

# Aquaculture Advisory Council

## Extraordinary Executive Committee meeting

6<sup>th</sup> of October 2022 (09:30-13:00)

Czech Permanent Representation to the EU – 15, rue Caroly – 1050 Bruxelles – Interpretation available in  
EN - FR – ES – IT

## Minutes

### PARTICIPATION LIST

#### EXCOM MEMBERS

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Brian Thomsen (AAC Chair)

#### Operators

Ola Öberg (Recirkfisk)

Ole Christensen (FEFAC)

Teresa Morrissey (IFA)

Angeles Longa (Mexillon de Galicia)

Bruno Guillaumie (EMPA)

Laurine Tertre (CNC)

Javier Ojeda (FEAP)

#### Other interest groups

Paul Denekamp (Stichting Vissenbescherming)

Douglas Waley (Eurogroup for Animals)

Phil Brooke (CIWF)

#### Excused

Bernhard Feneis (Cogeca) – Proxy: Javier Ojeda (FEAP)

Pier Salvador (Copa) – Proxy: Javier Ojeda (FEAP)

Luisa Alvarez (Fedepesca) – Proxy: Javier Ojeda (FEAP)

#### OTHER PARTICIPANTS

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**Invited:** Vladimír Žlábek (CENAKVA)

**Secretariat:** Cécile Fouquet (AAC Secretariat), Charlotte Musquar (AAC Secretariat)



## AGENDA

- [Welcome words by the Chair Brian Thomsen](#)
- [Adoption of the agenda and approval of the last Extraordinary ExCom minutes \(14 September 2022\)](#)
- [Presentation by Prof. Dipl.-Ing. Vladimír Žlábek, Head of the South Bohemian Research Centre of Aquaculture and Biodiversity of Hydrocenoses \(CENAKVA\)](#)
- [Working Groups: Updates](#)
- [Attribution of topics between the Working Groups](#)
- [Guidance for AAC recommendations](#)
- [AAC Budget 2021-2022: update on ongoing financial year](#)
- [Results of the AAC annual survey](#)
- [Further consolidating the AAC relationship with Member States](#)
- [AAC members categorisation](#)
- [Inter-AC Brexit Forum](#)
- [Presentation of ongoing communication activities](#)
- [ExCom Focus Groups on specific issues](#)
- [Any other business](#)
- [Conclusions](#)

## MEETING MINUTES

### Welcome words by the Chair Brian Thomsen

The Chair Brian Thomsen welcomed the Executive Committee (ExCom) members and confirmed the quorum.

#### 1. Adoption of the agenda and approval of the last Extraordinary ExCom minutes (14 September 2022)

The Chair announced a decision to be taken under AOB on an extra translation cost for a questionnaire in Working Group 1 (WG1).

The agenda was adopted with this change.

The minutes of the previous Extraordinary ExCom meeting (14.09.22) were adopted without any change.

#### 2. Presentation by Prof. Dipl.-Ing. Vladimír Žlábek, Head of the South Bohemian Research Centre of Aquaculture and Biodiversity of Hydrocenoses (CENAKVA)

Vladimír Žlábek (CENAKVA) presented the South Bohemian Research Centre of Aquaculture and Biodiversity of Hydrocenoses.



The presentation was followed by an exchange of views with the members of the ExCom.

The AAC members expressed an interest in learning more about the technique developed by CENAKVA on the production of caviar without killing the sturgeons. An invitation to present that project to WG1 may follow, to be discussed with WG1 Chair Andrea Fabris.

