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-PRESS RELEASE-

The EU fish processing industry calls for speedy procedure on the new Autonomous Tariff Quota Regulation for certain fishery products

The Autonomous tariff quota regulation for certain fishery products has been a crucial guarantee of continuous and sustainable supply of raw material for the EU processing industry for over 21 years now. It has at the same time guaranteed level playing field for the Union producers, taking into consideration the sensitivity of individual fishery products on the Union market.

The uncertainty of Brexit and a serious situation that *covid-19* has created in the market, make this tool a much needed guarantee of stability and continuity of supply, which is why it is important that the negotiations for the coming 2021-2023 period are finalized as soon as possible. This is key if we want to see employment stabilizing after the pressures suffered in the past months and key if we want to see the much desired industry growth in Europe.

The numbers show our reliance on imports is significantly high in every product category reported in the Regulation. Since the formation of EU 25/27 in 2006, the dependence of the EU on imported materials for its markets has been very consistent, remaining within the range of 63% +/- 1%. The 2019 [Finfish study](#)¹ shows that for some items the EU measures a 75% - 100% dependency on raw material.

One of the indispensable items in the Regulation, tuna loins, proves the exact same tendency when it comes to dependency on imports, regardless the important contribution in this product category by the EU domestic supply. The 46% of the EU market that the EU processors are currently able to supply would be jeopardized without this ATQ, as well as the jobs it provides for, when the objective is to maintain positive values, or more so - to grow.

The EU canned tuna market weighs approximately 760 000t. To produce this amount, approximately 1.300.000t of whole tuna fish are needed, while the EU catches are approximately 385 000t. Moreover, in 2019 EUMOFA reports that, being a global operator, the EU fleet sold 60% of their catches to third countries. This means that, of the total catches of the European fleet, only 40% was available to the European processors as whole tuna.

The success of the industry remains dependent on stable access to fish. It is important to have trade flows as seamless and smooth as possible due to the reliance of the EU processing industry on a truly global sourcing base. Reliance on domestic supply only, would leave a much smaller industry, providing for less employment and would limit the scope for growth, or the capacity to buy fish from EU fishermen.

¹ Finfish studies have been published since 1992 and provide a unique record and commentary of our industry. Year after year, they provide key figures on the developments in the EU seafood market and exemplify the need for imported seafood in the production of added value seafood within Europe. Finfish studies can be downloaded from AIPCE CEP website.



AIPCE CEP calls for the European Commission and Council to finalize negotiations on the new Regulation as soon as possible, so to enable the processing companies in the EU to plan their activities and safeguard the Union's employment.

AIPCE (EU Fish Processors and Traders Association) and CEP (European Federation of National Organizations of Importers and Exporters of Fish) were established in 1959 and collaborate on the basis of a Co-operation Agreement, creating AIPCE-CEP.

The association represents 20 EU National Associations and 2 Associations in Third countries, for a total of nearly 3,500 companies, the majority of which with 20 employees at most, for total employment of around 120,000 persons. The overall value of the output of the industry represented by AIPCE-CEP amounts to around EUR 27 billion, or three times the turnover of the catch sector.

Contact: ajpce@kellencompany.com