

## Working Group 2: EU Markets

### Minutes

Friday, 6 June 2025 (09:30 – 13:00 CET)

Copa Cogeca (Meeting Room B), Rue de Trèves 61, 1040 Brussels

Interpretation in EN, ES, FR

Welcome from the Chair, Pierre Commère

#### Presentation

**Adoption of the agenda and of the last meeting's minutes (27.03.25):** Adopted

Guus Pastoor (Visfederatie) expressed interest in a brief update by the European Commission on the impact of the sanctions imposed by the EU against Russia.

Fabian Schäfer (Fischverband) expressed interest in an update by the European Commission regarding the termination of the simplified arrangement for catch certificates with the USA.

The Chair informed that the first issue could be addressed in the context of the agenda point “Trade Agreements & Trade Policy Instruments”, while the second issue could be addressed under the “Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated (IUU) Fishing” point.

- **State-of-play of the action points of the last meeting - information**

- Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated (IUU) Fishing:

- Draft advice on “urgent need for effective implementation of EU import control rules across Member States” to be considered via an ordinary written procedure.
  - Approval procedure ongoing.

- Outermost Regions:

- Secretariat, in collaboration with the CCRUP Secretariat, with informal involvement of the most interested members, to pursue an improvement of the substantiation of the allegations made in the draft advice on “Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated Fishing in the Outermost Regions of the European Union”.
- Following the consideration of the revised draft advice by the CCRUP, the Secretariat will put forward the document to the Executive Committee for consideration and potential approval.
  - With the involvement of WG2 Chair, EJP and Visfederatie, footnotes substantiating allegations added to the document.
  - Advice adopted on 21 May 2026.



## Trade Agreements & Trade Policy Instruments

- **Update on latest trade developments by Commission representatives (MARE B3), including:**
  - **Indonesia (negotiation of Free Trade Agreement)**

Pawel Szatkowski (DG MARE) explained that the negotiations on the Free Trade Agreement with Indonesia were supposed to have concluded in 2024, but an agreement had not yet been reached. A ministerial meeting was scheduled to take place in Indonesia on 6 June 2025, which could trigger the political commitment to conclude the negotiations in the near future.

Mr Szatkowski informed that agreement was reached on the rules of origin, which followed the EU's standard position on vessels' conditions. The issue of market access for processed fishery products, particularly canned and preserved tuna, was still under discussion. The Commission was taking a cautious approach and did not include tuna products in its initial market access offer. On the other hand, Indonesia was seeking full market access for canned tuna products. Indonesia was making comparisons with the agreements reached with other countries in the region, since, for example, a quota of 11.500 tonnes of canned tuna was agreed with Vietnam. As for the discussions on the liberalisation for tuna loins, he recalled that Indonesian products currently entered the EU market with 0% tariffs via the Autonomous Tariff Quotas regime. Nevertheless, Indonesia was seeking an increase in its market access.

Mr Szatkowski argued that the approach on the described matters should be broader, since there were ongoing negotiations with Thailand and the Philippines. In the near future, negotiations were going to be launched with Malaysia. Therefore, a comprehensive view was needed on the potential market offers. The Commission representative recalled that Indonesia was not the main supplier of canned tuna products to the EU and that the Philippines benefited from the General Scheme of Preferences (GSP+).

Mr Szatkowski added that Indonesia was also negotiating a free trade agreement with the USA, which also needed to be taken into account in the EU negotiations.

- **Thailand (negotiation of Free Trade Agreement)**

Pawel Szatkowski (DG MARE) informed that there were no major developments since the previous update. The latest round of negotiations took place in March 2025. The next one would take place in June 2025. Under the next round, there would be market access offers. The EU's offer would exclude liberalisation for sensitive fishery products, such as preserved tuna. However, Thailand was requesting more liberalisation.

Mr Szatkowski informed that agreement on the Trade and Sustainable Development chapter was reached, in line with the terms proposed by the EU. On rules of origin, there was agreement regarding the fishing vessels conditions, but Thailand was seeking a "relaxation" of the rules for processed fishery products, which still needed to be addressed. The Commission representative added that a broader view was needed to account for the negotiations with other countries.

- **Mercosur (entry into force of Free Trade Agreement)**



Kinga Malinowska-Facci (DG MARE) explained that there were no changes to the agreement reached in 2019 made available on the DG TRADE website. The additional agreement of December 2024, contained sustainability elements and did not impact fishery products. Concerning the procedural process, Ms Malinowska-Facci informed that the translation of the agreement was being finalised. Internal consultations were ongoing. The Commission was aiming to present the agreement for approval by the Council before the Summer break. She recalled that the timeline for the approval was dependent on the Council.

