

Steerable doors a step closer

Quentin Bates

The doors are the same, but improved, Atli Már Jósafatsson of Polar Fishing Gear told *Fishing News International*, before adding that there is a new design currently being tested as well as ongoing development of the firm's controllable doors.

One of the first companies to sign up to join the new Ocean Cluster, Polar Fishing Gear produces the Hercules, Neptune, Jupiter and Mercury trawl doors that have all seen minor tweaks and design improvements, and the latest design is the Thor trawl door.

"I'm running out of Greek gods and had to move on to Norse mythology instead," he said.

The first pair of these new bottom doors with three vents has been tested on board DFFU's trawler *Norma Mary* with a trip on cod to Flemish Cap, followed by fishing in the Barents Sea using an 8.80m², 4200kg pair.

"This is the new generation of Polar Doors and the extra vent means that these have greater spreading power combined with lower drag," he said.

The conventional catalogue of doors continues to sell, with Jupiter doors sold to New Zealand for *Amaltal Explorer*, as well as Neptune and Hercules doors sold through John Cleal of Fishing Vessels Management.

"We have also sold a lot of small Neptune doors from 0.70m² to 1.10m² to India for shrimping and we have our first pair of 3.20m² Hercules doors going to Canada's east coast, as well as six more pairs being made for shrimp fishing in Oregon."

Polar's trawl doors are now made by fabricators in Portugal, Lithuania, Argentina and Bangladesh, but the attention is firmly on the steerable trawl doors that Atli Jósafatsson said have already been tested successfully on two trips on board research vessel *Árni Fridriksson*. Full-scale sea trials on a commercial pelagic vessel are scheduled for this summer.

Operated with movable wings to adjust the flow of water, these new doors have a relatively low power requirement and will be fitted with batteries that can be removed to be recharged, while another option that is being explored would be a jack socket allowing a charging cable to be plugged in.

"This is something that's still being worked on, but because there is only a simple and relatively small movement of each wing to adjust the doors, there isn't a big power demand," he explained.

"This is designed as a cable-free system with an acoustic link and we're also working to perfect that at the moment. Once the problems with frequencies and interference have been sorted out, then we'll have something ready for the fishing gear market."

IMPROVED: Greenlandic pelagic vessel *Polar Amaroq* (ex-*Eros*) arrived in Iceland to be fitted out with a pair of Polar Fishing Gear's 14m² Jupiter pelagic doors



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