



EU Fish Processors and Traders Association

Brussels, 29 April 2024

AIPCE CEP position on Negotiations of EU – Thailand Free Trade Agreement

We are reaching out to express our concerns and emphasize the importance of active participation in the ongoing negotiations for the EU-Thailand Free Trade Agreement.

With the third round of negotiations scheduled for the week of 17 June 2024 in Brussels, we urge the European Commission to prioritize the interests of the European processing industry, particularly within the tuna sector, and ensure that our concerns are given due consideration throughout the negotiating process.

Thailand holds a dominant position in the global tuna industry, particularly in canned and preserved tuna production and export. Producing over 470,000 tons, accounting for more than 22% of the world's total, and holding the largest export share at over 29%, Thailand's impact on the global market is rather significant.

However, considerable differences in social, economic, and environmental standards between the European Union and Thailand have to be acknowledged, notably in areas such as combating illegal, unreported, and unregulated (IUU) fishing, and in the area of labour standards. This provides Thailand with a huge competitive advantage that we cannot challenge without duty protection.

In light of these challenges, we encourage the European Commission to adopt a defensive approach in protecting the interests of the European tuna processing industry in its negotiations with Thailand. Specifically, we request that processed tuna products be excluded from these negotiations. This approach is vital to preserving the place and excellence of European tuna production against Thai competition.

Tariff items the EU processing industry requests be excluded from the negotiations are:

- **canned tuna** (1604 14 21, 1604 14 28, 1604 14 31, 1604 14 38, 1604 14 41, 1604 14 48, 1604 14 90, 1604 19 39, 1604 20 70)
- tuna loins (1604 14 26, 1604 14 36, 1604 14 36)

Should discussion arise on fishery products and tuna, we seek meaningful involvement in the negotiations to ensure that the interests of our European processing industry are effectively represented and protected.

We look forward to constructive engagement and collaboration.

Kind regards,

President of AIPCE

President of CEP