

pescanfo



No 18/EN

Heading towards more selective fishing

Within the framework of 'sustainable development', the need for selective fishing is an issue being discussed increasingly among the various European and international authorities concerned by the management of marine resources. In many fishing grounds, by-catches and their frequent discards are a growing concern. In a climate of dwindling fishing resources and ensuing measures advocating a reduction in fishing effort, practices involving the discarding of significant quantities of non-targeted species to the sea are widely considered as outrageous. Accidental catches of turtles, marine mammals and sea birds have also provoked strong criticism from environmental organizations seeking to encourage discussion on the issue.

Discards of by-catches can reach very high levels, as highlighted by an FAO report published in 1994. Shrimp fishing grounds are the record holders, with a ratio of over 80% in terms of weight. With the exception of crab catches, however, such high levels are currently rare in other fishing grounds. The percentage of discards actually seems to be declining, owing to the promotion of more responsible fishing. Nevertheless, a definitive solution to such a complex issue is still a long way off.

Various strategies have been developed, involving the adoption of increasingly selective techniques. Research institutes in the European Union are working with this aim in mind, with selective trawls, the BED (By-Catch Exclusive Device) – a system that considerably reduces the proportion of by-catches – and TED (Turtle Exclusive Device) – specifically concerning turtles – providing a few examples. Finally, the impact of fishing gear, such as trawls and dredges, on benthic ecosystems is also gaining increasing attention.

Such trends are in keeping with the various measures adopted by the EU to limit fishing effort, with the aim of preserving stocks of young species in particular, and all the decisions taken to this effect: limiting the length of nets cast to sea, regulating the size of the meshes of these nets or trawls, or even banning the use of certain fishing gear in some instances. These measures will also help contribute towards the implementation of selective fishing.

The Editor

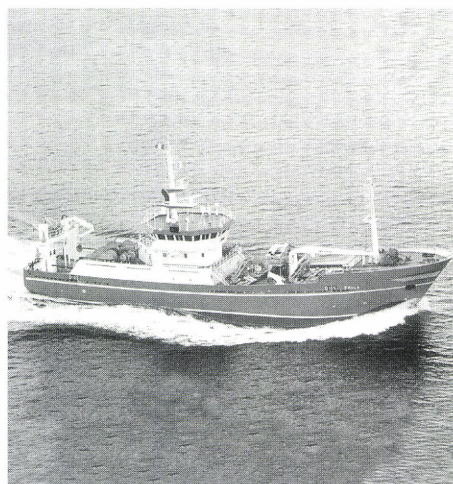
European Commission Delegation
Library
2300 M Street, NW
Washington, DC 20037

Contents

- Region of the month: Killybegs, Co. Donegal, Ireland
- The Common Fisheries Policy: the development of controls
- PESCA on the spot: PESCA in Finland
- Interview of the month: Tero Laukkanen (Finland)
- Newsflash: programme of meetings in Member States on the CFP after 2002

Region of the month

Killybegs: fishing port and economic lifeline of Donegal



Killybegs is Ireland's leading fishing port, both in terms of tonnage and value. It is also an industrial fishing complex forming the main pole of economic activity in Donegal, a rural county in the north-west of Ireland far from the country's main urban and industrial centres.

(continued on page 2)



The fishing-aquaculture sector plays an important role in a region where traditional activities – the textile industry, sheep rearing and peat farming – are in decline, while the budding tourist industry remains small. It employs some 1,000 fishermen, with twice as many in related industries, particularly in the processing plants concentrated around Killybegs. Apart from this fishing centre, the county houses two other versatile ports, i.e. Greencastle (demersal fish, shellfish) and Burtonport (deep-water fish, salmon and, in particular, crab, packaged on site).

Unlike both of these ports – and the county's other, much smaller ones – Killybegs does not house small-sized vessels. The 20 or so demersal trawlers are between 15 and 35m in length. They tend to be very old, accounting for only a fifth of the value landed. Killybegs' speciality is in fact pelagic fishing. The tonnages caught are 15 times greater than those for groundfish for the same number of boats, though different in size. Killybegs' pelagic fishing fleet contains vessels between 25m and 100m in length. It was the main beneficiary of the major programmes for renewal of the Irish fleet in the mid-nineties.

Although the fleet has been developed, the port, which does not have enough space to house it, has not. This fact is highlighted by Joey Murrin, Secretary of the Killybegs PA. This is not his main concern, however. He is more worried by fishing resources, especially when they are being exploited by foreign fleets. He is fighting for tighter control measures, similar to those introduced in Norway. He would like to see measures enforced compelling all vessels leaving the fish-

ing zone across from Ireland to be checked automatically. He deplors the significant quota of blue whiting allocated to the Norwegians, all the more so as this species is increasingly targeted by the port's pelagic vessels.

