

Aquaculture Advisory Council

Working Group 1 - Finfish meeting

30 Jan 2024 (9:30-12:30)

Online meeting (Zoom) - Interpretation available in EN – ES – IT

Minutes

PARTICIPATION LIST

WG1 MEMBERS

Andrea Fabris (API, Chair)	Aquaculture)	Yannis Pelekanakis (HAPO)
Phil Brooke (CIWF, Vice-Chair)	David Bassett (EATIP)	Teresa Morrissey (IFA)
	Ana Granados (EFFAB)	Anna Pyć (Polish Trout Breeders Association)
	Gaiagla Kaya (EFFAB)	Dr. Shane Willis (OFI President)
Garazi Rodriguez (APPROMAR)	Anne Mette Baek Jespersen (EFFOP)	Nathalie Gamain (OFI)
Giulia Malerbi (Aquatic Life institute)	Douglas Waley (Eurogroup for Animals)	Catalin Platon (ROMFISH)
Marine Levadoux (CIPA)	James Hinchcliffe (EFFOP)	Ola Öberg (RECIRKFIK)
Florian Guillou (CNPMEM)	Catherine Pons (FEAP)	Paul Denekamp (Stichting Vissenbescherming)
Bernhard Feneis (COGECA)	Javier Ojeda (FEAP)	Béla Halasi Kovacs (SCIAP Consulting)
Pier Antonio Salvador (COPA)	Ole Christensen (FEFAC)	
Brian Thomsen (Danish)	Alain Schonbrodt (FVE)	

OTHER PARTICIPANTS

Invited: Stanislav Ralchev (DG SANTE), Mitja Sedlbauer (DG SANTE), Dr. Dusan Palic (EMA).

Observers: Alejandro Guelfo (misPeces), Adrian Bilba (Compartiment Acvacultura si pescuit recreativ), Wasseem Emam (Ethical Seafood Research), Victor Nita (National Institute for Marine Research and Development), Krzysztof Ciszewski (Researcher), Birte Brorson (Organic Aquaculture Denmark), Linn Therese S. Hosteland (Kystrederiene).

Member States Experts: Ellen Rietsema (Dutch Ministry of Agriculture), Eleonora Fikovska (Bulgaria Directorate Management of Fisheries), Vela Dinkova (Bulgaria Directorate Management of Fisheries), Ruta Medne (Latvia Institute of Food Safety, Animal Health), Frederik Follesdal Venold (Norwegian Ministry of Fisheries), Nina Eriksen Vinja (Norwegian Ministry of Fisheries), Liv Hilde Westrheim (Norwegian Ministry of Fisheries), Ragnar Kanestrom Troite (Norwegian Ministry of Fisheries), Eivind Lorentzen (Norwegian Ministry of Fisheries), Daniel Bence Kovacs (Hungarian Ministry of Agriculture), Katalin Szentes (Hungarian Ministry of



Agriculture), Beatrix Beres Szabone (Hungarian Ministry of Agriculture), Raquel Lopez Gonzales (Spanish Ministry of Agriculture).

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

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MEETING MINUTES

Welcome words by the Chair

Andrea Fabris (Chair) welcomed the present participants.

1. Adoption of the agenda and approval of the Minutes of the last meeting

The minutes of the last meeting and the agenda were approved without modifications.

2. Fish Health

i. Ornamental Fish

- Presentation by **Dr. Shane Willis (OFI President)** on ornamental fish trade in the EU¹
- **Exchange of views** with the Working Group members.

Andrea Fabris (Chair) and **Pier Salvador (API)** **underlined** the importance of informing the owners about biosecurity rules.

¹ Available on the AAC members' Intranet.



Paul Denekamp (Stichting Vissenbescherming) informed that in The Netherlands many fishes needed to be rescued by shelters.

Dr. Shane Willis (OFI President) informed that OFI was working on this as well as on the topics of fish maintenance and good husbandry, to provide the best practical information to the Member States and consumers. He agreed that the clear lack of knowledge on the consumers' side is problematic.

The Focus Group will reflect on the next steps of its activities based on the information received today with this presentation.

ii. Update on Focus Group activities

- **Update** on the relaunch of work of FH expert, proposal of recommendation to MS, proposal of letter to EC, launch of discussions on ornamental fish.

Andrea Fabris (Chair) updated the WG on the Fish Health Focus Group. A FG meeting took place on 8 January. The members discussed the actions to be taken to follow up on the Commission's reply to their recommendation on fish health. The Chair also announced that he will reach out to a new external expert to write a recommendation on fish health management (after the failure of last year).

The Chair's analysis of the Commission's reply will be shared on the AAC share drive for approval by the Working Group members.

iii. Veterinary Medicine Products

- **A/ Presentation by Dr. Dusan Palic (EMA)² on the progress of the Article 114-3 of Regulation 6/2019 work (substance list)**

A Working Document was sent to EMA before the Christmas holidays listing the substances and commercial forms of the most often used medicines for fish in the different UE countries. The Commission wishes to approve this list by November 2024.