- **USA (impact of new trade tariffs)**

Kinga Malinowska-Facci (DG MARE) recalled that the USA imposed earlier in the year additional tariffs of 25% on the EU for aluminium and cars, and the so-called “reciprocal tariffs” of 20%. Although the USA suspended the so called ‘reciprocal’ tariffs to allow space for negotiations, the 10% tariff for all products on top of the usual tariff rates remained in place.

Ms Malinowska-Facci said that the EU was seeking the removal of the additional tariffs already in place and aiming to avoid the entrance into force, on 9 July 2025, of the 20% tariffs. The EU was prioritising a negotiated solution, but the outcome of negotiations remained unpredictable. The process included contacts at the Presidents’ level (incl. a call that allowed to decrease tension after the announcement, in the end of May, that the tariff for the EU could increase to 50%) and meetings between Commissioner Šefčovič with his USA counterparts in June.

Ms Malinowska-Facci underscored that the Commission must defend the interests of the EU. In absence of a negotiated solution, the EU would be applying countermeasures. A first list of products to be covered by countermeasures, which was meant to react to the tariffs on steel and aluminium, had already been adopted, following a public consultation, and its implementation was suspended until 14 July 2025 to facilitate negotiations with the USA. The list was based on what has already been prepared under the previous mandate of President Trump and contains only very few fishery products. The Commission is aware of some sourcing concerns of EU stakeholders, in particular regarding Jordani shrimps.

Ms Malinowska-Facci informed that the second list of products was under preparation, which would include many more products, including a long list of fishery products. Alaska pollock fillets would be excluded due to the strong import interest of EU operators and the lack of alternative supply. The tariff rates had not yet been decided. The public consultation on the second list would come to the end the following week. She encouraged the members to provide their feedback directly to DG TRADE.

Ms Malinowska-Facci stated that the Commission was analysing the impact of the tariffs. In the view of the Commission, the tariffs introduced by the USA were not actually “reciprocal”. For a full projection of the impacts, it was necessary to account for the negotiations between the USA and other countries as well as the level of tariffs imposed on them. This assessment was needed to determine how the competitive position of the EU products in the USA market may evolve.

- **Exchange of views**



The Chair wanted to know how the Most Favoured Nation treatment and the World Trade Organisation's General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT) were being applied.

Kinga Malinowska-Facci (DG MARE) responded that the GATT was in place and that the EU would prefer that developments followed the agreed rules. Nevertheless, the World Trade Organisation's Appellate Body had been paralysed making the Organisation's dispute settlement system not an efficient way to reach a settlement.

Guus Pastoor (Visfederatie) drew attention to the recent imposition of sanctions against two Russian companies, while recalling that Russia was a large supplier of white fish to the EU market. Mr Pastoor asked for information on the practical implementation, particularly the entry into force of the sanctions. There were products coming to the EU that were not yet paid. He also asked for more information on the difference between direct and indirect payments, particularly the impact when purchasing a mix of fishery products from other companies. He also wanted to know, within the European Commission, who was responsible for the implementation of the sanctions as well as for ensuring common interpretation across Member States.

Pawel Szatkowski (DG MARE) replied that DG MARE received a series of questions and a letter from AIPCE-CEP on the issue raised by Mr Pastoor. Mr Szatkowski informed that he would be consulting with the relevant colleagues. The European External Action Service was taking the lead.

Guus Pastoor (Visfederatie) stressed that companies were under pressure and that answers were needed as soon as possible.

Alessandro Manghisi (ASC) asked about the import of shrimps from Indonesia. The competent authorities in Indonesia had not been able to provide the necessary documentation to DG SANTE. The same issue was also happening with India.

Felicidad Fernández (ANFACO-CECOPESCA), concerning the negotiation of the free trade agreement with Indonesia, wanted to know if the agreement on the rules of origin also applied to transformed fishery and aquaculture products. In terms of market access, Ms Fernández called for the exclusion of canned tuna products. She recalled that Indonesia has a tuna fleet.

Concerning the free trade agreement with Vietnam, Ms Fernández highlighted that, in practice, Vietnam was exporting even more canned tuna products than what was stipulated in the tariff quota of the FTA, which meant that the market offer was very attractive.

As for Thailand, Ms Fernández stated that the country had flexibility in their production due to a possibility of having a tuna fleet. She expressed opposition to flexibility for prepared and preserved fishery and aquaculture products. In terms of market access, she called for the exclusion of tuna products. She wanted to know when the negotiations on the market access lists would take place, including discussions on sensitive products.



Daniel Voces (Europêche) welcomed the clear views from the Commission on not pursuing liberalisation for canned tuna products. Mr Voces wanted to know whether the same view would be taken regarding the liberalisation of tuna loins. In his view, it was a matter of sustainability and competitiveness.

Paweł Szatkowski (DG MARE), in response to Mr Manghisi, responded that he was unaware, as it was a sanitary and phytosanitary issue.

Alessandro Manghisi (ASC) responded that, according to the lists published by DG SANTE, it was an issue of lack of documentation. After November 2026, it would not be possible for Indian aquaculture shrimp to be exported into the EU.

