

Aquaculture Advisory Council

Executive Committee meeting

17 April 2024 (10:00-12:30)

Online meeting via Zoom – Interpretation available in EN – FR – ES – IT

Minutes

PARTICIPATION LIST

EXCOM MEMBERS

Brian Thomsen (AAC Chair)
Paul Denekamp (1st Vice-Chair)
Addy Risseeuw (AAC Treasurer)

Operators

Ola Öberg (Recirkfisk)
Javier Ojeda González-Posada (FEAP)
Pier Antonio Salvador (COPA)
Andrea Fabris (API)
Ma Luisa Alvarez (FEDEPESCA)
Bruno Guillaumie (EMPA)
Lorenzo Gennari (API)
Teresa Morrissey (IFA)
Thibault Pivetta (CNC)

Other interest groups

Phil Brooke (CIWF)
Douglas Waley (Eurogroup for Animals)

OTHER PARTICIPANTS

Secretariat: Cécile Fouquet (AAC Secretariat), Charlotte Musquar (AAC Secretariat), Tristan Tottet (AAC Secretariat)

AGENDA

1. [Welcome words by the Chair Brian Thomsen](#)
2. [Adoption of the agenda and last meeting's minutes \(31 January 2024\)](#)
3. [Follow up on the previous decisions](#)
4. [Update on 2023-2024 Work Programme completion](#)
5. [Update on 2023-2024 ongoing budget](#)
6. [Follow up on previous recommendations – state of play](#)
7. [Update on the Common Aquaculture Policy initiative and the AAC/MAC recommendation on consumer information](#)
8. [Update on the discussions on the MAC](#)
9. [External performance review – update on the execution of the plan](#)
10. [How to attract new members – following up on the NWWAC presentation](#)
11. [Set up of Denmark ExCom meeting](#)
12. [Updates by the Secretariat](#)
13. [Any other business](#)

14. [Conclusions and closing of the meeting](#)

MEETING MINUTES

1. Welcome words by the Chair Brian Thomsen

The Chair Brian Thomsen welcomed the Executive Committee (ExCom) members and confirmed the quorum.

2. Adoption of the agenda and last meeting's minutes

The agenda was adopted without AOB. The minutes of the previous ExCom meeting (31 January 2024) were adopted without changes.

3. Follow up on the previous decisions

The Chair reported on the follow-up on the decisions previously taken by the ExCom:

Action	Status
Biannual meeting with DG MARE aquaculture team	Next meeting 19 April 2024
OMC MS-AAC-DG MARE meeting	On the agenda of the biannual meeting
EU Communication campaign	On the agenda of the biannual meeting
External performance evaluation	On today's agenda
Rules of Procedure	Provision on adoption of minutes to be proposed today
NGO membership	On today's agenda
ExCom technical visit in Billund	On today's agenda
AAC Monitoring	Past editions are available on the AAC Sharepoint
Discussion on the MAC	On today's agenda

The ExCom members discussed about the European communication campaign due to begin. Pier Antonio Salvador (COPA) expressed his regret that in meetings the DG MARE representatives were not familiar with aquaculture issues.

4. Update on 2023-2024 Work Programme completion

The Secretariat presented an update on the Work Programme achievement. The Chair expressed his satisfaction and emphasised the importance of achieving deliverables to ensure the renewal of our European Union Grant.

5. Update on 2023-2024 ongoing budget

The Secretariat presented an update on the draft expenses of the year and the expenses foreseen. The Secretariat has also noted the possibility of a cash inflow with an expected financial contribution to be confirmed from Malta. The Secretariat also stressed that the AAC is in a favourable financial position but it is crucial to remain prudent in the expenses.

The Treasurer and the Chair expressed his satisfaction to see the budget under control halfway through 2024.

6. Follow up on previous recommendations – state of play

The Chair reminded that a table was created to follow up on the analysis of the EC responses received to our recommendations. The Chair and the Secretariat are analysing the pending actions one by one to make sure that no actions aren't followed up.

7. Update on the Common Aquaculture Policy initiative and the AAC/MAC recommendation on consumer information

The ExCom exchanged views on the work relative to the Aquaculture Policy revision. The Chair noted that the work would continue at the Focus Group (FG) and Working Group levels.

The members of the ExCom exchanged about the AAC/MAC common work on consumer information. The Chair noticed that the deadline given to the FG to answer the questionnaire was 24 April, and there will be a meeting to analyse the answers received (the AAC Chair is also the leader of this FG). The Chair also noticed that 2 representatives from the retail sector (HOTREC and Food Service Europe) have accepted to joint this work as observers.

