

Aquaculture Advisory Council

WG2 Shellfish Meeting

25 Octobre 2023 (13 :30-17:00)

Thon Hotel, Avenue du Boulevard 17, 1210 Brussels – Interpretations available in EN - FR – ES – IT

Minutes

PARTICIPATION LIST

WG2 MEMBERS

Stéphane Angeri (Chair)

Paul Denekamp (Vice-Chair)

Giulia Malerbi (ALI)

Giuseppe Prioli (AMA)

Wouter Van Zandbrink (CEP),

Audrey Lainé (CNC),

Thibaut Pivetta (CNC),

Florian Guillou (CNPMEM),

Philippe Le Gal (CRC Bretagne-Sud)

Angeles Longa Portabales (Consello Regulador do Mexillon de Galicia)

Phil Brooke (CIWF),

David Basset (EATIP)

Bruno Guillaumie (EMPA),

Teresa Morrissey (IFA),

Ola Öberg (RECIRKFIK),

Paul Denekamp (Stichting Vissenbescherming)

OTHER PARTICIPANTS

Observers: Joe Redfern (SAGB), Antonio Correia (Associacao Portuguease Aquaculture), Léo-Paul Mayé (Young Aquaculture Producer).

Secretariat: Cécile Fouquet (AAC Secretariat), Charlotte Musquar (AAC Secretariat), Hélène Hajek (AAC Secretariat).



MEETING AGENDA

MEETING MINUTES	2
Welcome from President Stéphane Angeri	2
1. Adoption of the agenda and minutes of the last meeting	2
2. Food safety: arsenic levels	2
3. Action Plan for Marine Ecosystems.....	3
4. Blue crab	3
5. Additional Point on DG SANTE's presentation during WG1	4
6. Shellfish health: Norovirus.....	4
7. Molluscan welfare.....	5
8. Use of DG MARE mapping studies for the development of low-trophic aquaculture.....	5
9. Preserve our sovereignty in terms of hatcheries and develop a "pathogen free" label to allow secure exports"	5
10. AOB & conclusions	6

MEETING MINUTES

Welcome from President Stéphane Angeri

Stéphane Angeri (Chairman) welcomed the participants as well as the secretariat and interpreters.

1. Adoption of the agenda and minutes of the last meeting

The agenda and minutes of the last meeting were approved with the addition of an item on the update by DG SANTE on Animal Health in WG1 and an item in the AOB section concerning a request for changing the name of the WG.

2. Food safety: arsenic levels

- Update on the intervention of DG SANTE by **Cécile Fouquet (Secretariat)**

Cécile Fouquet (Secretariat) updated the group on the follow up on the letter by DG SANTE. The point has not been yet discussed with Member States (planned for November/December). As for the extension to provide the data, this is what they replied: *As a possible vote on the proposal would be foreseen in Q2 of 2024, stakeholders can still submit additional occurrence data to me. They should submit the raw occurrence data with the concentration of iAs in each individual sample, as well as the Latin name of the species.*



Wouter Van Zandbrink (CEP) underlined the importance of communicating with the COM as well as with MS national authorities and to remind them of their responsibilities on water quality issues.

- Update by the **Secretariat** in the presence of **Niall Gerlitz (DG MARE)**

Niall Gerlitz (DG MARE) explained that Member States (MS) had been invited to submit sampling results in mid-august 2023. He underlined the fact that another technical working group will be held in November on this issue. He advised that the best thing to do was to wait and see what the new proposal will be and wait for the data to be received.

The Working Group will now have to wait and see what the new proposal will be before taking further action.

3. Action Plan for Marine Ecosystems

- Update by **the Chair** and next steps to carry out the mapping.

Stéphane Angeri (Chair) reminded that the Recommendation on the impact of a bottom trawling ban on shellfish aquaculture had already been sent to the Commission and the MS. The Commission has already sent an answer that has been analysed by the Focus Group.

- Exchange of views with the Working Group members and next steps

Cécile Fouquet (Secretariat) briefly summarised the meeting that was held online on 6 October. The meeting gathered members of the Member States Environmental and Fisheries Ministers, DG ENV and DG MARE. **Addy Risseeuw (PO Mosselcultuur)** and **Doug Waley (Eurogroup for Animals)** attended as online observers. **Addy Risseeuw** took the opportunity to present the AAC Recommendation. **Cécile Fouquet (Secretariat)** reminded that the AAC committed to draw a map of European zones of trawling for spats.

A Focus Group will be created for this task, create the mapping that was commissioned, and Bruno Guillaumie (EMPA) could be nominated as a rapporteur.

