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PRESS RELEASE

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Recreational anglers wriggle out of EU quotas plans

Plans to bring recreational anglers into the Common Fisheries Policy (CFP) have been watered down significantly by the European Parliament's fisheries committee in a vote this afternoon.

Article 47 of the proposed regulation would have required recreational fishermen to register their boats and whatever they catch would be counted against the fisheries quota for that country. Each country will also be required to allocate what share of its quota for each fish species will be available for commercial and recreational fisheries use.

Struan Stevenson MEP, Conservative fisheries spokesman in the European Parliament, has led opposition to Article 47 in Brussels and while his amendment to delete it altogether was rejected, he was able to reword the proposal so that national governments could decide whether they would include recreational fishermen in the regulation.

Earlier today, in an answer to a written question posed to the commission by Mr. Stevenson, EU Fisheries Commissioner, Joe Borg, confirmed: *"The normal hobby angler who catches an insignificant number of fish when he goes out fishing and uses it exclusively for his private consumption will not be covered by the control regulation, even if he catches fish like cod which is under a recovery plan."*

After the vote, Conservative MEP Struan Stevenson said:

"I am sorry that my amendment to delete article 47 was defeated in the Fisheries Committee. However, the fallback amendment which won majority support, together with the written answer I have received from Commissioner Borg, reassures me that recreational anglers have nothing to fear from the revised article 47. Only fishermen who target recovery stocks such as cod, hake, eel and bluefin tuna and seek to sell their catch, will come under the jurisdiction of the CFP. Recreational anglers who are simply catching fish, even cod or other recovery stock fish, for their own consumption, will not be affected."

Conservative MP, Richard Benyon, Shadow Fisheries Minister said:

"I really sense we are making progress. Recreational fishermen and the communities that benefit from the tourism they bring can have confidence that the vast majority will be excluded from this regulation. It is disappointing that despite all their rhetoric there were no amendments from UKIP opposing or seeking to change this measure. British anglers need politicians who will be effective in reining in some of the EU's more bizarre proposals."

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Conservatives in the European Parliament