

Ministry of Agriculture,
Nature and Food Quality

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Date 10-02-2022
Re Call for action on raising costs of aquaculture production

Dear Mr. Ojeda,

Our ref.
DGNV-V / 22567938

By means of this letter I would like to inform you that I have received your letter regarding the Call for Action on raising costs of aquaculture production. In your letter you ask for information on the measures member states haven taken in reaction to the high prices of energy, fuel and feed for aquaculture enterprises.

In The Netherlands, all land-based aquaculture farms use RAS. Like you indicated in your letter, this is an energy-intensive farming method. This therefore makes the viability of the sector sensitive to the increasing energy and feed prices we have experienced since mid-2021. In response to the increased production costs for small and medium sized enterprises (SMEs) in all sectors, The Netherlands has decided to use a general approach by offering a temporary targeted support to all energy intensive small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs). This means that no specific individual supporting measures for the aquaculture sector were taken, but instead aquaculture farms can apply for this general energy compensation allowance.

The total amount of energy compensation for a SME in this allowance is based on its gas/energy usage and turnover. A company qualifies for this regulation when it fits the European Commission SME definition and when its energy costs make up at least 7 percent of their turnover in the first two quarters of 2023. The subsidy covers 50% of the company's gas/energy costs up to a maximum eligible price of gas per m³ and electricity per kWh. The maximum subsidy per SME is set at €160.000,-. The specific conditions and details of this subsidy scheme can be found on the website of the Netherlands Enterprise Agency¹.

SMEs can apply for this compensation from the 21st of March in 2023. The allowance will be granted retroactively. To clarify, SMEs will receive energy compensation in 2023 for the increased energy costs from November 2022 until the end of 2023.

¹ [Tegemoetkoming Energiekosten energie-intensief mkb \(TEK\) \(rvo.nl\)](https://tegemeetkoming.energiekosten.energie-intensief.mkb.tek.rvo.nl)

The Dutch marine aquaculture sector, consisting of both mussel and oyster farms, also experiences consequences of increased fuel prices. We are currently exploring the options of a temporary support arrangement to partly compensate the oyster and mussel farms for their increased production costs.

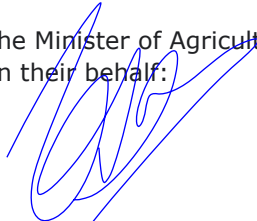
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In addition, the European Maritime Fisheries and Aquaculture Fund (EMFAF) enables member states to open aquaculture innovation subsidy schemes. As specified in our recently published National Programme EMFAF, we support innovations in aquaculture farming methods in relation to energy reduction. We are currently designing the conditions of an aquaculture innovation subsidy scheme with the Netherlands Enterprise Agency. We aim to open this scheme in 2023.

By taking these measures, we expect to counteract the effects of high energy, feed and fuel prices for the Dutch aquaculture farms in an appropriate way.

With kind regards,

The Minister of Agriculture, Nature and Food Quality,
on their behalf:



Nanou Beekman
Director of Fisheries and Great Waters