

# Aquaculture Advisory Council

## WG2 Shellfish Meeting

21 February 2024 (10:00 - 13:00)

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

## Minutes

### PARTICIPATION LIST

#### WG2 MEMBERS

Stéphane Angeri (Chair)

Paul Denekamp (Vice-Chair)

Giuseppe Prioli (AMA)

Wouter Van Zandbrink (CEP),

Audrey Lainé (CNC),

Thibaut Pivetta (CNC),

Florian Guillou (CNPOMEM),

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),

Addy Risseeuw (PO Mossemcultuur)

Christian Vorbeck (RECIRKFISK),

Ola Öberg (RECIRKFISK),

Paul Denekamp (Stichting Vissenbescherming)

#### OTHER PARTICIPANTS

**Invited:** Niall Gerlitz (DG MARE), Guy Tueta (PROLOG Inginerie), Roberto Bertilotti (PROLOG Ingenierie).

**Observers:** Sarah Horsfall (Shellfish Association of Great Britain), Joe Redfern (Shellfish Association of Great Britain).

**Member States Experts:** Kristaps Pilskalns (Latvian Ministry for Agriculture), Paloma Carbello Tejero (Spanish Ministry for Agriculture).

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



## MEETING AGENDA

Participation list.....	1
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. Norovirus .....	3
4. Blue crab.....	3
5. Molluscan welfare .....	4
6. Preserve our sovereignty in terms of hatcheries and develop a “pathogen free” label to allow secure exports.....	4
7. PROLOG Projects .....	4
8. Use of DG MARE mapping studies for the development of low-trophic aquaculture .....	4
9. Action Plan for Marine Ecosystems .....	5
10. AOB & conclusions.....	5

## MEETING MINUTES

### Welcome from President Stéphane Angeri

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

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

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

An AOB was added by the Secretariat to approve the WG2 rapporteurs’ contracts for 2023-2024.

#### 2. Food safety: arsenic levels

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- Exchange of information on the latest news

**Audrey Lainé (CNC)** updated the members on this matter. A Member States experts’ meeting took place in December on arsenic levels. They received some feedback from the competent authorities. At the moment, there is no timeframe nor calendar for an application of maximum inorganic arsenic levels for shellfish.

**Niall Gerlitz (DG MARE)** explained that discussions are currently ongoing and that the maximum levels foreseen had increased a lot. At this stage, there is no plan for further discussions before the end of the current Commission’s mandate. He added that it will be the responsibility of the next commission to take care of the negotiations.



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

**Audrey Lainé (CNC)** stated that this will give enough time in France to collect data and send them to the Commission. Samples will be collected in February; the analysis should be starting in March or April and the results are expected to be delivered around May this year. She will keep the other WG2 members informed about the results. She mentioned that CIPA contacted her, as they also wished to carry out analyses on fish.

### 3. Norovirus

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- “Strategy of the French shellfish industry to assess the risk of infectious norovirus in shellfish: monitoring and management means with the OXYVIR indicator” by **Audrey Lainé (CNC)**

**Audrey Lainé (CNC)** updated the members on the Norovirus crisis that occurred in France in December 2023. She explained the Strategy developed by the French shellfish industry with the French national authorities to find solutions to the norovirus crisis and avoid new closures for the next winter. She explained that there was no threshold defined the moment at national level nor an EU Regulation. Finally, she underlined the need for better support from the public authorities, for sampling protocols and funds to be allocated to companies.

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

**Stéphane Angeri (Chair)** highlighted the need to collaborate with the British colleagues from SAGB.

**Audrey Lainé (CNC)** advised that all contacts at EU level should be focusing on the causes and origins of the norovirus but not on norovirus thresholds.

**Stéphane Angeri (Chair)** mentioned the importance of data collection, analysis etc. to solve this crisis.

**The Working Group members agreed to send a letter to the Commission on the norovirus crises, related with the final stages of the negotiations of the Urban Wastewater Treatment Directive and the Water Resilience Initiative.**

### 4. Blue crab

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- Follow up actions proposed by **Giuseppe Prioli (AMA)**

**Giuseppe Prioli (AMA)** analysed the Commission’s answers to the WG2 letter and updated the WG2 members on the situation in Italy. He mentioned that Italian producers have tried to use the blue crabs for food, but the results did not appear to be positive as blue crabs have a low amount of meat. He added that several studies have been carried out in the meantime and that the Italian Government has allocated some funds to support the farmers in buying equipment against the invasion.

- Exchange of views with the WG members and decision on the next steps

After a lively discussion regarding the possible solutions to manage the blue crab, WG members agreed to wait and see the evolution of the current situation before sending another letter to the Commission.



## 5. Molluscan welfare

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- Presentation of draft recommendation by FG Leader **Paul Denekamp (Vissenbescherming)** – See Working Document

**Phil Brooke (CIWF)** presented the draft Recommendation.

- Exchange of views with the WG members and decision on the next steps

**Phil Brooke (CIWF)** clarified that sentience needed to be scientifically proven before assuming it exist amongst invertebrates.

## 6. Preserve our sovereignty in terms of hatcheries and develop a “pathogen free” label to allow secure exports

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- Update on FG activities by FG leader Audrey Lainé (CNC)

**Stéphane Angeri (Chair)** informed the members that a Recommendation will have to be ready by October 2024. **Audrey Lainé (CNC)** called for the organisation of a new FG meeting in the coming weeks. She explained the need to preliminarily get to know the number of nurseries in the EU and to exchange any documents on this matter.

- Exchange of views with the WG members and decision on the next steps

**Christian Vorbeck (RECIRKFISHING)** mentioned that a high sense of urgency was present to change and adapt the existing regulations to the reality.

## 7. PROLOG Projects

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- Presentation of the project by **Guy Tueta and Roberto Bertilotti (PROLOG Ingenierie)**

**Guy Tueta and Roberto Bertilotti (PROLOG Ingenierie)** presented the PROLOG project<sup>1</sup>.

**The Secretariat will provide the contact details of the WG2 members to PROLOG.**

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

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- Update by **Thibault Pivetta (CNC)** on the DG MARE mapping studies

**Thibault Pivetta (CNC)** informed that he will start working on the basis of the Commission’s preliminary report<sup>2</sup> and that a first FG meeting should be organised in March 2024.

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<sup>1</sup> QUALECOS : Quality of Coastal Water and Health Risks by Guy Tueta and Roberto Bertilotti (PROLOG Ingenierie) [Présentation PowerPoint \(aac-europe.org\)](#)

<sup>2</sup> <http://aac-europe.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/10/20240917-Report-on-impact-of-seaweed-and-shellfish-aqua-fmars-11-1405303.pdf>



## 9. Action Plan for Marine Ecosystems

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- Update by **Bruno Guillaumie (EMPA)** on the mapping work

**Bruno Guillaumie (EMPA)** explained that he hopes to gather all the data for his work on mapping. He informed that he just received the Irish data but is currently still waiting to receive the data from France and The Netherlands. He hopes that work will be done by June this year.

## 10. AOB & conclusions

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The following contracts were approved for EMPA rapporteurship on:

- A recommendation on nurseries
- A recommendation on the use of DG MARE maps on potential low-trophic aquaculture development
- A mapping of dredging zones (to follow up on the recommendation on the Marine Action Plan)

**The next meeting will be held in Brussels the 11 June 2024 (morning).**

