

You are going to read an article about a businessman. For questions 1 - 7, choose the answer (A, B, C or D) which you think fits best according to the text.

### The codfather

The cod, the species of fish that features in the famous British dish 'fish and chips', could soon make the leap out of the frying pan and into popular culture according to Karol Rzepkowski, an effervescent Scot of Polish descent. Someone approached us specifically with a view of making iPod covers out of cod skins - it's seen as an alternative to snake skin for the fashion industry,' laughs 42-year old Karol, managing director of Johnson Seafarms, the world's first organic cod farm which is located in the Shetland Isles. Lifestyle entrepreneurs will have to wait though, because the main target market for Karol's carefully reared cod is clearly a consumer armed with knife and fork rather than a digital music player.

Along with business partner Laurent Viguie, Karol has put enormous money into the technology diversification that they hope will bring sea farming into the twenty-first century with a profitable, environmentally friendly, cod-farming venture. All of this is literally oceans away from the chance meeting that brought together two business men with the clout to push forward a scheme deemed outlandish by most: people in the business.

Karol and Laurent struck up a friendship whilst on a diving trip off the Caribbean island of Grenada in 1999, and realised that their different business experience would make them into a formidable team. Laurent was a trained lawyer, restaurateur and high-profile figure in the music industry, while Karol was running Grenada's biggest leisure company, having grown up helping at his father's delicatessen in Edinburgh. Karol has never flinched from hard work. 'One day, it might be nice to have a holiday ...' he says wistfully.

Life in Grenada was good, but Karol was married to a Shetlander and wanted his 12-year-old son to grow up with a good education as well as personal freedom; 'Somewhere he can walk out of the door at nine in the morning and we don't need to worry if he's not back until nine at night.' Most people might think of moving to a sleepy village within commuting distance of a big city, but he found his idyll on a scattering of islands that are closer to the Arctic Circle than to London, where puffins outnumber people by ten to one.

After moving to Shetland, Karol found employment as marketing director at Johnson Seafarms, a small, family-owned company which mostly reared salmon. Two fishing issues featured on the public agenda around that time: a spate of public health scares over the chemicals used to farm salmon, and the plight of wild cod as over-fishing devastated shoals in the North Sea. Cod stocks there have plummeted 75 percent over the past fifteen years, bringing the lynchpin of UK cuisine almost to the cusp of extinction - yet Britons tuck into some 170,000 tonnes of the fish every year.

"The solution was obvious for Karol, 'Farmed salmon was becoming a tainted industry in people's minds. I said: why don't we just move into another species? But everyone was rather taken aback at the idea.' After convincing sceptical colleagues, he faced the much tougher task of persuading hard-boiled financiers to

line 35

stump up millions of pounds for an unprecedented experiment. Karol enlisted the support of his old friend Laurent who, convinced that the plan had potential, decided to join forces with Karol and take over the company. With the money at Johnson Seafarms fast running out, the pair headed to London in 2004 to

line 37

seek emergency funds of £21 million. "There was a great deal of misgiving, but the people who were most reticent were the ones who ended up investing,' adds Karol. With enough investors interested, the company went through the process known as 'due diligence', which saw zealous lawyers and accountants descending

line 39

line 41

on the Shetland Isles to scour the paperwork and check every last detail. It was a major cliffhanger - at any moment it could have fallen flat on its face, says Karol. When it didn't, he says the biggest thrill was being able to call the company's twenty-seven employees and tell them their jobs were safe,

The end of the funding drama was the start of real work: farming a new species of fish in a way that would address increasingly pressing environmental and ethical concerns. Today, Johnson Seafarms takes wild codlings from regularly renewed breeding stocks, nurturing them on a natural diet throughout their stages of development: The fish swim about in large sea pens enclosed with nets that are regularly cleaned rather than treated with chemicals, and come with shady areas for repose and 'toys' such as coconut rope to chew on. It would be easy to dismiss this fastidiousness as shrewd public relations, but the company has won enthusiastic accolades from animal charities which don't hold back from lambasting the corporate world when they see fit. The big test is still to come as the company waits to see whether the shopper will rake in the new organic cod.

#### 1 How has Karol reacted to the idea of making cod skin iPod covers?

- A It's not his main priority at the moment.
- B He thinks that it is a ridiculous suggestion.
- C He cannot see them catching on as a fashion item.
- D It is something he is looking forward to trying out.

**2 Karol and his business partner, Laurent, met**

- A whilst both on holiday in Grenada.
- B because of a shared leisure interest.
- C as a result of their business dealings.
- D through a contact in the food industry.

**3 Why did Karol move to Shetland?**

- A He had the offer of a job in the area.
- B He had family responsibilities on the islands.
- C He could see there would be business opportunities there.
- D He wanted his family to benefit from a particular lifestyle.

**4 What problem was Johnson Seafarms facing when Karol first worked there?**

- A decline in the local fishing industry
- B the limited resources available to the company
- C a loss of public confidence in fish-farming methods
- D poor health affecting the main type of fish it produced

**5 How did Karol's colleagues react to his proposed solution to the company's problems?**

- A They refused to cooperate with him.
- B They eventually accepted his suggestion.
- C They remained unconvinced that it would be successful.
- D They immediately realised it was their only hope of survival.

**6 Which phrase from the sixth paragraph is used to emphasise how keen someone was to do something properly?**

- A 'hard-boiled' (line 31)
- B 'join forces' (line 33)
- C 'a great deal of misgiving' (line 35)
- D 'zealous' (line 37)

**7 In the last paragraph, we learn that animal charities**

- A have expressed their concerns about the company's new methods of fish farming.
- B have given their seal of approval to the company's approach to fish farming.
- C remain unsure that the fish will not suffer in the company's fish farms.
- D are generally supportive of companies engaged in fish farming.