

Irish fish producers' organisation



Press Release
May 21st 20220

Minister refuses to change his Covid-19 Voluntary Tie-up Scheme despite it being rejected by Fishing Industry.

The IFPO along with other representatives of the fishing community have met with Minister Creed and his officials from the Department of the Marine on 2 occasions in the last month to try and get a **Covid-19**

Voluntary Fleet tie-up Scheme as we have seen the collapse of markets for fish both at home and abroad. Despite the fact that we have seen the prices for the main species landed by Irish vessels to have fallen by 50 to 70% in the interim and many vessels have been forced to tie up since mid- March, the Department is only looking a tie up commencing from June 1st

He says that EMFF funding for Ireland has already been allocated and there is very" little uncommitted funding available and that there is little scope nationally for specific supports". The Minister is not looking to allocate one penny from national resources to the industry beyond the horizontal measures. Perhaps being the Minister responsible for both Agriculture and Marine means he has bigger fish to fry.

Our main objections to the ministers scheme is that the tie-up scheme for 1 month is too long and it will not have the desired effect of enticing vessels that have already been tied up for 2 months to consider the scheme. The tiered allocations outlined are totally inadequate. They need an Income and they need it now. The Industry has been doing their bit as an essential food supplier, with many vessels trying to rotate their fishing activities to ensure a constant supply for the home market and the still limited export market but unfortunately this scheme does nothing to support them. We hoped the Minister would have followed the same blueprint of some of our EU partners, particularly France which has a scheme with the objective to match to match fishing and demand.

We are asking the Minister and his government to do something meaningful to help our Industry and we are more than willing to meet him halfway.

Ends

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Note to editor:

The four producer organisations (the IFPO, ISEFPO, ISWFPO and KFO) have already put forward a joint position on what they consider necessary to achieve a workable and effective temporary tie-up scheme

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that would try to match supply to demand. The two key elements of their proposal were an initial three months scheme starting on April 1st 2020 with a review at the end of May and that the financial support for a temporary tie-up would be based on 30% of the full grossing of the vessel in the same period last year (force majeure to be taken into account in relation to this period) with an appropriate tie up period of 7 to 10 days to be further discussed. Unfortunately, the scheme as announced by Minister Creed and the Department of Agriculture, does not take these two key elements in account and as a consequence the very firm collective view of both the four POs and their members is that the scheme is doomed to failure with very little uptake.

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