



Council of the
European Union

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NOTE

From: General Secretariat of the Council
To: Delegations
Subject: Further increase in imports to the EU of japonica rice
- Information from the Italian delegation

Delegations will find in the Annex a note from the Italian delegation on the above-mentioned subject, to be dealt with under "Any other business" at the Council (Agriculture and Fisheries) on 18 November 2019.

Further increase in imports to the EU of *japonica* rice

The activation of the safeguard clause requested by the Italian delegation has determined a progressive decreasing, during this marketing year, of the imports of *indica* rice into the EU from Cambodia and Myanmar.

On the other side, in the same marketing year, it an unexpected increase in the import of milled *japonica* rice from Myanmar to the EU has occurred. The imports of *japonica* rice from Myanmar are considered at zero duty since the safeguard clause has been activated only for *indica* rice.

Due to the possibility to export *japonica* rice at zero duty the import into the EU from Myanmar has increased, in the marketing year 2018/2019, up to **85,685 tonnes**, with an increase of 213% compared to the previous marketing year (27,334 tonnes). Additionally, this kind of rice has not been traditionally imported into the EU.

Moreover, considering the beginning of the marketing year 2019, a further increase in imports of *japonica* rice from Myanmar could be noted that, compared to the same months of the previous year, registered an increase of 300%.

This progressive and continued increase at zero duty of imports of *japonica* rice could generate serious difficulties and damage to the EU rice producers, since *japonica* rice accounts for 75% of total EU rice production.

In this context, it should be considered that the EU rice sector, by the recent activation of the safeguard clause, is trying to reach a fair balance in the market after years of turbulence caused by huge imports of rice at zero duty from the EBA Countries.

Furthermore, it is also worth remembering that recent agreements with third countries have stated concessions with tariff quotas for import of rice at zero duty.

For these reasons, we call upon the Commission **to monitor closely the trend of duty-free imports of milled *japonica* rice from Myanmar and the relative impact for the producers and on the EU market and, consequently, to assess possible conditions for activating the safeguard clause for the *japonica* rice also.**
