

Rùnaire a' Chaibineit airson na h-Eaconomaidh
Dhùthchail agus Comas-ceangail
Cabinet Secretary for the Rural Economy and
Connectivity
Fergus Ewing BPA/MSP



Scottish Government
Riaghaltas na h-Alba
gov.scot

F/T: 0300 244 4000
E: scottish.ministers@gov.scot

George Eustice MP
Minister for Farming, Fisheries and Food
Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs
Noble House
17 Smith Square
LONDON
SW1P 3JR

4 May 2018

Dear George,

UK CONCORDAT ON SEA FISHERIES MANAGEMENT AND LICENSING

Last November we discussed the finalisation of the UK Fisheries Concordat. We agreed the process and timing for completion and publication of the Concordat in December 2017. The process, you recall, was to develop compromise language acceptable to all parties, for you to then write to Ministers in the devolved administration, including myself, proposing this compromise and for us to confirm the terms of new Concordat separately and collectively, allowing its publication in advance of last year's December Council.

The compromise text was quickly agreed and we awaited your letter. It is disappointing that it did not happen within the original agreed timescale and deeply concerning that there appears to have been no further progress, despite Marine Scotland officials frequently prompting DEFRA officials.

This prolonged delay is seriously impacting important elements of fisheries management in Scotland, such as the publication of our intentions on quota management reform following our 2014 consultation

The failure to progress the revised Concordat is detrimental to the current management of Scotland's fisheries. There is no doubt that preparations for Brexit in less than twelve months' time will require significant DEFRA resource but that cannot and must not be at the expense of delivering for the current needs and interests and day to day operation of sea fisheries in the UK.

Tha Ministearan na h-Alba, an luchd-comhairleachaidh sònraichte agus an Rùnaire
Maireannach fo chumhachan Achd Coiteachaidh (Alba) 2016. Faicibh www.lobbying.scot

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I am writing therefore to urge you once again to finalise the revised Concordat at the earliest possible date. I am aware of the situation in Northern Ireland but can see no real barrier to the Concordat being agreed in the meantime between the UK and other Devolved Administrations given its support across all fishing authorities.

I look forward to hearing from you with your proposals for the speedy adoption of the Concordat and I consider it vital that we make progress as fast as possible.



FERGUS EWING

Cabinet Secretary for the Rural Economy and Connectivity

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