



Contribution to the European Commission Communication's on a new approach for sustainable blue economy in the EU

December 2020 - (AAC 2021-01)



The Green Deal calls for a growth strategy with the transformation of the maritime sector. A sustainable blue economy can play a central role in alleviating the demands on land resources and tackling climate change. The aquaculture sector can contribute by improving the use of aquatic resources and by promoting new sources of protein that can relieve pressure on agricultural land and on wild fish stocks.

The European Commission's Communication focuses on decarbonisation, zero pollution, circularity and biodiversity. The Communication encourages sustainable solutions, innovative products and services and emerging sectors with high employment potential and low environmental impact.

The Aquaculture Advisory Council (AAC) welcomes the Commission's initiative and presents 11 key recommendations:

1. Agrees that improved ocean knowledge and observation supports a sustainable Blue Economy.
2. Notes that the FAO attaches special importance to aquaculture as a food source with the potential for sustainable growth and recommends promoting it as a provider of food, employment and wealth.
3. Points to the Union's significant trade deficit in aquatic products for human consumption that places the Union in a position of weakness regarding its present and future safety and food security and stresses that the deficit is unacceptable given the missed opportunities for employment.
4. Notes that the further development of the aquaculture systems with low carbon footprints and that provide ecosystem services could also help reduce the pressure on land use and freshwater.
5. Encourages the improvement of circularity in the use of marine raw materials and responsible sourcing of all feed ingredients to reduce pressure on marine ecosystems.

6. Highlights the need for an ecosystem-based approach to support sustainable growth, to reduce the degradation of aquatic habitats and to contribute to the maintenance of socio-cultural activities and biodiversity of coastal areas.
7. Points to the need to improve and simplify the regulatory aquaculture framework and a best practice platform to foster knowledge transfer in production and governance, and closer collaboration among Member states (in line with the objectives of the soon-to-be-launched Strategic Guidelines for EU Aquaculture).
8. Stresses the need to improve consumer information on aquaculture products in all food channels and the importance of a competitive level playing field for aquatic products in Europe.
9. Supports innovation and research to implement new aquaculture technologies and to optimize conventional aquaculture systems for the benefit of fish welfare and the environment as well as production.
10. Supports the use of marine spatial planning, sea basin strategies and river management plans.
11. Encourages the search for synergies between maritime sectors for a multiplier effect on the blue economy.

You can find this contribution on the European Commission's consultation's website:

<https://ec.europa.eu/info/law/better-regulation/have-your-say/initiatives/12659-Maritime-sector-a-green-post-COVID-future/F1301513>



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