

Bord Iascaigh Mhara Announce the Winners of National Seafood Awards

Images courtesy of Paul Sherwood



Bord Iascaigh Mhara (BIM), Ireland's Seafood Development Agency, announced the winners of the first ever BIM National Seafood Awards at a Gala Awards event in the Clayton Hotel, Ballsbridge, Dublin.

Out of 38 finalists shortlisted across the areas of Skills, Sustainability, Innovation and Competitiveness, twelve winners received awards for their outstanding contributions to the fishing, fish farming, seafood processing and retail sectors at a ceremony officially opened by Minister for Agriculture, Food and the Marine, Mr. Michael Creed, T.D.

The full list of winners from the BIM National Seafood Awards are:

Category: Skills

- Student of the Year: **Barry Shaw (Killybegs, Co. Donegal)**
- Young Fishmonger of the Year (Independent Seafood Specialist): **Stephen Hurley, The Fish Shop, Glenmar Shellfish, Union Hall, West Cork**
- Young Fishmonger of the Year (Supermarket Seafood Counter): **Eimantas Zvirblis, Donnybrook Fair, Malahide, Co. Dublin**

Category: Sustainability

- Responsible Fisherman of the Year: **Jim Connolly, Supreme II, Clogherhead, Co. Louth**
- Aquaculture Environmental & Social Responsibility Award: **Blackshell Farm, Newport, Co. Mayo**
- Green Processor of the Year: **Island Seafoods Ltd, Killybegs, Co. Donegal**

Category: Innovation

- Best New Fishing Practice: **Foyle Warrior Ltd, Greencastle, Co. Donegal**
- Innovation in Aquaculture: **Dungarvan Shellfish Ltd, Dungarvan, Co. Waterford**
- Innovation in Seafood Processing: **Oceanpath/Dunn's of Dublin (Howth, Co. Dublin) & Goatsbridge Trout Farm (Thomastown, Co. Kilkenny)**

Category: Competitiveness:

- Fishing Enterprise of the Year: **DC Fish Ltd (Union Hall, Cork)**
- Aquaculture Enterprise of the Year: **Kush Seafarms Ltd, Kenmare, Co. Kerry**
- Seafood Enterprise of the Year: **Sofrimar, Kilmore Quay, Co. Wexford**

Establishing leaders in the sector is a key priority for BIM and the final award of the evening, the **BIM Lifetime Achievement Award**,

was presented to the family of a true leader in his field, the late Mr. Martin Howley, as BIM Chairman Kieran Calnan explains: 'Martin exemplified everything you need to be a great leader. He led by example starting as a fisherman in Killybegs in the 1970's rising to become a pioneering mackerel Skipper then a successful businessman and a great leader in the fishing industry. His passion, energy and innovative spirit were a unifying and driving force. Martin is a most worthy recipient of the BIM Lifetime Achievement Award'

The winners represent a wide geographical spread including three from Donegal; two each are from Cork and Dublin while Kerry, Kilkenny, Louth, Mayo, Waterford and Wexford each had one winner on the night.

Included in the list of winners are two talented young fishmongers; Stephen Hurley from The Fish Shop, Union Hall, Co. Cork and Eimantas Zvirblis from Donnybrook Fair, Malahide, Co. Dublin who have won the coveted title of **BIM Young Fishmonger of the Year** (Independent Seafood Specialist) and (Supermarket Seafood Counter).

BIM's CEO Tara McCarthy outlined the rationale behind the awards; 'The Irish Seafood Sector contributes €1 billion in GDP to our economy and employs over 11,000 people predominantly in our coastal regions. The BIM National Seafood Awards provide us with the opportunity to celebrate the positive contribution of this valuable indigenous industry and recognize excellence and leadership across this diverse sector. It is an exciting time to work in seafood and the high standard demonstrated by our winners and all of our finalists bodes well for the future as we collectively aim to achieve growth as set out in the Government's Food Wise 2025 plan'.

