

Brussels Weekly update – 10/03/2017

Over the next few months, we'll be reporting back how Brexit is playing out across the water. Deeper insights will be shared on our website and through our Seafish Round-Up' industry newsletter - contact Nick.Connelly@seafish.co.uk to subscribe.

EU INSTITUTIONS

- **European Parliament:**

EP questions on Brexit: European Parliament 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 a MEP can submit a maximum of five questions per month.

- [EU-UK relations after Brexit](#) - Raymond Finch (EFDD)

- [May invites Tajani to London to discuss Brexit](#) – Source EurActive

New European Parliament President Antoni Tajani will make a special trip to London, by invitation of Theresa May, to discuss Brexit. EP President Tajani is a member of the European People's Party (EPP), and it looks that his relationship with Prime Minister May will be better than his predecessor, the German Social Democrat Party chief Martin Schulz.

- [Conclusions by the President of the European Council, following the European Council meeting on March 9](#). Source European Council

The European Council deliberated on [THIS](#) document. It was supported by 27 Members of European Council, but it did not gather consensus. Beside this the European Council re-elected Mr Donald Tusk President of the European Council for the period from 1 June 2017 until 30 November 2019.

MEMBER STATES

The Netherlands

- [VisNed is ready for Brexit negotiations](#) (Association of Producer organisations of Dutch Demersal Fisheries)

The message of VisNed as regards fisheries and Brexit is very clear: no free access to the European market for British fish, if the UK do guarantee free access to its waters. To explain their concerns VisNed and NVB (Dutch Fish Marketing Board) have met leadership of the Dutch Task Force on Brexit. These organisations also met European colleagues in Brussels more specifically Member States representatives, a large number of Members of the European Parliament (from the UK and other MS). They also met Director General of DG Mare.

Ireland and Spain

- [Agri-Fish Council Provides Opportunity for Brexit Exchanges](#) – Source Irish Ministry for Agriculture, Food and the Marine

The Irish Minister for Agriculture, Food and the Marine, Michael Creed said on the occasion of the EU Council for Fisheries and Agriculture "I was very happy to have bilateral meetings on both agri-food and fisheries aspects of Brexit with a number of Member States, and with Commissioner Phil Hogan. I met my counterparts from Spain, Scotland and from Estonia, ahead of the latter's assumption of the Council Presidency later this year. I also met my counterpart and current Council President from Malta for a very useful and informative discussion. I intend to build further on these contacts through

bilateral meetings with other key Member States in the coming weeks, in respect of which officials from my Department also held preparatory discussions today.”

Referring in more detail to his discussion with his Spanish counterpart, the Minister said: “This was a very useful opportunity to identify common concerns, and we agreed that we will work towards building a common platform involving the main Member States operating within the UK 200-mile fishery limits. The EU fishing industry is taking a similar approach, and our combined efforts will strengthen our delivery of the EU fishing priorities in the Brexit negotiations.”

MORE INFORMATION

- House of Lords oral evidence: [Brexit - EU budget](#). Source Bruegel
- House of Lords: [Brexit: UK-EU movement of people](#)

This report examines what the Government’s pledge to deliver control over EU immigration might mean in practice. The free movement of persons is a legal construct, and its foundations are in EU law. It is set to end automatically when the UK ceases to be a member of the EU bound by EU law.

- House of Lords: [UK trade options beyond 2019](#). First Report of Session 2016–17.

This report analyses the factual implications for the UK’s future trading relationships of the UK’s different options for trade after Brexit, and the issues that the Government will need to resolve in each case: the UK’s relationship with the World Trade Organization (WTO); the Free Trade Agreement (FTA) the Government plans to strike with the EU; the implications of the UK falling back on trading with the EU under WTO rules alone; and the UK’s future trading relationship with non-EU countries.

- [PM statement at European Council Meeting: 9 March 2017](#). Source UK Government.
- [Consumer groups outline recommendations for Brexit talks](#). Source BEUC
- [EU budget post-Brexit - Confronting reality, exploring viable solutions](#). Source European Policy Centre.
- UK Chamber of Commerce in Belgium organises: [Brexit: what would it mean for my business?](#) Monday, 23 May 2016

FISHERIES

- [Food safety: simpler rules proposed for small retailers](#). Source EFSA

Under current European hygiene legislation, food businesses are obliged to develop and implement food safety management systems (FSMS) including prerequisite programme (PRP) activities and hazard analysis and critical control point principles. This requirement is especially challenging for small food retail establishments, where a lack of expertise and other resources may limit the development and implementation of effective FSMS

To help overcome this problem, EFSA has developed simple FSMS for five types of small food business – a butcher’s shop, a grocery, a bakery, a fishmonger and an ice cream shop – that are easy to understand and implement.

