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Answer given by Ms Kyriakides
on behalf of the European Commission
(15.2.2021)

As regards sanitary risks, the Commission follows the conclusions of the recent Rapid Risk Assessment (RAA)¹. From a human health perspective, findings of SARS-CoV-2 mink related variant are significant, as there are risks of potential implications for immunity, reinfection, vaccination and treatment of COVID-19. Such implications are still under investigation. Member States should consider to implement a variety of measures, in line with the RAA and under a One Health umbrella, including considering culling minks from infected farms. The Commission supports that the competent authorities of the Member States assess local risk according to prevailing epidemiological, demographic and other circumstances to better guide their responses in line with the RAA.

Regarding unfair competition (dumped or subsidized imports) from third countries, the EU has trade defence instruments in place, whereby EU companies can lodge a complaint if they suffer an injury from the import of goods, which are subsidised or imported in the EU at prices below the normal value. If such complaint is duly substantiated, the Commission can subsequently initiate an investigation and as a result impose, if warranted, anti-dumping or countervailing measures to correct the damage caused to the EU producers. The Commission provides special assistance for small and medium enterprises on the use of trade defence measures².

¹ European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control (ECDC) and European Food Safety Authority (EFSA), on Detection of new SARS-CoV-2 variants related to mink

<https://www.ecdc.europa.eu/sites/default/files/documents/RAA-SARS-CoV-2-in-mink-12-nov-2020.pdf>

² Through a dedicated helpdesk: <https://ec.europa.eu/trade/policy/accessing-markets/trade-defence/actions-against-imports-into-the-eu/help-for-smes/>