

PRESS RELEASE

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EUROPEAN COMMISSION GUILTY OF NEGLECT

Attn: News desks & Fish correspondents
Release

Immediate

The European Parliament Fisheries Committee yesterday voted overwhelmingly in favour of the EU's fish Processors. Commenting on the vote, SNP Euro-MP, Ian Hudghton, welcomed the outcome:

“Fish processors are faced with the impact of a whole host of European legislation, from the management measures of the Common Fisheries Policy, to hygiene and food safety, to the environment. Despite this, the concerns of Processors are rarely taken into account and this has resulted in ruinous socio-economic effects, especially for smaller Processors. The European Commission has, quite simply, neglected the sector.

“That is why I welcome wholeheartedly the outcome of yesterday's vote, which clearly highlights the problems faced by Processors. It sends an unequivocal message to the European Commission: the impact of legislation must be properly assessed; Processors must receive real support, not just in understanding the needs of the industry, but by providing structural backing to a sector which supports jobs in fragile fisheries dependent communities.

“I am very happy that my own amendment calling for Processors to be integrated into the decision-making process of the Common Fisheries Policy - part of the push towards zonal management in the CFP – were approved by the Committee.

“The Committee also endorsed provisions which address a number of market issues, including the need for consistency in supplies. Furthermore the Committee called for labelling and hygiene standards to be applied to imports from third countries and for unfair competition to be wiped out.”

Mr Hudghton, commenting on the support given to amendments to the Wastewater Directive which he had authored, said:

“This was an excellent result for Scotland’s fish processing industry too. The Committee endorsed amendments which not only criticised the European Commission for failing to pay attention to the specific needs of the processing industry with respect to the Wastewater Directive, but went one step further, calling for financial and scientific support to the sector to set up water-recycling systems.

“The report will go before the European Parliament Strasbourg Plenary session in mid-March. In the meantime I intend to push the Commission not only to listen to the concerns of the processing industry, but to act upon these concerns without further delay.”

- Ends