



Tuesday, 21 February, 2017

### **Agriculture: the Commission approves new geographical indication from the United Kingdom**

The Commission has approved today the addition of a new product from the United Kingdom to the quality register of Protected Geographical Indication (PGI). The '[West Wales coracle-caught salmon](#)' is salmon which has been caught using the ancient Welsh traditional method of coracle fishing. Due to its wild nature, this salmon does not contain any artificial additives and/or colourings. It is fished in the rivers Tywi, Taf and Teifi in West Wales. Both the Tywi and Teifi rivers have been classed as Special Areas of Conservation (SAC) under the [European Habitats Directive](#). Coracle fishing is an old craft and skill, recorded in the 11th century, that has survived into the 21st century — 'a living tradition'. Although coracles were once used extensively throughout Wales, they are now exclusive to the Taf, Tywi and Teifi. These three rivers are the only places in Europe where coracle fishing is still practised. The new denomination will be added to the list of over 1,380 products already protected. More information: webpages on [quality products](#) and [DOOR database](#) of protected products.

### **Joint Statement of President Juncker, Prime Minister Rajoy and Prime Minister Costa on the amicable settlement concerning the Almaraz case**

An amicable settlement has been reached, on the initiative of President **Juncker**, in the case concerning legal action brought by Portugal against Spain (under Article 259 TFEU) over the management of nuclear waste near the Spanish town of Almaraz. Acting as an impartial mediator, President **Juncker** helped steer the dialogue between the two parties which resulted in a number of agreed actions that both Spain and Portugal committed to undertake. In a joint statement, President **Juncker**, Prime Minister of Spain, Mariano Rajoy and Prime Minister of Portugal, António Costa, consider that in view of the immense economic, social and geopolitical challenges the European Union is facing at the moment, "*disputes between Member States who traditionally are allies, should be solved swiftly in a consensual and cooperative manner*". They add that today's outcome is "*proof of the pragmatic cooperation and problem-solving spirit of the European Union*". The full statement is available online in [here](#)

### **Fair Taxation: Commission welcomes new rules to prevent tax avoidance through non-EU countries**

The Commission welcomes the agreement reached at today's ECOFIN on new rules to help prevent tax avoidance via non-EU countries. This latest addition to the EU's anti-tax avoidance toolbox will prohibit

multinational companies from escaping corporate tax by exploiting differences between the tax systems of Member States and those of non-EU countries (so-called 'hybrid mismatches').

*"Today is yet another success story in our campaign for fairer taxation" said Pierre **Moscovici**, Commissioner for Economic and Financial Affairs, Taxation and Customs. "Step by step, we are eliminating the channels used by certain companies to escape taxation. I congratulate the Member States for agreeing on this tangible measure to clamp down on tax abuse and install a fairer tax environment in the EU." The full statement is available online in [here](#).*

### **Juncker Plan: HRK 350 million for Croatian small and medium-sized enterprises**

The European Investment Fund (EIF) and Privredna banka Zagreb (PBZ) have signed a [COSME agreement](#) that will unlock HRK 350 million (ca. EUR 45.7 million) worth of loans to small and medium-sized Croatian businesses. This agreement was made possible by the support of the European Fund for Strategic Investments (EFSI), the so-called **Juncker** Fund. The EFSI is the central pillar of the [Juncker Plan](#). Around 600 Croatian SMEs are expected to benefit from the loans which will be approved in the course of the next three years. European Commissioner for International Cooperation and Development, Neven **Mimica** said: *"SMEs are a driving force for jobs and growth in Croatia. Today's EFSI-backed agreement, the third to support Croatian SMEs, demonstrates that the Investment Plan is working to give small businesses the tools they need to innovate, expand and create jobs. I look forward to hearing the success stories that will surely follow today's announcements."* A full press release is available [here](#).

### **EU announces €82 million in emergency aid as famine declared in South Sudan**

Today the European Commission has announced an emergency aid package worth €82 million as famine has been declared in South Sudan for the first time since the country gained independence in 2011. Announcing the funding, Commissioner Humanitarian Aid and Crisis Management Christos **Stylianides** said *"The humanitarian tragedy in South Sudan is entirely man made. Urgent action is needed to prevent more people from dying of hunger. I have seen for myself the impact of this crisis when visiting South Sudan and neighbouring countries such as Uganda, and I'm ready to return to the region. Crucially what matters is that all parties allow humanitarian organisations to have immediate and full access to do their job and deliver aid. Ultimately it is only by laying down arms that the country can be rebuilt and that the hopes that came with independence can be fulfilled."* To date, the European Commission has made more than €381 million available to respond to the worsening humanitarian crisis in South Sudan since fighting erupted in December 2013. Read the full press release [here](#).

## **ANNOUNCEMENTS**

### **Commissioner Thyssen visits Estonia**

Tomorrow and Thursday, 22 and 23 February, Commissioner for Employment, Social Affairs, Skills and Labour Mobility, Marianne **Thyssen** will travel to Estonia. On Thursday morning, the Commissioner will meet with the Estonian Minister of Social Protection, Ms Kaia Iva. Following this meeting, Commissioner **Thyssen** will meet the chairman of the European Affairs Committee of the Estonian Parliament, Mr Toomas Vitsut, and the chairman of the Social Affairs Committee, Ms Helmen Kütt. She will then have a working lunch with social partner representatives, notably the CEO of the Estonian Employers' Confederation, Mr Toomas Tamsar, and Chairman of the Confederation of Trade Unions, Mr Peep Peterson. Following the lunch, Commissioner **Thyssen** will hold a bilateral meeting with Prime Minister of Estonia, Mr Jüri Ratas. And finally, she will meet with the Estonian Minister of Health and Labour, Mr

Jevgeni Ossinovski, and the Minister of Education and Research, Ms Mailis Reps. The visit will be an opportunity to discuss the upcoming [European Pillar of Social Rights](#), the changing world of work and the [New Skills Agenda for Europe](#), as well as the Commission's proposals on the [revision of the social security coordination rules](#) and the [Posting of Workers Directive](#).

## Upcoming events

- [March 2017: The Commission will publish its 2nd report on the progress in making the new European Border and Coast Guard fully operational](#)
- [March 2017: The Commission will publish the 10th Report on Relocation and Resettlement](#)
- [March 2017: The Commission will publish the 5th Report on the progress made in the implementation of the EU-Turkey Statement](#)
- [March 2017: Commission White Paper on the Future of Europe and Rome Summit to mark the 60th Anniversary of the Treaties of Rome](#)
- [March 2017 : 3rd Report on the Partnership Framework on Migration](#)

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Find out [here](#) what will be discussed next week in the European Commission, the European Council and the European Parliament.