

The EU Common Fisheries Policy (CFP) was designed from the beginning to steal our fish. It has ravaged our fishing industry and caused catastrophic environmental damage. Fishing grounds have been so over-fished that some are at the point of collapse. Our fishing fleet is half its former size.

Britain's seas should be the jewel in her crown, but we surrendered these priceless family treasures when we joined the then EEC 1973 and our territorial waters were merged into one giant European fishery.

The UK has almost 70 per cent of Europe's fishing grounds but only 13 per cent of its fishing quota. So, we must import fish species such as cod, haddock and huss that our own fishermen are forced to throw overboard – usually dead – because of EU rules. The EU itself estimates 40 per cent of all fish caught are discarded, so as much as two million tons of perfectly edible fish are wasted every year. The EU's proposed discard ban will not fix this problem, just move it onshore.

Worse, while preaching 'conservation,' the EU allows industrial fishing techniques such as electric pulse trawling, which destroys marine life and disturbs the ecological balance of our seascapes.

We can only replenish Britain's bounty of fish and restore our fishing industry if we leave the EU and withdraw from the CFP. Then we can:

- Establish a 12-mile zone around our coastline for UK fishermen and a 200-mile exclusive economic zone under UK control, as is our right under international law
- Reverse the rapid decline in our fishing industry and return £2.5 billion a year in fish sales to the UK economy

- Enforce 'no-take' zones to aid spawning and replenish fish stocks
- Protect our coastal eco system by ending destructive industrial fishing practices
- End the slaughter of dolphins by banning pair trawler fishing for bass
- Work with our fishermen to solve discard and landing issues
- Reverse any EU-wide drift-net ban in British waters
- Issue permits for foreign trawlers once fish stocks have returned to sustainable levels.

FISHING BOATS UNDER 10 METRES

Smaller fishing boats make up the majority of the UK fleet but only receive only 4 per cent of the English quota, while the five largest foreign-controlled vessels take 32 per cent. It is grossly unfair and damages fish stock sustainability. Small-scale inshore fishing is the backbone of the UK fishing industry and we will end this injustice.

SEA ANGLING

Over 750,000 people enjoy sea angling in the UK. It is a profitable hobby for Britain: VAT income from sea angling is worth more than the value of all commercial landings and some 23,000 jobs depend on sea angling, yet the EU is planning to restrict anglers to catching just three sea bass

a day. We suspect this will eventually lead to EU controls on all angling and we will vociferously oppose this threat.

We will ensure sea anglers and our under 10-metre boat fleet are represented on the Marine Management Organisation, which licenses, regulates and plans marine activities in the seas around England and Wales. At present, none of the fifteen board members are fishermen.

The EU is just not interested in sustainable fishing. If we want to eat fish in the future, we must preserve our fishing industry and our marine ecology. We can only do this if we escape the CFP and introduce our own sustainable fishing practice.

BELIEVE in BRITAIN