

Irish industry says the Common Fisheries Policy (CFP) has failed our fishing industry.

€94M Blow Threatens Future of Irish Fishing Industry

The **Seafood Ireland Alliance** (SIA) says today's EU Fisheries Council deal is a **betrayal of Ireland's fishing industry**. The Alliance says the Member States and European Commission has **reneged on commitments** embedded in the Common Fisheries Policy designed to protect our island's reliance on fishing.

This failure delivers a **€94 million hit** and threatens the survival of many Irish vessels and seafood businesses, says Aodh O'Donnell of the **Irish Fish Producers Organisation (IFPO)**. "The consequences will be catastrophic."

"The EU has failed Ireland's fishing industry repeatedly. This latest failure means utter devastation and effectively the CFP as a policy has failed. It's symptomatic of a fundamentally unfair system where large Member States and big business can dictate what happens to the Irish fishing industry."

O'Donnell said Ireland entered the talks presenting a strong, united front, but was "met with a slap in the face".

"Despite the best efforts of Minister Dooley and the Government, the Member States failed to honour the protection mechanism created to support Ireland and failed on the very foundation the European Union was built on."

The Alliance says the Irish fishing industry will have **57,000 tonnes less quota** to fish in 2026 and is now at risk. Over **2,300 jobs** in coastal communities face immediate danger, and the wider economic impacts could reach **€200 million** next year. Coastal communities in ports such as Killybegs, Castletownbere and Howth will be decimated,

Why this decision is so damaging.

Ireland has been denied a long-standing insurance mechanism designed to prevent extreme quota cuts to Ireland's basic fishing share. These so-called '**Hague Preference**' created in 1976 to protect highly dependent fishing nations like Ireland have been blocked by Member States for the first time in almost fifty years of the CFP.

Aodh O'Donnell highlighted **"If this protection cannot be honoured, why should Ireland continue to offer generous access to our rich fishing waters?"** The refusal raises serious questions about future cooperation with other European fishing industries.

Dominic Rihan of the Killybegs Fishermen's Organisation (KFO) said **"the outcome of this year's Council and the actions of the Member States will see our vessels limited to less than 20 days fishing a year with the tiny quotas left to catch."**

Patrick Murphy of the Irish South and West Fish Producers Organisation (**IS&WFPO**) says **Ireland is paying for others' reckless behaviour. We are** being punished unfairly."

"Non-EU states ignored science and inflated their catches. They created this crisis. Ireland fished responsibly, yet we now carry what are proportionately the heaviest losses."

Brendan Byrne of the Irish Fish Processors and Exporters (**IFPEA**) says **processing plants now face a huge threat. "They cannot survive without supply. Less quota means less fish and less work. Many plants may not survive this blow without raw material."**

John Lynch of the Irish South and East Fish Producers Organisation (**IS&EFPO**) says **"Ireland's united position was ignored."**

"All sectors of our fishing industry backed one position. That unity deserved respect, yet Ireland was dismissed. We now have a situation when our fleet of fishing vessels are left with 28 tonnes of sole to catch in 2026 on the south coast of Ireland, when Belgium has 450 tonnes."

Along standing agreement based on access to Irelands Exclusive Economic Zone has been broken tonight. This is a sad day for the Irish fishing industry, a very sad day for Ireland and a disaster for the dysfunctional fisheries council process."

Alliance conclusion

The **Seafood Ireland Alliance** says Ireland cannot accept this outcome, while acknowledging the extensive efforts of Minister Dooley to fight for our industry. The Alliance says the EU and Government must also act to support the fishing fleet or there will be job losses on a catastrophic scale.

O'Donnell said. **"Once again as in Brexit, Ireland has been left carrying a burden created by others. This is unjust and shows the European Union in a very bad light in its failure to protect the interests of small Member States."**

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