UK Fisheries Policy Post-Brexit

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Brexit, Fisheries and the EMFF post-2020 Seminar
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Brexit and Fisheries – An Overview

• ‘Take Back Control’
  – Leave the Common Fisheries Policy
  – Independent Coastal Status
  – Sovereignty over British waters, full control over access and rights to fish

• What has actually happened?
  – UK Government claimed full independent coastal status would come after March 2019
  – But, the CFP will continue to apply
  – Will the UK ‘take back control after the transition period give the complex nature of Brexit negotiations?’
Brexit and Fisheries – Within the Industry

• Catching sector fairly favourable towards Brexit
  – Survey of UK skippers showed 92% support
  – ‘Sea of opportunity’
  – Opportunity to restrict foreign access and increase quota

• Consequences for the export sector
  – Impact of being out of the CFP and the subsequent access to overseas markets
  – Resulting tariffs and non-tariff barriers
Brexit and Fisheries – Constitutional Challenges

• Devolved administrations manage fisheries
  – But external relations, for example, are reserved

• Clause 11 of the Withdrawal Bill
  – Requires devolved law to be compatible with ‘retained EU law’ and thus prohibits modification by devolved governments
  – Restrictions most acute where common frameworks are required
  – Devolved Governments have rejected this as a ‘power grab’ and passed their own ‘continuity bills’
  – UK deems this as unlawful and lodged challenge in the supreme court
Brexit and Fisheries – Intergovernmental Strains

• Scottish dimension has always held much sway
  – DEFRA and Marine Scotland have had a close and collegiate relationship historically

• Evidence that Brexit is putting this relationship under strain
  – UK Government has shrouded the Brexit process in secrecy
  – For example, Marine Scotland officials not officially allowed to see Fisheries Bill white paper
Thank you!

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