

Brussels Weekly Update – 15/09/2017

EU INSTITUTIONS

European Parliament:

Parliamentary Questions: Members of the EP (MEP) can submit questions for written answer to the European Commission (among other EU Institutions). The content of questions is the sole responsibility of their author(s), and an MEP can submit a maximum of five questions per month. Below, the Commission have responded to one EP question related to Brexit.

- [Brexit and the Fishing Industry](#). José Blanco López (S&D)
- [Proposal to redistribute the UK seats at European Parliament](#)

The proposal submitted to the Constitutional Affairs Committee of the European Parliament suggests cutting 51 of the 73 UK seats from the Parliament after Brexit. These 51 vacated seats would be kept in store in case of future EU enlargement and the remaining “minimal fraction” of 22 British seats could be re-distributed among the remaining 27 EU countries.

European Commission:

- [State of the Union Address 2017, by Jean-Claude Juncker](#). Source European Commission

Whilst Mr Juncker did not detail everything that the Commission intends to do over the next 18 months, he did set out five of their key priority work areas: international trade, investment screening, industrial policy, digital protection and migration. The speech looked past Brexit, noting only that the UK departure will be a sad event.

- [Questions and Answers Related to the United Kingdom's Withdrawal from the European Union with Regards to the Biocides Sector](#). Source European Commission

The aim of the document is to address consequences for business operators falling under the scope of Regulation (EU) No 528/20121 concerning the making available on the market and use of biocidal products. The Commission underlines that business operators should prepare for the withdrawal and should also consider that third countries cannot act as evaluating member states, meaning that if there is a risk that those procedures are not concluded by the date when the UK leaves the EU; applicants may choose by preference another evaluating member state or reference member state to carry out the evaluation.

MORE INFORMATION

- [Implementing Brexit: Customs](#). Source Institute for Government

The paper offers recommendations to help the UK avoid the customs cliff edge, such as moving customs requirements away from the physical border, retaining access to key EU computer systems and establishing working groups with the private sector, upon implementation.

- [Chancellor: UK will seek 'status quo' transition deal](#). Source House of Lords

The UK Chancellor Philip Hammond gave evidence to a Lords Economic Affairs committee yesterday where he suggested the UK could remain in the single market and the customs union during the Brexit transition period. The Chancellor said there was a "general agreement" in Cabinet that "it would not make sense to ask business to face two sets of changes" - once in March 2019, and another at the end of a transition period. He added: "That implies a transition, or interim, period would need to

look a lot like the status quo, otherwise businesses will be making one set of changes at the beginning of the interim period and another set towards the end of it." The "ideal solution" from the Government's point of view would be "that the trade in goods and services would be able to continue as it does now".

- [Environment Secretary Confirms Upcoming White Papers](#). Source Parliament.uk
Michael Gove MP spoke to the Environment, Food and Rural Affairs select committee yesterday regarding a range of areas such as forthcoming legislation and Brexit work by his department. Gove said that he hoped the impending Fisheries Bill would be introduced shortly with the Agricultural Bill to follow in May/June of 2018. The Secretary of State confirmed that a fisheries white paper should be published before Christmas and an agricultural white paper in the early New Year.
- [UK Parliament Passes Brexit Bill](#). Source Parliament.uk
The EU Withdrawal Bill passed its second reading late on Monday night by 326 to 290, after nine hours of debate and contributions by 107 MPs. Members of Parliament from both sides [tabled their amendments](#) following the late night agreement on 12th September.
- [Food law: What does Brexit mean for food labelling?](#) [Podcast] Source Agribusiness Intelligence
- [A Future Partnership Paper: Future Policy, Defence and Development](#). Source .gov.uk

Events:

- [Brexit: Legal Consequences for the EU](#). Source Academy of European Law. 28 September.

FISHERIES & AQUACULTURE, TRADE AND FOOD SAFETY ISSUES

- [Multi-annual plan for demersal stocks in the North Sea and the fisheries exploiting those stocks](#). Source European Parliament.

On September 13, the European Parliament's plenary discussed its draft report on the multi-annual plan for demersal stocks in the North Sea. Some of the key issues raised in the debate were the inclusion of leisure fisheries in the plan, how the plan would work after Brexit, and ensuring sufficient flexibility.

On September 14, The Plenary adopted the report with 328 votes in favour, 232 against and 19 abstentions.

- [FVO Audit: evaluate the control of residues and contaminants in live animals and animal products including controls on veterinary medicinal products in Zimbabwe](#). Source FVO

This audit was carried out in parallel with an audit on fishery products (reference DG(SANTE) 2017-6148). The report concludes that in recent years, Zimbabwe has failed to effectively implement the residue monitoring plan approved by the EU. Therefore, there are no reliable guarantees on the residue status of animal products eligible for export to the EU. The report makes a recommendation to the competent authorities of Zimbabwe aimed at rectifying the shortcomings identified and enhancing the implementing and control measures in place.

EP Questions:

- [Fleet Capacity](#). Aguilera Garcia (S&D)
- ['Choke Species'](#). Millán Mon (PPE)
- [Advisory Council Recommendations](#). José Blanco López (S&D)
- [Fake Food and Public Health](#). Seb Dance (S&D)

- [Shrimps and Mangroves](#). Marco Affronte (Verts/ALE)
- [Fines on Fishermen for Entering Ports Unannounced](#). Annie Schreijer-Pierik (PPE)
- [Closed Fishing Season and Croatia](#). Marco Affronte (Verts/ALE)
- [High Concentrations of Cesium-137 in Canned Tuna](#). Daniel Buda (PPE)
- [Tariff-Free Trade in Bluefin Tuna under the JEFTA](#). Anja Hazekamp (GUE/NGL) and Anne-Marie Mineur (GUE/NGL)

Useful links:

- [Lack of implementation of EU funds hampers efforts to achieve CFP objectives](#). Source EuroPêche
- [The Commission's early ban on bluefin tuna fishing in 2008 cannot give fishermen a right to compensation](#). Source Court of Justice of the EU.
- [Public consultation on the implementation of the Atlantic action plan closes 22nd Sep](#). Source DG MARE

Events:

- [Scientific Seminar on the status of European fish stocks](#). 27 September. Brussels.
- [Safeguarding the Food Chain - Protecting Authenticity and Integrity](#). October 5-6. Dublin.
- [Our Ocean 2017](#). 5-6 October. Malta.
- [Humber Seafood Summit](#). October 10-11. Grimsby.