

# Aquaculture Advisory Council

## WG3 Horizontal Issues

11 June 2024 (15:00-17:30) and 12 June 2024 (10:30-12:15)

Thon Hotel EU – Rue de la Loi 75 – 1000 Brussels – Interpretation available in EN - FR – ES – IT

## Minutes

### PARTICIPATION LIST

#### WG3 MEMBERS

Douglas Waley (Eurogroup for animals, WG3 Chair),  
Yannis Pelekanakis (HAPO, WG3 Vice-Chair),

Melanie Haslauer (ALFAA),  
Lorenzo Gennari (AMA),  
Andrea Fabris (API),  
Giulia Malerbi (Aquatic Life Institute),  
Javier Ojeda (FEAP),  
Marine Levadoux (CIPA),  
Phil Brooke (CIWF),  
Thibault Pivetta (CNC),  
Julie Aleksandrova (CNC),  
Florian Guillou (CNPMEM),

Bernhard Feneis (COGECA),  
Pier Salvador (COGECA),  
Angeles Longa Portabales (CRMG)  
Philippe Le Gal (CRC Bretagne-Sud)  
David Bassett (EATiP),  
Charlotte Epinay (Eurogroup for Animals),  
Bruno Guillaumie (EMPA),  
Alexandra Philippe (EBCD),  
James Hinchcliffe (EFFOP),  
Danilo Santini (FAI CSL),  
Pierpaolo Piva (FAI CSL),  
Catherine Pons (FEAP),  
Szilvia Mihalfy (FEAP),

Maria Luisa Alvarez Blanco (FEDEPESCA),  
Teresa Morrissey (IFA),  
Nathalie Gamain (OFI),  
Addy Risseeuw (PO Mosselcultuur),  
Anna Pyć (Polish Trout Breeders Association),  
Isidro Blanquet (APA)  
Antonio Correia (APA)  
Ola Öberg (RECIRKFISK),  
Christian Vorbeck (RECIRKFISK),  
Paul Denekamp (Stichting Vissenbescherming).

**Excused:** Brian Thomsen (Danish Aquaculture), Catalin Platon (ROMFISH).

#### OTHER PARTICIPANTS

**Invited:** Lana Bezinovic Sostar (DG MARE), Lorella de la Cruz Iglesias (DG MARE).

**Observers:** Sarah Horsfall (Shellfish Association of Great Britain), Joe Redfern (Shellfish Association of Great Britain), Pedro Reis Santos (MAC), Wasseem Emam (Ethical Seafood Research), Laura Jordao (CCRUP), Valentin Rosca (Moldovan Ministry of Agriculture and Food Industry), Dumitru Cocieru (Moldovan Ministry of Agriculture and Food Industry), Viorica Turcanu (Moldovan Ministry of Agriculture and Food Industry), Vasile Capatina (Moldovan Bureau for European Integration)

**Member States Experts:** Yas Farjad (French State Secretariat for the Sea and Biodiversity), Veerle Campens (Flemish Agency for Agriculture and Fisheries), Francesco Lombardo (Maltese Ministry for Agriculture, Fisheries and Animal Rights), Rui Oliveira (Portuguese Directorate-General for Natural Resources, Safety and Maritime Services), Magdalena Tenciu (Romanian Institute for Aquaculture), Paloma Carbello Tejero (Spanish Ministry for Agriculture)

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





Secretariat)

WG3 Meeting 11-12 June 24



T +32 (0) 2 720 00 73  
E [secretariat@aac-europe.org](mailto:secretariat@aac-europe.org)  
[www.aac-europe.org](http://www.aac-europe.org)

31, rue Montoyer  
BE 1000 Bruxelles

## MEETING AGENDA

Participation list.....	1
MEETING MINUTES .....	3
Welcome words by the Chair Doug Waley.....	3
1. Approval of the agenda and last meeting’s minutes .....	3
2. DG MARE updates .....	3
3. Consumer information .....	4
4. Aquaculture Policy Reform.....	5
5. Research for aquaculture .....	5
6. Update on ongoing WG3 work .....	6
7. AAC WG3 Work Programme .....	6
8. AOB and conclusions of the WG3 meeting .....	7