Dr. Dusan Palic (EMA) updated the members on the ongoing work related to animal health done by EMA for the European Commission. The Commission has mandated EMA to provide scientific advice on the substances that may be considered for inclusion in the list by **30 November 2024**. He explained in further detail the latest developments on substances for use in aquaculture under the cascade on Article 114.3 of regulation 2019.³

- **Exchange of views** with the WG Members and next steps

EMA will contact the AAC when more inputs will be needed.

- **B/ Update by Andrea Fabris (Chair) on the ongoing EC Consultation on Oral Administration of**

² Available on the AAC members' Intranet.

³ Article 114-3 of Regulation 6/2019: <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:32019R0006>



VMPs

Andrea Fabris (Chair) briefly updated the group on the consultation on a draft document related to the oral administration of VMPs.

The Chair expressed that the document was positive as some of the AAC recommendations had been considered by the Commission in the draft document.

3. Eels

- Update on Focus Group activities by **Andrea Fabris (Chair)**

Andrea Fabris (Chair) outlined that a Recommendation will be written focusing on the need for and importance of restocking eels, of avoiding damage to eels in rivers, and of banning illegal trade of eels. The Recommendation will have to be produced by **October 2024**.

The Chair encouraged members to join the FG group and provide further inputs. A draft recommendation will be prepared.

4. Sturgeon

- **Proposal** of new work to be launched – Exclusion of aquaculture sturgeon from the CITES objectives by **Andrea Fabris (Chair)**

Andrea Fabris (API) proposed to launch the work on a Recommendation aiming at the exclusion of aquaculture sturgeon from the CITES list. He mentioned the administrative burden it constitutes for EU sturgeon producers.

The Secretariat will circulate the list for members to join this new FG. If the FG was to be touching trade matters, the MAC will have to be involved.

5. Fish welfare

- i. [EU Fish Welfare Reference Centre priorities](#)
 - **Update** from **Phil Brooke (Compassion in World Farming)**

Phil Brooke (Compassion in World Farming) informed that now that the Fish Welfare Reference Centre consortium was officially nominated, a meeting will be organised soon with **Prof Michalis Pavlidis** to discuss the priorities of the Centre.

- ii. [Fish welfare during transport](#)
 - Presentation of the EC proposal by **Mr. Stanislav Ralchev (DG SANTE)** and **Mr. Mitja Sedlbauer (DG SANTE)**⁴

⁴ Commission proposal for a Regulation on the protection of animals during transport with a focus on aquatic animals by Stanislav



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

The members requested further information on **the proposal, such as how to concretely implement the provisions.**

Javier Ojeda (FEAP) underlined the need for more consistency and detail in the provisions related to the unloading and loading of aquatic species, as well as on the Annex I related to the measure of CO₂ and ammonia levels.

Mr. Stanislav Ralchev (DG SANTE) informed that the proposal will be translated in all official languages by 15 February and a consultation will be open for feedback for 8 weeks after that.

iii. Good practices

- **Presentation** of a draft Recommendation by **Phil Brooke (Vice-Chair, FG leader)**

Phil Brooke (Vice-Chair, FG leader) presented the FG draft Recommendation on good practices. Discussions focused on the wording around the second paragraph.

The Secretariat will share the link to the draft to the members via email for further comments.

6. Circularity of feed

- Update on FG activities by FG leader **Ole Christensen (FEFAC)**

Ole Christensen (FEFAC) informed that the FG will start working on a new recommendation in the coming months.

7. Domestication

- Update on Focus Group activities by FG leader **Ana Granados (EFFAB)**

Ana Granados (EFFAB) updated the members on the FG activities. She reported that the FG had identified the need to seek more expertise and gain insights and knowledge on the topic. A Norwegian paper that was published a few years ago related to new species in aquaculture and domestication is currently being translated.

8. AOB & Conclusions

Two **AOB points** were discussed:

RALCHEV & Mitja SEDLBAUER (DG SANTE) : <https://aac-europe.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/01/Transport-proposal-with-focus-on-aquatic-animals-AAC-30-Jan-2024.pdf>



- **Cécile Fouquet (Secretariat)** informed that a WG2 Focus Group was launched on the matter of nurseries. The FG was discussing the writing of a recommendation focused on the state of play of shellfish nurseries in Europe and the current challenges. She mentioned that this FG was thinking of the possibility of collaborating with WG1 FG (if needed) to tackle fish nurseries too. A call for Focus Group members will be shared.
- **Phil Brooke (Compassion in World Farming)** informed about his work in WG2 about a draft recommendation on Molluscan Welfare. He called for potential comments/input from WG1 members too. **The Secretariat** will circulate the file again.

Andrea Fabris (Chair) thanked the members for their participation and work done. He informed that the next meeting of this Working Group will take place in Brussels on the **12/06/24** (afternoon).