Paweł Szatkowski (DG MARE), regarding the negotiations on rules of origin with Indonesia, confirmed that the agreement on vessel conditions was in line with the EU's position. Mr Szatkowski took note of the views of ANFACO-CECOPECA. The Commission representative recognised that even a partial opening of the market could offer advantages in the future. Even though Indonesia exports much less than the Vietnam, Indonesia has a large Exclusive Economic Zone and a tuna fleet.

Concerning Thailand, Mr Szatkowski explained that, if there is agreement on vessel conditions, there are no specific rules for specific products. The EU negotiations would continue to call for the EU's position on rules of origin. In terms of the timing of the decisions, the Commission representative stated that it was difficult to predict, as there was a first exchange of views and a first exchange of offers. There was no political commitment to conclude the agreement as soon as possible.

As for Indonesia, Mr Szatkowski informed that the EU's market access offer excluded tuna products. However, Indonesia was insisting on market access for tuna loins and canned tuna, since it is an important sector for the country. Therefore, partial liberalisation of the market access was very likely.

Caroline Gamblin (PACT'ALIM) asked for more information on the second list of USA products considered for countermeasures. Ms Gamblin called for the exclusion of frozen surimi, recalling that these raw materials are almost exclusively sourced from the USA. Otherwise, French surimi processors would face difficulties.

Kinga Malinowska-Facci (DG MARE) asked Ms Gamblin to send her the list of the corresponding Combined Nomenclature codes. Ms Malinowska-Facci encouraged PACT'ALIM to respond also directly to the public consultation.

Felicidad Fernández (ANFACO-CECOPECA) drew attention to the lack of supply alternatives for hake fillets. In her view, reflection on the impact of the 10% tariffs imposed by the USA on the operators of the fisheries and aquaculture sector was needed. Ms Fernández highlighted that EU canned tuna in olive oil was facing a tariff rate of 35% to enter the USA. She added that it was also necessary to consider the tariffs imposed on other countries. If other countries face inability to export to the USA, they will try to export to the EU market, impacting EU operators. As an example, Thailand was expected to face a "reciprocal tariff" of 36% from the USA and could reinforce its targeting of the EU market.



Kinga Malinowska-Facci (DG MARE) responded that she took note of Ms Fernández's views on hake fillets. Ms Malinowska-Facci informed that the European Commission was looking into potential trade diversion but added that it was too early for a comprehensive analysis.

The Chair recalled that the impact of the General Scheme of Preferences "Plus", which covered the Philippines, was also to be considered in the frame of the market liberalisation.

Paweł Szatkowski (DG MARE) responded that the negotiations of an FTA with the Philippines were on the third round, so at early stage. No market access offers had been exchanged yet. The Commission was preparing with the Member States.

- **Update on public consultation on the potential integration of sustainability criteria under the Autonomous Tariff Quotas for fishery products by Commission representatives (MARE B3)**

Paweł Szatkowski (DG MARE) recalled that the Commission's public consultation began in April 2025. Contributions were submitted by individual companies and national Producer Organisations. Due to the specificity of the topic, not many contributions from citizens or academics were submitted, as expected. Mr Szatkowski thanked the MAC for the valuable advice, which showed some common ground on the need to address sustainability, even though there were clearly different views between processors and producers on how to achieve it.

Mr Szatkowski further recalled that the European Ocean Pact was published the previous day. The Pact, in the section on ocean governance, made reference to the exploration on how to improve sustainability for products under the Autonomous Tariff Quotas regime. The Commission representative informed that an analysis was ongoing. There was some delay in the external study commissioned, but it was expected to be available by the end of July. In terms of schedule, the aim would be to draft the impact assessment by the end of 2025, which would allow the submission of the legislative proposal by early 2026.

The Chair wanted to know whether the study by the external consultants would be made publicly available.

Paweł Szatkowski (DG MARE) informed that the study would be made available at the same time as the Staff Working Document.

### Food and Agriculture Organisation

- **Update on the EU's mandate for the Sub-Committee on Fish Trade (8-12 September 2025) by Commission representatives (MARE B3)**

Kinga Malinowska-Facci (DG MARE) informed that the FAO's Sub-Committee on Fish Trade would be meeting at the beginning of September 2025. The EU's position was under preparation. Earlier that week, a meeting of the Bureau of the Sub-Committee took place. While internal preparations had begun, the relevant documents had not yet been made available by the FAO. Ms Malinowska-Facci offered to provide more detailed information at a later stage and encouraged the MAC to reach out for updates.



- **Exchange of views**

The Chair wanted to know who was the responsible officer in MARE B3. The Chair drew attention to the timing of the next meeting of the Working Group in September 2025.

