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SNP plans to rejoin the EU would place Scotland's fishing industry back under the control of the Common Fisheries Policy, the European Commission has confirmed.

In a letter to Scottish Conservative MEP Dr Ian Duncan, fisheries commissioner Karmenu Vella said a new country joining the EU would not be able to opt out from the CFP, as one of the bloc's 'exclusive competence areas'.

Commissioner Vella's statement places the SNP under fresh pressure to clarify its approach to Scotland's vital fishing industry.

Nicola Sturgeon demanded a second independence referendum on the back of the UK's vote to leave the EU and her party's policy is for Scotland to join the EU as an independent state.

However, in a gesture incompatible with the policy, SNP MPs have signed a fishing pledge rejecting any move which would return the industry to CFP control.

**Scottish Conservative leader Ruth Davidson, who will visit Peterhead today, said:**

"Nicola Sturgeon is treating Scotland's fishing communities with utter contempt.

"Her policy is to return to the despised Common Fisheries Policy – but she wants to pretend otherwise.

"The SNP cannot have it both ways. Scotland's fishing communities will not be fooled by them.

"Fishermen see great opportunities after Brexit so the most important thing for their industry is to secure the best deal for Scotland and the whole of the UK when we leave the EU.

“A vote for the Scottish Conservatives is a vote to leave the CFP for good.”

**Ian Duncan, who is also the Scottish Conservatives’ General Election candidate in Perth and North Perthshire, said:**

“We have confirmation once again from the EU’s fisheries commissioner that no state can join the EU without joining the Common Fisheries Project.

“No ifs, no buts, no negotiation.

“If you are not in the CFP, you are not in the EU.

He added: “The SNP’s claims that Scotland could somehow negotiate its way out of the CFP are worthless, as Spain for one would veto the country’s membership in the first place.”

**Ends**

**Notes to editors**

Commissioner Vella’s letter ([link](#)) confirms the CFP is a non-negotiable cornerstone of EU membership.

Despite their party’s plan to rejoin the EU, a group of SNP MPs have signed the Scottish Fishermen’s Federation’s ‘Brexit, Sea of Opportunity’ pledge, which opposes ‘any policy, practice or treaty which would return the UK to the Common Fisheries Policy.

Ruth Davidson will visit Peterhead fish market today (Wednesday, May 10) to meet fishermen and industry leaders.