

# THE CORNISH FISH PRODUCERS' ORGANISATION

APRIL 18 NEWSLETTER



- Brexit update from Paul.
- Latest news from Robert Greenwood on the ILO C188 Work in Fishing Convention.
- Update from Defra on working with industry to tackle bycatch of dolphins and porpoises.

## HERE'S WHAT'S NEW

## Brexit updates

### UK fishing and the transition period.

After making our case on the transition period extremely clear (in our letter to the Prime Minister and South West MPs, which you can find [here](#)) and after hearing constant promises and reassurances from Michael Gove, Secretary of State at DEFRA, and the UK Fisheries Minister, George Eustice MP, and from Theresa May herself in her Mansion House speech – “As the UK leaves the EU on 29 March next year, the UK would leave the Common Fisheries Policy. Quota shares would be rebalanced” - I think many of us felt let down and betrayed to hear that the UK will remain bound to the EU during the 21-month transition, following the UK’s departure from the EU.

It’s been clear over the recent months that fishing has never been so high on the political agenda or received so much political attention. We’ve had the Prime Minister, Michael Gove and George Eustice raising the expectations of the fishing industry on a daily basis, telling us that the UK Government would make good on their promises and that the UK would be an independent coastal state from March 2019. We saw this as an end to the CFP’s control over UK fishermen and their livelihoods.

But, in Brussels during March of this year, the UK Government was given a binary choice: either a 21-month transition period, exclusively on the EU’s terms with regard to fishing **or** no transition period (which some sectors of UK business and politicians saw as important). The UK backed down, it appears without a fight, and accepted a package that is clearly disadvantageous to the UK fishing industry.

There can be no doubt that the transitional agreement is a humiliation for the UK’s fishing industry. Annual decisions on quotas and other legislative decisions made after March next year will be made by the EU with only a cosmetic obligation to consult with the UK, even though the most of the fish caught will be caught in UK waters!

## LATEST UPDATES

### New CFPO website

The new CFPO website launched in January. Along with tailored quota and policy information for CFPO members, the website features new pages such as our ‘CFPO in the News’ and the ‘Meet our Members’. If you would like to be featured on our members’ page with your vessel please email [admin@cfpo.org.uk](mailto:admin@cfpo.org.uk).

### Andrew Pascoe to be new Chairman of NFFO

Congratulations to CFPO's board member, Andrew Pascoe, for being unanimously elected as the next Chairman of the NFFO. Andrew will start in the summer.

## **What next?**

UK Ministers (Gove and Eustice) have been quick to say that although concessions on fishing have been made to secure a transition deal for the greater good of the UK and the Brexit process, the UK Government's position and objectives on fishing, as stated by the Prime Minister in her Mansion House speech, remain unaltered.

Holding the Prime Minister and her Government to account on that fundamental commitment, which will shape the future of fishing for generations, will be the main focus of work for the CFPO and the NFFO - and our allies in Parliament - for the rest of this critical year.

From a fishing perspective, having seen the UK's capitulation on the transition without even testing the EU's resolve, the obvious concern has to be that in the end the UK will be faced with the same binary choice – access to UK fishing grounds and fisheries resources on the same humiliating terms as now or no deal at all.

Ultimately, the real measure of success (or otherwise) of Brexit for us remains the same as it was at the outset and has been throughout this process – you can read our clear position statement in the document [here](#).

If you have any concerns or questions about the CFPO's position on Brexit or any other fishing issues please get in contact. My door is always open.

Paul

## **Understanding bycatch levels of dolphins and porpoises**

*Update from Catherine Bell, Policy Advisor, International Fisheries and Marine Species Protection, Department for Environment Food & Rural Affairs (DEFRA)*

In the Autumn last year, Fisheries Minister George Eustice announced his ambition to establish a partnership with stakeholders to build on existing efforts to tackle the bycatch of dolphins and porpoises in our waters. Over the coming months, Defra and Cefas will be starting conversations with the fishing industry and other stakeholders in the South-West with the aim of better understanding bycatch levels and, where possible, developing realistic and practical mitigation options informed and supported by the industry. More information will be available soon.

It is likely the focus will be on inshore static gear activity (regulation exists for larger offshore netting vessels). If you want to be involved or have comments at this early stage please get in contact.

## **ILO Work in Fishing Convention is near**

The consultation for the implementation of the ILO C188 Work in Fishing Convention in the UK has concluded, and the process of finalising the legislation has begun. We understand the UK fishing sector has been listened to and calls for a longer more practicable phase-in period as well as ensuring maximum flexibilities were heard and perhaps more importantly understood by the Maritime and Coastguard Agency (MCA)

To support the industry the National Federation of Fishermen's Organisations (NFFO) has been developing the [SafetyFolder.co.uk](http://SafetyFolder.co.uk) website to be ILO C188 compliant and to allow last minute changes and guidance to be immediately available. The website is written and designed by Robert Greenwood, NFFO's Safety and Training Officer. Robert is the NFFO's main representative on matters of health, safety and welfare and a member of the UK ILO C188 working group.



The website is free to all and importantly can produce the evidence of compliance necessary for the MCA, FSM Code (MIN 558 F) and supply chain needs or certification schemes like the Responsible Fishing Scheme. Regardless of your vessel size, the NFFO recommend that if you need help understanding the ILO C188 at the beginning of the process please do visit the [SafetyFolder](http://SafetyFolder.co.uk) website.

An unwelcome and indeed at times inaccurate focus on the treatments and welfare of those involved in the fishing industry has led to the establishment of The Fishermen's Welfare Alliance. The Fishermen's Welfare Alliance is led by the UK fishing federations and includes processors, retailers, charities and government and non-government organisations. The Alliance will be working to ensure that the UK's fishing vessels can evidence compliance with legislation without duplication and that the whole supply chain can have confidence in, and promote, UK caught fish.

Robert is keen for any CFPO member to contact him directly if they need any help or guidance on any health, safety or welfare matters. Robert can be reached by email at [Robert@nffo.org.uk](mailto:Robert@nffo.org.uk) or on 07876 547 343.

---