

European Scrutiny Committee

House of Commons, London, SW1A 0AA

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From: Sir William Cash MP

26 May 2021

Victoria Prentis MP
Parliamentary Under Secretary of State
Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs
Seacole Building
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London SW1P 4DF

9317/18: Proposal for a Regulation amending Council Regulation (EC) No 1224/2009, and amending Council Regulations (EC) No 768/2005, (EC) No 1967/2006, (EC) No 1005/2008, and Regulation (EU) No 2016/1139 of the European Parliament and of the Council as regards fisheries control (39822)

We considered your letter of 5 March 2021 on the revision to the EU's fisheries control Regulation at our meeting of 26 May 2021.

The content of your letter was disappointing, providing us with little information on the progress of discussions concerning this proposal and their potential implications for the UK. We are mindful that any changes introduced will apply to UK fishers in EU waters and the impact of that will, in turn, depend on the outcome of the UK's own review. Whether consciously or not, it is likely that the EU's review will impact on the UK's review, if only because costs to the industry are likely to increase in line with the degree of divergence between the two regimes.

As a third country, the UK is no longer part of internal EU discussions, but some information on those discussions is in the public domain and we also anticipate that UK officials in the UK's Mission to the EU will be monitoring this negotiation to the extent that they are able from outside the institutions.

In that context, and acknowledging that the Government has access to less information than was the case during the period of the UK's EU membership, we ask that you provide us with an update covering the following matters:

- any likely legislative changes applicable to Northern Ireland under the terms of the Northern Ireland Protocol;
- the progress of discussions at EU level, including the progress made within and between the respective institutions;
- the key issues of debate at EU level and their potential relevance to UK interests, including the implications of mandatory electronic declarations;
- UK Government activity to monitor developments, such as whether UK Mission to the EU officials are actively monitoring the file and whether any analysis of the implications for the UK is underway;
- whether the economic impact on UK fishers of any fundamental divergence between UK and EU rules will be taken into account during the UK's review of the control Regulation; and
- the precise timing of the UK's review.

We would welcome a response by 7 July, reflecting any progress at the Fisheries Council on 28-29 June 2021.

We are copying this letter to Neil Parish MP, Chair of the Environment, Food and Rural Affairs Committee and Ian Bradshaw, Clerk of the Committee; Simon Hoare MP, Chair of the Northern Ireland Affairs Committee and Stephen Habberley, Clerk of the Committee; Pete Wishart MP, Chair of the Scottish Affairs Committee and Leoni Kurt, Clerk of the Committee; Rt Hon. Stephen Crabb MP, Chair of the Welsh Affairs Committee and Dr Adam Evans, Clerk of the Committee; the Earl of Kinnoull, Chair of the European Affairs Committee in the House of Lords and Simon Pook, Clerk of the Committee; your Departmental EU Scrutiny team; and Les Saunders and Donald Harris in the Cabinet Office.

CHAIR