

Brussels Weekly update – 19/05/2017

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:

- [Termination of the lease at the European Medicines Agency](#) - Mireille D'Ornano (ENF)
- [Brexit — UK-US trade relations](#) - Franck Proust (PPE)
- [Brexit: MEPs want EU and UK to take care of citizens' rights first](#): A joint hearing organised by the committees of Civil Liberties, Employment and Petition on the situation and rights of EU citizens in the UK. In this respect, Parliament's Brexit coordinator, Guy Verhofstadt informed that an EP resolution on this issue will be adopted by the EP probably at the end of the summer break.

- **European Commission:**

- [Speech by President Juncker at the European Parliament Plenary session on the conclusions of the Special European Council \(Article 50\) of 29 April 2017](#)
- [Reflection paper on harnessing globalisation](#): On 10 May the EC launched a new paper which is part of a series of reflection papers on key topics that will define the coming years.

- **European Council:**

- [Report by President Donald Tusk to the European Parliament on the Special European Council \(Art. 50\) of 29 April](#)

The Council of the EU expects to adopt the Commission proposed set of negotiating directives on Brexit, on Monday, 22 of May.

MEMBER STATES

- [EU satellite states could be part of Brexit deal](#). Source euObserver.

EEA countries have met EC Brexit negotiator Mr Barnier, who according to euObserver promised that EEA countries would not only be kept informed, but also consulted about the Brexit negotiations. The UK has not yet triggered a clause in the EEA treaty, notifying the EU that it intends to leave the EEA. If it neglects this formal obligation, the clause will likely be triggered by the EU, said Dag Werno Hotler, deputy secretary general of EFTA.

MORE INFORMATION

- [UK officials snub MEPs on Brexit](#). Source POLITICO
- [Five takeaways from analysing Brexit](#). Source Jacques Delors Institute

In this blog post, Federico Fabbrini presents five takeaways from the expert conference “The Law & Politics of Brexit” on Brexit at Dublin City University.

- [‘The Impact of Brexit on the UK’s Trade with Non-EU Member States Under the EU’s Mixed Free Trade Agreements’](#). University of Oxford
- [EU's top court makes surprise ruling on trade deals](#). Source Euronews.
- [Brexit and the Anglosphere Alternative](#). Source Australian Institute of International Affairs
- [Ask the Experts: Legal and Constitutional Implications of Brexit](#). 13 June 2017. London.

UCL and the House of Commons Library are holding a joint 'ask the experts' question time event to provide answers to key questions arising from the Brexit process.

- UK Chamber of Commerce in Belgium organises: [Brexit: what would it mean for my business?](#) Monday, 23 May 2016.

FISHERIES

- [EU grants Sri Lanka improved access to its market as incentive for reform](#). Source European Commission

The European Union will remove a significant part of the remaining import duties on Sri Lankan products as from Friday, 19 May. This will be in exchange for the country's commitment to effectively implement 27 international conventions that it has ratified on human rights, labour conditions, protection of the environment and good governance. These one-way trade preferences will consist of the full removal of duties on 66% of tariff lines, covering a wide array of products including textiles and fisheries.

More information:

- [Commission Delegated Regulation \(EU\) 2017/836 of 11 January 2017 amending Annex III to Regulation \(EU\) No 978/2012 of the European Parliament and of the Council applying a scheme of generalised tariff preferences](#).

- [Live Lobsters: import documentation in South Africa](#)

Following South Africa's adoption of the 2017 version of the Southern African Customs Union (SACU) Harmonized Nomenclature, which, in turn, is based on the Harmonized System (HS), the tariff codes of the goods assigned to the applicable import measures in South Africa have been reviewed and adapted to the new version, as applicable.