### 3. Working Groups: Updates

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Phil Brooke (WG1 Vice Chair) presented the work of WG1:

- **Fish Health:**
  - Paolo Caricato (DG SANTE) presented an update on the issue of fish parasites during the last WG1 meeting.
  - WG1 approved a ToR to hire an expert on the health management of farmed fish.
  - On the issue of medicated feed, WG1 decided to invite a representative from the European Medicine Agency to the next WG1 meeting.
- **Sustainability of EU fish farming:**
  - Circularity of fish feed: a Focus Group (FG) was created to prepare a draft recommendation.
  - The issue of decarbonisation in fish farming (use of electricity) will be discussed in the FG that has been created in WG3 on the issue of the decarbonisation of aquaculture (use of fuel). However, two distinct Recommendations will be produced.
- **Eels:** A letter was sent to DG MARE by the end of August but feedback has yet to be received.
- **Fish Welfare:**
  - Understanding consumer views on animal welfare: it will be decided during the next FG meeting whether to hire an expert or to work internally on this issue.
  - Improving fish welfare & production through a better understanding of fish behaviour & ethology: a questionnaire prepared by the expert will be circulated among EU fish farmers to complete and finalise the report.
  - AAC Code of good practices on farmed fish welfare: the work is ongoing.
- **Domestication in aquaculture:** an expert was present during the WG1 meeting but no conclusions were drawn and the discussion will continue on this topic and the matter of octopus farming.

Paul Denekamp (WG2 Vice Chair) presented the work of WG2:

- The final draft of the study on "Algae, shellfish and nutrients" was presented to WG2 by a DG MARE consultant.
- **Good practices in shellfish farming:** a FG was created to prepare a draft recommendation.
- **Shellfish farming as a nitrogen sink:** a FG was created to prepare a draft recommendation.
- **EMODNET:** WG2 will provide to DG MARE a list including all existing declarative Member States' obligations on shellfish farming zones.
- **Shellfish Health:**



- Norovirus: a letter has been drafted and approved to be sent to the EC.
- **Molluscan welfare:** the work is still ongoing in the FG which could become a long-term FG (similarly to WG1's FG on fish welfare).

Douglas Waley (WG3 Chair) presented the work of WG3:

- **DG MARE Updates:** Lorella De La Cruz (DG MARE) and Lana Bezinovic Sostar (DG MARE) provided updates on the following topics:
  - Strategic Guidelines – Guidance documents on MSP and Administrative Procedures
  - Reaction to the Council Conclusions on the Strategic Guidelines and in particular its points 8, 14 and 15
  - EU Communication Campaign on Aquaculture
  - The CoR event results
  - Aquaculture Assistance Mechanism
- An update on previous AAC WG3 recommendation uptake and WG3 activity was presented to WG3 by Brian Thomsen (Danish Aquaculture).
- **Organic Aquaculture:** comments were made on the draft during WG3 meeting and it will be approved by written procedure.
- **Environment Liability Directive:** WG3 will follow up on this issue after the event of November 22 stakeholders' event.
- **Promoting the involvement of young professionals in aquaculture farming:** the listing of young farmers is still ongoing, work will be launched with them once it has been finalised.
- **Climate Impact on Aquaculture activities:** the AAC report will be finalised before the end of the month.
- **Socio-economic impact of aquaculture:** WG3 will invite a FAO representative to make an introductory overview during the next meeting.
- **Nutrients Management Plan:** work is ongoing and the draft recommendation should be submitted for approval during the next WG3 meeting.
- **Small Scale Aquaculture:** the recommendation has been approved by the WG with some changes.
- **Decarbonisation of aquaculture (use of fuel):** a FG was created to prepare a draft recommendation.

#### 4. Attribution of topics between the Working Groups

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The Secretariat presented the draft criteria for the attribution of topics between Working Groups.

The criteria were adopted with the following additions:

- "Finfish" instead of "fish",
- Octopus farming added as a topic in WG1,
- Algae farming will continue to be discussed under WG3 but should be considered by the other Working Groups when necessary.



## 5. Guidance for AAC recommendations

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The Secretariat presented the draft guidance document for AAC recommendations.

