

UK 'must resist' EU attempts to influence outcome of Brexit talks on fishing

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Scottish Conservative MP David Duguid has said the UK “must resist” attempts by EU countries such as France and Spain to influence the outcome of the Brexit deal on fishing.

The Banff and Buchan MP was responding to weekend reports that several member states have complained to European Commission chief negotiator Michel Barnier about the terms of the deal.

One Brussels negotiator is reported to have said that France, Spain, Belgium, Denmark and Portugal are among the nations unhappy that the EU has not demanded access to UK fishing waters in the withdrawal agreement.

Scottish Conservative MPs wrote to the Prime Minister last week seeking confirmation that the UK will have full sovereignty over its waters after Brexit and that there will be no link made between access to fisheries in a future trade deal.

Theresa May provided a verbal reassurance to Mr Duguid in the Commons chamber on Thursday, but the north-east MP has said he wants to see it in writing.

David Duguid, Scottish Conservative MP for Banff and Buchan, said:

“France, Denmark, Holland, Spain and Portugal are all deeply unhappy about this deal as it stands – that should tell our fishermen that we are on the right track.

“For far too long, EU boats have landed a larger share of fish caught in our waters than the UK – that needs to change.

“But the Prime Minister and the UK negotiating team must resist any attempts to secure a more favourable deal for the EU.

“My priority remains to get out of the CFP and assume our status as an independent coastal state with full sovereignty over our waters.

We must be in that position no later than the end of 2020 – as was agreed

when the implementation period was announced in March.

"We must enter upon annual negotiations as an independent coastal state with the maximum amount of leverage possible.

"We cannot have a future fisheries agreement that links access to fishing waters to trade. I will continue to seek assurances from the Prime Minister on that front."