

# Fishing Sector Acknowledges Fianna Fáil Manifesto

## **22<sup>nd</sup> November 2024: Statement from Seafood Ireland alliance, representing fishing and seafood processing sectors on the Fianna Fáil manifesto.**

Having welcomed the manifestos issued by Fine Gael and Sinn Féin, the Seafood Alliance Ireland has further commented on the relevant part of the manifesto release by Fianna Fail.

While not as comprehensive as the other parties, nonetheless there are positive elements contained in the Fianna Fáil document. Speaking on behalf of the Alliance, Aodh O'Donell of the IFPO highlighted, "It is positive to see Fianna Fáil acknowledging the need for a dedicated Minister of State for the Marine who will work closely with the Cabinet Minister. This is badly needed to re-invigorate the seafood sector that has been neglected for many years".

Patrick Murphy of the ISWFPO went on to say, "It is encouraging that Fianna Fáil will advocate for CFP reforms that better reflect Ireland's share of fish species caught in its waters, ensuring fairer quotas. Given that Ireland has the most productive fishing grounds in Europe, but less than 6% of the EU quotas, it is vital that the Government argues robustly and makes a more equitably sharing of quotas in Europe during the negotiation of a new CFP".

The Alliance also welcomed the other elements of the manifesto regarding innovation and promotion of education within the marine sector. John Lynch commented, "While these are both positive initiatives, they will only be useful if the existential challenges facing the industry can be addressed".

On the final commitment made by Fianna Fáil to explore incentives for boats to land their catch in Irish ports, stimulating the domestic processing sector, Brendan Byrne of the Irish Fish Processors and Exporters commented, "This is an interesting proposal given our processors have been starved of fish in recent years. While there are obvious benefits, the detail on how this work in practice and the types of incentives that could be put in place to encourage boats to land in Ireland need to be carefully considered".

Seafood Ireland would like to acknowledge the assistance of MEPs Billy Kelleher, Barry Cowan and Cynthia Ní Mhurchú who took time to meet the sector and have followed up on some of the issues highlighted to them. Dominic Rihan of the KFO said, "The constructive engagement we have had with the Fianna Fáil MEPs is very much appreciated as political support for our seafood communities is needed more than ever given the many challenges the seafood industry is facing".

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