

EN

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Answer given by Mr Šefčovič
on behalf of the European Commission
(18.8.2025)

The Commission is aware of the import bans that China is imposing on ruminant meat and derived products due to bluetongue disease outbreaks. These bans are indeed impacting exports from various Member States, including Italy, since 2024.

The Commission has been raising this issue with relevant Chinese authorities at multiple occasions since 2024, both at technical and political level, and both at bilateral letter to the General Administration of China Customs on 14 October 2024 and multilateral level (World Trade Organisation Sanitary and Phytosanitary committee).

The Commission reminded China that according to the World Organisation for Animal Health (WOAH), no import restrictions should be imposed, regardless of the bluetongue status of the exporting country (see in particular Article 8.3.2 of the WOAH code on ‘Safe commodities’, which confirms that Veterinary Authorities should not require any bluetongue-related conditions regardless of the bluetongue status of the exporting country¹). Accordingly China should lift the bans currently in place because of the bluetongue disease. At this stage, the issue has not been solved but the Commission will continue raising it.

In the same way, recognition of EU regionalisation measures by China has been a long-standing issue. This is still a priority issue which the Commission keeps raising regularly with Chinese authorities.

¹ https://www.woah.org/fileadmin/Home/eng/Health_standards/tahc/2018/en_chapitre_bluetongue.htm.