

## EU will evaluate in 2020 withdrawal of 'yellow card' to Ecuadorian tuna

The European Union (EU) will carry out from April 2020 a first evaluation of the progress of Ecuador in its fight against illegal tuna fishing, which determined that it received a "yellow card", prior to the prohibition of fishery products as tuna to that block, it was announced this Wednesday.

In late April "a technical commission will arrive in Ecuador to assess what is being done to clean that yellow card," said the ambassador of the Delegation of the European Union in Ecuador, Marianne Van Steen.

In dialogue with journalists, the diplomat said that among the requirements raised is the update and renewal of a fishing law that dates back more than 30 years.

But in this regard she showed satisfaction because a reform is being treated in the National Assembly (legislative) for approval no later than January of next year.

Brussels detected "deficiencies" that prevent Ecuador from ensuring that its exports to the EU do not come "from illegal fishing activities," explained European Fisheries Commissioner Karmenu Vella last October.

Next January will be four years of a trade agreement between the EU and Ecuador, which between January and September 2019 registered 24% of its total exports to the European block with products derived from tuna, the second item after banana -which represents 35% of sales.

Other recommendations of the European bloc to eliminate its warning are the prompt execution and start-up of the new normatives and their implementing regulations.



Since 2010, the EU develops a certification system for its trading partners to ensure that products do not come from illegal fishing, within the framework of a global action for better management of the oceans.

In this context, they also ask Ecuador to verify the solvency of traceability systems, which will allow determining from the origin of the catches until Ecuadorian tuna reaches the European consumer.

The evaluations will continue with technical visits every six months and then it will be decided if the yellow card is lifted or passed to a red card, which would represent the impossibility of trading with the block, although there are no defined deadlines for it.

Ecuador is the second largest tuna producer in the world, after Thailand, and in 2018 it registered some USD 1.4 billion in tuna exports to the EU, according to data from the European Commission.

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