

Aquaculture Advisory Council

WG3 Horizontal Issues

20 February 2024 (14:00-17:00)

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

Minutes

PARTICIPATION LIST

WG3 MEMBERS

Douglas Waley (WG3 Chair),	Florian Guillou (CNPMEM),	Teresa Morrissey (IFA),
Leo Kirchmaier (ALFAA),	Angeles Longa Portabales (CRMG)	Anna Pyć
Katarina Sipic (AIPCE),	Brian Thomsen (Danish Aquaculture),	(Polish Trout Breeders Association),
Giuseppe Prioli (AMA),	David Bassett (EATiP),	Ola Öberg (RECIRKFISK),
Andrea Fabris (API),	Bruno Guillaumie (EMPA),	Christian Vorbeck (RECIRKFISK),
Pier Antonio Salvador (API),	Alexandra Philippe (EBCD),	Catalin Platon (ROMFISH),
Giulia Malerbi (Aquatic Life Institute),	James Hinchcliffe (EFFOP),	Paul Denekamp (Stichting Vissenbescherming),
Garazi Rodríguez (APROMAR),	Daniilo Santini (FAI CSL),	Stephane Angeri (SENC).
Javier Ojeda (FEAP),	Catherine Pons (FEAP),	
Marine Levadoux (CIPA),	Ole Christensen (FEFAC),	
Phil Brooke (CIWF),	Alain Schonbrodt (FVE),	
Thibault Pivetta (CNC),	Yannis Pelekanakis (HAPO),	

OTHER PARTICIPANTS

Invited: Emilia Gargallo Gonzales (DG MARE), Matteo Tartaglia (Court of Auditors), Daniel Nuijten (DG ENV).

Observers: Sarah Horsfall (Shellfish Association of Great Britain), Joe Redfern (Shellfish Association of Great Britain), Pedro Reis Santos (MAC).

Member States Experts: Soizic Schwartz (French Ministry for Agriculture), Magdalena Tenciu ((Romanian Institute for Aquaculture), Paloma Carbello Tejero (Spanish Ministry for Agriculture), Kristaps Pilskalns (Latvian Ministry for Agriculture), Constantinos Moustakas (Cyprus Ministry for Agriculture), Ketter Kärp (Estonian Ministry of Agriculture), Ellen Rietsema (Dutch Ministry for Agriculture).

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



MEETING AGENDA

Participation list.....	1
MEETING MINUTES	2
Welcome words by the Chair Doug Waley	2
1. Approval of the agenda and last meeting's minutes.....	2
2. DG MARE updates	2
3. Court of Auditors.....	3
4. Invasive Alien Species	3
5. Consumer information	4
6. MSFD.....	4
7. Research for aquaculture.....	4
8. Update on ongoing work without progress.....	4
9. AOB and Conclusions of the WG3 meeting	5

MEETING MINUTES

Welcome words by the Chair Doug Waley

The Chair welcomed the participants.

1. Approval of the agenda and last meeting's minutes

The minutes were approved without changes.

An AOB point was added to the agenda at the request of **Phil Brooke (CIWF)** to discuss the WG2 work on a draft recommendation related to Molluscan welfare. The agenda was approved with this change.

2. DG MARE updates

1. Presentation by Emilia Gargallo (DG MARE, Policy Officer A2, "Aquaculture Team")

Emilia Gargallo (DG MARE) informed the WG regarding the following points:

- First Strategic Guidelines and Guidance Documents

The first two Guidance documents (on MSP and administrative procedures) will be published very soon, and the Aquaculture Assistance Mechanism trainings will start. The four others – that were discussed at the November 2023 Seminar on Aquaculture- are not ready yet. The one on Climate Change is the most mature. The one on Environmental performance has been split into two, with a first part focusing on good practices and legal requirements that should be ready this summer. The second part will be focussing on energy transition and environmental indicators and should be ready in 2025.



A call to produce a new study on the benefits of extensive and semi-intensive aquaculture (molluscs, ponds, etc) was launched. The study should be ready by summer 2025.

- EU Communication campaign

The campaign focus will be on aquaculture producers to show the more human side of the sector. The campaign should be launched in autumn 2024. It will target the age range 24-45 years old. A video template will be developed, as well as social media assets. Influencers will be involved, and a reference website will be created. The campaign's official launch should be taking place in Hungary.