The Secretary General asked about the possibility of MAC representatives integrating the official EU delegation, in line with the previous session of the FAO's Committee on Fisheries. The Secretary General wanted to know, based on the session's provisional agenda, whether there were topics on which advice would be particularly relevant. The aim would be to support the preparation of the EU's mandate.

Kinga Malinowska-Facci (DG MARE) informed that the responsible officer at MARE B3 was Ms Ida Le Roux. Ms Malinowska-Facci stated that, in principle, participation in the EU delegation could be accepted. As for the topics, only the provisional agenda was available yet.

- **Way forward**

The Chair proposed the circulation by the Secretariat of a questionnaire to collect input from the members on the EU's mandate ahead of the session of the Sub-Committee on Fish Trade.

### **Fisheries Control**

- **Presentation of the outcomes of the Fish-X project by Laure Guillevic (WWF)**

#### Presentation

Laure Guillevic (WWF) presented the outcomes of the Fish-X project, which aimed to provide a European Fisheries Data Space through a consultative approach. The project focused on driving the digitalisation of small-scale fisheries and ran from June 2022 to May 2025, with a duration of 36 months and a budget of six million euros. It involved seven partners, including four tech companies, two fisheries representatives, and two NGOs.

Ms Guillevic emphasised that small-scale fisheries are a crucial part of coastal economies and cultures yet remain underrepresented. The digital transition of the small-scale fleet is supported by the revised EU Fisheries Control Regulation, which sets new obligations, including that tracking devices must be installed on all small-scale fleet vessels by 2030, and electronic logbooks are required for all such vessels by 2028.

Ms Guillevic explained that the Fish-X project included a field component and several technical outputs such as the Fish-X Data Space, the Insight Platform, and a traceability system. There were three use case locations: Ireland, Portugal, and Croatia. In these regions, fishers were engaged to install tracking devices. A total of 104 Vessel Monitoring System devices and 11 electric fishing gear markers were deployed.

Ms Guillevic informed that feedback from fishers was gathered via a questionnaire, showing that 85% of participants expressed overall satisfaction. The main motivation cited was the desire to safeguard their



fishing grounds. Fishing organisations were also identified as playing a key role in addressing fishers' needs. The Fishweb tool was found useful, with potential for delivering additional information to users.

Ms Guillevic emphasised that the Fish-X Data Space facilitated the sharing of fisheries data among relevant stakeholders. It aligns with EU data space principles and the revised Fisheries Control Regulation, ultimately supporting better decision-making processes. On the Insight Platform, 255 small-scale fisheries vessels—focused on polyvalent fisheries—were included, and 4.9 million positions were processed up to April 2025. Fishing effort was derived from Vessel Monitoring System trajectories using artificial intelligence and machine learning, and the platform also incorporates electronic logbook reports and statistics. She added that the traceability platform and associated app enabled transparent and comprehensive mapping of seafood products using blockchain technology. The app allows consumers to access detailed information about the origin and journey of seafood.

Ms Guillevic highlighted that policy engagement had been a significant part of the project, with five policy papers produced. These include three white papers on small-scale fisheries digitalisation and traceability, specific policy recommendations, and a roadmap for future action. Article 58 of the Regulation was highlighted as needing to apply to both processed and prepared products, whether imported or domestically produced. It should provide precise data on catch areas, support the development of digital literacy among fishers, and reward these efforts with improved market access and product valorisation. The project supports the implementation of Global Dialogue on Seafood Traceability standards.

Ms Guillevic mentioned that several requirements were identified as crucial for a successful digital transition in small-scale fisheries, including interoperability, standardisation, and improved data collection quality. The Fish-X project envisioned the fisheries sector in 2040 as one built on trustful relationships with small-scale fishers. It aimed to promote inclusive and sustainable fisheries management, to guarantee fishing grounds and inform maritime spatial planning. In her view, the future model should be based on co-management governance and regional cooperation.

- **Exchange of views**

Sylvie Becaus (VVV) asked about the ownership of the data used in the project and the recipients. Ms Becaus wondered why a fishing vessel owner would be willing to share the necessary data, as the data could be commercially relevant.

Laure Guillevic (WWF) clarified that there would be no commercial redistribution of the data, as the project was financed by the Horizon programme. The primary motivation of the operators was improving the scientific data and the related policies. Raising the visibility of the small-scale fleet was also a goal, allowing operators to show their fishing grounds. The data sharing was compliant with GDPR, including through the appropriate use of consent forms.

María Luisa Álvarez Blanco (FEDEPESCA) recalled that there was an obligation to share the information with the national authorities. In the case of Spain, all first sales data is transmitted in real time. In her view, the main challenge was the transmission of the data on fresh products along the other parts of the value chain, particularly ensuring interoperability. The scientific and commercial names remained a challenge, particularly



due to the diversity of commercial tools. Therefore, it was necessary to identify the weakest link in the data transmission chain.

