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## Press Release

### **Following DG Trade “No opinion” vote, Copa and Cogeca call on the College of Commissioners to adopt safeguard clause on rice imports.**

Yesterday, DG Trade submitted to a vote the implementing act proposing to enforce a safeguard clause on rice imports from Cambodia and Myanmar at Generalised Preferences Committee. Although 13 member states supported the proposal, 7 abstained and 8 were against. Therefore the “no opinion” prevails and it is now up to the Commission to decide on the adoption of the legal text.

Reacting to the vote, Pekka Pesonen Copa-Cogeca Secretary General said *“The enforcement of the safeguard clause is of utmost importance for the EU rice farmers and the industry. Therefore we call the College of Commissioners to adopt this measure as soon as possible in order to relieve the whole sector.”*

Giuseppe Ferraris, Chair of Copa-Cogeca Working party on rice said *“Rice is deeply rooted in European culture and is grown in eight EU countries. Rice cultivation is vital to preventing rural exodus and provides many environmental benefits. For example, rice is the only crop that is adapted to saline soil and that helps to prevent salinisation and therefore desertification due to the flooding of the land. If the quota and duty free rice imports from Cambodia and Myanmar continue at the current pace, it could, in the worst-case scenario, bring about the abandonment of EU rice production.”*

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