- [FVO Audit - US: evaluation of US control systems in place governing the production of fishery products intended for export to the EU](#)

A FVO audit mission was carried out in the US from 20 June to 01 July 2016. The main objective of this audit was to verify that the recognised conditions of equivalence for fishery products are being delivered concerning intended exports to the European Union.

This report concludes that the system of official controls implemented by the Food and Drug Administration is in general able to ensure that the relevant United States requirements for fish and

fishery products are largely fulfilled by food business operators. The effectiveness of the system is affected by:

- some inconsistencies in the official controls conducted by Food and Drug Administration investigators and state inspectors when they carry out official controls on behalf of the Food and Drug Administration and,
- the fact that contrary to United States requirements, fishery products which have fallen on the floor during processing are considered as fit for human consumption after chemical rinses have been used to recondition them.

The certification system put in place as regards consignments exported directly by food business operators largely covers the requirements for issuing European Union health certificates. However, the system is negatively affected by the absence of documented procedures and guidelines concerning the issuance of partially completed health certificates (in batches) and the measures put in place to mitigate the risk of fraudulent use of these certificates. As regards exports from brokers, the system as implemented, does not reliably exclude exports from facilities not listed for European Union export or the inclusion in consignments of ineligible products.

- [New online tool allows consumers to assess the health benefits and risks of seafood.](#)
Source ECsafeSeafood

FishChoice, a new online tool to help consumers and professionals efficiently and effectively balance the benefits and risks of eating seafood, has been launched by the EU-funded ECsafeSEAFOOD project at www.fishchoice.eu.

FishChoice is a digital tool which assists users by taking both the benefits and risks into consideration when choosing seafood. Two versions of the tool have been designed, one for everyday users and one for professionals working in the field of nutrition and health. Both versions are freely available at the website. The tool allows the user to create a weekly menu by selecting among 24 of the most consumed seafood species in Europe. The benefits and risks for each choice are then calculated by comparison with threshold values. What makes this program particularly unique is the inclusion of specific information for pregnant women and nursing mothers, whose increased health risk from consuming certain species such as tuna, was incorporated into the system.

- [EU and US tackling plastic pollution of the Ocean](#) – Source DG MARE

The fight against plastic pollution is one of the four main themes of the 2017 [Our Ocean conference](#), to be hosted by the EU in Malta on 5-6 October. High-level ocean champions from around the world will gather under the motto “Our Ocean – an Ocean for Life” to underscore the importance of ocean protection and sustainability. Initiated by the United States in 2014, the first three Our Ocean conferences generated commitments valued at over 8 billion euros to protect our ocean and commitments to protect 9.9 million square kilometres of ocean – an area almost the size of Europe.

EP Questions:

- [Quotas for tuna caught with traps in Spain](#) - Paloma López Bermejo (GUE/NGL)
- [Fishing opportunities with the Cook Islands](#) - João Ferreira (GUE/NGL)

Useful links:

- [COMMISSION DELEGATED REGULATION \(EU\) .../... of XXX amending Delegated Regulation \(EU\) 2017/117 establishing fisheries conservation measures for the protection of the marine environment in the Baltic Sea and repealing Regulation \(EU\) 2015/1778](#)
- [EP INTA - Impact of international trade & the EU's trade policies on global value chains](#)
- [Council Decision \(EU\) 2017/418 of 28 February 2017 on the conclusion on behalf of the European Union of the Sustainable Fisheries Partnership Agreement between the European Union and the Government of the Cook Islands and the Implementation Protocol thereto](#)
- [IUU FISHING: List of Member States and their competent authorities concerning Articles 15\(2\), 17\(8\) and 21\(3\) of Council Regulation \(EC\) No 1005/2008.](#)
- [EP analysis: New framework for fisheries data collection](#)

- [List of ports in EU Member States where landings and transshipment operations of fishery products are allowed and port services are accessible for third country fishing vessels, in accordance with Article 5\(2\) of Council Regulation \(EC\) No 1005/2008.](#)
- [EUMOFA Monthly Highlights No.1/2017](#)

Events:

- [Aquaculture Advisory Council \(ACC\) Working groups 2 and 3.](#) 13-14 March
- [6th European Tuna Conference.](#) 24 April

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