

Rùnaire a' Chaibineit airson Cùisean Dùthchail agus na h- Àrainneachd  
Cabinet Secretary for Rural Affairs and the Environment  
Ridseard Lochhead BPA  
Richard Lochhead MSP

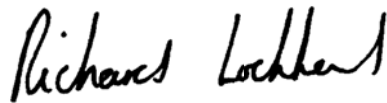
To:  
Rob Gibson MSP  
Convener  
Rural Affairs and Environment Committee  
The Scottish Parliament  
EDINBURGH  
EH99 1SP

22 September 2014

Dear Rob,

I am writing to provide you with a report on the outcomes of the EU Agriculture and Fisheries Council meeting which I attended in Brussels on the 5 September 2014.

I am copying this letter to the Convener of the European and External Relations Committee, for information.

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Richard Lochhead". The script is cursive and fluid, with the first name "Richard" and surname "Lochhead" clearly distinguishable.

**RICHARD LOCHHEAD**

## **AGRICULTURE AND FISHERIES COUNCIL REPORT: 5 SEPTEMBER 2014**

### **SUMMARY**

#### **Agriculture**

Ministers discussed the impact and implications of the Russian ban on imports of EU agricultural products introduced in August, in retaliation for EU sanctions on Russia in response to their role in the crisis in Ukraine.

The Commission presented an analysis of the impact on agricultural sectors and a description of the measures which had already been introduced to help the worst hit producers in the short term with emergency market support, primarily targeting the fruit and vegetables and dairy sector. The Presidency sought to focus the debate on the medium and long term whilst allowing time to see how the short term emergency measures served to support affected sectors.

### **KEY OUTCOMES**

#### **Russian import ban on EU agricultural products**

- Ministers welcomed the Commission's swift response to events and agreed on the principle of EU solidarity. They supported increasing the EU budget for promotion of agricultural products, as part of the drive to widen export markets for affected producers, and encouraged the Commission to look for support from other budget lines. The Commission and Council will also give further consideration to altering the existing school milk and fruit schemes and the options for facilitating distribution of excess products to social organisations supporting those in poverty. Ministers agreed to continue monitoring the situation closely and concentrate efforts on opening up new markets. There was no consensus on other measures such as compensation or export refunds
- The UK intervention highlighted that the Council was focusing solely on agricultural impacts but that there were also impacts on the fisheries sector, with the Scottish mackerel fishery being the most affected sector in the UK. A number of Member States, in particular Ireland, Spain, Finland and the Netherlands supported the UK's call for an in depth analysis of these impacts by DG Maritime Affairs and measures which may be appropriate to support affected fisheries. The Commission agreed to produce such an analysis.

### **ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

#### **UK Ministers Meeting with Commissioner Dacian Ciolos**

- UK Ministers - Secretary of State Elizabeth Truss, Cabinet Secretary Richard Lochhead, Northern Irish Minister Michelle O'Neill and Welsh Deputy Minister Rebecca Evans – met outgoing Agriculture Commissioner Dacian Ciolos. This was an opportunity to discuss progress with CAP implementation. The Cabinet Secretary highlighted his call on the Commission to undertake a health check of the CAP.

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- The next Agriculture and Fisheries Council will be held in Luxembourg on 13-14 October 2014.