

Seafish EU alert monitoring 22/10/15 - 30/10/15

TTIP

Subject: In-depth analysis: The Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership (TTIP): The sluggish state of negotiations

Please follow the [link](#) to access the European Parliament Policy Department in-depth analysis: The Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership (TTIP): The sluggish state of negotiations.

URL:

http://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/etudes/IDAN/2015/549074/EXPO_IDA%282015%29549074_EN.pdf

Meeting report of the Transatlantic Trade & Investment Partnership Advisory Group

Please follow the [link](#) to access the Meeting report of the Transatlantic Trade & Investment Partnership Advisory Group from their meeting on 17 September 2015.

URL: <http://trade.ec.europa.eu/doclib/html/153803.htm>

Press Conference following the 11th Round of negotiations for a Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership

On October 23rd, the US and EU negotiations on TTIP held a press conference following the [conclusion](#) of the 11th Round of negotiations for a Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership. Please find a summary of the press conference below:

URL: http://ec.europa.eu/atwork/key-documents/index_en.htm

Third Country Fishing

SFPAs – ensuring environmentally and economically sustainable fishing in third countries

The European Court of Auditors (ECA) last week published the results of an audit looking into certain EU sustainable fisheries partnership agreements (SFPAs) with non-EU countries. The Commission considers this audit exercise as a positive opportunity for improving the framework of the EU's bilateral relations with third countries in the field of fisheries.

The auditors found that the agreements were generally well managed, but expressed a number of reservations. Many have already been recognised by the Commission and have been anticipated and addressed through the reform of the EU's Common Fisheries Policy in 2013/2014, which has led to substantial improvements in the bilateral agreements concluded since then and which are not subject of the ECA's audit.

The Commission's overall concern is to ensure that fisheries are both economically and environmentally sustainable in the long term and are cost-effective. Thus the Commission strives to

ensure that each SFPA makes use of the best available scientific advice and delivers value for money. When this was not achievable, the Commission has suspended negotiations. Furthermore, the Commission's new agreements include provisions to improve implementation and monitoring, while at the same time strengthening the governance of the fisheries concerned.

In the case of highly migratory species such as tuna, it is impossible to anticipate the level of catches. Catches may not always attain the negotiated quantities for climatic and environmental reasons. However the negotiated quantities take into consideration the historic catches and the estimated availability of resources. In that context, it should be highlighted that the price paid by the EU is above all the outcome of a negotiation aiming at getting access to a certain fishing zone and thus contributing to supporting third countries' efforts in favour of the sustainable management of their fisheries and the development of the sector. The total EU financial contribution also depends on other factors such as the evolution of market prices, the operational facilities and conditions offered to EU vessels by coastal States, the trends in the development of the fleet as well as the willingness that third countries demonstrate to improve the governance of their fisheries.

With the aim of decreasing the public spending on the access part of these SFPAs, one of the main improvements to be highlighted is that in the newly negotiated Protocol, the cost of access borne by the EU has decreased while the financial contribution supported by the ship-owners has steadily increased to let the private sector assume the major share of the financial risk of these fishing activities.

Regarding the perceived data discrepancies, it should be noted that they mostly relate to provisional data that require verification and validation by scientific institutes, which are then provided to the EU and to the partner country. This results in final data which are consistent and reliable.

Improvements introduced by the CFP reform include standardising the methodology used for evaluating Sustainable Fisheries Partnership Agreements (SFPA), achieving greater consistency with other EU policies such as development policy, carrying out more sophisticated monitoring and verification of catches through IT tools and scientific verification, and monitoring financial support for the local fisheries sector more closely, which has led to a suspension of payments on a number of occasions. As a result, SFPAs have been recognised by most stakeholders and other EU institutions as an attractive tool regulating the activity of the EU external fleet in a highly regulated and transparent manner.

URL: http://ec.europa.eu/newsroom/mare/itemdetail.cfm?item_id=26890&subweb=343&lang=en

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Official Controls: Member State Ministers Approve Council General Approach

Member State Ministers approved the Council General Approach on the Commission's official controls proposal during the Environment Council meeting held on 26 October 2015.

A first trilogue meeting is scheduled to take place on 9 November 2015. These are negotiations (trilogues) between the Council and the European Parliament, with the assistance of the Commission.

