Basic information

2013/2179(INI) INI - Own-initiative procedure	Procedure completed
Situation and future perspectives of the European fishing sector in the context of the Free Trade Agreement between the EU and Thailand **Subject** 3.15.15.03 Fisheries agreements with Indian Ocean countries 6.20.03 Bilateral economic and trade agreements and relations **Geographical area** Thailand	

Key players

European Parliament

Committee responsible	Rapporteur	Appointed
PECH Fisheries	MATO Gabriel (PPE)	13/06/2013
	Shadow rapporteur RODUST Ulrike (S&D) MEISSNER Gesine (ALDE) GRÓBARCZYK Marek Józef (ECR) FERREIRA João (GUE/NGL)	

Committee for opinion	Rapporteur for opinion	Appointed
INTA International Trade	WAŁĘSA Jarosław (PPE)	10/07/2013

European Commission

Commission DG	Commissioner
Maritime Affairs and Fisheries	DAMANAKI Maria

Key events

Date	Event	Reference	Summary
12/09/2013	Committee referral announced in Parliament		
11/02/2014	Vote in committee		
19/02/2014	Committee report tabled for plenary	A7-0130/2014	Summary

12/03/2014	Decision by Parliament	T7-0210/2014	Summary
12/03/2014	Results of vote in Parliament		
12/03/2014	End of procedure in Parliament		

Technical information	
Procedure reference	2013/2179(INI)
Procedure type	INI - Own-initiative procedure
Procedure subtype	Initiative
Legal basis	Rules of Procedure EP 55
Other legal basis	Rules of Procedure EP 165
Stage reached in procedure	Procedure completed
Committee dossier	PECH/7/12956

Documentation gateway

European Parliament

Document type	Committee	Reference	Date	Summary
Committee draft report		PE521.498	08/11/2013	
Amendments tabled in committee		PE524.693	05/12/2013	
Committee opinion	INTA	PE521.662	18/12/2013	
Committee report tabled for plenary, single reading		A7-0130/2014	19/02/2014	Summary
Text adopted by Parliament, single reading		T7-0210/2014	12/03/2014	Summary

European Commission

Document type	Reference	Date	Summary
Commission response to text adopted in plenary	SP(2014)457	11/08/2014	

Situation and future perspectives of the European fishing sector in the context of the Free Trade Agreement between the EU and Thailand

2013/2179(INI) - 12/03/2014 - Text adopted by Parliament, single reading

The European Parliament adopted by 503 votes to 69, with 32 abstentions, a resolution on the situation and future prospects of the European fishing sector in the context of the Free Trade Agreement between the EU and Thailand.

Parliament recalled that the European fishing and processing industry is vital in terms of securing the supply of food to European citizens and that the survival of the sector will be jeopardised if the EU liberalises trade in fishery products with developing countries that wish to export their products to the key Community market, especially if they are offered zero duty.

Thailand is the world’s main producer of canned tuna, with 46% of world production, and its exports of canned tuna to the EU, more than 90 000 tonnes each year, amount to almost 20% of all Community imports from third countries.

The lack of progress in the negotiations on this regional agreement has led to the opening of bilateral negotiations with ASEAN member countries, including Thailand, with a political commitment to conclude the FTA within two years.

Tuna and fish products from Thailand: in this regard, Parliament requested that **fish products, such as canned tuna imported from Thailand**, which have the potential to disrupt the EU's production of and market for these products, be treated as sensitive products.

More specifically, it called for access to the EU market for canned and prepared fish and shellfish from Thailand to remain subject to the current tariff and thus to be **excluded from tariff reductions**.

Imports of canned tuna and other fish products from Thailand should be subject, insofar as is possible, to the same competitive conditions as fish products of EU origin.

Parliament considered this demand to imply in particular that the FTA must contain an ambitious trade and sustainable development chapter, whereby Thailand undertakes to respect, promote and implement **internationally recognised labour standards**, as enshrined in the fundamental ILO conventions, including those on forced labour and child labour. Respect for human rights, the protection of the environment and the conservation and sustainable exploitation of fisheries resources, the fight against illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing and conformity with the EU's sanitary and phytosanitary rules should be strictly enforced. The FTA is called upon to include a requirement for compliance with International Labour Organisation conventions and greater transparency, surveillance, oversight, and traceability in the Thai fisheries sector, so that fishing activities can be monitored.

Progressive liberalisation: in order to safeguard the competitiveness of the Community tuna industry and preserve the significant activity and social dimension associated with the tuna industry in the EU (which provides 25 000 direct and 54 000 indirect jobs), Parliament recommended that **long transitional periods and partial liberalisation commitments**, including the imposition of quotas, be established for canned and prepared fish and shellfish products should tariff reductions be introduced.

Parliament also:

- called for full compliance with solid and coherent strict rules of origin to be enforced without exception and for cumulation to be strictly limited to those products for which Thailand is mainly a processor rather than a fishing country;
- demanded that imports of canned tuna and other fish products from Thailand be subject, insofar as is possible, to the same competitive conditions as fish products of EU origin;
- called on the Commission to ensure that the **illegal, unregulated and unreported fishing** (IUU) Regulation is effectively implemented and that the FTA negotiations result in an explicit reference thereto within the body of the text of the agreement;
- called for **safeguard clauses** to be set out.

Situation and future perspectives of the European fishing sector in the context of the Free Trade Agreement between the EU and Thailand

2013/2179(INI) - 19/02/2014 - Committee report tabled for plenary, single reading

The Committee on Fisheries adopted an own-initiative report by Gabriel MATO ADROVER (EPP, ES) on the situation and future prospects of the European fishing sector in the context of the Free Trade Agreement between the EU and Thailand.

Members recalled that the European fishing and processing industry is vital in terms of securing the supply of food to European citizens and that the survival of the sector will be jeopardised if the EU liberalises trade in fishery products with developing countries that wish to export their products to the key Community market, especially if they are offered zero duty.

Thailand is the world's main producer of canned tuna, with 46% of world production, and its exports of canned tuna to the EU, more than 90 000 tonnes each year, amount to almost 20% of all Community imports from third countries.

The lack of progress in the negotiations on this regional agreement has led to the opening of bilateral negotiations with ASEAN member countries, including Thailand, with a political commitment to conclude the FTA within two years.

In this regard, the report requested that **fish products, such as canned tuna imported from Thailand**, which have the potential to disrupt the EU's production of and market for these products, be treated as sensitive products.

More specifically, Members called for access to the EU market for canned and prepared fish and shellfish from Thailand to remain subject to the current tariff and thus to be **excluded from tariff reductions**.

In order to safeguard the competitiveness of the Community tuna industry and preserve the significant activity and social dimension associated with the tuna industry in the EU (which provides 25 000 direct and 54 000 indirect jobs), the report recommended that **long transitional periods and partial liberalisation commitments**, including the imposition of quotas, be established for canned and prepared fish and shellfish products should tariff reductions be introduced.

The committee also:

- called for full compliance with solid and coherent strict rules of origin to be enforced without exception and for cumulation to be strictly limited to those products for which Thailand is mainly a processor rather than a fishing country;
- demanded that imports of canned tuna and other fish products from Thailand be subject, insofar as is possible, to the same competitive conditions as fish products of EU origin;
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- called on the Commission to ensure that the **illegal, unregulated and unreported fishing** (IUU) Regulation is effectively implemented and that the FTA negotiations result in an explicit reference thereto within the body of the text of the agreement;
- called for **safeguard clauses** to be set out and requested the FTA to include a requirement for compliance with International Labour Organisation conventions and greater transparency, surveillance, oversight, and traceability in the Thai fisheries sector.