



Department
for Environment
Food & Rural Affairs

From George Eustice MP
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The Chair
European Scrutiny Committee
14 Tothill Street
House of Commons
London
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16 August 2017

Dear Sir/Madam,

**EM 10741/17: PROPOSAL FOR A COUNCIL REGULATION AMENDING
REGULATION (EU) NO 2017/127 AS REGARDS CERTAIN FISHING
OPPORTUNITIES**

I am writing to explain my decision to over-ride Parliamentary scrutiny of the Commission's proposals for the second amendment to the Total Allowable Catch (TAC) and Quota regulation for 2017, which was agreed by written procedure on 25 July.

The Commission brought forward its proposal for a second in-year amendment on 4 July. Defra submitted an explanatory memorandum (EM 10741-17) to Parliament on 12 July. I understand that this was considered by the House of Lord's scrutiny committee on 25 July but will not be seen by your committee until September.

The amendment is relevant to our fishermen given that in relation to the sea bass regulations, it clarifies that if a vessel is replaced the related bass catch eligibility may be transferred to the replacement vessel, while ensuring the number of qualifying fishing vessels and their overall fishing capacity does not increase. The amendment also includes a proposal relating to fishing opportunities for the seasonal North Sea sandeel fishery, which is important to Denmark. The proposal was discussed at European Council Working Group on 5 and 12 July and at Coreper on 19 July, before going forward for agreement by written procedure on 25 July. The UK voted in favour of the proposed amendment. Over-riding the scrutiny of proposals from the European Commission is not an action that I take lightly. However, in this instance, I believe it was in the best interests of the UK to support the proposal.

I am writing in similar terms to Lord Boswell, Chairman of the European Union Committee. I am also copying this letter to the Clerks of the Commons and Lords Committees, Eve Samson and Chris Johnson respectively; Les Saunders, Department for Exiting the European Union; and Sarah McLean, Defra Scrutiny Co-ordinator.

GEORGE EUSTICE MP