Key elements include

(1) Appointment of official veterinarians and plant health officers

The Council wants to include, in Article 4 of the proposal, provisions on the appointment of official veterinarians and plant health officers. Any appointment would have to be in writing and would have to set out the official controls and other official activities for which the appointment has been made.

(2) Additional requirements in certain areas

According to the Council, official controls performed to verify compliance in relation to products of animal origin intended for human consumption should include the verification of compliance with the requirements laid down in Regulation (EC) No 852/2004 on food hygiene and Regulation (EC) No 853/2004 on hygiene for food of animal origin.

In addition, according to the Council, the official veterinarian should remain responsible for the decision taken following official controls in relation to the production of meat, even if the performance of an action is assigned by him or her to the official auxiliary.

(3) EU reference centres for the authenticity and integrity of the agri-food chain

The Council proposes to add provisions for the establishment of EU reference centres for the authenticity and integrity of the agri-food chain. These centres would be responsible for (a) providing specialised knowledge in relation to the authenticity and integrity of the agri-food chain, (b) providing specific analyses designed to identify the segments of the agri-food chain that are potentially subject to violations of rules, (c) establishing and maintaining collections or databases of authenticated reference materials and (d) disseminating research findings and technical innovations.

(4) Financing of the controls

The Council wants to delete from the proposal the provisions granting a derogation for microenterprises concerning the payment of mandatory fees. Instead, the Council suggests that Member States should be allowed to reduce the amount of the fees or charges, taking into account the following criteria: (a) the interests of operators with a low throughput; (b) the traditional methods used for production, processing and distribution; (c) the needs of operators located in regions subject to particular geographical constraints; and (d) the operators' record of compliance.

REFIT of General Food Law

The European Parliament's ENVI Committee is expected to be briefed on the Fitness Check of Regulation (EC) No 178/2002 (General Food Law Regulation) at a meeting to take place on 10 November 2015.

During this meeting, the Commission will most likely present the results of the evaluation (Fitness Check) of General Food Law to Committee MEPs. An exchange of views is then expected to take place.

The two external evaluations (on the general evaluation of the GFL Regulation and on the evaluation of the RASFF) would be expected to be finalised by early November 2015.

Question for written answer E-013700/2015 to the Commission Rule 130 Catherine Bearder (ALDE)

Legislative requirements for the labelling of fishery and aquaculture products

Under Regulation (EU) 1379/2013 on the labelling of fishery and aquaculture products, companies are required to inform consumers of the type of fishing gear used. However, research by Greenpeace, published on 5 October 2015, suggested that John West, the UK's biggest producer of tinned tuna, is failing to meet its 2011 pledge to end the use of fish aggregation devices, which are highly destructive for marine wildlife including sharks and endangered turtles. However, John West does not include consumer information on its tinned tuna products about the fishing gear used to catch its fish, notably the use of destructive fish aggregation devices, claiming that the legislation does not apply to tinned tuna. It also defines sustainably sourced fish as 'not being endangered or threatened, caught by well-managed fisheries with scientifically based quotas.'

Can the Commission confirm that the labelling requirements in Regulation (EU) 1379/2013 apply to preserved fish, including tinned tuna?

What steps is the Commission taking to ensure that the labelling requirements in Regulation (EU) 1379/2013 are properly enforced and that consumers in the EU are fully informed about the sustainability of the fish products they purchase?

Can the Commission confirm whether fish caught with fish aggregation devices can be defined as sustainably sourced under EU law?

EU Institution Updates

European Commission Work Programme 2016

Please follow the links below to access the European Commission Work Programme 2016, as adopted today by the Commission:

- [Commission Work Programme 2016 - No time for business as usual](#)
- [Annex I: New initiatives](#)
- [Annex II: REFIT Initiatives](#)
- [Annex III: Priority pending proposals](#)
- [Annex IV: List of withdrawals or modifications of pending proposals](#)
- [Annex V: List of repeals](#)
- [Annex VI: Legislation that becomes applicable in 2016](#)
- [Roadmaps](#)

Parliamentary committee members

Please follow the link [here](#) to access the updated European Parliament **Committee** membership spreadsheet, also including **Delegations, Bureaus** and groups' **Coordinators**.