

Dear

I write to you due to my concern over the deliberate, ambiguous wording of the Conservative manifesto. This is regarding the text defining the extent and boundaries of the waters the UK will be fully responsible for the access and management over upon withdrawal from the EU.

The manifesto commits and defines the waters as those over which the UK has ***“historically exercised sovereign control”***.

Under international law an independent state is entitled to exercise sovereign control over all waters and resources within the nation’s Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ), defined as 200 miles or the midline from shore.

However, the UK has never *“exercised sovereign control”* over these waters! UK fisheries limits were extended to 200miles or the midline by the Fishery Limits Act 1976.

However, due to the UK being bound to the EU Common Fisheries Policy (CFP) and the Regulation 2141/70 Article 2-Section3 the EU *“exercised sovereign control”* over *“maritime waters described by the laws in force in each Member State”*.

Our surrendered EEZ represents an area 3 times larger than our land territory. Containing some of the world’s richest grounds. Automatic repatriation of these waters, facilitated by the treaties and CFP “ceasing to apply” as per Article 50-Section 3, could be worth £6.3bn to the economy & coastal communities annually.

However, the deliberate choice of wording in the manifesto could render any of the commitments on reclaiming these British waters as worthless! The Fisheries Minister states it will be out to 200miles but then why were the Ministers words not used in the Manifesto instead of those relating to 12 miles?

The manifestos transcends all and we therefore seek clarity as to – Why these words were used? What is now government policy - the minister’s words or the manifesto? What waters does the government define as those the UK has *“historically exercised sovereign control”* over?

If there’s unequivocal commitment to taking back control over the UK’s entire EEZ why was this not clearly stated in the manifesto? It is imperative that the Prime Minister gives immediate clarity & unequivocal commitment to affirm that it is our entire EEZ and all waters and resources within.

If Conservatives back the minister’s words then doing so should not be a problem. Failure to do so would illustrate that that there is no intention of making a serious stand on fishing or Brexit.

Fisheries symbolises whether we've "taken back control of our borders" and will be an "acid test" of Brexit. The entire EEZ must be repatriated and exclusive sovereign control over access and management exercised for British fishermen only as a tangible demonstration of parliament, MP’s and the government’s intent and commitment on Brexit.

I hope that as a Member of Parliament we can count on your full support in ensuring clarity and commitment is given to taking back control of our entire EEZ out to 200 for British fishing communities.

Yours Sincerely,

In Support Of

