

Exhibition captures the pride within Scotland's fishing sector

Individuals from the fishing industry profiled in major visual project

The moving accounts and portraits of 12 workers within Scotland's fishing industry take centre stage as part of an ambitious new exhibition titled "Pride in the Seas".

A celebration of the passion, heritage, and commitment to sustainability of today's fishing communities, the [Scottish Fishermen's Federation](#) initiative features subjects from Shetland to Berwickshire, captured by Scottish photographer Ian Georgeson.

It brings to life the narratives of those working in the industry with insights into the vast challenges that fishermen face, such as diminishing access to fishing grounds, recruitment challenges and the fear of misguided government intervention, like the ill-fated highly protected marine areas (HPMA) policy.

Spanning various roles, the subjects represent the diversity and shared values of many of Scotland's coastal communities as well as a number of experts on land that support those at sea with vital knowledge.

Elsbeth Macdonald, chief executive of the Scottish Fishermen's Federation, said: "The passion and pride of those working in the industry is a constant source of inspiration. They are out

there in all manner of conditions, putting healthy, sustainable and climate-smart food on our tables.

“This campaign is a first of its kind, and captures the spirit, integrity and quiet pride our fishing communities possess as they carry on centuries-old local traditions while looking forward to a sustainable future for their sector.

“As well as all the positives there are concerns. Fishing is surprisingly complex. Fishing businesses are dependent on so many factors that no-one has any control over and this complexity means there is still much to learn. But those who seek to attack fishing often use over-simplification and misinformation to talk our industry down. This is neither right nor fair, and this campaign, Pride in the Seas, gives our fishermen a chance to tell their own stories.

“The dozen that we have interviewed are a snapshot into that frontline. They are the people immediately impacted when fishing grounds are lost or policies are implemented. But we are all impacted if Scotland’s fishing heritage is further diminished and our vital food security, both now and in future, is threatened.”

- The 12 individuals featured include:
- Trevor Spouse, Skipper in Eyemouth
- Mark Anderson, Skipper, and son Nicol, Deckhand, in Shetland
- Colin Stephen, Skipper in Peterhead
- Mark Robertson, part-owner, and sons Paul and Adam, Skippers, in Fraserburgh
- Willie John McLean, Skipper in Mallaig
- Erin Mackenzie, Deckhand in Mallaig
- Dr Steve Mackinson, Chief Scientist, Scottish Pelagic Fishermen’s Association
- Dr Paul Macdonald, Senior Fisheries Analyst, Scottish Fishermen’s Organisation

- Elena Balestri, Senior Fisheries Policy and Science Manager, Scottish Fishermen's Federation

Due to be held in The Scottish Parliament in the coming months, the "Pride in the Seas" exhibition will provide opportunity for members of parliament and staff to better understand the stories and values of Scotland's vital fishing communities.

Following its debut, the exhibition will be available for tour across towns, schools, museums and other public facilities around the country.

Celebrating its 50th anniversary in 2023 the SFF was established to represent a sustainable, prosperous fishing industry in Scotland. It was borne in response to the need for greater political engagement when the UK joined the EU and in adapting to the first oil exploration which saw the proliferation of other activities in the historic fishing grounds of the North Sea.

Fighting for the interests of 450 fishing vessels in Scotland's fleet, the SFF is made up of eight Associations which represent the sector from small creel boats to large pelagic and white fish trawlers.

[See the full exhibition on the SFF website.](#)



Willie John and Erin from Mallaig