4. Blue crab

- Presentation of the problem by **Giuseppe Prioli (AMA)**

Giuseppe Prioli (AMA) updated¹ the AAC on the situation concerning the blue crab in Italy.

- Exchange of views with the WG members and next steps (launch of a Focus Group work)

After a lively discussion, WG members agreed to draft a letter to DG MARE. **Giuseppe Prioli (AMA)** stated that he will reach out with those tackling the issue and ask them about possible solutions as well as reach out to the Italian Ministry and request further actions to be taken.

¹ <http://aac-europe.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/11/The-blue-crab-and-shellfish-farming.pdf>



The letter will call for:

- The possibility to fund compensation measures with the EMFAF.
- The commissioning of a study to assess the movements of the blue crab. Two public institutions in Italy are currently looking at these issues and could be contacted.
- The creation of a Forum or the organisation of an EU conference on this matter.

The secretariat will draft a letter with the help of Giuseppe Prioli (AMA). The matter of invasive species in general will have to be discussed in WG3 as this is a growing problem affecting aquaculture activities due to climate change.

5. Additional Point on DG SANTE's presentation during WG1

- Point on the presentation of Fiona (DG SANTE) by **Andrea (WG1 Chair)**

Andrea (WG1 Chair) came back on yesterday's presentation² by **Fiona Geogheghan (DG SANTE)**. He underlined the issue of the poor uptake by Member States on the voluntary eradication of Category C diseases.

- Exchange of views with the WG members and next steps

Giuseppe Prioli (AMA) advised that AAC producers gather and find a common solution to influence the MS towards a solution.

WG members agreed that the sector organisations should act at Member State level.

6. Shellfish health: Norovirus

- Presentation of the research perspectives on Norovirus (OXYVIR 2 conclusions, NOROTRACK Project) by **Audrey Lainé (CNC)**

Audrey Lainé (CNC) updated³ the AAC the recently finalised project OXYVIR 2.

- Exchange of views with the WG members and next steps

Stéphane Angeri (Chairman) summarised the discussion by stating the sector's hope in finding a solution with the purification system, but that on the other hand the additional costs will have to be bore by the producers when they are not responsible for the problem.

An update on this point will be done at the next meeting.

² Available on the AAC members' Intranet

³ http://aac-europe.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/11/5.-231025_Norovirus-perspectives-de-recherche_GT2-CCA.pdf



7. Molluscan welfare

- Update on the Focus Group discussions by **Paul Denekamp (FG leader)**

Paul Denekamp (FG leader) reminded that he had sent a message over the weekend to the Focus Group members to continue their work. He proposed to set up a new FG meeting in November.

- Exchange of views with the WG members and next steps

David Bassett (EATIP) advised that the AAC should give some a recommendation to the COM to work on this matter. He noted that there was currently a European Partnership for animal welfare with funds from the MS. The AAC would be well placed to give recommendations to the national research Councils.

Giuseppe Prioli (AMA) underlined the fact that the AAC could carry out a study on mollusc's welfare and look at the conditions of molluscs in polluted waters in comparison to their condition in non-polluted waters.

A Focus Group meeting will be organised in November to explore the issue of molluscan welfare and discuss the drafting of a Recommendation on this topic.

8. Use of DG MARE mapping studies for the development of low-trophic aquaculture

- Exchange of views with the WG members to define the scope of our future recommendation.

Bruno Guillaumie (EMPA) stated that since DG MARE's results of the second study on mapping have not been published yet, the FG could not advance further on the Recommendation yet.

Thibaut Pivetta (CNC) explained that it would be relevant to ask to the COM on when this study will be available.

- Decision on next steps.

The secretariat will contact DG MARE and the FG will launch its activities on the basis of the received response.

9. Preserve our sovereignty in terms of hatcheries and develop a "pathogen free" label to allow secure exports"

- Exchange of views with the WG members to define the scope of our future recommendation.

The objective of this point was to create a Focus Group and find a Rapporteur. She reminded the AAC that the Group had to write a Recommendation on the topic before Octobre 2024.

- Decision on next steps.

Thibaut Pivetta (CNC) advised to ask the COM for its positions on the topic and volunteered to be elected Rapporteur of the FG.



The Focus Group will nominate a rapporteur and start drafting a Recommendation.

10. AOB & conclusions

Bruno Guillaumie (EMPA) proposed that WG2 is named “Low-trophic level aquaculture WG” instead of “Shellfish WG”, since it also tackles algae production. He advised that the new name is proposed to the EXCOM.

Paul Denekamp (FG leader) underlined that this should not be done in a hurry and that it could be discussed in our next meeting.

The next Working Group 2 meeting will take place on **21 February 2024, online.**

