

Aquaculture Advisory Council

Executive Committee meeting

29 October 2024 (10:00-12:00)

Online meeting - ZOOM – Interpretation available in EN – FR– ES – IT

Minutes

PARTICIPATION LIST

EXCOM MEMBERS

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

Operators

Ola Öberg (Recirkfisk)
Javier Ojeda (FEAP)
Pier Antonio Salvador (COPA)
Bernhard Feneis (COGECA)
Ma Luisa Alvarez (FEDEPESCA)
Ole Christensen (FEFAC)
Thibault Pivetta (EMPA)
Lorenzo Gennari (AMA)
Angeles Longa Portabales (Consello Regulador do Mexillón de Galicia)
Anne-Laure Prego-Cauchet (CNC)

Other interest groups

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

OTHER PARTICIPANTS

Observers: Stéphane Angeri (WG2 Chair)

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

AGENDA

- [Welcome words by the Chair and adoption of the agenda](#)



- [Membership categorisation](#)
- [AAC 2023-2024 budget - update on ongoing financial year](#)
- [AAC 2024-2025 budget implementation](#)
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MEETING MINUTES

1. Welcome words by the Chair and adoption of the agenda

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

An agenda point (9) to decide a new date for the January ExCom meeting was added.

Under AOB, Ola Öberg (Recirkfisk) requested a discussion on addressing an aging population.

The agenda was adopted with these additions.

The minutes of the previous ExCom meeting (26.08.2024) were adopted by written procedure.

2. Membership categorisation

Following the withdrawal of the Aquaculture Stewardship Council (ASC) membership, the Chair presented two solutions for membership categorisation to the ExCom:

- 1) Change the name of the "Sector Organisations" category to "Value Chain Operators";
- 2) Split the "Sector Organisations" category into "Primary Operators" and "Suppliers/Buyers".

Both solutions would entail an update of the delegated regulation and possibly of the AAC statutes. Several members proposed that the ASC could participate in AAC meetings as observer

No decision was formally taken after discussion between the ExCom members.

The Chair will reach to the ASC and the Market Advisory Council (MAC) to gather their opinion on the matter and get back to the ExCom with their inputs.



3. AAC 2023-2024 budget - update on ongoing financial year

The Secretariat provided an update on the current budget and indicated that the AAC is expected to conclude the year with a positive balance.

The Treasurer and ExCom members expressed their satisfaction.

4. AAC 2024-2025 budget implementation

- The Secretariat presented three potential meeting venues for the next financial year, **and it was decided to book the meeting room at COPA-COGECA, subject to its availability.**

The Secretariat will also send a request e-mail for in-kind contributions to the Member States permanent representations in Brussels (for a meeting room). The AAC members are also encouraged to contact their national representatives themselves.

- The Secretariat presented proposed amendments to the reimbursement rules. Several members of the Executive Committee (ExCom) expressed a desire for increased flexibility between the allocated amounts for travel and accommodation. **The Secretariat and Treasurer will consider these comments and propose a revised version of the amended reimbursement rules for the ExCom's approval.**
- The Chair indicated that any invitation from a member to host an ExCom meeting followed by site visits is welcome.

5. AAC Webinars on dissemination of information to EU farmers

The Chair proposed organising webinars addressed mainly to EU farmers to align with the AAC's actions as outlined in the Strategic Guidelines.

An ExCom Focus Group (FG) will be created as a first step to make a detailed proposal on the AAC policy/strategy, logistics and budget that organising those webinars would entail. The work should include carrying out a trial webinar to gain experience before the policy/strategy is adopted. Several ExCom members volunteered to join.

6. Renaming Working Group 2

Stéphane Angeri (WG2 Chair) explained that it has been suggested to rename WG2 "Shellfish" as "Low-trophic aquaculture". As this proposal has not reached a satisfactory consensus, he suggested to create or reopen the FG on algae in WG3 to discuss the matter more extensively and gather the views of AAC members, experts, and current key algae farmers.

The ExCom agreed to reopen the FG on algae.



7. Follow-up on the previous decisions

The Chair provided a written update on previous decisions:

Action	Status
Biannual meeting DG MARE aquaculture team	8 November
OMC MS-AAC-DG MARE meeting	TBD at the biannual meeting
EU Communication campaign	To be launched in Spring
External performance evaluation	ExCom tasks/ManCom transparency awaits the approval of the policy on external events
Rules of Procedure: Provision on adoption of minutes	To be adopted at the February General Assembly
MAC Workshop on Producer Organisations	28 January
Meeting Mr. Costas Kadis	Follow up after formal appointment as Commissioner for Fisheries and Oceans
MS survey	Deadline end October/TBD at DG MARE meeting
Internal policies	Document in progress
STECF indicators economic sustainability	Included in the 2024 Economic report

8. Updates by the secretariat

- INTER-AC meeting of 04 October

During her intervention, DG Charlina Vitcheva underlined three key points:

- 1) Aquaculture will be fully included in the Common Fisheries Policy (CFP) evaluation
- 2) Importance of consumer demand for the sector's development
- 3) Importance of robust indicators to take informed decisions

Advisory Councils (ACs) will be asked to answer six questions regarding the implementation of the delegated regulation on the functioning of the AC: the Chair and Secretariat will submit their draft answer to the ExCom.

- Biannual bilateral meeting with DG MARE

The items on the agenda are the following:

- 1) Coherence with the working programmes of the different DGs of the European Commission
- 2) Mid-term assessment of the Strategic Guidelines
- 3) Next meeting with Member States (MS)
- 4) The MS survey on indicators
- 5) State of play of the EC replies to the AAC Recommendations
- 6) Follow-up on the MAC-AAC Recommendation on the STECF's EU aquaculture sector report
- 7) Letter on the establishment of a formal transparent consultation process for the AAC regarding the



Commission's Guidance documents

8) AAC Webinars on dissemination of information to EU farmers

- **Event at the European Parliament on "The Role of Advisory Councils under the Common Fisheries Policy" on 12 November**

Cancelled due to the cancellation of the PECH committee – Monday 27 January 2025 at 18:30 is the new possible date. The Secretariat is waiting for the final green light from the hosting MEPs.

- **Workshop on the future of aquaculture under the auspices of the Hungarian Presidency of the Council of the EU on 14 October**

Many AAC members took part in the event. It's the first time a Presidency has given such political importance to the aquaculture sector.

The Polish representative present during the event explained that their presidency will also place aquaculture high in their political agenda.

9. New date for the January ExCom

The date of the January ExCom has been changed to **Friday 31st of January 2025, at 10:00.**

10. Any other business

Ola Öberg (Recirkfisk) mentioned the United Nations' Decade of Healthy Aging and that the Horizon Europe strategic plan for 2025-2027 includes a point on aging population and its impact on the work force. He therefore suggested to reflect on a way to transfer aquaculture knowledge to younger generations.

He will share this information with the Chair and the Secretariat who will then assess how this work could be developed.

11. Conclusions and closing of the meeting

The Chair thanked the ExCom members for a productive ExCom meeting.

The next ExCom meeting will take place online on the **31 January 2025.**

