



**ASEM SECOND FORUM ON MARINE FISHERIES  
BRUSSELS, BELGIUM – 28 AND 29 APRIL 2009**

**BRIEFING FOR EXHIBITORS AT THE 16<sup>th</sup> ANNUAL EUROPEAN  
SEAFOOD EXPOSITION**

Welcome to Brussels for the 16th Annual European Seafood Exposition. Alongside this event, ASEM (the Asia Europe Meeting) is holding its second forum, "Towards Enhanced Co-operation and Better Understanding of Marine Fisheries."

The Forum, hosted by the European Commission's DG Maritime Affairs and Fisheries, will explore ways of addressing some of the biggest challenges confronting international marine fisheries. Delegates from more than 40 countries will seek to work together to improve dialogue and mutual understanding.

ASEM is the premier multilateral channel for communication between Asia and Europe. Created in 1996 to stimulate dialogue between both continents and to create greater understanding among peoples, it now represents 50 per cent of the world's GDP, nearly 60 per cent of its population and 60 per cent of global trade.

It is made up of 43 countries in Europe and Asia, the European Commission and the ASEAN (Association of Southeast Asian Nations) Secretariat. It has implemented some 100 initiatives with experts in themed meetings and symposia.

Asia and Europe are important fisheries partners. South East Asian countries are the second most important providers of fish and fishery products to the EU. At the same time, the EU is the largest importing market of fishery products in the world, with a value of £16.4 billion in 2007.

The huge scale of the business shows that fish and fishery products are of enormous global importance, with Asia and Europe operating as major players in markets as well as in their roles as producers and processors.

This ASEM fisheries forum is the second of its type. The first, the ASEM Forum on Trade and Investment in Fishery, took place in Yantai, China last September. It began dialogue on a range of challenges which face the industry globally. These themes will continue to be discussed at the meeting in Brussels on 28 and 29 April.

European Union Member States are committed to working closely with all willing members of the international community to preserve a healthy balance between a strong and viable trade flow on the one hand and the preservation of marine ecosystems and action to prevent the depletion of fish stocks on the other.

The ASEM event, held at the Berlaymont, will bring together high level officials involved in marine fisheries. It comprises a full day's Forum session on Tuesday April 28 followed by a guided tour of the Seafood Exposition at the Parc Des Expositions on April 29.

The first day of the Forum aims to discuss and where possible identify convergent positions on areas of common international interest in the fisheries and aquaculture areas. These include:

- **Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated (IUU) fishing.** This is a critical issue within Regional Fisheries Management Organisations (RFMOs). A new EC regulation which will apply from next year aims to prevent, deter and eliminate these activities.

- **Future challenges for tuna Regional Fisheries Management Organisations.** It is crucial that Asians and Europeans work hand in hand to take up the challenges of the tuna sector, harmonising their work and developing compliance procedures.

- **Sanitary and phytosanitary measures in trading of high quality foodstuffs and looking ahead to future development policies.** Discussions will centre on the delivery of high quality goods and sustainable trade

- **Tools for sustainable development of aquaculture,** especially concerning the shape of the industry in the future in order to promote environmentally friendly farming methods and achieve sustainable development.

It is anticipated that the discussions will help to identify a way forward on key areas of mutual interest and also to explore the scope for future dialogue on these important fishery and aquaculture issues.

For further information on ASEM and on the Forum, please visit [ec.europa.eu/external\\_relations/asem/intro](http://ec.europa.eu/external_relations/asem/intro) or [www.aseminfoboard.org](http://www.aseminfoboard.org).

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