Mariano García (FACOPE) highlighted that, in his fishing port, 90% of the fleet was artisanal and the vessels, which operated daily, continuously sent information on the fishing location to the authorities. The data on the sales notes was also sent to the authorities. Mr García stated that there were issues related to the size of the fleet, particularly the corresponding platform for data. He wanted to know whether the project's platform would allow including information on sales by third parties.

María Luisa Álvarez Blanco (FEDEPESCA) asked for more information about what was newly provided by the project in comparison with the mandatory legal requirements, since data was already transmitted from the fishing vessels to the authorities. Ms Álvarez underscored the importance of a rapid and efficient implementation of a digital system for the access to data on the products, particularly on the names.

Laure Guillevic (WWF) explained that the core idea was to pursue innovation in the collection and use of fisheries data. Ms Guillevic highlighted the development of a data space aimed at creating a more open and accessible framework for data collection. She acknowledged that, given the sensitive nature of the information, certain types of data remained under the authority of the relevant authorities. Nevertheless, the project aimed to develop more automated methods for data gathering.

Anne Gautrais-Le Goff (DG MARE) highlighted that the Fish-X project was a research project, even though it connected with the revision of the Fisheries Control Regulation. The project focused on digitalisation of fisheries and enhancing data collection for recreational fisheries. Ms Gautrais-Le Goff confirmed that traceability data is not legally required to be made publicly available. The data is accessible to control authorities and operators can choose to share it. She added that it was useful to understand what is possible to achieve with the existing data.

The Chair asked about the long-term maintenance of the project's online platform, following the conclusion of the research period, particularly in the context of the entry into force of new digitalisation requirements under the revised Fisheries Control Regulation.

Laure Guillevic (WWF) responded that the platform would remain available for another six months. Ms Guillevic added that it was necessary to look for new funding sources to maintain the developed tools. Funding through the next Horizon Europe calls could be considered.

Pim Visser (NOVA), concerning the financial aspect, commented that the development cost was covered by research financing, but that, to maintain the platform, it would require a subscription fee from fishers. Therefore, operators would need to know the annual cost and the benefits. Mr Visser argued that there were already many solutions available on the market for electronic logbooks. He wondered if the matter would not be better addressed by the commercial market.

Jean-Marie Robert (Les Pêcheurs de Bretagne) expressed agreement with Mr Visser. Mr Robert highlighted the impactful cost of Vessel Monitoring Systems for small-scale vessels. He wondered about the added value of the project, since it was developed before the conclusion of the revision of the Fisheries Control



Regulation. In his view, if the tools developed provided additional functionalities and less costs when compared to others, then fishers could be interested in subscribing.

Sylvie Becaus (VVV) commented that the Fish-X project was another tool in development in the context of several other tools for fisheries control. Ms Becaus argued electronic systems could be useful to decrease the impact of physical inspections, particularly in the case of the small-scale fleet.

Laure Guillevic (WWF) responded that the control measures were under development by the Commission, including on the use of Vessel Monitoring Systems and the reporting of data. Ms Guillevic emphasised that the project was developed with the small-scale fleet in mind. In terms of the costs, she expressed availability to share the contact details for the company responsible for the electronic devices.

### Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated (IUU) Fishing

- **Overview of existing procedures and dialogues with third countries by Commission representatives (MARE B4) Stavroula Kremmydiotou and Lil Kerherve**

The Chair asked the MARE B4 representatives to include Vietnam in their overview. In the context of the pre-identification (“yellow card”), Vietnam was supposed to have been audited by the Commission in Autumn 2024, but the mission was postponed to 2025. Vietnam had been limiting its exports to the EU market to safeguard shipments in anticipation of the audit. Therefore, he wanted to know more about the audit and potential findings as well as corresponding schedule. The Chair recalled that one member requested an update regarding the termination of the simplified arrangement for catch certificates with the USA.

Stavroula Kremmydiotou (DG MARE), on Vietnam, informed that, since the adoption of the “yellow card”, the government had increased efforts to combat IUU fishing, including through a revision of the legislation on control, surveillance, and monitoring. However, the latest progress report, dated 2 June 2025, showed continued challenges in control and enforcement, particularly issues of implementation by regional authorities, even though Vietnam was reviewing the division of competences to simplify. Ms Kremmydiotou recalled that a significant number, even though decreasing, of Vietnamese vessels operated in the waters of third countries. There were issues related to the disconnecting of Vessel Monitoring Systems as well as inconsistencies in the implementation of port control measures and control of direct landings. She informed that, the following week, another report would be drafted.

