

Dear Scrutiny Panel Members

As a long-established fisherman, myself from a Jersey fishing family, I'm very concerned that Jersey is not complying with various international agreements. IUU, SMEFF and NEAFC to name but a few that we are signed up to and obliged to enforce to protect the environment, sustainability and give protection to indigenous fishermen from heavily subsidised modern EU fleets fishing in third country waters at levels in Jersey's case that dwarf our fleet in numbers and fishing capacity compared to Jersey's fleet of mainly small day boats. This is not a level playing field we are outnumbered and are being squeezed out by a modern EU subsidised French fleet in our own waters, which in itself breaks international agreements. This is compounded by the fact that our 6-mile exclusive waters have been given up for free smooth trade with the EU. That couldn't be further from the truth because we are being blackmailed by the French: they are using bureaucracy, intimidation and threats as their familiar weapons of choice.

The problems with direct landing and exporting into France at the moment I can assure you are not teething problems with the system but the French using an unworkable paper trail designed to strangle Jersey until we give in to their ridiculous demands. Moreover, this time the French boat numbers are 382 compared to 132 Jersey boats, with many of ours being small open boats used part time, bringing the number of professionals down to approximately 35 to 50 Jersey boats. Bearing in mind that our small number of trawlers of about 6 or 7 range from 120 horsepower to 300 hp whereas the French have anything up to 1000hp in modern vessels that are capable of fishing in bad weather so not allowing fishing grounds to rest whilst our boats are tied up.

As it stands, at the moment, the Jersey tax payers are footing the bill to have a French fleet unsustainably exploiting our waters and getting nothing in return for the estimated €20,000,000 they take annually from our waters. There are examples around the world where third countries like ourselves are given funding by the EU to manage foreign vessels' activities and to ensure all international agreements are adhered to and stocks are monitored and kept at sustainable levels by accurate catch recording and scientific data collected from surveys as required under the United Nations IUU convention, Illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing.

If Jersey doesn't take this opportunity to take firm control by using its rightful powers and evidence of the past and conventions we are signed up to we will be lining ourselves up for continuous disruption and obstruction from the French in all areas, not only fishing from blockades and even threats of turning off power, to being awkward with boaters wanting to go to Carteret for lunch.

Stephen Viney