The species landed by the fleet are mostly processed by local plants, providing the main source of jobs (altogether some 2,200) in the whole fishing sector.

Questions put to Tadhg Gallagher, Director of Gallagher Bros and Representative of Killybegs' processing industries.

Pesca Info (P.I.): Could you briefly tell us about your activities?

Tadhg GALLAGHER (T.G.): We have three processing companies in the area of Killybegs, which are involved in filleting, freezing, curing, smoking and canning. We have also an aquaculture company which rears Atlantic Salmon.

P.I.: *What are the problems and the advantages of being located in Killybegs?*

T.G.: The main problem is that we are located at the periphery of Europe and so we are very far from some markets. It is not a problem for our exports to Africa or Japan which are very important, but made by cargo-boat directly from Killybegs, but for herring the main market is in Germany and the fish needs three days to reach this country compared to less than one day for our competitors in Denmark. But we have a good labour force here and part-time jobs are very frequent in the area; that allows us to adapt to fluctuations in supply, that occurs frequently because of bad

weather. We can also get quality products because the fish is landed close to our factory and is therefore quickly ready for processing. In the same way, it can be quickly transferred to the cargo-boats (reefers) for export.

Data sheet Killybegs

- *Location:* Co. Donegal, Ireland
- *Fleet:* 40 trawlers and pelagic trawlers-seiners, 20 demersal trawlers
- *Type of fishing:* pelagic trawl, bottom trawl.
- *Output:*
 - *species:*
pelagic: mackerel (*Scombrus scombrus*), scad (*Trachurus sp.*), herring (*Clupea harengus sp.*), blue whiting (*Micromesistius poutassou*)
demersal: highly varied, mainly including haddock (*Melanogrammus sp.*), whiting (*Merlangus merlangus*) cod (*Gadus morhua*), megrim (*Lepidorhombus sp.*), etc.
 - *volume:* nearly 142,000 tonnes in 1996 (including 135,000 pelagic) plus 10,000 tonnes of landings from the fleets of other Member States (mainly British)
 - *value:* Ir£31.94 million, or **ECU 43.16 million**
- *Employment in fishing:* 400 fishermen
- *Processing:* 11 companies (employing up to 1,500)





Common Fisheries Policy

The development of monitoring within the CFP

For several years now, the 'control' segment of the activities of the fisheries sector in the EU has been of great concern to the European Commission. The regulations currently in force (Reg. No. 2847/93), which were adopted in October 1993, stressed the need for integrated controls at all levels of the sector and the use of modern techniques to increase effectiveness.

Since then, the Commission has pursued its policy regarding this matter in close cooperation with the Member States. Cooperation between the services of the Commission and those of national authorities has been strengthened. Awareness of the need for stringent controls among an increasing number of professionals from the fishing sector in the Union, who are demanding above all greater harmonization of the enforcement of these measures, has contributed to this development.

Strengthening the efficiency and increasing the transparency and fairness of controls

After it became clear that there were deficiencies in controls, particularly regarding the harmonization of measures, controls of catches made at sea or those from landings of vessels in a Member State other than the flag state, the Commission proposed modifying this regulation in May 1998.

The aim of the Commission's modifications is twofold. On the one hand, it involves increasing the efficiency of controls throughout

the sector by limiting the costs incurred by fishermen and other operators in the sector. On the other, the Commission wishes to increase the transparency of monitoring activities in order to ensure that measures are enforced fairly in the different Member States.

There are three main themes underlying the proposed modifications: to develop the exchange of information and cooperation among Member States and with the Commission; to strengthen controls of vessels from third countries fishing in Community waters; and to improve controls after the landing of catches.

A plan of action extending over three years

As a result of the proposed modifications to the regulation, the Commission drew up a detailed plan of action in June, covering 1998, 1999 and 2000. The activities advocated mostly relate to the exchange of inspectors, the development of computerized connections among Member States and with the Commission with a view to improving the transfer of information and the drawing-up of reports, the improvement of controls and cooperation within international organizations (NAFO, for example), and the development of the use of satellite for monitoring vessels at sea.

Community funds will be provided by the Commission to help Member States implement the appropriate measures (technical equipment as well as vocational training) to ensure Community regulations are adhered to. The installation of 'blue boxes' on vessels of over 20m in length, for example, has been allocated 100% financing. Monitoring of these vessels by satellite has been compulsory since July 1998.

PESCA on the spot

Pesca in Finland: just recently taken off ...

