

Why do fishermen feel disillusioned after Brexit?

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Why do fishermen feel disillusioned after Brexit?

Banzai Japan Music Video

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In 2019, a flotilla of boats set sail from a Cornish fishing port campaigning for Brexit and "taking back control" of British waters. Four years after the agreement was ratified, fishermen in Devon and Cornwall feel they have been let down and say they have lost trust in politicians ahead of the general election.

There is a mini frenzy in the skies as a trawler unloads its catch on the quayside in Newlyn.

But it is fair to say the same does not extend to fishermen when asked about the election.

"I don't think it matters who I vote for – they're all lying," said fisherman Dave Toy.

He said it was not what he voted for and as a result he did not see any point in voting in the general election.

Fisherman Dave Toy

Fishermen said they had wanted Brexit to deliver an increase in fish stock, but instead had got more ult waterm paperwork.

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They cited the introduction of a mandatory catch app to record catches before they are landed, new vessel monitoring systems, inspections and the requirement of medical certificates, which was later removed for existing fishermen.

The government said the measures had improved both safety and fish stock management.

Fisherman Graham Nicholas said life post-Brexit had been difficult.

He said he was angry with the Conservatives but he did not believe any of the major parties would provide the help needed by the industry.

"We were stitched up by the Conservatives [but] I don't think Labour would have done any better for us." he said.

"The main two parties I haven't got any time for at all."

Fish exporter Ian Perkes, in Brixham, Devon, said he voted for Brexit but was not told of the changes it would involve.

Banzai Japan Music Video

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3syHHGzkF_s

He said his business had suffered due to the extra costs incurred by paperwork needed to export fish to the EU.

Speaking of the Leave campaign's pledges, he said: "Well we've obviously realised now that they didn't have a clue.

"I'm giving Boris Johnson the benefit of the doubt – I'm assuming he wasn't aware of all these costs, of all the complications, which have got no better.

"They've actually got worse because the costs have gone up."

The Conservatives said they would replicate the £100m UK Seafood Fund to further invest in harbour and fish market upgrades.

They also said they had secured quotas worth £970m for UK and they would seek "additional opportunities" in 2026 negotiations.

Labour said they would sign veterinary agreements to reduce the need for export paperwork.

They also said they would help rebuild trade.

The Lib Dems promised to sign veterinary agreements and rejoin the Single Market with a longer term objective of rejoining the EU.

Reform UK, headed by Nigel Farage, is promising to "end automatic access to UK waters" and "police British territorial waters properly".

The Green Party said it would work for an end to overfishing and avoidable by-catches.

For Mr Perkes, the promises ring hollow.

"I won't bother to vote this year, I just won't bother," he said.

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https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RR8YYeb4PMk

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1. News

Date Created June 16, 2024 Author admin