

30th June 2020

Australia-UK FTA submission

To whom it may concern,

As CEO of Geraldton Fishermen's Co-operative (GFC), Australia's largest exporter of rock lobster I want to submit our strong request for the removal of all import tariffs to Australian rock lobster (HS 030631 and 030621 [currently 12.5%](#)) in the UK market at the upcoming FTA discussions between our two countries.

More broadly, as a representative of the Australian seafood industry, a diversified, premium, and export-focused sector, it would be my strong recommendation to seek the removal of import duties for all Australian seafood products to the UK.

GFC and many other Australian seafood exporters have flourished under FTAs with Asian markets. Recently ratified FTAs (China and Japan, for example) have facilitated two-way investment, trade growth and product and market diversification between Australian and our Asian neighbours.

Considering Australia's track record with FTAs and the strong cultural ties between the United Kingdom and Australia, the evaporation of import duties to our product and the seafood sector would foster a better landscape for trade growth.

While the UK (and by proxy the EU) has historically been a smaller trading partner for our industry, trade to this region can be traced back to the 1990s. In recent years the volume of business has diminished due to increased costs (including tariffs) and highly technical requirements for clearance. I believe the removal of tariffs would have a positive impact on trade development and market diversification.

Although a reduction in tariffs for rock lobster and seafood exports to the UK is the primary desired outcome for negotiations, of equal significance is ensuring that the agreed technical trade rules and export regulations:

- Minimise the cost of exporting seafood to the UK
- Can be readily understood and easily applied by industry throughout the supply chain, and
- Do not exclude the export of specific Australian seafood products to the UK
- Expedites custom clearance and security verification for highly perishable products such as seafood
- Australia needs to ensure that text regarding rules of origin, geographical indicators (GIs), and vessel ownership conditions do not prevent Australian seafood producers from exporting product under the preferential terms of the FTA.

I welcome the opportunity to discuss this submission further.

Yours faithfully



Matt Rutter
Chief Executive Officer