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A senior SNP minister has signalled that signing back up to the Common Fisheries Policy would be a “trade-off” for an independent Scotland re-joining the EU.

Finance Secretary Derek Mackay made the comments in response to questions about SNP policy on fishing in a radio interview.

Discussing the prospect of an independent Scotland re-joining the EU, Mr Mackay added the SNP “accepts there would be trade-offs in any political deal”.

The MSP also claimed that “every part” of Scotland, including those “with more fishing interests than others” voted Remain in 2016.

However, research by the University of East Anglia showed that the Westminster constituency of Banff and Buchan – including Europe’s largest white fish port of Peterhead – voted Leave by a majority of 54%.

Scottish Conservative MP for Banff and Buchan David Duguid said:

“Derek Mackay has let the cat out of the bag here and confirmed the SNP would sell out our fishermen in a heartbeat.

“SNP have tried for years to look both ways on fishing.

“But the truth is their plans to break up the UK and rejoin the EU were always going to mean our fishermen would be stuck with the hated CFP.

“However, his claim that fishing communities didn’t vote for Brexit is plain wrong. A majority, estimated at 54%, in Banff and Buchan voted to leave the EU.

“Boris Johnson made clear yesterday that we will be out of the CFP by December 2020 at the latest and that fishing won’t be used as a bargaining chip in negotiations with Brussels.

“Those comments are already being welcomed by fishermen in ports like

Peterhead, Fraserburgh and Macduff.

“If the SNP dragged us back into the CFP after separation, it would rightly be viewed as the ultimate betrayal of our fishing communities.”