On French Guiana, Ms Kremmydiotou underscored that, following sightings from France, the Commission was taking action to address IUU fishing by vessels of third countries, namely from Suriname, Guyana, Brazil, and Venezuela. A first mission to Suriname to address IUU fishing took place in April 2025, which allowed for an assessment of the Surinamese system. Several shortcomings were identified. An observation note and recommendations would be sent to the authorities. The Commission would ask for a response. Regarding Brazil, a formal letter concerning the suspected IUU activities was sent. The response from the Brazilian authorities was being analysed. Regarding Guyana, a formal letter was sent to the national authorities in 2024 calling for an investigation of enforcement measures. A response with key documents was received in May 2025, which was being reviewed. The Commission would be following up with more questions. As for Venezuela, in April 2024, a questionnaire on IUU activities was sent. The deadline for a response was



extended, while engagement with the authorities continued. The aim was to maintain cooperation. She added that a field mission could be difficult due to security concerns.

On Thailand, Ms Kremmydiotou emphasised that the Commission was closely monitoring the legislative developments, particularly the impact on the industrial fleet segment. The next online meeting would be taking place the following week. Substantive backtracking could lead to measures such as a “yellow card”. The Commission representative explained that, in the context of the negotiations of the free trade agreement, under the sustainable development chapter, provisions on IUU fishing were included. Any backtracking could impact the trade negotiations. The IUU Working Group would be meeting in September.

On Ecuador, Ms Kremmydiotou informed that pre-identification took place due to inefficiencies in fishing vessels operating in the waters of Regional Fisheries Management Organisations, particularly in the waters of the Inter-American Tropical Tuna Commission. There were also issues related to the control of processing plants. Following the adoption of a new legal framework, the Commission was focused on the implementation, particularly in relation to the large-scale fleet and the processing plants. The Commission would like to see improvements concerning sanctions and traceability. While there was some progress, issues remained, for example on carrying capacity and fish hold volumes. Therefore, further clarity was needed. She added that the Commission was awaiting the results of the country’s presidential election. A videoconference with the national authorities could take place in the near future.

On Ghana, Ms Kremmydiotou informed that, following the elections of December 2024, a change of government took place. The new minister expressed commitment to continue the work to lift the “yellow card”. The authorities initiated a revision of the legislative framework, but shortcomings remained, as it was necessary to ensure respect for international obligations. A progress report would be concluded in the following month. A videoconference call would take place in the near future.

On Senegal, Ms Kremmydiotou recalled that a “yellow card” was adopted in May 2024. Serious shortcomings were identified, both as a flag State and as a port State. Inappropriate replies were provided in the context of bilateral exchanges and in the context of meetings of the International Commission for the Conservation of Atlantic Tunas. A mission was carried out in Senegal and recommendations were provided. The situation would continue to be monitored.

On Panama, Ms Kremmydiotou informed that, following a previous report, a videoconference took place in April 2025. The Commission continued to wait for progress, including on control and effective implementation of the new legislative framework. There were some improvements in the monitoring, control, and surveillance of the long-distance fleet, but there was an uneven implementation by law enforcement authorities. While there was a high-level commitment, work needed to be reinforced at the technical level. A technical meeting was planned for the near future. A mission would take place before the end of 2025.

- **Exchange of views**

Vanya Vulperhorst (Oceana) asked for an update on the situation in the Philippines.



Stavroula Kremmydiotou (DG MARE) informed that a technical meeting took place two weeks prior, but that there was no significant progress. While some information was exchanged, the outcome was inconclusive. Therefore, a mission might be needed. Furthermore, the Commission was awaiting to know the decision of the Supreme Court concerning the use of Vessel Monitoring Systems. She underscored the importance of a strict commitment to fighting IUU fishing.

The Chair asked for more information about Suriname, particularly potential informal discussions, and the potential application of a “yellow card”.

Stavroula Kremmydiotou (DG MARE) responded that the Surinamese authorities were very cooperative. Close contact would be maintained to monitor their commitment and the implementation of the recommendations previously provided by the Commission.

Fabian Schäfer (Fischverband) asked about the status of Regulation 1010/2009, particularly about the relationship between the USA and the Commission. Mr Schäfer wanted to know how the import of American products into the EU market would be guaranteed, including whether the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration was expected to provide all the necessary documentation. As of January 2026, there could be products no longer eligible for export. He argued that a transition period could be needed for fishery products already being caught.

Lil Kerherve (DG MARE) responded that Regulation 1010/2009 was being reviewed. From January 2026, the USA would be required to use the new template for catch certificates, as foreseen in the revised Fisheries Control Regulation. Discussions with the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration were ongoing. A meeting of the EU-USA IUU Working Group took place. Ms Kerherve highlighted that the CATCH IT system would provide one template for all countries.

Fabian Schäfer (Fischverband) wanted to know what would happen to fishery products already being caught.

Lil Kerherve (DG MARE) responded that the CATCH IT templates were already available. Ms Kerherve added that she took note of the question<sup>1</sup>.

The Chair wanted to know whether the initiative to terminate the simplified systems came from the Commission services.

