



EUROPEAN COMMISSION
DIRECTORATE-GENERAL FOR MARITIME AFFAIRS AND FISHERIES

THE DIRECTOR-GENERAL

Brussels,
A2/EG D(2014)

LDAC
Mr Antonio Cabral (Chair)
C/ del Doctor Fleming 7,
2º derecha
28036 Madrid
Spain

Subject: Prospect of the Philippines becoming a GSP+ beneficiary country

Your ref.: R-01-14/WG5

Dear Mr Cabral,

Thank you for the LDRAC letter regarding a possible entry of the Philippines into the special incentive arrangement for sustainable development and good governance of the Generalised Scheme of Preferences (GSP+).

The services of the Commission have received letters with similar content before and a meeting took place on 20 May with representatives of the industry. As explained at this meeting and in our previous correspondence on this issue, in case of an application for GSP+, the Commission's review of the application is based on the criteria set out in the GSP Regulation.¹ In particular, the Commission must examine whether all of the conditions of Article 9(1) of the GSP Regulation have been met in order to determine whether GSP+ status is to be granted to the country concerned. Detailed rules related to the procedure for granting the GSP+ have been published in a separate delegated act on 21 February 2013.²

The Commission's assessment of an application for GSP+ is objective and non-discriminatory, in line with our international obligations under the WTO. In particular, when examining the application, the Commission assesses, inter alia, the applicant's vulnerability, whether or not it has ratified all relevant conventions, the submitted binding undertaking on monitoring and reporting, and the most recent available conclusions of the monitoring bodies of the relevant conventions. This assessment is led by the Directorate-General for Trade of the Commission, in association with several

¹ Regulation (EU) of the European Parliament and of the Council No. 978/2012 (OJ L203, 31.10.2012, p.1).

² Commission Delegated Regulation (EU) No. 155/2013 (OJ L48, 21.2.2013, p.5).

others Directorate-Generals of the Commission and the EU External Action Services. As the review of the application of Philippines is still on-going, you will certainly understand that we are not in a position to comment on it at this stage.

We have taken note of your concerns regarding the effects on the EU canned tuna market of a potential granting of GSP+ preferential treatment to the Philippines. Even though the main objective of the GSP+ is to support GSP+ countries development by increasing their exports as compensation for their efforts on sustainable development, the GSP+ scheme does foresee the possibility of safeguard measures, whose main objective is to counter possible disruptive effects of GSP (including GSP+) preferences on the EU market.

If you have any further question on this reply, you can contact Ms Evangelia Georgitsi, coordinator of the Advisory Councils (evangelia.georgitsi@ec.europa.eu; +32.2.295.04.43).

Yours sincerely,



Lowri Evans

Copies: C. Rambaud, B. Focquet, E. Bianchi, E. Georgitsi (DG Maritime Affairs and Fisheries)