

Aquaculture Advisory Council

Working Group 1 - Finfish meeting

8 June 2026 (14:30-17:45)

COPA-COGECA – Rue de Trèves, 61 – 1000 Brussels – Interpretation available in EN - FR – ES – IT

Minutes

PARTICIPATION LIST

WG1 MEMBERS

Andrea Fabris (API, Chair),
Phil Brooke (CIWF, Vice-
Chair),

Tamas Eisenbeck (Seafood
Europe),
Leo Kirchmaier (ALFAA),
Giulia Malerbi (Aquatic Life
Institute),
Marine Levadoux (CIPA),
Florian Guillou (CNPMEM),
Pier Salvador (COPA),

Brian Thomsen (Danish
Aquaculture Producer
Organisation)
David Bassett (EATiP),
Bárbara Barbosa (EFFAB),
Robyn Sahota (Eurogroup for
Animals),
Javier Ojeda (FEAP),
Catherine Pons (FEAP),
Lone Flyvholm (FEAP),
Ole Christensen (FEFAC),
Alain Schonbrodt (FVE),

Yannis Pelekanakis (HAPO),
Teresa Morrissey (IFA),
Anna Pyć (Polish Trout
Breeders Association),
Ola Öberg (RECIRKFISK),
Eugen Catalin Platon
(Romfish),
Paul Denekamp (Stichting
Vissenbescherming).

OTHER PARTICIPANTS

Observers: Linn Therese S. Hosteland (Norwegian Coastal Shipowners Association), Wasseem Emam (Ethical Seafood Research).

Member States Experts: Alkisti Batzina (Greek Ministry of Rural Development and Food), George Broudikadis (Greek Ministry of Rural Development and Food).

Secretariat: Cécile Fouquet (AAC Secretariat), Alicia Mouthuy (AAC Secretariat).



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MEETING MINUTES

Welcome words by the Chair

Andrea Fabris (Chair) welcomed the present participants.

1. Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was approved with a point added under AOB regarding farm visits. The minutes of the last meeting (24.02.2026) had been approved by written procedure.

2. Fish Health

i. Recommendation on biocides

- **Presentation** of the draft recommendation by Andrea Fabris (Chair)
- **Exchange of views** with the members of the recommendation and decision on next steps

Andrea Fabris (Chair) presented the draft recommendation on access to and safe use of biocides for fish health management in EU aquaculture. Brian Thomsen (DAPO) stressed the importance of considering the upcoming Omnibus simplification package's implications in this matter. Javier Ojeda (FEAP) highlighted the need to ensure that recommendations are sent to the appropriate contact points within Member States and suggested that the Secretariat identify the relevant authorities.

Both the draft recommendation and an Excel table on the use of biocides will be circulated to the WG1 members for their contributions.



ii. Vaccines availability in EU and connected issues

- **State of play** on the matter by Andrea Fabris (Chair)
- **Presentation** by Dr. Dusan Palic (LMU Munich)¹
- **Presentation** of a draft recommendation on “Autologous Vaccines” by Andrea Fabris
- **Exchange of views** with the members and decision on the next steps

Andrea Fabris (Chair) presented his draft recommendation on autologous vaccines. **Dr. Dusan Palic** (LMU Munich) then made a presentation on the availability of the vaccines for food producing aquatic animals in the EU and associated countries.

Following a discussion with the members, the draft recommendation on autologous vaccines will be circulated for comments and approval to WG1.

3. Disease Control Measures

i. Restriction on moving fish from confirmed outbreak of ISA/IHN/VHS

- **Presentation** of a draft recommendation by Alain Schonbrodt (FVE)
- **Exchange of views** with the members and decision on next steps

Alain Schonbrodt (FVE) presented his draft recommendation on the restriction on moving fish from confirmed outbreak of ISA/IHN/VHS. **Anna Pyc (Polish Trout Breeders Association)** pointed to the incompatibility between eradication programmes and vaccination strategies, while noting the lack of awareness and educational programmes on the issue in Poland. **Marine Levadoux (CIPA)** stressed that eradication programmes cannot be financed by national public funds in some countries and called for dedicated financial support from the European Commission. Finally, **Pier Salvador (COPA)** underlined the significant investments and preparation required to obtain disease-free status. He called for an initiative to exchange good practices in this field.

The draft recommendation will be circulated again to WG1 for comments and review before finalisation.

4. Fish welfare

i. Increased funding to support research on species-specific welfare indicators and humane slaughter including the effectiveness of stunning methods in the field

- **Presentation** of the draft recommendation by Robyn Sahota (Eurogroup for Animals)
- **Exchange of views** with the Working Group members and next steps

Robyn Sahota (Eurogroup for Animals) presented her draft recommendation. Many members reacted, stressing the importance of addressing micro and small enterprises' specific needs. They called for a more holistic approach encompassing a broader range of species, as well as a better access to scientific research funds and knowledge development on animal welfare indicators.

¹ Presentation to be added



The draft recommendation will be further discussed by the FG on fish welfare.

5. Domestication

- **Update** on Focus Group activities by FG leader Phil Brooke (CIWF)
- **Exchange of views** with the Working Group members and next steps

Phil Brooke (Vice-Chair) presented the state of play of the FG on domestication's work. Members reacted by highlighting the need for a clear and commonly agreed definition of "domestication". They also stressed the importance of further research on fish behaviour (also concerning molluscs such as cephalopods), combining scientific evidence with practical farming experience, and ensuring that the discussion considers a broad range of factors rather than solely animal welfare aspects.

A new FG meeting will be organised to further discuss the file.

6. AAC WG1 Strategic Plan

- **Presentation** by the Secretariat
- **Approval** of the Strategic Plan for 2026-2027

The **Secretariat** presented the WG1 Strategic Plan for 2026-2027, including recommendations and studies to work on during this period. **WG1 members approved the SP with the following recommendations as commitments:**

- Gaps in fish welfare science
- Training aquaculture professionals and health services
- EMFAF financing of autologous vaccines

WG1 will also start working on a recommendation on "contaminants in feed" but it will not be one of the commitments for 2026-2027. A FG will be created and will determine the scope and objectives of future work on this matter.

Four different studies were supported by the WG1 members:

- Harmonisation of animal welfare indicators for fish (implementation phase, case studies)
- Fish health: IPN, BKD etc... Free zones, Eradication and Vaccines
- Biocides, where do we stand? How does the simplification package impact aquaculture medicinal products availability.
- Economic and financial implications of fish welfare in aquaculture.

The ExCom will decide on the funding of the studies for 2026-2027.

7. AOB & Conclusions

One AOB was introduced by Paul Denekamp (Vissenbescherming):

- **Farm visits:** Paul Denekamp proposed organising a farm visit in The Netherlands during a future WG meeting, potentially in 2027. **A decision on this proposal will be taken by the Executive**



Committee.

Andrea Fabris (Chair) thanked the members for their participation and concluded the meeting.

The next meeting of this Working Group will take place in Brussels on **21 October 2026 (afternoon)**.