Information as regards the importation of live lobsters has been brought to the chapter on Fish and Crustaceans in accordance with the respective national compulsory specification, which took effect in February 2017. For specifics, please turn to the quoted paragraph in this overview

- [FVO audits: Honduras and Colombia](#)

Honduras:

A FVO audit mission was carried out in Honduras from 10 to 20 October 2016, as part of its programme for audits in non-EU countries. On legislation, the audit report concludes that maximum levels implemented for heavy metals in fishery products and chlorine in water are now in line with EU and national legislation respectively, even though the national legislation have not been amended. However, the gaps in the inclusion of some contaminants the RMP may weaken the ability of the competent authority to demonstrate that applied standards are at least equivalent to EU requirements.

Among other findings the report also indicates that the system in place for official controls over EU listed shrimp processing establishments can be considered in line with EU requirements. However, its implementation shows weaknesses as IVO inspections have gaps in their assessment of compliance of establishments. The fact that part of the system designed by the CA to ensure that these gaps do not occur in other establishments is not being implemented does not help provide the assurance that the control system over EU listed establishments is effective. As regards official controls of fishery products intended for EU export (shrimp and tilapia) cover all the EU requirements, FVO stressed that the lack of compliance with the additives testing official control programme together with the lack of verification of the reliability of the FBO own checks results, weakens the guarantees that EU listed establishments in Honduras comply with Article 12 (2) of Regulation EC (No) 854/2004.

Colombia:

A FVO audit mission was carried out in Colombia from 4 to 13 October 2016 and from 25 to 29 November 2016. This is the second in a series of audits dedicated to getting a clearer picture of the tuna industry as a whole and determine if the **tuna** we import meets the applicable requirements concerning public health requirements (in particular limits for **histamine and heavy metals**) also in the context of fish policy requirements and customs rules. Some weaknesses were identified which affect both the domestic and import supply chains at the level of storage and processing of raw material at freezer vessels and processing establishments. This is considered as having a low/medium risk impact on food safety. Other weaknesses were identified regarding the import controls over certain foreign vessels (approximately two percent of raw material used for export) which have the potential to be of medium risk if imports of raw materials increase. The implemented control system also presents weaknesses that may allow the production and possible export to the EU of fishery products contaminated with diesel, mainly due to the dual use of storage tanks and food business operators' quality control procedures.

- [CJEU Ruling: EU - Singapore trade agreement](#). Source Court of Justice of the European Union

On 16 May the CJEU has concluded that the free trade agreement with Singapore cannot, in its current form, be concluded by the EU alone, because some of the provisions envisaged fall within competences shared between the EU and the Member States. It follows that the free trade agreement with Singapore can, as it stands, be concluded only by the EU and the Member States acting together. There are two aspects of the agreement that, according to the Court, where the EU is not endowed with exclusive competence, namely the field of non-direct foreign investment ('portfolio' investments made without any intention to influence the management and control of an undertaking) and the regime governing dispute settlement between investors and States.

EP Questions:

- [Total allowable catches in accordance with the maximum sustainable yield](#) - Clara Eugenia Aguilera García (S&D)
- [Import controls to combat illegal fishing](#) - Roberta Metsola (PPE)
- [Measures and instruments for providing aid to the fish processing sector](#) - Ruža Tomašić (ECR)
- [Imports of seafood products into the EU](#) - Nuno Melo (PPE)

Agendas:

- [Standing Committee on Plants, Animals, Food and Feed - Section: "Biological safety of the food chain"](#). May 17 2017
- [EP Committee for Fisheries](#). 30th May.
- [Agriculture and Fisheries Council](#). 11th May.

Useful links:

- [DG TRADE: Overview of FTA and other trade negotiations](#)
- [Feed for certain organic aquaculture animals](#)
- [Minutes of meeting with civil society on the EU-MEXICO trade negotiations.](#)
- [EUMOFA: European Market Observatory for fishery and aquaculture products](#)

- [EC - Report of Tariff Quotas](#)
- [Report of the 18th EU-Japan FTA/EPA negotiating round](#)

Events:

- [High-level event on "Skills needs in an evolving maritime green economy"](#). 1 June. Brussels
- [Hydropower and Fish Joint Workshop IEA Hydropower TCP](#). 29-31 May. Brussels
- [International Conference on Molluscan Shellfish Safety \(ICMSS\)](#). 14-18 May.

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