

Friends of the Earth MedNet
Rue Blanche 15
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Mr Lefflear Director General DG RELEX.DGA 2
European Commission
Rue de la Loi, 200
Brussels
Belgium

Copied to:
Ms. Katriana Carmodi, Cabinet of DG AIDCO
Mr. Richard Weber, Director, DG AIDCO.A
Ms. Laura Baeza, Head of Unit, DG RELEX.F.1
Ms. Carla Montesi, Head of Unit DG AIDCO.A.3
Ms. Soledad Blanco, Director, DG ENV.E

Dear Mr Lefflear,

I am writing to you on behalf of the Comité de Suivi* to express our collective concern at what we regard as a lack of coherence in the current draft of the declaration being prepared for the 10th Anniversary Heads of Government Summit in Barcelona in November this year.

Specifically, we refer to the wording, for accelerated trade liberalisation in agricultural products and fisheries where the draft proposes that negotiations should start in the 2nd half of 2005 and be concluded within a year with a view to aligning these sectors with Euro-Mediterranean Free Trade Area (EMFTA) objectives. However, this proposal does not mention incorporating into the related negotiating process the recommendations due at the end of 2006 of the Sustainability Impact Assessment (SIA) of the EMFTA, which the European Commission itself has contracted to Manchester University.

The European Commission President, in his letter of 6 September replying to a letter of 4 May from the Comité de Suivi stated, "the commission is currently preparing an SIA of the EMFTA so that we achieve a trade cooperation that will be equitable to all parties concerned."

In our view, given the absolute importance of the agriculture and fisheries sectors for poor Mediterranean farmers and the fragile environment of the Mediterranean region, particularly in the south and eastern regions, liberalisation negotiations should not be opened before the recommendations of the SIA are made available in late 2006.

I would kindly request your written response to this letter so as to share with us your views on our concerns made above.

Yours sincerely,

Mr Eugene Clancy
Mediterranean Programme Coordinator
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Rue Blanche 15
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*Members of the Comite de Suivi are: Arab Network for Environment and Development (RAED), Environment and Development Action in the Third World (ENDA), European Environmental Bureau (EEB), Friends of the Earth (FoE/MedNet Programme), Mediterranean NGO Network for Ecology and Sustainable Development (MEDForum), Mediterranean Information Office for Environment, Culture and Sustainable Development (MIO-ECSDE), World Wide Fund for Nature Mediterranean Programme (WWF/MEDPO)