

AAC Observers Policy

AAC Statutes and Rules of Procedure (RoP)

Statutes article 8 (4), 4 (1) and 8 (2)

The chair may authorize any person whose presence is deemed to be beneficial based on the agenda of the meeting, as an observer, to attend the GA and ExCom meetings.

The meetings of the GA and the ExCom shall be open to the public; the latter modified by “unless in exceptional circumstances”.

Rules of procedure article 11 (1 – 3)

Representatives of the aquaculture operators and other interest groups from third countries may - at the discretion of the ExCom - be invited to participate in the AAC and WG as active observers when issues that affect them are discussed.

Representatives of the European Commission, other European institutions, Member States and additional representatives of Member Organisations shall be permitted to attend any meeting of the AAC.

The AAC shall not be responsible for meeting the costs of attendance of observers. Observers shall not be entitled to vote.



Practices supplementing the Statutes and Rules of Procedure

1. The ExCom has decided (in 2022) to keep on reimbursing former UK AAC members who wish to attend physical Working Group meetings.
2. Working Documents other than the agendas are *per se* not shared with the observers ahead of the Working Group meetings. The Chair may decide otherwise on an *ad hoc* basis.
3. Observers can be invited to attend Focus Group meetings on an *ad hoc* basis when issues that affect them are discussed. Focus Group working documents may then be shared with them.
4. Inviting observers to attend AAC meetings is a way of attracting new members.
5. Observers are invited to the lunches organised by the Secretariat when meetings are organised physically. The WG dinners are open to AAC members, EC and MS representatives only.
6. The AAC reimburses the travel expenses of Member States' experts that attend physical meetings¹.
7. Observers are entitled to have the floor at all AAC meetings.
8. Observers should be registered in the European Transparency Register.

¹ New Guidance Document adopted on 11/08/2023 on the use of ACs Grant, 13.3 ANNEX X - Experts' travel expenses, Point 2:

"PUBLIC SECTOR EXPERTS (representing a public body from a Member State): public sector experts are entitled to reimbursement of travel expenses. A daily allowance per meeting and an accommodation allowance will be paid only if such allowances are provided for in the rules of procedure of the advisory council. Reimbursements will be paid in euro value on a bank account in the name of the Member State, one of its ministries or a public body."

