

# Aquaculture Advisory Council

## Executive Committee meeting

26 August 2024 (10:00-12:00)

Legoland - Billund (DK) – Interpretation available in EN – ES – IT

## Minutes

### PARTICIPATION LIST

#### EXCOM MEMBERS

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Brian Thomsen (AAC Chair)

Paul Denekamp (1<sup>st</sup> Vice-Chair)

#### Operators

Ola Öberg (Recirkfisk)

Javier Ojeda (FEAP)

Thibault Pivetta (CNC)

Pier Antonio Salvador (COPA)

Ma Luisa Alvarez (FEDEPESCA)

Ole Christensen (FEFAC)

Lorenzo Gennari (AMA)

#### Other interest groups

Phil Brooke (CIWF)

Douglas Waley (Eurogroup for Animals)

#### OTHER PARTICIPANTS

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**Observers:** Andrea Fabris (API)

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



## AGENDA

- [Welcome words by the Chair Brian Thomsen](#)
- [Adoption of the agenda and last meeting's minutes](#)
- [Membership applications and categorisation](#)
- [AAC response Guidance Documents](#)
- [AAC participation in external events](#)
- [AAC 2024-2025 Work Programme](#)
- [AAC 2024-2025 budget](#)
- [AAC Calendar of meetings for 2024-2025](#)
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## 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 last meeting's minutes

Two additional topics under AOB were requested:

- (Paul Denekamp – Vice-Chair) AAC participation to external events
- (Brian Thomsen – Chair) Evaluation of the Common Fisheries Policy (CFP)

The agenda was adopted with these additions.

The minutes of the previous ExCom meeting (17.04.2024) were adopted without changes.

### 2. Membership applications and categorisation

The AAC Secretariat has received a membership application from the Aquaculture Stewardship Council (ASC). The ASC has informed that this application is only valid if the AAC decides to categorise this organisation in the "Other Interested Stakeholders" category.

The Delegated Act 2022/204 laying down detailed rules on the functioning of the Advisory Councils develops a series of criteria to guide the "classification" of stakeholders in 2 categories: the "Sector Organisations" and the "Other Interested Stakeholders". On the basis of this text and after a long debate, **the AAC ExCom decided to categorise the Aquaculture Stewardship Council (ASC) as a "Sector Organisation"**.



The ExCom members understood the ASC's decision and its arguments to request an "Other Interested Stakeholder" classification. However, the Delegated Act's current formulation does not allow for the text to be interpreted differently.

**The ExCom resolved to write a letter to DG MARE, informing them of the issue with the ASC and requesting revisions to the current rules to better represent the diversity of EU aquaculture stakeholders in the AAC.**

### **3. AAC response Guidance Documents**

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The ExCom members discussed the consultation process during the production of the last Guidance documents. In particular, on the Environmental Performance draft, serious shortcomings were identified at the end of 2023 and no new version has been circulated since then.

**A letter will be sent to the European Commission (EC) to request a formal and transparent adoption process with a defined consultation period for both the first and second drafts.**

The AAC will work on drafting a Recommendation on the draft Guidance Document on Environmental Performance, if it is still relevant to send an input on this document (the Secretariat will ask DG MARE about the timing).

### **4. AAC participation in external events**

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**An ExCom FG will be created to draft a policy on the AAC's participation and what it entails to talk on behalf of the AAC in external events.**

The decision on whether this should be managed by the Management Committee (ManCom) or the ExCom will be discussed later. The ExCom noted that the main purpose of the AAC is to draft recommendations.

### **5. AAC 2024-2025 Strategic Plan**

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**The draft Strategic Plan was approved by the ExCom and will be formally approved by the General Assembly (GA) on September 24, 2024.**

Lorenzo Gennari (AMA) will send his comments about minor technical amendments to be made to the Secretariat.

### **6. AAC 2024-2025 budget**

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**The draft budget was approved and will be sent to the GA for final approval.**

The Secretariat will look into the possibility of finding a venue for meetings that costs less than the Thon while providing a similar level of service. The Secretariat will also look into the possibility of increasing the reimbursement for travel expenses.

### **7. AAC Calendar of meetings for 2024-2025**

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**The draft calendar was adopted and will be sent to the GA for final approval.**



## 8. Closure of Twitter account

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The decision to close the Twitter account and move exclusively to LinkedIn was approved.

## 9. Follow-up on previous decisions

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- **Bi-annual meeting with the EC:** The last meeting was held in April; the next one needs to be scheduled. The Chair and the Secretariat will get in contact with DG MARE.
- **Open Method of Coordination with the Member States (MS):** The timing of the next meeting will be discussed with DG MARE.
- **Communication Campaign:** It should be launched in October during the Hungarian presidency. There are no updates at the moment, but the Chair will share information as soon as it becomes available.
- **Adoption of the Rules of Procedure (RoP):** General Assembly meeting on 24 September.

## 10. External performance review action plan

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There has been progress on several actions already, including:

- Distinguishing clearly recommendations to Member States (MS) and the EC,
- Enforce article 44 in the CFP if applicable,
- Attracting new NGO members: Native Oyster Restoration Alliance (NORA) has applied as a member,
- Draft a list of AAC achievements: the Chair is currently working on a draft with the Secretariat,
- Improve EC answers to recommendations: we've started to apply the SMART concept to our recommendations,
- Internal quality measures have been implemented,
- Allocate more time for discussion: we've focused discussions on recommendations only during WG meetings,
- Transparency of the ManCom and ExCom strategic objectives/tasks: the Chair has received comments on the two documents he sent and will welcome any additional comments. The adoption of the documents is planned for the October ExCom,
- Improve coherence of the Work Programme (WP): will be discussed with DG MARE,
- Protocol on involving external experts: the Secretariat drafted a proposal that will be adopted by written procedure.

## 11. Any other business

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Evaluation of the CFP: The Chair suggested to answer the call for evidence by making a reference to the AAC Recommendation for an Aquaculture Policy reform<sup>1</sup>. He has prepared a draft that will be circulated for submission by the deadline of September 6.

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<sup>1</sup> <https://aac-europe.org/en/publication/aac-recommendation-for-an-aquaculture-policy-reform/>



Cécile Fouquet, Executive Secretary of the AAC, will be replaced by Cynthia Benites after the General Assembly.

## **12. 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 online on the **29 October 2024**.

