

IS&EFPO LTD



Fishing Opportunities for 2023.

The latest communication from the European Commission states that “fisheries have continued growing in sustainability overall, thanks to the efforts made by the sector not only to further improve the stocks situation , but also to keep sustainable stocks in a good condition. This has led to even more stocks being brought to sustainable levels, with very good results especially in the North East Atlantic”. The ISEFPO supports the ambition to move to msy for all stocks but recognises that it can only be achieved with the buy in of the fishing industry.

It is important to point out that the move towards msy for all stocks is being achieved through the sacrifices being made by the fishing sector. The announcement last week that 64 vessels have applied for decommissioning in Ireland represents one third of the vessels over 15 meters in length in the Irish fleet. This will have a real impact on the coastal communities and will reduce opportunities for young people to get employment in their own area. This scale of fleet reduction will have consequences also for all ancillary industries with a link to the fishing industry. Moving into this new era we must ensure that Irish fishermen receive a fair and balanced share of fish quotas to enable us to sustain the remaining vessels in a very small fleet.

The EU / UK negotiations are now ongoing and we are hopeful that agreement can be reached so that the full years quota allocations are in place for the 1st January 2023. Minister McConalogue in line with the requests of the POs begun the process in September this year so as to have our input to the system at an appropriate time. The outcome from these and other third country negotiations will determine our fishing opportunities for 2023. Where it would be ideal here to have agreement with the UK as soon as possible. The ISEFPO supports the Ministers position to hold firm and that we do not want a deal at any cost.

In the current negotiations between the EU and Norway where Norway is looking to fish Blue Whiting in the Irish EEZ south of 56 degrees 30 minutes North we support the position that if this access is given there should be some benefit to Ireland from any agreement between the EU and Norway.

The review of the Common Fisheries Policy is due in 2023 and we must ensure we work to secure a better deal for Irish fishermen. The final report of the Common Fisheries Policy Review Group outlines very clearly Irelands position in relation to the CFP review. The report makes many relevant recommendations to the Minister and has examined in depth the approach which must be taken to achieve a level playing

field and a sustainable fishing industry which can survive long into the future. We must make a strong case to have the Hague Preferences adjusted and given an enhanced legal standing to give Irish fishermen a fair share of fish quotas most of which would be caught in the waters that surround Ireland to provide job security for the wider fishing industry. Our access to fish quotas within the CFP was further reduced by the Brexit Trade and Co-operation Agreement where Ireland took an unjust 25% share of the burden when 160 million Euro worth of fish was gifted to the UK in exchange for EU access to UK waters. The unbalanced burden sharing created by the Brexit transfers must be resolved soon to return stability and confidence to the Irish fishing fleet.

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