

## **Seafish Regulation Monitor 15/01/16 - 22/01/2016**

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### **NGOs press releases**

**Oceana - Fish in the North-East Atlantic** – Source Oceana [press release](#)

Oceana reports that 79% of fish species threatened with extinction ignored by North-East Atlantic governments

In Trondheim, Norway, representatives from 15 governments and the EU will convene under the OSPAR Convention to discuss the protection of threatened marine species and habitats in the North-East Atlantic. Oceana urges them to expand the list of threatened and declining species. The list has not been updated since 2008 and does not include 79% of the fish species recognised as threatened with extinction. Oceana is also advocating for the protection of declining habitats, such as kelp forests and Haploops communities.

The OSPAR List of Threatened and/or Declining Species and Habitats was adopted in 2003. It is the main tool for identifying priorities for conservation measures in the North-East Atlantic. However, no additions have been made to the list since 2008, despite growing scientific evidence that marine biodiversity is degrading rapidly due to increasing human activities and climate change.

### **Food safety and consumer protection**

#### **Denmark lowers indicative levels for acrylamide**

EU guidance levels for acrylamide do not protect consumers enough, according to the Danish minister for environment and food, as it sets lower indicative levels for Danish manufacturers. See the article in [food navigator](#)

The EU is currently consulting with member states on applying controls on acrylamide in food. Fried carbohydrate foods such as coated fish and chips could be affected.

#### **FSS survey of fish authenticity in foods in schools, care homes and hospitals** – source [FSS](#)

Food Standards Scotland has published the results of a fish authenticity survey in foods procured for schools and healthcare establishments in Scotland. The survey was initiated to investigate the potential for white fish to be substituted with cheaper species in public sector food supply chains.

A total of 26 local authorities participated in the survey and sampled 264 unique fish products from 214 premises across Scotland. Of the unique samples tested, 249 (94%) were fully compliant with legislation, with 15 samples (6%) failing due to the presence of non-declared fish species such as whiting being labelled as haddock.

In all cases Local Authorities concluded from their investigations that mislabelling of products was not due to deliberate food fraud, but had occurred due to a breakdown in the suppliers' quality control systems.

### **Radioactive Contamination of Food and Feed: Council Regulation Published in Official Journal**

[Council Regulation \(Euratom\) 2016/52](#) laying down maximum permitted levels of radioactive contamination of food and feed following a nuclear accident or any other case of radiological emergency was published in the Official Journal on 20 January 2016. It will enter into force on 9 February 2016.

The Council Regulation sets out the maximum permitted levels of radioactive contamination for foodstuffs and feedingstuffs following a nuclear accident or and other case of radiological emergency. The Regulation maintains the maximum permitted levels that were previously set and lays down the procedure to render these maximum permitted levels applicable.

### **Question for written answer to the Commission on Mislabelling of fish in restaurants – source EP Register – no link available**

On 3 November 2015 the Oceana Association published a study with the Catholic University of Leuven which showed that 30% of the fish on sale in the restaurants tested in Brussels, including the institutions' canteens, were mislabelled as more expensive fish species.

Could the Commission inform Parliament what it is doing to make sure that Member States follow up on this issue?

Does it have any data as to how widespread this issue is?

What actions does it intend to take with its own providers in its canteens?

Answer given by Mr Andriukaitis on behalf of the Commission included this update

'While the overall rate of non-compliance of 6% is lower than in other – more limited – studies, vigilance should remain high. Member States, as part of their duties to enforce EU law, have to take into account available information pointing to possible non-compliance to adjust their control activities. They also have to take action to ensure that violations are remedied.

The Commission will continue its awareness-raising campaigns on labelling requirements for fishery products, and will soon start a series of audits in Member States on labelling and traceability of fishery products.

The Commission reminded its catering contractors their duty to fulfil contractual obligations and tightened controls on fish-products labelling in its canteens. A project for sampling in view of DNA identification of fish species is planned for 2016’.

### **EFSA updated guidance on health claims – source – [EFSA](#)**

EFSA has updated its advice for applicants seeking approval of health claims made on food products.

The two documents now include:

- A detailed explanation of each step of the evaluation process – characterisation of the food/constituent, characterisation of the claimed effect, identification of pertinent human studies – illustrated with concrete examples from previous evaluations.
- An explicit differentiation between the principles applied to the evaluation of health claims based on the essentiality of nutrients and those applied to other claims. These differences relate to the definition of the claimed effect, the substantiation of the claim and the conditions of use.
- Examples of applications that have been evaluated with a positive outcome to indicate the number, type and quality of studies that may be needed for substantiation of a claim.
- Examples of applications evaluated with an unfavourable outcome to illustrate the kind of shortcomings that can prevent the substantiation of certain claims.
- Guidance on the main steps and scientific aspects which applicants should consider when preparing an application.

### **International Trade**

#### **CEO - Dangerous Regulatory Duet – source - [Corporate Europe Observatory Reports](#)**

How transatlantic regulatory cooperation under TTIP will allow bureaucrats and big business to attack the public interest

The ongoing EU-US trade negotiations, TTIP, seek to bring rules on both sides of the Atlantic together by means of so-called regulatory cooperation. This part of the talks involves dismantling existing “regulatory barriers” and preventing new ones from emerging with public interest regulations having to go through lengthy procedures, including vetting by business for possible impacts on trade. It has sparked concerns that the trade deal will lead to attacks on environmental protections, safety at work regulations, and laws to defend public health and food safety– to name but a few. This latest report finds that regulatory cooperation procedures have already been used to delay, water down and prevent legislation in the public interest. It thus confirms this critique.

