

PRESS RELEASE

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HUDGHTON LAMBASTS EUROPEAN FISHERIES POLICY

Speaking yesterday at a top level meeting between Scottish fishing and processing industry representatives and Commissioner Franz Fischler, Ian Hudghton MEP branded the European Commission as "illogical" on the Deep Water stocks issue, and weak in the face of Spanish pressure on CFP Reform.

The SNP MEP said:

"Once again Commissioner Fischler fully accepted that European fisheries management has been a miserable failure to date. The need for sensible, accurate and up to date scientific information is paramount if a reformed CFP is to gain any credibility. The reported threat of complete closure of Scots fishing grounds is unacceptable and would devastate the catching and processing sectors. I am deeply concerned at the apparent weakness of Scotland's position in the all-important Council of Ministers where we continually seem to be outwitted and outmanoeuvred. The Commission has given in to Spanish pressure over the summer and allowed open access to Scottish waters and resources to be a major threat."

Calling on Commissioner Fischler to reconsider his position on Deep Water fisheries Mr. Hudghton continued:

"You (Mr. Fischler) have said today that the Cod/Hake recovery plans will be the first test of a new CFP with science and industry being consulted. Surely then it is illogical to support the current proposals for a Deep Water TACs and Quotas regime which can only lead to destruction of stocks through discarding. These proposals fly in the face of all the logic which you are using in support of a new way of working through a reformed CFP. This shady deal on deep water stocks must be reviewed."

Ends: