



EUROPEAN COMMISSION

PRESS RELEASE

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Russian trade ban: Commissioner Damanaki ready to support EU fisheries sector with financial help, quota flexibility

In the light of Russia's trade ban on certain fisheries products which hit the European fisheries sector this summer, European Commissioner for Maritime Affairs and Fisheries, Maria Damanaki, has today reassured the Council and the European Parliament that the European Commission stands ready to support the European fisheries sector. In a letter addressed to Italian Minister Maurizio Martina and the Chair of the European Parliament's Fisheries Committee, Alain Cadec, Commissioner Damanaki outlined that the EU can provide financial support to the sector as well as the possibility of shifting unused fishing quotas to 2015.

In her letter, Commissioner Damanaki called upon the EU governments concerned by the ban to make use "as quickly as possible" of the European Maritime and Fisheries Fund (EMFF), which can provide financial help to producer organisations who are unable to sell their products to Russia. This aid enables them to store the unsold products until new markets have been found. She underlined that no approval by the European Commission is necessary to unlock these storage funds.

Commissioner Damanaki also pointed to flexibility rules which allow Member States to carry over up to 10% of their fishing quotas to the following year. She underlined that, given the current circumstances, she has instructed her services to examine the possibility to go beyond the 10% quota flexibility. The Commissioner said that she could take a positive stance on this option, under the condition that scientific examination confirms that such a proposal would not undermine long term sustainability.

Background

Following Russia's announcement on 7 August to ban imports of certain fisheries products from the European Union, the European Commission is working closely with Member States authorities to gather evidence on the impact of the Russian trade measures in the fisheries sector and to outline the available support to the sectors affected by the ban. The fisheries products affected by the ban are live, fresh, chilled, frozen, salted, in brine and smoked fish, molluscs and crustaceans. The main Member States exporting these products to Russia in 2013 were Denmark, Latvia, UK, Ireland, Estonia, Spain and France.

In 2013, the total export value of the banned EU fisheries products was close to EUR 144 million, which represents 2% of total value of the EU's fish and aquaculture annual product.

Russia is the EU's 6th export market for fisheries products. In 2013, EU exports of fisheries products to Russia represented 5%, or EUR 199 million, of total EU fisheries exports. In 2013, fisheries products represented 0.2% of the EU's overall exports to Russia.

For further information

Russian trade ban on fishery products: [Commission in close contact with EU governments; financial support possible for storage](#)

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