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<sup>1</sup> After the meeting, DG MARE sent the following clarification via email message “As of 10 January 2026, the administrative arrangements in accordance with Article 12(4) of the IUU Regulation (hereafter: agreed records) established between the Commission and seven non-EU countries will be terminated. From that date, these countries must use the template of the catch certificate (as set out in Annex II of Regulation (EU) 2023/2842, amending the IUU Regulation), as well as the template of the simplified catch certificate (as set out in Annex IV of the Regulation (EC) 1010/2009) instead of the templates set out in the agreed records. For catches validated before 10 January 2026 and exported after that date, the template of the current agreed records will still be applicable during a transitional period that will end on 10 January 2028. For such documents, the “old” template of the catch certificate (CC) will have to be selected in CATCH and, depending on the flag State that validate the CC, certain validation rules will apply, i.e. some data will not be required for some agreed record countries (in accordance with those specific templates) for catches validated prior to 10 January 2026”.



Lil Kerherve (DG MARE) replied that, in the past, simplified templates were agreed with some third countries, but that, in the future, all countries would have to use the same template.

Ms Kerherve took the opportunity to provide an update on the CATCH IT system. The Commission services were finalising all the corresponding materials, including the update to the user manual. The recordings of the organised webinars were made available online. Some new templates were being developed. An IT help desk was also under development. DG MARE was working with third countries and with the Member States to encourage the use of the new system. Discussions were initiated with third countries on interoperability, which should be achieved in the next years. That month, DG MARE would be holding two training sessions with the Member States.

Felicidad Fernández Alonso (ANFACO-CECOPESCA) wanted to know whether the CATCH IT system would be connected to the customs authorities. Ms Fernández exemplified that, in the case of Spain, the national system was linked to the customs authorities.

Lil Kerherve (DG MARE) responded that a link with CERTEX was foreseen. Implementation would take place from 2028. DG MARE was working with DG TRADE on the matter.

## AOB

- **Study on Feasible Traceability Systems and Procedures for Prepared and Preserved Fishery and Aquaculture Products**

## Presentation

Anne Gautrais-Le Goff (DG MARE) explained that the Commission was preparing a delegated act under the revised Fisheries Control Regulation, which would include two specific articles. The first article would concern the traceability information of lots of fishery and aquaculture products falling under Chapter 3 of the Combined Nomenclature, as established by Council Regulation No 2658/87. The second article would address the marking of lots of these products. The consultations with Member States lasted until May 2025. Following this, the Commission aimed to complete its internal procedures for adoption of the act during the summer or autumn of 2025. The draft would be presented at an expert meeting in the summer, with consultations involving the European Parliament and the Council expected to take place in the autumn of the same year. Throughout this process, engagement with the competent authorities in each Member State would be essential.

Ms Gautrais-Le Goff informed that, in parallel, a study focused on the traceability of specific fishery and aquaculture products, as outlined in Article 58, paragraph 9, had been launched. The evaluation phase was completed in April 2025, and a consortium had been selected to carry out the work. The contract was signed on 5 May 2025 and was being managed by CINEA under an existing service framework agreement. The study was scheduled to run for eighteen months, concluding at the end of November 2026. To support effective stakeholder engagement, DG MARE had issued a recommendation letter to the consortium to facilitate contact with relevant parties.



Ms Gautrais-Le Goff encouraged the MAC to contribute to the process in several ways. These included sharing relevant materials or studies—either national or EU-level—that are not already available on the MAC’s website and assisting with fieldwork in selected case study countries. The selected countries included Spain, France, Italy, Germany, Denmark, the Netherlands, Poland, and Portugal. Support from the MAC would be particularly sought in identifying national associations, companies, and other stakeholders who could be willing to participate in interviews or complete a written questionnaire between June and October 2025. Additionally, the MAC would be invited to engage in the final validation workshop.

Ms Gautrais-Le Goff thanked the MAC for the advice previously provided on the planned delegated act, adding that several points were integrated into the draft act. No major changes were introduced in comparison with draft version shared at a previous meeting.

Fabian Schäfer (Fischverband) wanted to know whether the HORECA would be covered in the upcoming act.

Anne Gautrais-Le Goff (DG MARE) responded that the HORECA sector was the last element of the chain. Under the legal requirements, the previous operators must transmit the information to the HORECA sector.

Gerd Heinen (DG MARE) recalled that, under the applicable consumer information requirements, mass caterers received information on fishery and aquaculture products from the other operators in the value chain. Mass caterers could voluntarily share the information with consumers.

Anne Gautrais-Le Goff (DG MARE) emphasised that no derogations or thresholds were foreseen in the implementation of the new delegated rules, including on the storage time of the information.



### Summary of action items

- Food and Agriculture Organisation:
  - Secretariat to circulate a questionnaire to gather input on the upcoming session of the FAO's Sub-Committee on Fish Trade (8-12 September 2025) with the aim of developing advice to the European Commission on the EU's mandate.