**The guidance document was adopted with the following additions:**

- Addition of a “for approbation” box in the header,
- Addition of a “proofread” box in the header: proofreading should take place at the earliest possible stage of the process – when a draft recommendation has been drafted to be discussed by the Focus Group.
- The recommendations should be SMART (specific, measurable, assignable, realistic and time-related). A clear reference to this tool should be included in the template.

## 6. AAC Budget 2021-2022: update on ongoing financial year

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The Secretariat presented the 2021-2022 AAC progress budget.

Two additional expenses were suggested by members of the ExCom:

- Translation of the WG1’s Fish ethology report survey,
- Compensation to Aliénor for the extra inflation costs unforeseen by the Secretariat’s contract.

**These two expenses were approved by the ExCom.**

The Secretariat will request to Aliénor draft invoice to be submitted to the ExCom for approval.

**The ExCom also agreed to reflect, in future discussions, on:**

- Increasing the per diem,
- A new and more flexible formulation for the Secretariat’s contract to count for inflation.

## 7. Results of the AAC annual survey

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The Secretariat presented the results of the annual AAC survey.

After a short exchange of views, the Chair suggested to circulate the ExCom minutes to the whole AAC members so as to increase transparency about the decisions made at the ExCom level.

**The ExCom members agreed.**

## 8. Further consolidating the AAC relationship with Member States

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The Secretariat presented the activities that were carried out to further consolidate the AAC relationship with MS:

- Update of MS contacts via the ExCom members,



- Automatic transmission of recommendations,
- Invitations to AAC meetings and seminars and sharing working documents when they confirm their participation to the meeting,
- Out of office message in the summer,
- Christmas greetings,
- Contact every year for funding and communication of annual accounts,
- Draft & send thank you letters when funding is received.

**The ExCom agreed on the following additional actions:**

- Addition of a RSS feed functionality to the AAC website,
- Update the Member States' national contact list every 6 months.
- Organisation of an AAC seminar with MS – if successful, to make it a yearly event.

## **9. AAC members categorisation**

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The Secretariat presented the draft new member application form.

**The application form was adopted with the following adjustments:**

- "Control and funding" in addition to "Organisation objectives",
- "Sector organisation" instead of "Aquaculture value chain".

## **10. Inter-AC Brexit Forum**

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The Secretariat explained that the AAC's decision not to actively engage in the Inter-AC Brexit Forum was communicated to its secretariat. Colleagues from the other ACs will let the AAC Secretariat know if any topic linked to aquaculture is brought up.

Bruno Guillaumie (EMPA) noted that the AAC needs to remain aware of the consequences of Brexit and suggested to the Secretariat to stay informed on these developments.

## **11. Presentation of ongoing communication activities**

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The Secretariat presented the ongoing communication activities of the AAC:

- **Leaflet:** Text + design updated by the Secretariat,
- **Website:** quote requested to use some of the remaining budget to update the website, as approved by the GA in September => Estimated budget = 7 000 €.

**The ExCom agreed on the following additional actions:**

- Addition of a page on the website: "What is aquaculture?" – including facts and figures, links to relevant



web pages, number of licenses for each MS,

- Measure of the website's traffic.

## **12. ExCom Focus Groups on specific issues**

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The Secretariat presented the specific issues that could be debated within the ExCom:

- Follow up on previous recommendations
- External evaluation of the AAC
- AAC statutes and rules of procedure amendment
- Revision of reimbursement rules
- Guidance on LinkedIn and Twitter
- Publication of AAC facts and figures 2022
- Attracting new members (environmental NGOs, consumer representatives)

The ExCom agreed to meet in a Focus Group format to discuss these matters one by one. A doodle will be sent to the ExCom members to organise its first meeting (probably in November).

## **13. Any other business**

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The additional budget on the translation of the WG1 questionnaire was approved under Point 6.

No additional issue was raised under AOB.

## **14. Conclusions and closing of the meeting**

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The Chair thanked the ExCom members for a productive ExCom meeting.

The next ExCom meeting will take place virtually on the 2<sup>nd</sup> of February 2023.

