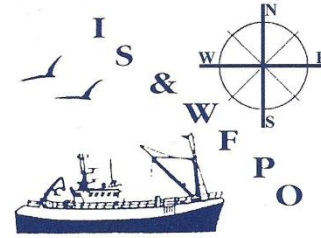


Irish South and West Fish Producers' Organisation Ltd.



The Pier, Castletownbere, Co. Cork
Tel: 027-70670 Fax: 027-70771 Int. Prefix + 353
e-mail: info@irishsouthandwest.ie
Website: www.irishsouthandwest.ie

PRESS RELEASE

"Race to reach Maximum Sustainable Yield (MSY) leads to loss for the Irish Fishing Industry"

"The Annual Council of Ministers Meetings ended in the early hours this morning with some, but not enough, improvements on the proposed quota reductions" commented **Eibhlin O'Sullivan** CEO of the **Irish South and West Fish Producers Organisation**.

"We knew travelling to Brussels that there were significant cuts proposed to key stocks such as Haddock and Cod in the Celtic Sea which were based on the Commissions desire to reach Maximum Sustainable Yield (MSY) for these stocks in 2016. We had hoped that the Council would adopt a phased approach in implementing the reductions necessary to achieve MSY on a step by step basis between this and 2020 but this did not happen. While the actual reductions of 13% for Haddock and 4% of Cod are less than those initially proposed this will result in significant economic loss for those Whitefish Fishermen who rely on these stocks. For Haddock, in particular, this 13% reduction equates to 5 weeks less fishing in a fishery which has seen increasingly selective gears since 2011 which saw an increase to a 120mm Square Mesh Panels implemented in 2015. While the 4% reduction in Cod may appear small due to the pressure this stock is under it will, in fact, have a detrimental effect on all Whitefish Fishermen, particularly for inshore fishermen".

"It was good to see that the proposed reductions in Prawns, which is the most valuable whitefish stock for the Irish Industry, were reversed but it should be pointed out that if not for the additional quota uplift for Prawns due to the obligation to land all catches which comes into effect from the 1st of January 2016 there would, in fact, be a 2% reduction in this stock. It is disappointing to note that the Council, despite Scientific Advice chose to continue to implement the "of which" restriction for the Porcupine Bank Prawn fishery which in effect means it is a separate quota for prawns fished in this area."

"There had been concerns regarding proposed reductions for Pollack and Skates & Rays which were completely unjustified based on Scientific Advice but thankfully for those vessels who rely on them these did not go ahead" finished Ms. O'Sullivan

ENDS

Dated this 16th day of December, 2015.

Contact: Ms. Eibhlin O'Sullivan, CEO, IS&WFPO Ltd. - 086 / 2360001