



Member
of the European Parliament

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P R E S S R E L E A S E

ECOLOGICAL DISASTER LOOMING IN THE CLYDE

South of Scotland Euro MP Alex Smith, has enlisted the support of the President of the European Council, in the campaign to make the Irish Sea and the Firth of Clyde safe for shipping.

Alex said, "Action is needed now to reduce the possibility of a full scale ecological disaster in the Irish Sea.

My main concern is the danger posed from Nuclear submarines colliding with fishing boats or vessels carrying toxic/hazardous wastes or oil. The consequences of such a collision would be unthinkable."

Alex continued, "The President of the Council of Ministers, who is an Irish Minister, fully agreed with the point I made and took the unusual step of re-iterating his Governments policy on the matter. This has seldom been done before, and emphasises the concern felt over the matter.

I was pleased to hear that the Commission of the European Community are investigating a maritime navigation system similar to that which exists for air transport. This should help in avoiding the type of incidents which have occurred to date."

Alex concluded, "The point was re-inforced in Parliament by President Collins during a debate on cross border pollution, when he referred to my question in saying that both the British Government and the European Community must take definite action instead of paying lip service to the problem.

I will now be writing to the President in Office asking for his support for further measures which I believe will make these waters safer;

1. That he submarines use active rather than passive sonar.
2. That they travel on the surface when in fishing waters.
3. That they inform other users in the Clyde and Irish Sea of their movements.

For further information please contact Tom Dewar on 0294 77780