

Media Release

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The Commission refers fishing collusion investigation

Yesterday, the Competition Commission (the Commission) has referred to the Competition Tribunal its findings of cartel conduct against Pioneer Fishing (Pioneer) and Blue Continent Products (BCP) - fishing companies that operate in the market for supply of horse mackerel locally and for export markets.

The decision by the Commission follows an investigation that was initiated in March 2011. The Commission has asked the Tribunal to impose an administrative penalty not exceeding 10 percent of annual turnover of Pioneer, whilst no administrative penalty is sought against BPC as it has been granted conditional leniency in terms of the Commission's Corporate Leniency Policy.

The Commission found that between 2008 to at least 2010, Pioneer and BCP agreed to divide the market for supply of horse mackerel by allocating territories and/or customers. The parties entered into a suite of agreements relating to the sale and supply of horse mackerel within certain markets, such as Limpopo, Mpumalanga and North West provinces. Pioneer denies the aforesaid conduct. However, the Competition Tribunal will make a finding after the matter has been heard.

"This referral is yet another confirmation of the correctness of our focus on food and agro processing, a sector that has a direct impact on consumers," said the acting Commissioner, Tembinkosi Bonakele.

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