



EUROPEAN COMMISSION
DIRECTORATE-GENERAL FOR MARITIME AFFAIRS AND FISHERIES

The Director-General

Brussels, 8 March 2022
MARE/A2/EL (2022)

Subject: AAC recommendation on the role of Producer Organisations in the sustainable development of aquaculture

Dear Mr. Ojeda,

I would like to thank you for your letter of 23 December 2021 including the recommendation on the role of Producer Organisations in the sustainable development of aquaculture.

Producer organisations play a central role in ensuring sustainable fishery and aquaculture activities and in improving the sector's competitiveness. I can therefore agree with your view that Production and Marketing Plans (PMPs) are key tools for the achievement of the CMO objectives and could therefore be identified as "sustainability plans" for aquaculture.

New *Strategic guidelines for a more sustainable and competitive EU aquaculture for the period 2021 to 2030* recognize the role of the producer and market organizations, as well as the difficulties that they face for setting up and recognition, in particular for small-scale producers. To facilitate the recognition of Producer organisations (POs) and other professional organisations, the Commission has prepared a non-binding guidance document¹. The Commission also continuously supports the sector and national administrations through methodological support and participation and exchanges in technical meetings. This practice will continue through the implementation of the Strategic guidelines that envisage workshops for relevant public authorities and industry to facilitate the establishment and recognition of POs and other market organisations, by presenting and exchanging good practices. The Commission invited the Member States to promote the benefits of setting up these organisations, as well as to continue supporting them through national and EU funding, in particular their PMPs.

¹ [*guidance-document-on-implementation-of-professional-organisations_en.pdf \(europa.eu\)](#)

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The Commission also relies on the support from the AAC to promote the benefits of setting up POs and other market organisations among aquaculture producers.

As far as your recommendation to assess the implementation of the CMO and of the EMFF is concerned, I should recall that by the end of 2022, the Commission will report on the functioning of the CFP and on the application of the CMO regulation. Particular attention will be paid to the organisation of the sector through the creation and support to POs. I take this opportunity to remind you of the questionnaire² to the attention of stakeholders, which your members can use to share their view on the different chapters of the CMO. The EMFF is also subject to an evaluation process.

Besides the above-guidance of the Commission on the recognition of professional organisations, I also draw your attention on the Commission recommendation on the establishment and implementation of PMPs³, the compilation of FAQs on the implementation of the CMO⁴ and the guidance drafted by the Market Advisory Council on PMPs⁵. These reference documents can probably respond to your demand to create an inventory of measures deployed by POs.

I agree with you that information and training sessions on the creation and functioning of POs are useful, and DG MARE met national administration and industry stakeholders on numerous occasions to that end. We remain available for any such assistance.

On transnational professional organisations, the Commission has published the results of a Pilot Project on “an EU platform for fishery and aquaculture producer organisations”⁶. Based on the findings of that report, DG MARE elaborated a guidance to the attention of Member States to support them in the recognition and support of transnational organisations. This guidance can be shared with the AAC in case you are interested.

Finally, on the subject of the European Maritime, Fisheries and Aquaculture Fund (EMFAF), as a successor of the EMFF for the 2021-2027 period, it will still be possible to grant financial support from the EU budget for the creation of POs and the implementation of production and marketing plans, provided such measures are selected by Member States. This new fund is currently in the phase of programming by Member States. Nevertheless, expenditure for selected operations is eligible since 1 January 2021. Therefore, Member States can already start implementing the fund and grant pre-financing to beneficiaries, even before the adoption of their programme. However, applicants should be aware that the final confirmation of support is subject to the formal approval of the selection criteria by the monitoring committee and of selection of operations by the managing authority, once the programme is adopted.

² <https://ec.europa.eu/eusurvey/runner/TargetedConsultation2022ReportCMO>

³ <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:32014H0117>

⁴ https://ec.europa.eu/oceans-and-fisheries/document/download/53e9d3d9-ae6e-47a9-868a-8e23364cf31d_en

⁵ <https://marketac.eu/en/production-marketing-plans-guidelines-good-practices/>

⁶ <https://op.europa.eu/fr/publication-detail/-/publication/fe000638-3060-11eb-b27b-01aa75ed71a1/language-en/format-PDF/source-177630836>

I am looking forward to our continued fruitful cooperation. Should you have any further questions on this reply, please contact Ms Pascale COLSON, coordinator of the Advisory Councils (Pascale.COLSON@ec.europa.eu; +32.2.295.62.73), who will forward it to relevant colleagues.

Yours sincerely,

[e-signed]
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