## 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 agenda and the minutes were approved without changes.

#### 2. DG MARE updates

---

- Presentation by Lana Bezinovic Sostar (DG MARE, Policy Officer A2, “Aquaculture Team”)

**Lana Bezinovic Sostar (DG MARE)** informed the WG regarding the following points:

- Strategic Guidelines actions and Guidance Documents

Two Staff Working Documents were published in April on “Planning of space and access to water for marine aquaculture” and the “Regulatory and administrative framework”. DG MARE is organizing trainings for Member States administrations to present these documents and is setting up an online learning tool. There are three documents that are waiting to be adopted on good husbandry practices, climate change, planning of space and access to water for freshwater aquaculture. The document on environmental performance is in preparation. It will be split into 2 parts: the 1<sup>st</sup> package is about environmental legislation and presenting good practices. The 2<sup>nd</sup> package is on environmental indicators and decarbonisation in aquaculture. A workshop will be organised next week on 17-18 June 2024 in relation to the latter.

- EU Communication campaign

A meeting of the task force will take place on 12 June. The campaign ambassadors have been chosen and they will start filming the videos in June and July. More details will be shared during the task force meeting,



which will be attended by the AAC Chair Brian Thomsen. DG MARE offered to present the whole campaign to the AAC at the October WG meetings.

- Survey on the evolution of aquaculture

The Commission has presented its ideas about this survey to the Member States and it should be approved next week. The objective is to be launching it after the summer with a deadline for responses mid-October. The results will be considered for the mid-term evaluation of the Strategic Guidelines' implementation.

- Aquaculture in the new Strategic Dialogue on the future of EU agriculture

DG MARE is involved in the Strategic Dialogue, as well as FEAP and the European feed manufacturers (FEFAC). The Chair of the Strategic Dialogue met with the relevant Directorate Generals and DG MARE will explore how the Strategic Dialogue will impact fisheries and aquaculture.

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

**Javier Ojeda (FEAP)** and **Thibault Pivetta (CNC)** asked if the Guidance documents that will be presented at the Workshop are final documents or if there are still possibilities to comment them. **Lorella de la Cruz Iglesias (DG MARE)** mentioned that the consultation on the drafts was carried out after in October 2023 and that no further possibility to comment is foreseen.

In line with his comments in WG2, **Thibault Pivetta (CNC)** mentioned the gaps in the document on good husbandry practices and that EMPA would like to be able to comment the latest version. **Lorella de la Cruz Iglesias (DG MARE)** answered that they can have a discussion concerning shellfish in particular.

Many Working Group members reacted to the new Strategic Dialogue on the future of EU agriculture mentioning the problem of licensing in different Member States, the need to develop aquaculture in the EU, the central role of aquaculture in the future and within agriculture and the obstacles to its development.

### 3. Consumer information

---

- Update on FG activities by AAC-MAC Focus Group leader **Brian Thomsen (Danish Aquaculture)**
- Exchange of views with the members and next steps

In the absence of Brian Thomsen (Danish Aquaculture -excused), **the Secretariat** and **Pedro Reis Santos (MAC)** updated the members on the AAC-MAC Focus Group activities and presented the draft recommendation, which was discussed during an online Focus Group meeting on 28 May.

**Pier Salvador (COGECA)** mentioned that there is a need to work more on pushing forward aquaculture products and that the Commission and policy makers should be the ones to inform consumers.

**Maria Luisa Alvarez Blanco (FEDEPESCA)** stated that there is a discrimination based on the products and on where these products are consumed. Consumers should have the same rights regardless of the type of products or the sector.

**Marine Levadoux (CIPA)** mentioned that consumers request more and more information from the aquaculture sector in a market that is increasingly important. If the basic information cannot be passed on, EU SMEs won't be able to survive third county competitors.



**Javier Ojeda (FEAP)** suggested to include a possible recommendation on finding ways to encourage consumers that want more information to request the traceability documents. He also mentioned including a question in a Eurobarometer to know what kind of information the consumers would like to receive.

**Christian Vorbeck (RECIRKFISK)** mentioned a project that is using new technologies to inform consumers such as QR codes.

