



**EU Fish Processors and Traders Association**  
**Association des Industries du Poisson de l'UE**

**EU Federation of National Organisations of Importers and Exporters of Fish**  
**Comité des Organisations nationales des importateurs et exportateurs de poisson de l'UE**

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*- Press Release -*

## **Market operators call on the EP for realist approach to the market**

*Friday 9th July 2010*

AIPCE-CEP, the EU fish processors and traders association, believes that Mr Cadec's report on the arrangements for importing fishery and aquaculture products into the EU, will not help the sector to move forward. The report was adopted yesterday in the European Parliament. It reflects outdated views on the fisheries policy, by not taking into account market realities. This will not be to the benefit of European fish consumers, who may face less variety of supply and higher prices.

The report presents an outdated protectionist approach. It does not take into account a number of relevant factors in a global market for fishery products. The strengthening of fishing activities in the EU is important to ensure a significant part of the supply for the short and long term. However, the reality of strong reliance on imports should not be seen as a threat for the EU production, but as a necessary element to be able to supply the European consumers with enough fish. Consumer demand is increasing, as more consumers are aware of the health benefits and the fine taste of fish. The EU fishermen can supply only one third of the market; two thirds need to come from imported fish.

In particular, AIPCE-CEP considers that the following elements are missing in the report, thus giving an imbalanced picture:

- Imports and EU production are subject to the same exigent controls by the European Commission and Member States. If products are not complying with the EU requirements, they cannot be imported. The adopted report suggests that controls on imported fish are not adequate. There are no facts to support this assumption.
- The report criticizes the EU trade policy, saying that it tends to eliminate import duties. This would then put price pressure on EU fish. AIPCE-CEP points out that if we want to maintain the fish processing industry in the EU, this import tariff policy should be more flexible in order to allow a stable supply. The EU trade and processing industry, representing 130.000 employees, is of great economic importance. If this industry disappears from Europe, fishermen in the EU will encounter severe problems to sell their fish.
- A considerable amount of imports comes from developed third countries such as USA, Norway, and Iceland. Furthermore, the EU industry has also invested heavily in developing countries where it produces high value semi-processed or processed products.



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- The benefits of the global trade in fish products for developing third countries are under estimated: this trade helps these countries to improve their standards and to foster local employment.

On the whole AIPCE-CEP considers that the report, adopted by the European Parliament on the system of imports, reflects an unbalanced approach. This is to the detriment of the competitiveness of the EU processing industry, destabilising supplies. European consumers will be left with less variety of fish and higher prices if the recommendations in the report are followed.

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***AIPCE-CEP*** is the EU Fish Processors and Traders Association and represents 130.000 employees, 4.000 enterprises and a production value of around €20 billion (<http://aipce-cep.org/>).