8. Update on the discussions on the MAC

An ExCom Focus Group on the AAC-MAC relations took place on 11 March and its members discussed the representation of the aquaculture stakeholders in the MAC. The Chair noted that the Aquaculture sector would benefit from having a stronger representation in the MAC.

The ExCom members requested that the MAC secretary general presents its activities to the AAC members and encourage them to apply as MAC members.

9. External performance review – update on the execution of the plan

The Chair presented the external performance review's results and the draft analysis and action plan.

High priority		
1.	Improve MS's reactions to AAC recommendations	Distinguish clearly between recommendations to the EC and MS Enforce CMO article 44 (4)
2.	Increase the diversity of the ExCom team	Attract new NGO member
3.	Improve EC's answers to AAC recommendations	Apply 'SMART' concept on recommendations Should we establish an internal quality control (3 people) of AAC recommendations?
4.	Allocate more time for discussion/adoption of recommendations	Only include presentations linked to recommendations at WG meetings
Low priority		
5.	Improve balance between ExCom operational/strategic task	Set annual strategic ExCom objectives?
6.	Increase the transparency of the functioning of the ManCom	Draft a 'job description' to clarify tasks?
7.	Improve coherence with the DG's working programmes	Discuss with DG MARE ('annual wheel')
8.	Monitor EP elections and appointment new Commission	Outside the scope of the AAC (FEAP/FEFAC/EMPA?)
9.	Develop/implement a protocol for the involvement of experts	Chair/Secretariat prepare a draft
10.	Increase frequency of short online ExCom meetings	Chair/Secretariat takes notes

The action plan was discussed with the ExCom members. **The amended draft will be submitted for written approval.**

10. How to attract new members – following up on the NWWAC presentation

The Chair proposed that the AAC needs to take more proactive action to attract new members.

The ExCom members emphasised the importance of AAC members communicating about their AAC activities within their own national aquaculture associations, expanding engagement with these associations and involving young individuals and small-scale operators. Additionally, they underlined the need for AAC to establish connections with the food and tourism industries to improve the perception of aquaculture.

ExCom members suggested to compile a list of the top five AAC achievements over the years.

One to one meetings of the secretariat with targeted potential members should continue.

The ExCom agreed that this is a priority that it should continue to be discussed.

11. Set up of Denmark ExCom meeting

The Chair presented his proposal of agenda for the ExCom visit in Billund, to which he proposes to invite DG MARE as well. The ExCom members welcomed the proposal and asked if it would be possible to invite colleagues during the visits.

The Secretariat will send a questionnaire to coordinate the logistics and communicate the meeting's programme to the ExCom members ASAP.

12. Updates by the Secretariat

[New membership applications received \(NL green light received\): Aquaculture Stewardship Council \(ACS\) and Native Oyster Restoration Alliance \(NORA\)](#)

Two new AAC membership applications will be submitted to written ExCom approval: Aquaculture Stewardship Council (ASC) and Native Oyster Restoration Alliance (NORA).

[EMD workshop](#)

The AAC Secretariat is co-organising with the other Advisory Councils' secretariats the first Advisory Councils' Workshop at the European Maritime Days (EMD) in Svenborg, Denmark on 30 May. This will be the first of many, as DG MARE has communicated that it wishes to have an ACs workshop at all the future EMD editions.

[Marine Action Plan Workshops](#)

DG MARE & DG ENVI invited the Advisory Councils to attend two workshops organised in the framework of the Marine Action Plan (MAP) implementation. Last week's workshop focused on financing the MAP, with participants from AAC. Next week there will be a meeting about the Eel regulation.

[CFP evaluating meeting with DG MARE](#)

The secretariat will attend a DG MARE information session on the CFP evaluation process organised by DG MARE (7 May)

[19/04 AAC-DG MARE bilateral meeting](#)

The Chair and Vice-Chair Paul Denekamp will be meeting with DG MARE on 19 April. An email summarising this meeting will be circulated shortly after that.

[BlueBlio project -WG3 recommendation](#)

The AAC is working with other ACs and the Blue Bio project to draft a second recommendation on the valorisation of fish manure – a Focus Group will be created soon.

[ROP amendment proposal – Approval of minutes \(WGs, ExCom, GA\)](#)

The Secretariat will circulate a proposal for revising the ROP to allow for a written approval process of the AAC meetings' minutes, in conformity with Belgian law.

13. Any other business

The Chair informed the ExCom members that **Bruno Guillaumie** will retire on 1 July.

14. Conclusions and closing of the meeting

The Chair thanked the ExCom members for a productive ExCom meeting and closed the meeting. The next ExCom meeting will take place in Billund on 26 August