

John F. Robins, Secretary and Campaigns Consultant, Animal Concern, Post Office Box 5178,  
Dumbarton G82 5YJ. Tel. 01389-841-639, Mobile: 07721-605521.

E-MAI: [animals@jfrobin.force9.co.uk](mailto:animals@jfrobin.force9.co.uk) website: <http://www.animalconcern.org/>

Animal Concern is a pressure group registered as a non-profit making Limited Company (Co. No. SC109126) established in 1988 as Animal Concern (Scotland) Ltd.

It incorporates the Scottish Anti-Vivisection Society which was founded in 1876.

To supporters of Animal Concern, Animal Concern Advice Line and Save Our Seals Fund.

Dear Friends,

My apologies for contacting you twice in just a couple of days but something has come up with which I need your help.

On 4th December the Sunday Herald ran a story on how Scottish fishermen are using social media to track and avoid the three ships in the Scottish fishery protection fleet. You can read that article here:

[http://www.heraldscotland.com/news/14945175.Operation\\_Jolly\\_Roger\\_inside\\_the\\_secret\\_world\\_of\\_Scotland\\_39\\_s\\_fishermen\\_pirates/](http://www.heraldscotland.com/news/14945175.Operation_Jolly_Roger_inside_the_secret_world_of_Scotland_39_s_fishermen_pirates/)

This is not the first time Scottish fishermen have shown their contempt for fish conservation measures. In 2012 dozens of Scottish skippers were found guilty of participating in a very complex scam which earned them tens of millions of pounds by breaching conservation quotas. The scam was conducted at Lerwick and Peterhead where hidden offloading channels allowed boats to land millions of tonnes of illegally caught fish. Although guilty skippers received heavy fines these were insignificant compared to the massive profits they had made.

Less than 24 hours after the Sunday Herald revealed the latest skulduggery of the Scottish fishing industry the Scottish Government made a statement. Cabinet Secretary Fergus Ewing is responsible for Agriculture and Fisheries and he took a very firm line with the fishermen. He gave them £2.5million of public money! This will match £2.5M from the EU and will be used to expand capacity at the Peterhead fish market where skippers did their very best to wipe-out fish stocks and raked in millions of pounds through illegal sales. Not only did Mr. Ewing give £2.5million to one of the most profitable industries in Scotland he also told them that he is going to nip over to Brussels on December 12th to try and get large catch quotas for Scottish fishermen.

Instead of paying pirates from the public purse the Scottish Government should be putting extra taxes on the fishing industry and using that money to increase the woefully inadequate fishery protection fleet of ships and aircraft before the fishing free for all which will inevitably follow our exit from the EU, something the fishing industry campaigned hard for.

Here's what I'd like our supporters in Scotland to do. Please drop an e-mail to your

Constituency MSP (You can find their e-mail address here: <https://www.writetothem.com/> )  
. Remember to include your address and post code and say something along the lines of:

“On 4th December the Sunday Herald newspaper ran a story about fishermen using Facebook to track and avoid Scottish fishery protection boats. On Monday 5th December fisheries Minister Fergus Ewing went to Peterhead Fish Market to announce that he was giving the Market £2.5million to match a further £2.5million from the EU to allow the market to increase capacity by 50%.

It is only 4 years since dozens of skippers were found guilty of being involved in a multi-million pound fraud at Peterhead where they illegally landed millions of tonnes of over-quota fish which gained them millions of pounds more in illegal profits than they lost in court fines.

I would like you to ask Fergus Ewing why a very wealthy industry which continues to show contempt for fish conservation measures should get one penny in public money.

Instead of paying pirates from the public purse the Scottish Government should be putting an extra levy on the fishing industry to fund an increase in the woefully inadequate fishery protection fleet of ships and aircraft before the fishing free for all which will inevitably follow our exit from the EU, something the fishing industry campaigned hard for.

Please also ask Mr. Ewing what the Government is doing to strengthen our Fishery Protection Fleet in preparation for our forced exit from the EU.

Could you also please ask Roseanna Cunningham if she will be attending the EU Fisheries meeting on 12th December to insist on tighter conservation quotas for all vessels fishing in EU waters?

I look forward to hearing from you in due course.”

I hope many of you in Scotland will be able to send this e-mail to your MSP as we need to get as many of them as possible to question Fergus Ewing. This is especially important if you live in or near a fishing community.

When I write to Government Ministers I'm just another professional pot stirrer to be quietly fobbed-off with political platitudes.

When you write to your MSP and request that s/he raise the issue with a Minister on your behalf you not only make your MSP aware of the issue, you put the Minister in the position of having to supply your MSP with a more accurate and informed reply.

Please send me copies of any replies.

I read in the Press & Journal that Victoria, the female polar bear at the Highland Wildlife Park is believed to be pregnant after mating with Arktos, one of the two male polar bears at the

Park. What will happen to any cubs three or four years from now when, having outgrown the cute and cuddly paying punter pulling stage, they have to be rehomed? I dread to think.

Cheers 4 now,

John