

MFF – Exchange in view of an AAC contribution

25/02/2026

AAC WG3

Background- MFF 2028–2034

- 16 July 2025 – European Commission presented the **MFF 2028–2034 proposal** and associated Interinstitutional Agreement (IIA).
- MFF architecture redesigned (4 headings, integrated model)
- Advisory Councils sent joint letter (Feb 2026)
- Parliament preparing negotiating position
- Council discussions ongoing, no consolidated line

 Architecture not fixed yet. Window for influence open.

What is new in the COM proposal?

- No standalone EMFAF
- €2 bn minimum for CFP support
- Fisheries & aquaculture integrated into Heading 1
- National & Regional Partnership Plans (NRPPs)
- Allocation largely decided at national level
- Strong emphasis on flexibility & simplification
- Structural shift: From EU-level fund → national allocation model.
- Everything else politically **dependent on national governments.**

Three “Structural Shifts”

- 1. Institutional shift
 - From standalone EMFAF → integration into Heading 1
- 2. Governance shift
 - From EU-structured allocation → national prioritisation (NRPPs)
- 3. Political shift
 - Aquaculture must justify itself through cross-policy contribution

This is not only a budget debate.

It is a structural repositioning of the sector.

Institutional positions

Commission

- Flexibility & integrated planning
- Aquaculture recognised as growth sector

European Parliament (PECH & BUDG)

- Calls for autonomous / stronger ring-fenced funding
- Concerns about legal certainty & visibility

Advisory Councils

- Joint call for dedicated and predictable financing

Council

- Technical discussions ongoing
- Member State positions not yet consolidated

Key Concerns identified

1. Loss of Structural Visibility
 - No dedicated financial instrument
2. Legal Certainty
 - Minimum support not structured as autonomous envelope
3. Fragmentation Risk
 - National discretion → uneven ambition across Member States
4. Competition Within Heading 1
 - Aquaculture embedded alongside CAP & cohesion
5. Investment Uncertainty
 - Long-cycle!
6. Policy-Budget Disconnect
 - Vision 2040 ambitions without guaranteed financial backbone

The Aquaculture-specific issue

- Aquaculture framed as strategic growth sector (unlike fisheries)
- Can increase value & volume
- Contributes to:
 - Food security
 - Climate transition
 - Energy efficiency
 - Blue economy

But:

- No “Common Aquaculture Policy”
- No mandatory national targets
- No defined allocation rules
- Strategic recognition ≠ structural safeguard.

Scope of an AAC Recommendation

AAC could recommend:

1. Structural safeguards

- Dedicated aquaculture chapter in Partnership Plans
- Minimum allocation safeguards
- Structured stakeholder consultation

2. Clear investment priorities aligned with EU initiatives

Aquaculture contributes directly to:

- **Food security & protein autonomy**
- **EU Climate Adaptation Strategy**
- **Energy Transition & REPowerEU objectives**
- **EU Biodiversity Strategy 2030** (low-impact production)
- **Blue Economy & Ocean Pact**
- **Strategic Autonomy agenda**
- **Farm to Fork / Sustainable Food Systems framework**
- **Regional cohesion & coastal resilience**
- **Research & Innovation (Horizon Europe alignment)**

3. Simplified and meaningful performance logic

Performance Framework: Continuity & Sensitivity

- What is not new:
 - Indicators & monitoring already exist under EMFAF
 - Climate tracking already operational
- What is politically new:
 - Stronger milestone logic
 - Cross-fund integration
 - Climate tagging reinforced
- Real risk:
 - Administrative burden disproportionately affecting smaller sectors
 - Data accumulation without policy feedback
- Simplification must be real.

Thank you