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Joan McAlpine MSP
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Culture, Tourism, Europe & External Affairs Committee
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Dear Joan,

**Publication of UK Seafood Trade Modelling report and Scottish Government policy brief**

I am pleased to inform the Committee that today Scottish Government is publishing an externally commissioned report that examines the impact of potential scenarios of leaving the EU on the Scottish seafood industries. Alongside this the Scottish Government has produced a policy brief which sets out analysis of the potential impact of each hypothetical scenario on the Scottish seafood sector.

Scotland voted clearly and decisively to remain in the European Union and it is the Scottish Government’s view that this is the best option for Scotland’s future. However, we have also set out that in the event that we do leave, staying within the Single Market and Customs Union is the least damaging option. This position for the seafood sector is supported by the research being published today.

The research found that all of the plausible trade scenarios modelled would leave Scotland worse off than the current situation as a member of the EU. It also found that any potential benefits from increased fishing quotas would reduce with increasing tariff and non-tariff measures once the UK leaves the European Single Market and the Customs Union. Key findings showed:

- The overall impact of Brexit on the Scottish industry will likely be mixed, with any potential benefits from increased fishing quotas reducing with increasing tariff and non-tariff measures
- For example, farmed salmon – the UK’s most valuable food export – could experience a decrease in export value of between 4 to 6% in the absence of free trade with the EU
- Scotland’s aquaculture industry will be negatively impacted under all of the scenarios considered in the report
We will now consider this research carefully and hope you will also find it useful. I have also sent a similar letter and the research to Edward Mountain as the Convenor of the Rural Economy and Connectivity committee and to Graeme Dey as Convenor of the Environment, Climate Change and Land Reform committee.

FERGUS EWING