

All Party Parliamentary Fishing Group



Minutes of the meeting held on Wednesday 25th May 2016 in Room 9.

Attendance: Sheryll Murray MP (Chairman), Melanie Onn MP, Martin Vickers MP, Scott Mann MP.

Speakers: Jim Portus, Fishing for Leave and South Western Fish Producer Organisation and Mike Berthet, Global Aquaculture Alliance.

Guest: Dick James (Northern Ireland Fish Producers Organisation).

1. Chairman's welcome to the meeting

The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting.

2. Apologies for absence

Apologies were received from Lord Tebbit, Lord Teverson and Baroness Wilcox.

3. Minutes of the previous meeting / matters arising

The minutes of the previous meeting were circulated and approved.

The Chairman outlined the response from the Minister, George Eustice, on small-eyed ray. His response disclosed that although a landing restriction remains, a species-specific Total Allowable Catch (TAC) that allows landings of small-eyed ray in the Bristol Channel and parts of the Celtic Sea had been agreed.

4. Implications of the EU Referendum on the fishing industry

Jim Portus, Fishing for Leave and Mike Berthet, Global Aquaculture Alliance, gave their respective views from a "Leave" and "Remain" perspective.

Jim Portus spoke in favour of "Brexit", including providing some historical context. He expressed disappointment at the Prime Minister's negotiations. He raised concerns about the Common Fisheries Policy, quotas, structure and financing, including the creation of a "European fishing fleet" via EU Member State boats registering as British ('flags of convenience').

AP: Jim Portus agreed to share his remarks for circulation by the APPFG Secretariat to Members.

Mike Berthet spoke in favour of "Remain" and outlined his background in catering and M&J Seafood and trade. He explained he was very experienced in importing and exporting all types of seafood and detailed his concerns of higher costs if border controls are strengthened. In his view, British fishing, processing and distribution industries would suffer if the UK leaves the EU (Greenland are now considering reapplying to join the EU). He spoke about increased red tape and punitive tariffs and the possibility of processing moving to the former Easter bloc.

The Chairman clarified the position on the 200 median line limit which is defined by an Act of Parliament.

There then followed a discussion amongst Members and speakers, including the number of UK defeats in the European Council under Qualified Majority Voting, testing of economic 'links' of quota hoppers, trade barriers, small boats and their 6 mile limit and rebalancing quotas, exporting of fish to the EU and vice versa.

5. Any other business (AOB)

There was no AOB.

6. Date of next meeting

