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Members of the Inshore Fisheries Management and Conservation Group
Scottish Fish Producer Organisations
Marine Scotland Compliance – Fishery Offices and Marine Protection Vessels
UK Fisheries Administrations

8 December 2016

Dear Sir / Madam

CONCORDAT ON UK FISHERIES MANAGEMENT

1. Recipients of this letter will likely be aware that UK Fisheries Administrations have been undertaking a review of the 2012 Concordat on UK Fisheries Management. The purpose of this letter is to note that Administrations' review of the Concordat is complete and to inform you of what has changed. Enclosed with this letter is a copy of the new Concordat.
2. The new Concordat makes improvements to the 2012 Concordat. In particular, it strengthens arrangements about the transfer of fishing vessels between UK Administrations. Owners will continue to be permitted to move the administration of their vessels from one UK Administration to another, but only after the vessel has physically moved its operations to the country that the owners wish to administer their vessel.
3. The new Concordat also offers to each of the UK Administrations enhanced flexibility to maintain the quota allocations available to the vessels fishing from their ports. In future, each Administration will have the option to retain their existing share of UK quotas, except when vessels move fishing operations to another UK country and are given permission to change country of administration. In these circumstances, it will be permitted to move quota allocations (FQA units) between UK countries.
4. The Scottish Government is aware that the other UK Fisheries Administrations have decided to issue the new Concordat for consultation, and they did this on 7 December. It is of course a matter for other Administrations to decide whether or not to consult interested parties in their areas about the new agreement. The Scottish Government considers that the Concordat is an agreement between the Administrations about the powers available to each and about the manner in which the Administrations relate to one another. It is for each Administration to consider how to use the powers available to them under the Concordat in their area.
5. As noted, the new Concordat provides for each UK Administration an option to exercise discretion over the transfer of FQA units from licences that each issues. The Scottish Government intends to make use of that discretion and will in future only consider applications to transfer FQA units from Scottish to non-Scottish licences insofar as the units are attached to a vessel licence that has been given permission to move country of administration in terms of the arrangements described in paragraph 3 of the new Concordat. We will consider any such application within the terms described in the new Concordat and having regard to other matters as is considered appropriate.

6. These arrangements will be included in Scottish Quota Management Rules in 2017, but are without prejudice to the effect of Scottish Quota Management Circular 1/2014, which introduced a general moratorium on the transfer of FQA units from Scottish to non-Scottish licences. This moratorium continues as described in that letter.

7. I hope this letter is helpful. If you have any questions about the new Concordat please do not hesitate to be in touch.

Yours faithfully,

Greig Chalmers

GREIG CHALMERS

Sea Fisheries Policy Division