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Paul R. LePage
GOVERNOR

June 8, 2016

Mr. Daniel Calleja Crespo
Director General-DG Environment
European Commission
B-1049 Brussels Belgium

Dear Mr. Crespo,

I write to strongly encourage the European Commission to deny the Swedish government's petition to list *Homarus americanus* (American lobster) as an invasive alien species under EU Regulation 1143/2014. The risk assessment study submitted to the Commission provides inadequate scientific basis for the petition and, as such, it should be denied. Maine has had a successful live lobster trade with European countries for several decades.

Here in Maine, the lobster fishery is the primary economic driver of our coastal economy, with over one billion dollars in revenue generated from this fishery alone on an annual basis. Like the EU, we take the risk of any possible ecological threats to our fisheries very seriously and fully appreciate that the European Union is seeking to protect the health of its own marine resources.

Consumers are seeking a premium live product from Maine and North America. The US and Canada have developed a fishery that can provide this to Europe in a timely manner. Appropriate traceability and accountability within the supply chain can maximize benefits and minimize risk to EU importers, consumers and the environment.

The United States has submitted a scientific response to the risk assessment, compiled by state and federal lobster biologists here in Maine and around the region. The response indicates that the risk of establishment is minimal, and a prohibition on import is not the appropriate measure of response at this time. Given the economic implications to both European nations and the US in this case, it seems clear that there are a number of possible regulatory or enforcement actions that should be taken to mitigate any risk of establishment prior to severely impacting trade by listing American lobster as an invasive alien species.

Please do not hesitate to contact me or Commissioner of Marine Resources Patrick Keliher if the State of Maine can be of further assistance to the Commission in this matter.

Sincerely,

Paul R. LePage
Governor



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