**EU-Canada negotiations for a Comprehensive Economic and Trade Agreement (CETA) – source - [EP briefing](#)**

EU-Canada negotiations for a Comprehensive Economic and Trade Agreement (CETA) were declared concluded in September 2014. Except for a few sensitive agricultural products, CETA would remove practically all tariffs on goods exchanged between the two partners, and create important new market opportunities in, among others, financial services, telecommunications, energy and maritime transport, while reserving the parties' right to regulate their internal public affairs. Canada would substantially open up its public procurement, at both federal and sub-federal level, thereby eliminating a major asymmetry in access to each other's public procurement markets.

The consolidated CETA text is currently undergoing legal-linguistic review. Once this 'legal scrubbing' and the translation into all official EU languages are completed, the Commission can submit it to the Council and the European Parliament for approval. It is still to be decided whether the agreement in its entirety falls under exclusive competence of the European Union or would also touch upon Member States' competences. In the latter case, ratification by the Member States would also be necessary for the agreement to come into force.

**IUU**

**EU team visits Thailand to assess fishing industry cleanup – Source - [Euractiv](#)**

A European Union delegation that is visiting Thailand to weigh its progress in battling illegal and unregulated fishing will not make a decision this week on whether to ban Thai seafood products.

Thailand, the world's third-largest exporter of seafood, faces the risk of the ban after the European Union gave it a 'yellow card' in April 2015 for failing to clamp down on problems in its fishing industry.

An EU dialogue mission to assess progress is set for Thursday and Friday (21-22 January)

**EU to decide on Thai seafood ban – source - [Euractiv](#)**

Thailand is waiting to hear if it has dodged a potentially crippling European Union ban on seafood exports, after auditors Friday (22 January) wrapped up a probe into illegal fishing.

Last year, the EU hit Thailand with a "yellow card," warning it faced an outright ban unless the military government took action on illegal fishing and slave labour in the multi-billion dollar seafood industry.

Thai officials have said the ban could cost them up to \$1 billion a year in lost exports.

An EU team has spent the last week assessing Thailand's recent reforms but declined to comment on their findings, citing the sensitivity of the issue.

**EU move to fight illegal fishing through vessel numbering scheme** – source – [Oceana](#)

NGOs welcome EU move to fight illegal fishing through vessel numbering scheme

Today, the Environmental Justice Foundation (EJF), Oceana and WWF welcomed a new European Commission requirement that all EU fishing vessels, and foreign vessels fishing in EU waters, need to have unique vessel numbers from construction to disposal. The move will affect up to 8,205 European vessels. The change is a key reform that helps close a decades-old loophole that allows fishing vessels around the world to evade scrutiny, fueling illegal fishing.

**Another step forward in raising awareness on IUU fishing** – source - [FAO](#)

As the plague of IUU fishing is receiving increasing attention from the international community, the representatives of 28 States have just expressed their support towards initiatives aimed at combatting its negative effects. On the occasion of the intersessional meeting of the Compliance Committee of the General Fisheries Commission for the Mediterranean (GFCM) of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), held at FAO headquarters in Rome on 19–20 January 2016, a number of GFCM Contracting Parties conveyed their strong willingness to back the declaration of an international day for the fight against IUU fishing, within the remit of the FAO. This represents an important step as broad support from relevant organizations which are committed to raise awareness on IUU fishing will be crucial to this end.

**Fisheries Management**

**Multiannual recovery plan for Bluefin tuna in the eastern Atlantic and the Mediterranean** – Source - European Parliament Plenary Session

On January 18<sup>th</sup>, the European Parliament debated a proposal by the Commission to adapt EU rules to recently adopted recommendations for ICCAT regarding the multiannual recovery plan for bluefin tuna in the eastern Atlantic and Mediterranean. Members strongly supported the draft report, which sought to limit the use of delegated acts to adapt to future ICCAT amendments and to promote the use of traditional tuna fishing methods. Members also overwhelmingly supported the general thrust of an S&D amendment calling for bigger portions of catch quotas to be allocated to small-scale and traditional fishermen. The details of the debate contact [f\\_wright@seafish.co.uk](mailto:f_wright@seafish.co.uk)

The papers can be found here [Legislative Proposal](#) / [Report Tabled for Plenary](#) / [Legislative Observatory](#)

## **Landing Obligation**

**Question for written answer to the Commission on Landing obligation** – source EP Register

The new CFP prohibits the discarding of live or dead by-catch at sea and introduces a landing obligation.

In order to help fishermen adapt to this change, the landing obligation will be introduced stepwise, between 2015 and 2019, for all commercial fishing activities (for species governed by TACs and fish under the minimum catch size) in European waters.

Can the Commission therefore state:

1. How it will consolidate and monitor the landing obligation in real terms, when fishermen who comply with that obligation register huge losses?
2. Whether it considers that an on-board video monitoring system should be introduced to ensure that the landing obligation is correctly implemented?

Answer given by Mr Vella on behalf of the Commission can be found [here](#)

**DG MARE - EU promotes aquaculture at Green Week** – source - [European Commission](#)

The Commission has developed a handy school kit for teachers, providing material to raise awareness of aquaculture among schoolchildren aged 12 to 18. The booklet contains information on how to integrate aquaculture into lessons and encourage pupils to learn more about aquaculture in their community.