- Survey on the evolution of aquaculture

The Commission has presented its ideas about this survey to the Member States and is including their comments. A new draft will be ready after the summer.

3. Court of Auditors

- Presentation by **Matteo Tartaggia (Court of Auditors)**¹
- Exchange of views with the Working Group members in the presence of DG MARE and next steps

Many WG members reacted to this presentation. Mr. Tartaggia welcomed the comments and underlined the need for involving the stakeholders, as some aspects could be included in the upcoming follow up report on this matter.

Matteo Tartaggia (Court of Auditors) will share his email address with the AAC members who wants to send their comments on the report in writing or provide further information on some of the reports' findings.

4. Invasive Alien Species

- Presentation by **Daniel Nuijten (DG ENV)** on the upcoming revision of the Regulation and Climate Change challenges.²
- Exchange of views with the Working Group members and next steps

Andrea Fabris (API) underlined the issue of the lack of early detection of a new invasive species, such as for the blue crab and expressed that the IAS Regulation should be revised to guarantee a homogenous implementation by Member States.

Paul DeneKamp (Stichting Vissenbescherming) questioned that the most effective measures to eradicate a species is always killing and requested to consider other solutions.

David Nuijten (DG ENV) highlighted that if eradication was not possible, the idea remained to limit the spreading of an invasive species as much as possible while respecting animal welfare. He underlined that the commercial use of blue crabs – if listed amongst the invasive species – would not be banned but that it should contribute to the eradication and management of the species.

¹ Special report 25/2023: EU aquaculture policy – Stagnating production and unclear results despite increased EU funding: <https://www.eca.europa.eu/en/publications/SR-2023-25>. The Presentation is available on the AAC members' Intranet.

² The EU policy framework on IAS by Daniel Nuijten (DG ENV): <https://aac-europe.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/02/The-EU-policy-framework-AAC.pdf>



David Nuijten (DG ENV) underlined that the Commission was aware of the blue crab situation. He advised that the AAC provide their expertise on marine environment IAS to the European Commission and the IUCN.

The WG will follow the topic closely and wait and see if a Focus Group needs to be set on the matter.

5. Consumer information

- Update on FG activities by AAC-MAC Focus Group leader **Brian Thomsen (Danish Aquaculture)**

Brian Thomsen (Danish Aquaculture) informed the members on the decision to draft a joint recommendation with the MAC on this topic by October 2024. He will provide the WG with more updates after the first FG meeting set up for the last week of February.

6. MSFD

- Update on the FG activity by FG leader **Javier Ojeda (FEAP)**

The FG leader **Javier Ojeda (FEAP)** updated the members on the Focus Group work, a first draft recommendation is ready for comments.

The Secretariat will circulate the paper for the WG members to comment on the document while proposing specific track changes.

7. Research for aquaculture

- Update on Focus Group activities by FG leader **David Basset (EATIP)**

The Chair reminded that the Focus Group held its first meeting on research priorities last December. The Focus Group committed to delivering an AAC Recommendation by the end of October 2024.

David Basset (EATIP) mentioned that the Focus Group was not restricted to finfish or shellfish topics but included many various fields such as algae, animal welfare, ecosystem services etc. He informed the other members that priorities areas had been identified and attempt to reflect the Member States' interests. He added that if some members had specific outputs they wanted to share, they were welcomed to reach out. He also reminded that the door is always open for any members to join.

8. Update on ongoing work without progress

The Chair updated the members on ongoing work without progress including:

- **Polluter pays principle:** work on this topic is currently put on hold; the secretariat has requested a presentation to DG ENVI on the results of the Fitness Check, but its publication has been postponed again. DG ENVI will be invited again in October 2024.
- **Organic Aquaculture:** **The Chair** informed that the Focus Group will draft a follow-up letter related to the response received to the AAC Recommendation.



- **Algae:** The WG3 members confirmed the priorities decided by the Focus Group. The EU Algae Biomass Association (EABA) will be invited to the next Focus Group meeting.

9. AOB and Conclusions of the WG3 meeting

Phil Brooke (CIWF) informed the WG members on the Molluscan welfare Recommendation. The Secretariat will share the link again to the members for comments.

The Chair concluded the meeting. The next WG meeting will be held on **11-12 June in Brussels**.