## Attendance List

| Representative               | Organisation                                                              | Role        |
|------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------|
| Adrien Simonnet              | Union du Mareyage Français (UMF)                                          | Member      |
| Alessandro Manghisi          | Aquaculture Stewardship Council (ASC)                                     | Member      |
| Alexandre Bonneau            | SNCE                                                                      | Member      |
| Anne Gautrais-Le Goff        | European Commission                                                       | Expert      |
| Aodh O'Donnell               | Irish Fish Producers Organisation                                         | Member      |
| Arthur Yon                   | FROM Nord                                                                 | Member      |
| Bertrand Charron             | Aquaculture Stewardship Council (ASC)                                     | Member      |
| Camille Maisonneuve          | Market Advisory Council (MAC)                                             | Secretariat |
| Caroline Gamblin             | PACT'ALIM                                                                 | Member      |
| Christine Absil              | Good Fish Foundation                                                      | Member      |
| Daniel Voces                 | Europêche                                                                 | Member      |
| Dominic Rihan                | Killybegs Fishermen's Organisation (KFO)                                  | Member      |
| Fabian Schäfer               | Bundesverband der deutschen Fischindustrie und des Fischgrosshandels e.V. | Member      |
| Felicidad Fernández          | ANFACO-CECOPECA                                                           | Member      |
| Gerd Heinen                  | European Commission                                                       | Expert      |
| Giuseppe Scordella           | COPA-COGECA                                                               | Member      |
| Guus Pastoor                 | Visfederatie                                                              | Member      |
| Iñigo Azqueta Ruiz-Gallardón | FEICOPESCA                                                                | Member      |
| Isabel Alonzo Cabezas        | Spain                                                                     | Observer    |
| Janne Posti                  | Conxemar                                                                  | Member      |
| Javier Ojeda                 | Federation of European Aquaculture Producers (FEAP)                       | Member      |
| Jean-Marie Robert            | Les Pêcheurs de Bretagne                                                  | Member      |
| João Pereira                 | FRUCOM                                                                    | Member      |
| John Lynch                   | Irish South and East Fish Producers Organisation (ISEFPO)                 | Member      |
| Juana Parada                 | OR.PA.GU.                                                                 | Member      |



| Representative             | Organisation                                                                                                                                | Role        |
|----------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------|
| Jules Danto                | European Association of Fish Producers Organisations (EAPO)                                                                                 | Member      |
| Julien Daudu               | Environmental Justice Foundation                                                                                                            | Member      |
| Katarina Sipic             | EU Fish Processors and Traders Association (AIPCE) / European Federation of National Organizations of Importers and Exporters of Fish (CEP) | Member      |
| Kinga Malinowska-Facci     | European Commission                                                                                                                         | Expert      |
| Laure Guillevic            | WWF                                                                                                                                         | Member      |
| Lil Kerherve               | European Commission                                                                                                                         | Expert      |
| Marek Danikowski           | EU Fish Processors and Traders Association (AIPCE) / European Federation of National Organizations of Importers and Exporters of Fish (CEP) | Member      |
| María Luisa Álvarez Blanco | FEDEPESCA                                                                                                                                   | Member      |
| Mariano García García      | Federación Andaluza de Cofradías de Pescadores                                                                                              | Member      |
| Mike Turenhout             | Visfederatie                                                                                                                                | Member      |
| Mikel Ortiz                | OPPAO                                                                                                                                       | Member      |
| Patrick Murphy             | Irish South & West Fish Producers Organisation                                                                                              | Member      |
| Pawel Szatkowski           | European Commission                                                                                                                         | Expert      |
| Pedro Reis Santos          | Market Advisory Council (MAC)                                                                                                               | Secretariat |
| Pierre Commère             | PACT'ALIM / Eurothon                                                                                                                        | Chair       |
| Pim Visser                 | NOVA                                                                                                                                        | Member      |
| Sergio López García        | OPP7 Burela                                                                                                                                 | Member      |
| Stavroula Kremmydiotou     | European Commission                                                                                                                         | Expert      |
| Sylvie Becaus              | Vereniging Vlaamse Visveilingen (VVV)                                                                                                       | Member      |
| Tamas Eisenbeck            | EU Fish Processors and Traders Association (AIPCE) / European Federation of National Organizations of Importers and Exporters of Fish (CEP) | Member      |
| Thibault Pivetta           | European Molluscs' Producers Association (EMPA)                                                                                             | Member      |
| Thomas Kruse               | Danish Fishermen P.O. / Danish Pelagic Producers Organisation (DPPO)                                                                        | Member      |
| Vanya Vulperhorst          | Oceana                                                                                                                                      | Member      |
| William Morré              | Marine Stewardship Council (MSC)                                                                                                            | Member      |



| Representative  | Organisation                                       | Role   |
|-----------------|----------------------------------------------------|--------|
| Yobana Bermúdez | EU Fish Processors and Traders Association (AIPCE) | Member |

