



EUROPEAN COMMISSION
DIRECTORATE-GENERAL FOR MARITIME AFFAIRS AND FISHERIES

THE DIRECTOR-GENERAL

Brussels,
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Mr Antonio Cabral
President
Long Distance Fleet RAC
Calle del Doctor Fleming 7, 2º derecha
28036 Madrid
SPAIN

Subject: Opinion of the LDRAC on the future agreement with Thailand as regards tuna products

Yr reference: R-02-13/WG5

Dear Mr Cabral,

Thank you for the LDRAC opinion on the negotiations of a Free Trade Agreement (FTA) with Thailand. My services are fully aware of the sensitivities of the EU industry in the canned fish and seafood sectors in the context of our bilateral trade negotiations with Thailand, which is indeed a key player in the canned tuna sector. A large part of the EU tuna canning sector has responded to the fisheries-specific questionnaire submitted to consultation in advance of these negotiations and this helped us to refine our understanding of the sector's sensitivities.

The LDRAC recommendation highlights the importance of ensuring that labour and environmental issues are duly covered in the FTA, in particular with a view to supporting sustainable fish trade. In this regard, consistently with the approach developed in other recent negotiations, the EU aims at including in the FTA with Thailand ambitious provisions on trade and sustainable development which deal with labour and environment aspects of importance in a trade context. The EU considers as key elements of such provisions a commitment to adherence to and effective implementation of key principles and multilateral international agreements (notably International Labour Organisation core labour standards and conventions and core Multilateral Environmental Agreements), as well as to the effective enforcement of, and non-derogation from, domestic laws in these areas. The EU aims to also include dedicated provisions on fisheries that underline the importance of ensuring global fisheries governance by applying the principles of the main international agreements, of cooperating in the Regional Fisheries Management Organizations (RFMOs) and fighting illegal, unreported and unregulated (IUU) fishing activities. Provisions on trade and sustainable development should also provide for channels for dialogue on trade related labour and environmental issues and for robust and

effective monitoring and dispute settlement procedures, based on transparency, dialogue and cooperation, also with the involvement of civil society.

I would like to take this opportunity to inform you that, in addition to the FTA, the EU is seeking to increase political dialogue and cooperation with Thailand. The EU has concluded negotiations on a Partnership and Co-operation Agreement (PCA), which will open up further opportunities to develop cooperation and support in areas such as the promotion of sustainable management of marine resources, capacity building for implementing and negotiating multilateral environment agreements, decent work agenda and health and safety at the workplace.

I thank you for your continued interest and constructive input. If you have any question on this reply, you can contact Ms Evangelia Georgitsi, coordinator of the Regional Advisory Councils (evangelia.georgitsi@ec.europa.eu; +32.2.295.04.43).

Yours sincerely,



Lowri Evans

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