**The Secretariat** reminded that this file is time sensitive and highlighted the importance to participate in the Focus Group and send comments. The European Commission is also launching a study on consumer information. **The draft recommendation is expected to be approved by written procedure by October.**

#### 4. Aquaculture Policy Reform

---

- Presentation of draft recommendation by **Brian Thomsen (Danish Aquaculture)**
- Exchange of views with the Working Group members and next steps

**Brian Thomsen (Danish Aquaculture)** is excused. **The Secretariat** presented the draft recommendation to the members and insisted on the need to approve this recommendation quickly to be able to influence the next Commission's mandate.

Working Group members debated the idea of an overarching food policy.

**The draft will be sent for written approval by the Working Group by the end of June.**

#### 5. Research for aquaculture

---

- Presentation of draft recommendation by FG leader **David Basset (EATIP)**
- Exchange of views with the Working Group members and next steps

**David Basset (EATIP)** presented the draft recommendation to the members.

**Pier Salvador (COGECA)** suggested the creation of a user-friendly database listing all the projects that could be useful for aquaculture stakeholders. **Ola Öberg (RECIRKFISH)** stated that the research money should not go towards projects that support "greenwashing" but should be used to support small scale aquaculture. **Javier Ojeda (FEAP)** emphasized the need to have a better communication to society and that scientific knowledge will not be enough. **Lorenzo Gennari (AMA)** suggested that European projects produce summaries on the methods used and that there is an obligation to look at what has been done before to avoid having overlapping projects. **Andrea Fabris (API)** suggested to have an etiquette between research projects and companies for more constructive cooperations.

**The recommendation needs to be approved by the end of October. A draft recommendation will be circulated in the coming weeks.**



## 6. Update on ongoing WG3 work

---

The secretariat updated the members on ongoing work including:

- **Organic aquaculture:** The last Focus Group meeting took place in October. The Focus Group needs to draft two letters to follow up on the European Commission's answers. Focus group leader **Arthur Fuest (IFOAM Organics Europe)** will be working on them in July.
- **Algae:** The Focus Group analysed the Algae Initiative Communication and identified priorities on which the AAC should be working. A meeting was held on 4 June with **Vitor Verdelho (EABA)**. FG leader **Ola Öberg (RECIRKFISH)** would like to revise the roadmap and will circulate a paper soon for comments. **Javier Ojeda (FEAP)** asked to have a close following on the statistics on EU seaweed and the evolution of companies producing seaweed in the EU.
- **PEFCR for fishery and aquaculture products (MAC recommendation – AAC observer):** There was a first AAC recommendation in 2022. A second consultation is expected to be launched next week. The AAC is an observer in the MAC Focus Group on PEFCR to contribute to their recommendation. The Focus Group will start its work in June.
- **CSRD directive – Update by Vice-Chair Yannis Pelekannakis:** The Vice-Chair updated the members on the CSRD directive.

## 7. AAC WG3 Work Programme

---

- o Presentation by the secretariat

The secretariat presented the draft WG3 Work Programme for 2024-2025 and asked for additional input and ideas.

**FEDEPESCA** proposed to include the topics of digital tools for traceability of information, the revision of the CMO, the training of operators, the definition of a comprehensive food strategy, and the promotion of nutritional education in the mandatory education of children. The secretariat explained that these may be topics that would be better dealt with by the Market Advisory Council (MAC).

Concerning the idea of a food strategy, **Anna Pyć (Polish Trout Breeders Association)** suggested that it should include public procurement which will bring sustainable aquaculture products to children's table.

**Pier Salvador (COGECA)** mentioned the topic of social education and the work on educating the general public.

**Lorenzo Gennari (AMA)** suggested to work on satellite data and how to develop a tool to collect satellite data for aquaculture with Copernicus. The secretariat will contact Copernicus.

**David Bassett (EATIP)** suggested to include a follow up of the draft recommendation of this year on research and innovation priorities.

**A Focus Group on using satellite data in aquaculture and a Focus Group on a food strategy for the EU will be created to work on these priorities.** Depending on the amount of people signing up to these topics, they will be inscribed (or not) in next year's Work Programme.



## 8. AOB and conclusions of the WG3 meeting

---

The Chair concluded the meeting. The next WG3 meeting will be held on **15-16 October in Brussels.**

