

PRESS RELEASE

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SNP HAILS FISHING UNITY

"NORTHERN NATIONS FIGHT FOR FISHERMEN"

Commenting after a key fisheries vote in the European Parliament yesterday, SNP Euro-MP Mr Ian Hudghton hailed the apparent show of unity displayed by MEPs representing Northern countries. The vote, on the Common Fisheries Policy, saw a number of potentially damaging Spanish-backed provisions heavily defeated. Mr Hudghton, who saw a number of his own amendments passed, renewed SNP calls for the Scottish government to form a Northern Maritime Communities Alliance with other nations to support Northern fishing interests. Mr Hudghton said:

"The MEPs representing Northern fishing communities have managed to come together to fight for their fishing industries. Under the original Spanish-backed proposals, Spain and Portugal would have gained full access to stocks in Northern waters. This proposal was rejected in the Parliament.

"This important vote shows what can be achieved if the Northern nations unite in a common cause to defend their fishermen. This is a prime example of why Ross Finnie should be seeking to establish a Northern Maritime Communities Alliance prior to the coming make-or-break fisheries talks.

"If Mr Finnie follows the European Parliament's example and ensures Northern unity, we may have a chance of saving the Scottish fisheries industry from its current threat."

Notes for editors

- The vote, in the Fisheries Committee was on a European Parliament report on the Common Fisheries Policy "roadmap". The Committee meeting took place in Brussels and ran into last night.

- The potentially damaging Spanish-backed proposals were defeated by MEPs from a number of countries including Scotland, England, Ireland, Denmark, Germany and the Netherlands.