BIM also introduced an exciting new brand identity to the Industry at the event. Grounded in BIM's plans to enable progress in the seafood sector under its four key priorities – Skills, Sustainability, Innovation and Competitiveness, this fresh and vibrant new look for one of Ireland's longest established state agencies, is consistent with its vision for 'Ireland to become the International leader in high value differentiated seafood products that satisfy growing domestic and international demand for nutritious, safe and responsibly and sustainably produced food'.



DC Fish Ltd, Union Hall, Cork is the winner of the "Fishing Enterprise of the Year Award". Pictured is Monica Buckley of DC Fish with Niall Deasy CEO, BIM.



Island Seafoods Ltd, Killybegs, Co. Donegal is the winner of the "Green Processor of the Year Award" – pictured is Michael O'Donnell of Island Seafoods being congratulated by Michael Creed, T.D. and Tara McCarthy, CEO, BIM.



Group Shot of all Winners with Tara McCarthy, BIM CEO & Kieran Calnan, BIM Chairman and Howley family (BIM Lifetime Achievement Award) including Blackshell Mussels, Sofrimar, Oceanpath & Goatsbridge Trout Farm, Island Seafoods, Foyle Warrior Ltd, Barry Shaw (Student of the Year), Stephen Hurley, The Fish Shop, Union Hall (Independent Young Fishmonger of the Year), Eimantas Zvirblis, Donnybrook Fair, Malahide (Supermarket Seafood Counter), Jim Connolly, Responsible Fisherman of the Year, Dungarvan Shellfish.



Jim Connolly, "Supreme II", Clogherhead, Co. Louth is the 2016 "Responsible Fisherman of the Year" and was presented with his award by Michael Creed, T.D., Minister for Agriculture, Food and the Marine and Tara McCarthy, CEO, BIM.



Foyle Warrior Ltd, Greencastle, Co. Donegal is the winner of the "Best New Fishing Practice Award" – pictured are Patrick McClenaghan of Foyle Warrior being congratulated by Michael Creed, T.D., Minister for Agriculture, Food and the Marine and Tara McCarthy, CEO, BIM.



Stephen Hurley, The Fish Shop, Glenmar Shellfish, Union Hall, West Cork is the 2017 Young Fishmonger of the Year (Independent Seafood Specialist) – presenting him with his award are Michael Creed, T.D. and Tara McCarthy, CEO, BIM.



Kush Seafarms Ltd, Kenmare, Co. Kerry is the winner of the "Aquaculture Enterprise of the Year Award". Pictured is John Harrington of Kush being congratulated by Michael Creed, T.D. and Tara McCarthy, CEO, BIM.



Oceanpath/Dunn's of Dublin (Howth, Co. Dublin) and Goatsbridge Trout Farm (Thomastown, Co. Kilkenny) are the winners of the "Innovation in Seafood Processing Award". Pictured are Ken Ecock of Oceanpath and Mag Kirwan of Goatsbridge being congratulated by Michael Creed, T.D., Minister for Agriculture, Food and the Marine and Tara McCarthy, CEO, BIM.



Mr. Martin Howley, Killybegs, Co. Donegal was posthumously awarded a BIM Lifetime Achievement Award. Pictured L-R are Kieran Calnan, chairman, BIM, Tara McCarthy, CEO, BIM, Marguerite Lawler, Michael Creed, T.D., Minister for Agriculture, Food and the Marine, Sean O'Donoghue, BIM Board Director and Padraig Howley.



Sofrimar Ltd, Kilmore Quay, Co. Wexford is the winner of the "Seafood Enterprise of the Year Award". Pictured being congratulated by Michael Creed, T.D. and Tara McCarthy, CEO, BIM are Lorcan Barden and Leslie Bates of Sofrimar.



Barry Shaw (Killybegs, Co. Donegal) is the 2016 Student of the Year - presenting him with his award are Michael Creed, T.D. and Tara McCarthy, CEO, BIM.