

## **HUDGHTON TAKES ACTION AGAINST CALLS FOR “ECONOMIC FISHERIES POLICY”**

SNP-Euro MP Ian Hudghton has tabled a number of amendments to the key Common Fisheries Proposals on Conservation and Sustainable Exploitation of Fisheries Resources. Speaking in Strasbourg, Mr Hudghton commented:

“The European Parliament Fisheries Committee is currently considering the Common Fisheries Reform Proposals, and in particular the proposals on the Conservation and Sustainable Exploitation of Fisheries Resources, which includes key proposals on access and regional management.

“The Commission’s proposals are clearly lacking an independent, verifiable and up-to-date scientific basis. And now, more worryingly, the Iberian rapporteur in the Parliament’s Fisheries Committee has built upon the Commission’s proposals and is calling for open access to stocks based on economic factors and an end to the 6-12 mile coastal zones after 2008 – a policy based on market forces and disregarding historical fishing rights and endangering sustainability, an ‘Economic Fisheries Policy’.

“I have therefore tabled a number of amendments to the Commission’s text, which call for the 6-12 mile coastal zones to be installed permanently in the CFP and for relative stability, as a method for distributing scarce resource, to be maintained indefinitely. In addition, the provisions for the Shetland Box should remain in place and not be subject to an unpredictable future, as the Commission is currently proposing.

“Crucially, I have called for the existing access restrictions in the North Sea to be maintained. The Commission has admitted that very little is known about the abundance and status of non-quota species in the North Sea and that fishing many non-quota species will incur by-catches of species subject to quotas, many of which are already over fished, some with the need for recovery measures. In such circumstances, any proposals to lift the existing restrictions and open the floodgates for access to the North Sea could have a disastrous impact on stocks, and the future of the multitude of fishing communities which depend on the North Sea for their very survival.

“Finally, I have tabled amendments which aim to give the proposed Regional Advisory Councils teeth and real decision-making powers, and to create de facto Management Councils. I will now be lobbying hard within the European Parliament and will continue to push the Commission to take onboard these amendments.”

- Ends.