



EFFAT

EUROPEAN FEDERATION OF FOOD, AGRICULTURE AND TOURISM TRADE UNIONS

**To the kind attention of Commissioner Cecilia Malmström**

Via email. Art. 4(1)(b)

CC: Trade Expert Group Secretariat [TRADE-EXPERT-GROUP@ec.europa.eu](mailto:TRADE-EXPERT-GROUP@ec.europa.eu)

Brussels, 18 October 2018

Dear Commissioner Cecilia Malmström,

**Re: EU trade policy and climate change**

The recent report from the International Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) said that if we are to have any chance of limiting global warming to 1.5 degrees centigrade above pre-industrial levels, then “quick, extremely far reaching and unprecedented changes are necessary”.

The IPCC’s message does not appear to have made much impact on DG Trade, given the stated policy of pursuing as many free trade agreements as possible, regardless of their environmental impact. A particular case in point concerns the importation of beef from the Americas and Australasia if the EU manages to conclude agreements with Mercosur, Australia and New Zealand. In the wake of the IPCC report, scientists have concluded that projected increases in beef consumption around the world are incompatible with attempts to limit global warming, especially in countries such as Paraguay and Brazil where significant expansion of cattle ranching has been achieved at the expense of virgin forest and scrublands that are vital to our planet’s eco-system.

You will be aware that European beef farmers have repeatedly stated that they cannot compete with imports from South America. From a holistic standpoint, it therefore makes little sense to import thousands of tons of meat from the other side of the globe when the net effect will be to put European farmers out of business, encourage the destruction of the environment and hasten the onset of catastrophic climate change.

In a declining market, there is more than enough beef on this continent to satisfy demand. The cost of the damage occasioned by unfettered climate change will dwarf any short-term economic gains of importing cheaper meat from distant parts of the world so a call to cease beef imports is not a protectionist measure for European farmers but rather a rational and proportional response to an unprecedented, existential threat to our very existence.

We look forward to your comments on this issue and am,

Yours sincerely,

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