

The Government will fail the first Brexit test by not scrapping the London Convention

Release: Immediate

Words: 382

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Fishing for Leave recently highlighted the immediate need for the government to denounce the London Convention.

DexEU and DEFRA's response that "in regard to historical access to waters, no decisions have yet been taken on the UK's position" and that "we endeavour to reach an agreement... by the time the two year Article 50 process has concluded" is pitiful and suggests they have no intention of acting.

As lovely as it was to hear the government reiterate its position of caring for our fishing and coastal communities their response scarcely backs this rhetoric.

The London Convention must be denounced now to secure all access to our waters and obtain the strongest possible diplomatic hand.

This Convention gives historic rights for European vessels to fish in UK waters but only between 6 and 12 nautical miles from our shores.

Failing to scrap this Convention would allow the EU 'back door' access to this narrow strip as the convention will still

apply to the UK upon withdrawal.

As the Convention requires two years notice it must be denounced immediately, and before Article 50 is triggered, to avoid an overlap allowing EU access to UK waters.

For 8 months there has only been rhetoric and no results. The government is well aware of this issue and their failure to act suggests they have no intention of securing our rich fishing waters.

Why are they not fully committed to securing this strong hand by controlling all access?

If the government does not act immediately on this easy and simple test of Brexit then it evidently has no intention of making a serious stand. The government and MP's are about to fail this first test on Brexit.

It would show the opportunity of automatic repatriation of an industry, that could double to be worth approximately £6.3bn annually, is to be betrayed a second time. Fisheries will symbolise whether we've "taken back control of our borders" and will therefore be the "acid test" of Brexit.

The government must serve notice to denounce this Convention immediately. To demonstrate that it really does intend to repatriate and safeguard the nation's greatest renewable resource.

If it does not then it looks like we're going to have a backslide and betrayal of Brexit and that the government is all mouth and no trousers.

There is still time to lobby your MP to act on this – if you want to see our fishing grounds secured please send the letter in this link to them – <http://www.ffl.org.uk/letter-to-mp/>