetic studies have shown that the current stock delineation is not supported by the data.

There is another increase in the Blue Whiting advice, which is the result of the strong recent year classes now being fully recruited to the fishery. It is imperative that this positive trend is not compromised by unsustainable fishing by non-EU nations.

The decrease in the mackerel advice was again expected given the continued overfishing by Norway and the Faroes. The KFO again calls for the Irish Government to highlight this at EU level and for the Commission to act decisively against this irresponsible and reckless behaviour. Significant catches have been taken in the international zone in 2023, with much of the Faroese catch being reduced to fishmeal in Norway and also a large portion of the Iceland catches. There is an urgent need

to adopt a sharing arrangement amongst the coastal states and the KFO is also of a firm view that the management of fishing in international waters should be limited

The boarfish advice sees a 20 per cent increase in line with the category 3 biennial advice. This small increase is not keeping pace with the development of the stock which is now at a biomass in excess of what was seen in the early years of the fishery. It is essential that a quantitative category 1 assessment is developed without delay and to this end it is proposed to conduct another boarfish benchmark assessment in conjunction with the horse mackerel benchmark in early 2024.

There has been a significant change to the 6a Cod as ICES has revised the assessment areas and it is now included with the North Sea Cod. The new assessment comprises three sub-stocks; the Northwestern, Viking and Southern and the 6a Cod are included as part of the Northwestern, which is the largest of the three. There is much still to work out in terms of management but what it means is the end of the zero TAC advice that has been in place in 6a for the last 20 years.



# Editorial



by Sean O'Donoghue

CHIEF EXECUTIVE, KFO



Killybegs Fishermens Organisation, and I am sure the entire community, join me in extending our most sincere sympathies to the McGing and Gallagher families on the loss of Noel and Patrick. Both men were influential in making the port of Killybegs the fishing centre of Ireland and a major pelagic port in Europe. Between them they covered the two crucial elements of our fishing industry – Noel McGing caught the fish and Patrick Gallagher processed and sold it. They also left a legacy of continuity as both families are still to the forefront in both sectors and we know their father's achievements will live on.

Norah Parke (see picture below right) is retiring from the KFO on October 6, 2023 after almost 19 years of very dedicated service. Norah started on a short-term two-year contact as a crab sector co-ordinator but very quickly branched out to cover the large range of activities that the KFO is involved in. Her service to the KFO and its members in all three sectors has been immense and she has shown herself to be very competent, diligent, hardworking, an effective chairperson and highly respected outside of the KFO. On behalf of everyone in the KFO I would like to wish Norah a very happy retirement.

After seven years of the North West Herring being operated as a scientific monitoring fishery, the fishery has reverted to usual management.

The available quota, 1,720 tonnes in Divisions 6.a.S, 7.b-c (Herring 6A South), is disappointing and will require detailed management measures to allow fair and equitable access to as many fishermen as possible. To this end, Minister McConalogue held a review earlier this year, including a Public Consultation, of the existing 2012 Herring Policy as it has been applied in Area 6A South. The outcome was a Ministerial Decision which modified the 2012 Policy until such time as the herring quota reverts to 7,000 tonnes or more. During this period there is a set quantity of 350 tonnes allocated to the inshore fleet. The Minister requested the industry and inshore organisation to form a North West Herring Advisory Committee (NWHAC) to advise him of agreed management measures for the upcoming Autumn fishery.

There are a number of EU projects in which KFO plays a substantial role. The NEPTUNUS Interreg project has finished recently but, despite our late involvement with this project, we are very pleased with the outcome. In collaboration with our colleagues in the University of Galway we have completed carbon footprint analyses for our RSW vessels which compare very favourably with similar international studies. We also conducted assessments for our demersal and crabber sectors

which are excellent but there are very few similar groups to compare with to date. All this data will be very valuable going forward with increasing pressure on all sectors to reduce emissions and improve their carbon footprint.

The KFO also has a significant role in the new EU LIFE funded "CIBBRiNA" project, which concerns the incidental bycatch of marine mammals, birds, turtles and non-commercial fish. It is important to be involved and have an active input into projects such as this. The KFO plans to hold a workshop in December for members to discuss how best to make this input.

The recently released ICES advice for 2024 catch options is a mixed bag with more negatives than positives. The decrease in the mackerel advice was again expected given the continued overfishing by Norway and the Faroes. The KFO again calls for the Irish Government to highlight this at EU level and for the Commission to act decisively against this irresponsible and reckless behaviour.

The recent announcement of the Designated Maritime Area Plan (DMAP) system for the development of ORE is welcome news and puts an end to the developer led approach, which has caused significant issues up to now. Together with the principles laid out in the Summary Guide on Seafood/ORE Engagement in Ireland, this is a reassuring sign that the seafood industry is finally gaining recognition and a voice in the ORE discussion.

Finally, the KFO has been assured that the Pelagic BAR Scheme is undergoing final approval by the Commission. We expect members to be able to apply by the end of October and payment to be made before the end of the year.

## Important Dates October - December 2023

DATE	MEETINGS	VENUE
Sep 30	ICES Advice (Pelagic Stocks) Published	Virtual
Oct 03	Northern Pelagic Working Group (NPWG)	Utrecht, Netherlands
Oct 03	PELAC WG 1 & 2	Utrecht, Netherlands
Oct 04	PeLAC General Assembly & Executive Committee	Utrecht, Netherlands
Oct 09	Inter AC Brexit Forum	Virtual
Oct 9 - 12	Coastal States Blue Whiting & A.S. Herring Sharing Arrangements	London
Oct 10 - 12	ICES WKAFPA (W'shop re stakeholder perceptions of dynamics of fish stocks in ICES Advice)	Copenhagen
Oct 16 - 19	Coastal States mackerel sharing arrangements	London
Oct 23 - 24	Fisheries Council	Luxembourg
Oct 20	Quota Management Advisory Committee (QMAC)	Clonakilty/Dublin/Hybrid
Oct 23	Start of EU-UK Negotiations for 2024 TACS (several meeting envisaged)	London/Brussels
Oct 30 - 31	EU/Norway negotiations	Virtual
Nov 01	Release of advice on <i>Nephrops</i> Celtic Sea, angler fish, Rockall megrim	ICES
Nov 01	IFRSP	Marine Institute
Nov 01	Release ICES Advice on <i>Nephrops</i> , Celtic Sea, Angler fish, Rockall megrim	Marine Institute
Nov 06 - 09	EU-UK-Norway negotiations	London
Nov 06 - 10	ICES WKREBUILD2 (W'shop on guidelines and methods for the evaluation of rebuilding plans)	Copenhagen
Nov 14 - 17	NEAFC AGM and meeting	London
Nov 20 - 21	Fisheries Council	Brussels
Nov 20 - 22	Catch Welfare Platform	Bergen
Nov 27 - 30	EU-UK-Norway consultations	Oslo
Dec 11 - 12	Fisheries Council	Brussels



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