

BRUSSELS UPDATE 22/04/2016 - 29/04/2016

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SEAFISH BRUSSELS: NEW EVENT IN THE COMING MONTHS

Seafish will host a new event in Brussels to facilitate discussions on topics of relevance. It will be a perfect opportunity for you to exchange views with representatives of the European Institutions and other EU stakeholder.

I have some suggestions for you but of course this is only an attempt to introduce some ideas:

- Added water in fish products (the European Parliament is likely to develop its own report on this issue)
- Challenges on food safety in particular as regards fish products.
- Update on Trade in fish products.
- IUU fishing

I would really appreciate your feedback in terms of topics for discussion and suitable dates (from now till next April).

IUU FISHING

- **Thailand: ethical and sustainable fisheries**

In conjunction with the Seafood Expo Global, The Royal Government of Thailand held a seminar entitled "One year on: Thailand's journey towards sustainable & ethical fisheries". Presentations were given by the Ambassador of Thailand to the European Union, and by representatives from the Department of Fisheries, the Ministry of Agriculture and Cooperatives, the Ministry of Labour, the Command Centre to Combat Illegal Fishing (CCCIF), the Thai police and the Shrimp Sustainable Supply Chain Task Force (SSSCTF).

The Thai government representatives explained the measures that have been improved to eradicate IUU fishing and to improve labour conditions of workers in the seafood sector. The anti-IUU measures include improvements to port measures, fishery management, fishing control and surveillance, and international cooperation. The government is cracking down on labour abuses with increased penalties for the use of child labour, improved migrant worker management, introduction of free movement between employers, improved regulatory and enforcement framework and capacity, as well as improved international cooperation. The SSSCTF is a group of US and EU retailers, Thai manufacturers, governments and NGOs that is working to address social and environmental issues. The group is primarily working on traceability, on establishing a Thai Port Code of Conduct, and on managing resources through Fishery Improvement Projects.

- **EU & Canada took measures to strengthen their fight against IUU fishing – source DG MARE**

The Canadian Minister of Fisheries Oceans and the Canadian Coast Guard, Hunter Tootoo and the EU Commissioner for Fisheries Karmenu Vella signed a joint declaration binding both countries to cooperate in several areas. In particular, it will allow Canada and the EU to strengthen monitoring and compliance measures, and to exchange information on suspected and proven cases of non-compliance.

For more information follow [this link](#)

- **Sri Lanka welcomes the announcement of the lifting of EU red card**

In a press conference at the European Seafood Exposition, The Embassy of Sri Lanka in Brussels, with the co-cost Le Lien LTD and in collaboration with Seafood Exporter's Association of Sri Lanka (SEALS) brought to the attention of the market players of the key developments that had taken place in the industry complying with international standards and contributing to sustain the fishery resources through ethical practices, and the new opportunities available in the seafood industry in Sri Lanka.

- **Roundtable "Exploring the role of Industry in the EU's carding process"**

EJF, Oceana and Pew celebrated a roundtable event taking place on Thursday 28th April. The aim of the event was for one hand to present a draft of a briefing on the key factors that influence the EC's decision to issue a yellow or red card to a non-EU country for failing to act sufficiently to combat IUU fishing and on the other, to facilitate an exchange of views with representatives of the EU seafood industry on the carding process and to identify the stages at which stakeholders can be part of the process and those areas where industry could further support countries in the process.

The conclusions achieved in this event will be available by the end of May and the final briefing developed by these organizations will be also available at the beginning of May.

- **The EU attended the first round of international negotiations on measures to prevent unregulated fisheries in the Arctic high seas – source DG MARE.**

The international community started negotiating an agreement aimed at preventing the opening up of unregulated fisheries in the Central Arctic Ocean. Delegations from Canada, China, Denmark (in respect of the Faroes and Greenland), the EU, Japan, Korea, Norway, Russia and the United States were present.

The second round of negotiations is to take place from 6 to 8 July 2016.

ETHICS

- **Commission adopts a proposal for a Directive to improve the working conditions in the fishing sector – Source EC**

The European Commission has joined an agreement by social partners in the fishing sector on working conditions through a legal proposal for a Directive. In 2013, the EU social partners reached an agreement to align EU law with the "Work in Fishing" Convention 2007 of the International Labour Organisation (ILO).

The proposed Directive will improve the living and working conditions of fishermen. It includes minimum requirements for:

- Work on board (e.g. minimum age, medical certificate, information in the employment contract)
- Conditions of service (working time limits, right of repatriation)
- Accommodation and food
- Occupational safety and health protection, including medical treatment on board and ashore

For more information follow [this link](#)

FOOD SAFETY

- **Changes within DG SANTE: Directorate F Health & Food audits and analysis (formerly FVO)**

On the occasion of the Seafood Expo a representative from the FVO presented the following changes within this Directorate General to the EU stakeholders.

On audits (and other activities) will verify of compliance with EU legislation/standards on food safety, food quality, animal health, animal welfare, plant health, medical devices, active pharmaceutical ingredients in Member States, Candidate Countries, and in third Countries exporting to EU.

Concerning Exports, the role of SANTE F4 would cover health warning. However it should be noted that DG SANTE Export Strategy is still in development. It would be in charge of enhancing the capacity of the EU to export food and feed and promoting exports of food and feed by the provision of information and assurance to non-EU countries on the reliability of the EU regulatory framework.

- **FVO audit – Vietnam fishery products - source DG SANTE**

The Food and Veterinary office carried out an audit in Costa Rica from 25 January to 4 February 2016 and. In its report FVO concludes that there is an official control system in place in Vietnam covering the production, processing and distribution of fishery products, which allow the competent authority to guarantee that fishery products exported to the EU comply with relevant elements of the export health certificate. However, the system is weakened by the lack of fishing vessel inspections and checks on consignments before signing health certificates.

The full report of FVO and the Competent Authority response to the report recommendation can be found [here](#)

Useful links:

- [EUMOFA – Guidelines on data and methodology for price structure analysis](#)
- [Proposal for a Council Implementing Decision amending the list of non-cooperating third countries in fighting IUU fishing pursuant to Regulation \(EC\) No 1005/2008 establishing a Community system to prevent, deter and eliminate illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing.](#)
- [EP in-depth analysis - Vietnam: Despite human rights concerns a promising partner for the EU in Asia](#)
- [DG TRADE: Handbook for Trade sustainability impact assessment 2nd edition](#)
- [The Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership \(TTIP\) – State of Play](#)
- [Road map: Ex-post and ex-ante evaluation of the protocol to the Sustainable Fisheries Partnership Agreement \(SFPA\) between the EU and the Republic of Guinea Bissau](#)
- [MEDFISH4EVER](#)

Events:

- [Tackling food fraud: Industry initiatives and analytical solutions to ensure the authenticity of food and drink.](#) May 13th. Campden BRI, Chipping Campden, Gloucestershire, GL55 6LD, UK
- [MSP Stakeholder Series 6th Conference: Maritime Spatial Planning Worldwide \(MSP\).](#) June 23-24, University of the Azores, Ponta Delgada, Azores

DG MARE:

http://ec.europa.eu/information_society/newsroom/cf/mare/news.cfm?subweb=342&sub=1&lang=en

EFSA: <http://www.efsa.europa.eu/>

Other events:

<http://europa.eu/newsroom/calendar/?siteLanguage=en>

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