

PM: UK 'will not accept' any deal with EU that links access to fishing waters with trade

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The Prime Minister has today made clear that the UK Government “will not accept” any deal with the EU that links access to fishing waters with trade.

In response to a question from Banff and Buchan MP David Duguid, Theresa May said that there “have been attempts” to link fisheries access to a future trade deal between the UK and the EU.

The exchange followed a joint letter from Scottish Conservative MPs warning they could not support any agreement that prevented the UK from independently negotiating access and quota share.

The Scottish Fishermen’s Federation (SFF) also said yesterday that any link between access to waters and trade would be “unacceptable” and would defy “all international norms and practice”.

The Prime Minister insisted today, as she took questions from MPs in the Commons chamber, that it will be the UK that determines access to UK waters.

Mrs May said: “We are very clear that we will be an independent coastal state.

“There have been attempts to link fisheries and link access to fishing waters to the trade aspect of this negotiation.

“We have been very clear that we will not accept that, that we will be an independent coastal state so that it is the UK determining access to UK waters.”

Speaking afterwards, Mr Duguid, Scottish Conservative MP for Banff and Buchan, said:

“I am very pleased to hear the Prime Minister make clear today that the UK will not countenance any deal that links access to our waters to trade with the rest of the EU.

“I have campaigned ever since becoming elected to making sure that our

fishermen reap the benefits from leaving the EU.

“That means we must leave the Common Fisheries Policy, assume our status as an independent coastal and have sovereignty over our waters.

“I am sure my constituents, and those in the Scottish fishing industry more widely, will welcome the comments from the Prime Minister today that the UK will continue to stand up for our fishermen as we leave the EU.”