

Advice

Labelling of barramundi (*Lates calcarifer*) in international markets

Brussels, 21 January 2026

1. Background

In accordance with the FAO¹, in English, several local names are used to refer to the specie *Lates calcarifer*, namely: “Asian seabass”, “barramundi”, “barramundi perch”, “giant sea perch”, “palmer”, and “silver barramundi”. The mentioned specie is both captured and farmed in the Indo-Pacific region. For EU aquaculture production, particularly in the Mediterranean Sea, *Dicentrarchus labrax* is an important species, including for exports to Asian and Middle Eastern countries. Saudi Arabia, in particular, is an increasingly important destination. In accordance with the EU commercial designations of fishery and aquaculture products², the specie is referred to as “European seabass”. This designation is also used by the FAO³. Recent market observations showed cases, in Asian and Middle Eastern markets, of barramundi products placed on the market simply as “seabass”.

2. Potential risks for consumer information

As both European seabass and barramundi products are placed on the same international markets, the use of the generic designation “seabass”, while not unlawful, risks misleading consumers and importers. This practice could potentially affect the reputation of European

¹ <https://www.fao.org/fishery/en/aqspecies/3068/en>

² https://fish-commercial-names.ec.europa.eu/fish-names/species/dicentrarchus-labrax_en

³ https://www.fao.org/fishery/docs/CDrom/aquaculture/l1129m/file/en/en_europeanseabass.htm

seabass. Therefore, accurate labelling, to ensure transparency, uphold consumer confidence, and protect fair competition in international trade, should be pursued.

3. Recommendations

The MAC believes that, while the European Union cannot prescribe the commercial designations of fishery and aquaculture products in third countries, the European Commission should:

- a) In the context of bilateral exchanges, sessions of the FAO's Committee on Fisheries and corresponding Sub-Committees, and sessions of the Codex Alimentarius Commission, raise the issue of the potentially inappropriate use of the designation "seabass" and linked shortcomings for adequate consumer information;
- b) When possible, encourage competent authorities of third countries, retailers and industry stakeholders to accurately identify, through the appropriate commercial designations and scientific names, the fisheries and aquaculture products placed on the international markets.