

# TVØROYRI'S PELAGIC BOOSTER

*The Port of Tvøroyri is experiencing rapid growth after the new Varðin Pelagic fish factory opened for business in July 2012—with remarkable effect on employment and economy in the local and surrounding communities.*

IT TOOK ONLY a few weeks to set up and ready one of the world's most advanced processing plants for pelagic food fish. The change has been profound, however, for the Port of Tvøroyri since the Varðin Pelagic facility, in the summer of 2012, started commercial operations at the main fishing harbor there.

At year end, the new factory had processed 37,000 tonnes of mackerel, herring, and blue whiting—a figure that is expected to double this year (2013).

While the number of ship calls has increased markedly, as expected, the boom-town effect on the community has exceeded expectations, according to the mayor, Kristin Michelsen.

"The factory was running at full capacity of 600 tonnes per day already after three weeks," Mr. Michelsen noted.

"They had a tight time schedule and some of us perhaps would have doubted



*View of the new factory from the marina; Partial view of Tvøroyri with pelagic vessels docked at factory (opposite, bottom); Jupiter landing a catch with Tróndur í Gøtu docked next to her (below); The Varðin Pelagic facility (bottom right).*

whether all deadlines were going to be met. So the fact that they received their first load of catch already by late July was a pleasant surprise.

"This could be one of the most important undertakings ever for our small community and people are highly appreciative and supportive of the further development that has been announced."

Besides a planned upgrade of the factory to process as much as 1,000 tonnes per day, already implemented, a cold storage facility will be placed next to the factory, alongside 100 meters of deep-water terminal and a 3,000 to 4,000 square meter storage area for containers.

According to Mr. Michelsen, the port authority—the Municipality of Tvøroyri—has likewise decided to im-

prove existing harbor facilities to accommodate the handling of whitefish in the area. The main whitefish processor there, Delta Seafood, is also involved as a contractor in the Varðin Pelagic enterprise.

Mr. Michelsen added: "These are exciting times for Tvøroyri and the whole island of Suðuroy. We've had to put our shoulder to the wheel but we can already see the first results of these efforts and investments.

"We can see more commercial activity and tax revenues are growing, not only in this municipality but throughout this island. In the harbor area the whole atmosphere has become more confident, positive and optimistic.

"We have started producing something that brings progress and a promising future. This should increase the

attractiveness of this area, which is already happening. Along with this great enterprise, the upcoming cultural project at the old salt warehouse will doubtlessly also contribute to the attractiveness of Tvøroyri."

**HISTORIC HOUSES:** The mayor also referred to offshore oil and gas and the strategic location of the Port of Tvøroyri.



He said: "With the growing interest for oil and gas exploration in the southern regions of the Faroese Continental Shelf, I would say that Tvøroyri offers a well sheltered natural harbor and competitive services to support offshore operations."

"Making long-term plans is all well and good but a Municipal Council must avoid the trap of becoming so inflexible as to lose the ability to make exceptions to the rule and push for speedier administrative processes when important business is on the line. When it comes to port related business, Tvøroyri has the ambition of growing at healthy pace."

As further harbor development work was to get underway in the spring of 2013, Mr. Michelsen noted that while ship traffic has increased significantly since the opening of Varðin Pelagic, the port authority was determined to make sure operations would not be disrupted by infrastructure issues.

"We're raising the bar now and that entails new challenges. We haven't had any business disruptions so far and we intend to keep it that way, irrespective of construction work on our new harbor facility."

That new freight terminal will accommodate export and provide safe

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 500 meters of dock side with depths from 7 to 11 m alongside. Roll-on/roll-off ramp. Whitefish and pelagic processing.  
  
 All basic services for ships calling – port agency, tourist office, customs clearance, immigration, local hospital, provisioning, fuel, fresh water; fish handling, ship repairs including mechanical, electrical; marine electronics; transport services (import, export, domestic).

docking for vessels with a draft of up to 11 m.

"This terminal will make Tvøroyri more attractive as a port of call and we do expect traffic to increase—that is, traffic directly related to Varðin Pelagic as well as other ship traffic."

Tvøroyri's past as the Faroe Islands' first significant fishing port and foremost commercial center in the late 19<sup>th</sup> to early 20<sup>th</sup> century is not easily erased. In the town center close to the main harbor area, a group of old houses serves as a constant reminder of the origin of the Faroese fishing industry.

"This is a place where the past, present and future meet," the mayor said, "and we're proud of it."

