

**A view of the future for
the UK fishing industry –
Common Fisheries Policy
Reform 2012**

Coastal Futures Conference

21st January 2010

Speaker: Jim Portus BSc.

South Western Fish Producer Organisation Ltd.

- A Mutual Society, Registered in 1974 and recognised in the EU under the Common Organisation of the Market in Fisheries Products. (COM)
- Members in ports through English Channel, in Wales, Scotland and N Sea.
- UK vessels gross £110 millions from 80Kt fish from SW waters.
- N Sea is worth £290 millions from 220Kt.

Variety and Quality from our seas

- SW UK regional seas yield the finest diversity of species.
- 40 different commercial species are landed regularly in Brixham and Plymouth.
- Quality is second to none. High proportion adopted Responsible Fishing Scheme.
- Price per kilo of whitefish is higher in the SW than in any other part of the UK.
- +60% of all SW UK fish is of non-quota varieties
- +60% of all N Sea and Irish Sea fish is quota!
- Bigger part of SW UK catch is from sustainable sources.

Common Fisheries Policy (CFP)

- Competence for the management of our fisheries rests in Brussels under the European Communities Act 1972.
- In 1976 UK created 200 miles Exclusive Fishing Zone. By virtue of the ECA 1972 this is also controlled by Brussels.
- Temporarily the UK has exclusive use of the 6 mile zone and the partial use of the 12 mile zone. The present derogation expires 31st December 2012.

Common Fisheries Policy (CFP)

- Article 40 of the Treaty of Rome is used as foundation for the Common Fisheries Policy as we know it.
- The Maastricht Treaty incorporated the CFP as a “common policy on agriculture and fisheries”.
- The Amsterdam Treaty dismissed any hope that any powers and jurisdiction already handed over to the EU could ever be repatriated to Member States or to any other body.
- Power cannot be ceded to the RACS.

Institutions of the CFP

- Institutional governance involves Commissions DG Mare and DG Env the Council and the European Parliament.
- STECF, ACFA, SSSDC, the RACs, the CoR and the ECOSOC provide “Opinions” and “advice”.
- The governance of the CFP involves national and regional administrations within Member States.
- Scientific advice is delivered by ICES

Centralised Governance OR Regional and Local Management?

- For 3 decades, political decisions made in Brussels have caused chaos to fishing communities.
- All the right ingredients. Too many chefs!
- Fishing has always been an economic activity, ebbing and flowing, peaks and troughs.
- CFP = Attempting to manage by bureaucracy is like nailing jelly to a wall!

Why manage fish stocks?

- In 30 months a Cod grows from 44cm, 800grams to 85 cm and a weight of 6kgs.
- The value of that fish rises from £1.20 to £19.50 in that time.
- This represents the real return to fishermen if they leave the immature fish in the sea to maturity.
- That is Fisheries Management!
- This is how fishermen worked before CFP.
- Managing by CFP encouraged “Race to Fish”!

Fish is good for you!

- Brain food, rich in Omega 3s for health.
- Consumers are willing to pay a higher price for wholesome food, sustainably sourced.
- UK produces 600,000 tonnes, 74% from sustainable sources (Defra 2008)
- UK imports 900,000 tonnes (HMRC Inc fish products 2008)
- UK exports 430,000 tonnes
- UK eats 527,000 tonnes.

What next beyond 2012?

- The Minister said “radical” change is required to end waste, discards and to give consumers what they want
- Radical actually does not require timetable. It is happening in our ports and at sea now!
- Responsible Fishing Scheme
- MSC Accreditation Traceability

Radical is a CFP that works!

- Member States must each have the same vision: clean healthy safe productive and biologically diverse oceans.
- Fishermen all want the same things.
- What must not be put at risk through “Radical” change are the access provisions 6 and 12 mile limits.
- Also the Relative Stability Keys of the Quotas.

BEWARE THE RISKS OF 2012!

- If Ministers and MEPs are not ultra vigilant, we could possibly end 2012 with restoration of the TRUE CFP!
- Equal access to a Common Resource without discrimination.
- It would actually be the most “radical” thing...to do nothing more than do more of what we are already doing!
- THANK YOU.