

EUROPARL



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IAN HUDGHTON

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CALL FOR GM FISH BAN

Ian Hudghton MEP is the author of a report on Food Safety which was unanimously endorsed by the European Parliament's Fisheries Committee. Speaking in the plenary debate on proposals to establish a European Food Agency, Ian Hudghton said:

"It is imperative that the specific characteristics of the fisheries and aquaculture sectors are taken into account in European Food Safety Law. These sectors present quite different questions from the general food industry categories, and adequate consideration must be given to the special needs of fisheries dependent peripheral communities, such as those in Scotland and other fishing nations."

"The very nature of fisheries has implications on traceability; there are numerous potential difficulties which the Commission must ensure are fully catered for, taking into account different methods of catch, where fish are caught and where they are landed."

"The Fisheries Committee endorsed amendments which take into account the distinct needs of the aquaculture sector, and in particular my amendment which addresses concerns about the development of Genetically Modified fish, and to prevent this entering the food chain through the back door via third country imports. I call upon this House to support my report."

HUDGHTON IN ROAD TRANSPORT PLEA

Speaking in a Plenary debate at the European Parliament in Strasbourg on proposed new restrictions on working time within the road transport industry, SNP MEP Ian Hudghton highlighted the potential problems which coach and haulage operators could face in many parts of Scotland. Mr. Hudghton said:

"The aims of this report - improving road safety, and guaranteeing minimum levels of health and safety for all road transport drivers - are on the face of it worthwhile goals. But there exists a need to relate these goals to reality, for example in relation to their impact in peripheral and remote areas such as the Highlands and Islands of Scotland."

"In the case of Scotland's Western and Northern Isles, two or three ferry crossings may be required before reaching Scotland's mainland, often landing in areas very remote from the ultimate destination."

"The Report's conclusion also refers to 'achieving a level playing field with other transport sectors already covered'. The reality in much of rural and island Scotland is that no alternative to road transport exists."

"Scotland's road transport sector is already being penalised financially by the U.K. Government through punitive taxation on fuel."

"Some aspects of this Working Time proposal potentially threaten the already fragile viability of road transport in Scotland and therefore I cannot support the more restrictive proposals in this report."



Clackmannanshire Council Leader and SNP Candidate Keith Brown and MEP Ian Hudghton took part in a lively question and answer session with pensioners (pictured above) at Alloa last month. The pair also visited business leaders in Kinross and surrounding area as part of a pre-election tour.



Ian Hudghton with John Mowat, Orkney and Shetland candidate on a recent visit to McNab Seafoods, a Lerwick based family firm specialising in a wide range of quality Shetland seafood specialities. During his three day visit the MEP joined John Mowat in visits to fish processors, addressed a public meeting in Scalloway, and attended a major seminar at North Atlantic Fisheries College on Reform of the European Common Fisheries Policy.

Maritime safety plan approved

MEPs have given the go-ahead at first reading to new proposals designed to improve maritime safety, including the creation of a European Maritime Safety Agency. The measures are in response to a number of recent shipping disasters, in particular the Erika oil tanker disaster off the coast of France. In addition to the setting up of a safety agency, which would be responsible for checking that ships meet EU safety rules, there also plans to introduce "black boxes" on ships. The third proposal, agreed by Parliament, sets up a fund to provide compensation for damage caused by oil spills. The 3 proposals, the so-called "Erika II" package, will now be considered by EU governments in the Council of Ministers.

IN BRIEF

IN recent months visiting groups to Brussels and Strasbourg have included Angus College, Aberdeen European Law Students, the Saltire Society of Galloway, Northern College Aberdeen, Bharatiya Ashram Dundee, Shetland College and the Highland Normandy Veterans' Association.

IN supporting the Directive on Cosmetic Products, Ian Hudghton MEP successfully called for a marketing ban on products tested on animals. This subject drew a huge mailbag from constituents opposing cruelty to animals.





Scotland once again had the largest national pavilion at the annual Seafood Europe Exhibition in Brussels. Ian Hudghton MEP is pictured above with the Beaton family of Macduff Shellfish (Scotland) Ltd. during a visit to their impressive stand.

REFORM MUST ADDRESS CFP FAILURE

Speaking at the conclusion of the European Commission's major public hearing on reform of the Common Fisheries Policy, at which 400+ delegates debated all aspects of the recently published Green Paper, SNP MEP Ian Hudghton said:

"This 3-day hearing provided an excellent opportunity to place on record Scotland's case for a set of reforms which will guarantee the survival of our vital fishing, processing, and aquaculture industries."

"I was shocked to find myself the only Scots politician attending the first two days, when I contributed to crucial debates on Governance, Aquaculture and Processing, Resource Management and Conservation."

"During three days of debate on the CFP, I have gained further insight into the challenges confronting the Scottish fishing industry and the clear North-South divide that exists in Europe in relation to access to stocks and sustainability. That is why it is essential that Scotland's distinctive interests are properly represented in the CFP reform process. I was therefore somewhat disappointed at the lack of Scottish political presence at this critical conference."

"Only with independence can the importance of fisheries for Scotland be fully recognised in the forthcoming negotiations on reform of the CFP. In the meantime I call on the Scottish Fisheries Minister to accept the responsibility her position entails, and to take the lead in the all-important Council negotiations."

"To the Commission, I say, we have a real opportunity to right what is wrong with the CFP. The policy has clearly failed the Scottish fishing industry and failed in its founding mission of stock conservation."



Ian Hudghton's diary includes regular invitations to speak with primary school pupils during their European Union projects. Recent visits have included Logie Durno PS, Inverurie (above) and Langlands PS, Forfar. In May, the MEP helped present awards to various schools at Aberdeen City Council's Europe Day event.

IAN HUDGHTON'S DIARY

30-31 MAY

EP Plenary session, Brussels

1 JUNE

Election campaigning, Dundee

2 JUNE

Election campaigning, North Tayside

5-7 JUNE

European Commission public hearing on Fisheries Policy reform, Brussels

7 JUNE

Election work, North Tayside & Dundee

11-15 JUNE

EP Plenary session, Strasbourg

16 JUNE

SNP National Executive Cttee, Edinburgh

18-19 JUNE

Fisheries Cttee, Brussels

20-21 JUNE

Employment/Social Affairs Cttee, Brussels

22 JUNE

Portlethen Primary School, P7 European Question Time

24 JUNE

North Tayside Constituency Assoc.

25-27 JUNE

G/EFA Group meetings, Brussels

30 JUNE

SNP National Council, Perth

1 JULY

Letham Fayre, Angus

2-6 JULY

EP Plenary session, Strasbourg

9-10 JULY

Employment/Social Affairs Cttee, Brussels

10-11 JULY

Fisheries Cttee, Brussels

11 JULY

Video Conference with Highland and Island Local Authorities, on the CFP Reform Green Paper

Sow stall ban backed by MEPs

The European Parliament has approved a ban on the keeping of pregnant sows in individual stalls as part of Commission proposals to revise EU pig welfare rules. The new proposals, which update 1991 legislation, would also outlaw tethering and increase the space in which pigs are reared. The final decision on the new standards now rests with EU ministers. A UK ban on sow stall and tether systems came into force in 1999. Welcoming the move MEP Ian Hudghton said; "I hope that the Council of Ministers will back the Parliament's view, to ensure that all EU pig farmers comply with high welfare standards already applicable in Scotland."

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