



HOUSE OF COMMONS

LONDON SW1A 0AA

31<sup>st</sup> July 2020

*Dear Constance,*

**RE: SUPERTRAWLERS.**

Thank you for your recent correspondence in respect of sustainable fishing in British waters and the access of large trawling vessels to our waters; your comments upon which I have read with great interest.

I want to say at the outset that I am confident that the Government is listening to these concerns and taking action in the best interests of the UK on these matters. For this reason, and given the fact that as a Government Minister I am unable to do so, I will not be signing the campaign letter.

However, I share your concern about the protection and health of British waters and I am fully aware of the impact that supertrawlers have on marine life. Our waters are a precious natural resource and they must be managed carefully. The future of the communities that earn their livelihoods from the sea, and the biodiversity of the ocean, depends on a balanced and considered approach to fisheries management.

The UK has 357 Marine Protected Areas covering a quarter of the country's waters, but the EU's Common Fisheries Policy currently restricts our ability to impose more stringent protections on our seas. However, after the end of the transition period, the UK will be able to introduce stronger measures so that we can manage our waters as we see fit.

The *Fisheries Bill* currently going through Parliament will help to protect our marine resources and develop plans to restore our fish stocks back to more sustainable levels. This builds on a manifesto commitment which promised to introduce a legal commitment to fish sustainably as we become an independent coastal state once again.

I understand that the access of supertrawlers to UK waters is of significant concern to local fishing communities and to those working to protect our seas. That is why I am glad that the *Fisheries Bill* will provide the Government with powers to licence foreign vessels in UK waters. Foreign vessels will have no automatic right of access to our waters in the future. Any vessel granted access to our waters will also be required to abide by UK rules, including on sustainability, and I fully support this approach. We will once again be in control of how we protect our waters - something I consider to be very welcome, and which I campaigned for in the EU referendum.



Once again, thank you for having taken the time to contact me and if I can ever be of any further assistance to you then please do not hesitate to contact me again.

*With best wishes,*

*Tom*

**TOM PURSGLOVE MP  
MEMBER OF PARLIAMENT  
CORBY & EAST NORTHAMPTONSHIRE**