



EU Fish Processors and Traders Association

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- Press Release -

ATQs Regulation for 2016-2018 - EU Fish processors welcome continued access to vital raw material supplies, but regret missed opportunities to support innovation and growth

The ATQs regulation¹ for 2016-2018 has now been published, determining autonomous tariff quotas for key fish species for the supply of raw materials to the EU Fish processing sectors in the coming three years.

“Our industry is relieved to see this piece of regulation finally adopted – explained Guus Pastoor, AIPCE President – taking on board significant improvements in comparison to the original proposal made by the Commission, which understated the market’s dependency on imported fish”.

“Over the last three months, we have been working intensively with Member States to ensure the ATQ system properly reflects market needs, resulting in a satisfactory final outcome” - he added.

Following to AIPCE evidence-based analysis, quantities for the main species have maintained the levels necessary to meet consumer needs in coming years (Alaskan Pollock, cod, surimi, shrimps, hake, tuna loins) and some new quotas have been introduced (haddock, anchovies, prawn), in recognition of market developments.

“Overall the industry welcomes this revised regulation which, we should not forget, is vital for the competitiveness of the sector” – stressed Guus Pastoor. “Besides, the external evaluation carried out for the Commission clearly demonstrated that the ATQs system generates added value for the EU economy”.

Despite the importance of this tool to foster growth and innovation, some chances have been lost in the process. Some species the industry needed to be introduced have been kept out, and new developments in the market which could lead to direct growth have been disregarded. For instance modified atmosphere packaging - directly linked to progress in innovation - has not been introduced.

On behalf of the industry, AIPCE-CEP engaged in the process from the outset. We provided evidence-based facts to support our case and have remained consistent and united to ensure that the market reality is well understood. The resulting agreement, which we broadly welcome, should be sufficient to ensure that the ATQs system does help to realize the full potential of the EU fish processing market.

“The [2015 AIPCE-CEP Finfish Study](#) confirms the continuing high dependence of the EU market on imports and Member States have been responsive to this. The ATQs system is designed to allow the EU fish processing remain competitive. If this system meets the needs of the sector, it helps prevent the relocation of processing activities outside the EU “- concluded Guus Pastoor.

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Council Regulation 2015/2265 of 7 December 2015 opening and providing for the management of autonomous Union tariff quotas for certain fishery products for the period 2016-2018. - Union supplies of certain fishery products currently depend on imports from third countries. In the last 18 years, the Union has become more dependent on imports to meet its consumption of fishery products. In order not to jeopardise the Union production of fishery products and to ensure an adequate supply to the Union processing industry, import duties are reduced or suspended for a number of fishery products within tariff quotas of an appropriate volume.