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The Sea Fisheries (Remote Electronic Monitoring and Regulation of Scallop Fishing) (Scotland) Regulations 2024

Dear Clerk,

I am writing to you with regards to The Sea Fisheries (Remote Electronic Monitoring and Regulation of Scallop Fishing) (Scotland) Regulations 2024 which is currently laid in Parliament.

The reason for this communication is that the committee's call for views on this Order highlighted a small error in the drafting that, if uncorrected, will undermine technical restrictions fundamental to the regulation of scallop dredge fisheries.

As such, in terms of Rule 10.8 of the Standing Orders of the Parliament I request that the regulations be withdrawn, so that a correction can be promptly made. My Officials are arranging for minor amendments to be prepared to the drafting, correcting the error so that the Regulations can be re-laid.

By way of background, the intention of the policy is that the maximum number of scallop dredges which can be deployed by a fishing boat in any part of the territorial sea adjacent to Scotland, other than in Scottish inshore waters, is reduced to 8 on each side and a maximum of 16 dredges in total. However, I am advised that our use of the wording "any part of the territorial sea of the United Kingdom adjacent to Scotland" will not apply these controls to all of the areas of sea within the definition of "Scottish inshore waters", specifically the area to the landward side of the baseline. The restrictions on scallop dredges (8 each side and 16 in total) currently apply to Scottish inshore waters and the intention is to keep this consistent. The baseline in this context is a reference line for measurement of a territorial sea that represents the average low-water level along the coastline.

I would be grateful if you would make any necessary changes to the Business Bulletin and notify the relevant Committee as appropriate.

MAIRI GOUGEON