The Pesca initiative has recently had a concrete impact in Finland. Less than two years ago, the programme was considered too recent by what was then still a new Member State of the EU. While the programme was slow in taking off, the publicizing of the results of a number of pioneer projects in Finland has aroused some interest. So far, 28 projects have been granted part-financing, or the equivalent of FIM 14 million (ECU 2.4 million).

Half of all these projects have involved specific activities, such as the networking of fishermen, processing plants and other organisms to enhance the value of under-used species, or support towards the development of new products and trade outlets. In the field of aquaculture, the breeding of new species has been studied and research for reducing the negative impact on the environment has been conducted. Eight other projects have contributed towards developing training for fishermen and fish farmers, focusing on improving the quality of products. Finally, diversification into tourism has been encouraged, here too involving the retraining of fishermen into the new activity.

Though spread throughout the country, these projects mostly concern the south-west coast (the Turku region: Varsinais Suomi).





Interview of the month

**Interview with
Tero Laukkanen,
a consultant
specializing in the
quality of sea-food
products (Finland)**

Editor's note: intended as a medium for freely voiced opinions, the PESCA bulletin reflects the views held by professionals. Articles express the opinions of the authors alone. Latin names are used to identify fish species to improve recognition in various languages.

Pesca Info (P.I.): Would you please briefly tell us about your activity?

Tero LAUKKANEN (T.L.): I am a private consultant working in development of fish quality. The main task is to evaluate problems and to find practical solutions. The main objective is to increase profitability of fishing by improving fish quality. To reach this goal I am working with fishermen but also with district government, fish wholesalers and retailers. To be effective the development work should start with every fisherman from a given area, because wholesalers buy fish from several fishermen. Flexible work with many enterprises, which are often family enterprises, needs funds from the Finnish government for projects.

P.I.: What are the main problems concerning your job in Finland?

T.L.: The main problem in developing successful fishing is that fishermen want to see their wishes rapidly turn into results. In Finland, the idea of telling fishermen actively about profitability of fish quality is new. The importance of planning and development is, on the whole unclear to fishery enterprises.

Fishermen, who came to this job through practical experience, do not believe in texts or theories. When investment decisions are made (usually by loan capital), in addition to texts, plans and profitability calculations you need to see other practical examples in video. Fishermen find it easy to believe in other fishermen's experience, so they can see it from video as many times as they want. After evaluation of the present situation, a development plan for the enterprise is made together with the fishermen. The same plans and audio-visual material is used when presenting fishing and need of development to authorities who decide about funding the fishermen's investments and development projects.

The population and activities are scattered throughout large areas in Finland. By improving fish quality and storage in such a country where there are long distances from one place to another, we have to essentially improve the logistic of fish handling. In my job, I often have to drive a long time by car with my video material, computer, TV and other equipment; the mobile phone is very useful to discuss with fishermen and is often used to avoid meetings, which take valuable time.

In Finland, the fishery is limited by freezing lakes and seas. The growing period is short and the fishing enterprises are small. The future of fishery, especially in lake area, depends on consumers, who like to eat domestic fish because of its taste, and who are ready to pay the extra costs due to the conditions under which the fish are produced. The benefit of fish quality chains has been such that in some lake areas the consumption has even doubled. Improving fish handling technologies has meant that the Finnish Sea fishermen are rapidly entering the East-European market.

Newsflash

'The CFP after 2002': meetings with Member States

Within the framework of consultation of the fisheries sector on the future of the CFP after 2002, the Commission is organizing a series of meetings in the Member States. The programme is as follows:

Ireland: 22/9 in Cork, 24/9 in Dublin and 28/9 in Donegal

United Kingdom: 7/10 in Aberdeen, 9/10 in Glasgow, 13/10 in London and 16/10 in Belfast

Denmark: 27/10 in Copenhagen and 9/10 in Viborg

Germany and Belgium: December 1998

Spain: January 1999

Portugal and France: February 1999

Greece: March 1999

The Netherlands: April 1999

Finland and Sweden: May 1999

Italy: June 1999

This column is available to you if you wish to announce various events or actions likely to be of interest to the fishing world.

Pesca info is published by **INFOPARTNERS S.A.** on behalf of the European Commission, DG XIV. **PESCA Info** is published 10 times a year in all Community languages.

Editor in chief:
Director-General DG XIV

The views expressed are those of the authors and not necessarily those of the European Commission.

Comments and suggestions are welcome at:

Pesca Info
European Commission
DG XIV/A/2 - J99
Rue de la Loi, 200
B-1049 Brussels
Fax: +32 2 299.30.40

URL: <http://europa.eu.int/en/comm/dg14/pesca>