



EUROPEAN COMMISSION
DIRECTORATE-GENERAL FOR MARITIME AFFAIRS AND FISHERIES

The Director-General

Brussels,
MARE/B3/PS

Dear Ms Bermudez,

Thank you for your letter regarding the EU-Indonesia Comprehensive Partnership Agreement (CEPA). On 7 May 2026, I had the opportunity to extensively discuss the substance of this agreement with Europêche Tuna Group, jointly with DG TRADE.

First, let me recall the positive results of the CEPA with Indonesia. The agreement provides for a balanced result: it unlocks new market access for EU exports to Indonesia and new opportunities for EU investors, protects EU sensitive sectors by guaranteeing limited or progressive liberalisation and full respect of EU standard rules of origin, and secures comprehensive provisions on Trade and Sustainable Development. These include bilateral commitments referring to IUU fishing and to the respect of the core labour standards and fundamental Conventions of the International Labour Organisation, including on forced labour.

The Commission ensured that the agreement reflects the sensitivities of the EU fisheries sector, including those related to tuna products, bearing in mind the EU's fishing industry, the processing sector and the EU consumers.

During the entire negotiation process, the Commission consistently maintained the sensitive character of tuna products. The CEPA outcome is aligned with the EU's cautious approach, providing only limited tariff quotas, lower than current trade, or long phasing out, even for tariff lines which have been already fully liberalised in other EU FTAs – such as frozen tuna fillets.

In addition to the compliance committee of the Indian Ocean Tuna Commission (IOTC), the trade and sustainable growth and development committee to be established under the CEPA will provide an opportunity to address matters of interest for the EU, including the ones mentioned in your letter about the situation in the Indian Ocean.

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Regarding the Sanitary and Phytosanitary measures, the agreement does not grant any exemption to Indonesia and frozen tuna exports from Indonesia will need to comply with conditions set by the EU authorised establishments. The EU will maintain the sanitary requirements set in the relevant legislation, and the Commission will carry out necessary audits regarding freezing operations onboard fishing vessels.

We have carried out this negotiation in full transparency with EU Member States and the European Parliament at each stage of the discussions, as well as provided for regular channels of interaction with EU stakeholders. We have also debriefed the Market Advisory Council (MAC) on the progress made and we will continue to do so regarding the other ongoing trade negotiations with Southeast Asian countries (i.e. Thailand and the Philippines) and other trade files which might have an impact on EU stakeholders in the fisheries sector.

I am looking forward to our continued fruitful cooperation. Should you have further questions on this reply, please contact Ms Julia Rubeck, our Advisory Councils coordinator, via the functional mailbox MARE-AC@ec.europa.eu.

Yours sincerely,

Charlina VITCHEVA

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