



# AAC Policies

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## Index

Procedure for follow-up on recommendation .....	2
Procedure for handling consultations on research project proposals .....	3
AAC Financial Compensation Policy .....	4
Translation Policy for the Recommendations .....	5
Policy on participation in external events.....	6
AAC Observers policy .....	7
Improving the involvement of external experts.....	8



## Procedure for follow-up on recommendation

- 1. The FG leader analyses the reply received using the AAC template.**
- 2. The FG leader drafts a proposal to be approved by the FG.**
  - This may be done by written procedure or it may require an FG meeting depending on the 'complexity' of the recommendation and the reply received.
  - Having consulted with the WG chair the FG decides if the follow-up can be approved by the WG by written procedure or if it needs to be discussed and approved at a WG meeting.
- 3. The FG draft is approved by the WG either by written procedure or at a WG meeting.**
- 4. The follow-up actions that involve the EC, the member states or the European Parliament are coordinated by the FG leader, the WG chair, the secretariat and the chair.**
- 5. The WG Chairs will report on the actions carried out at the WG meeting.**



## Procedure for handling consultations on research project proposals

The AAC does **not** give priority to commend on research projects proposals as it is not a core objective of the AAC.

The **general policy** is that the AAC does not provide input to research project proposals, but exceptions are possible if the scope of the project may have significant implications on the preparation of an AAC recommendation ('work in progress') or if the results may significantly add to the impact of a prior recommendation.

The **deadline** for providing input project proposal may be short and invitations are therefore handled by emergency procedures:

- A. The chair of the AAC and the secretariat recommend to the Management Committee (ManCom) on whether a project proposal is 'significant' or not.
- B. The ManCom mandates a Working Group to prepare a response.
- C. The chair of the relevant WG decides on the response. This may involve the creation of a new Focus Group or a reference to a prior AAC recommendation.
- D. The ManCom approves the response.



## AAC Financial Compensation Policy

### Definition of a rapporteur:

A rapporteur is an AAC member representative that has been mandated by a Working Group to work on a draft recommendation.

### Compensation policy for a rapporteur's work:

AAC rapporteurs do not *per se* receive any financial compensation from the AAC.

The AAC can provide financial compensation to 'rapporteurs' up to 4.000 € per report following an application from a rapporteur's organisation if the AAC finds that the request is justified.

The compensation is formalised via the signature of a contract between the rapporteur's organisation and the AAC. The contract includes a specific assignment letter, detailing the work to be carried out, the timeline as well as the payment conditions.

### Budget implications:

- Compensation of all AAC rapporteurs for 2022-2023: 8.000 EUR
- Compensation of EMPA rapporteurs for 2022-2023: 8.000 EUR
- Rapporteurship + scientific expertise budget unused in 2022-2023: 2.000 EUR





## Translation Policy for the Recommendations

All AAC recommendations are translated into **French, Italian, Spanish and German**. In addition, recommendations are – upon explicit request - also translated into **Greek, Polish, Romanian and Portuguese** on a case by case basis.

**Draft** recommendations will be edited to ensure good quality of drafting.

Translating recommendations serves the purpose of disseminating their messages better among national authorities and within the AAC members' membership.



## Policy on participation in external events

This policy aims to provide guidance on the AAC's participation in external events.

The AAC welcomes invitations on aquaculture events from EU public institutions and Member States' public authorities and gives priority to such invitations. The chair has the mandate to accept such invitations and may consult the ManCom or ExCom if in doubt.

In this context, 'external events' refer to invitations where the AAC is asked to present itself, a recommendation or a good practice developed by the AAC or the European Commission.

### Does the AAC accept the external invitation?

The Common Fisheries Policy calls on the AAC to promote the development of sustainable aquaculture activities and the Strategic Guidelines includes several AAC dissemination/promotion activities.

Invitations to external events are shared with the ExCom and the AAC chair decides on accepting invitations on the following conditions:

1. The AAC is invited to present itself, a **recommendation** or a **good practice**.
2. The host/organiser/participants are considered **relevant stakeholders** in the context of the Strategic Guidelines.
3. The **programme/agenda items** are relevant to the AAC.
4. An AAC **representative** is willing and available to present the recommendation or the good practice.

### Who gives the presentation?

The AAC representative is selected according to the following order of priority:

#### For a presentation on a recommendation or a good practice:

1. The AAC member organisation **rapporteur** who has had the lead on the recommendation/good practice in question.
2. The **chair of the WG** responsible for the recommendation/good practice in question.
3. The **vice-chair of the WG** responsible for the recommendation/good practice in question.
4. The **chair of the AAC**.

#### For a presentation on the AAC:

1. The **chair of the AAC**
2. The **secretariat of the AAC**

The AAC representative must only present AAC positions that are reflected in the recommendation/good practice or attuned with the ExCom prior to the event.





## 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.



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## Improving the involvement of external experts

### Context:

The performance review suggested that “The AAC members rate the involvement of external experts to qualify recommendations to be somehow satisfactory”. This was the lowest score in the section about the quality of AAC recommendations.

4 respondent’s comments supplemented the answers:

- *“The quality of “experts has a wide range! from VERY poor to sometimes excellent most are “reasonable” not regarding the money they get for the job! including money I would kick out some of them directly.*
- *“I have rated 8 because there is always room for improvement but I’m quite satisfied”*
- *“All external experts are not of the same level. [meaning, some of them are very bad]”*
- *“The recommendations are well composed and consulted on - although I am not always in agreement with the content. External consultants are always helpful and good to improve content and objectivity in recommendations.”*

The ExCom agreed to include improving the involvement of external experts in the action plan.

### When does the AAC call for external experts?

The AAC requests experts in two cases:

- To inform the Working Group members about a specific topic. These experts take part to the meetings for free.
- Via an external call based on Terms of Reference for the preparation of a specific scientific report drafted with a financial compensation.

#### **A. Experts invited at Working Groups:**

The experts invited to present about their activities at the AAC WG meetings are either designated by the WG Chair or Vice-Chair when preparing the agenda, or by the European Commission when the expert needed is an official.

For EC officials, the AAC secretariat writes to DG MARE to request a briefing about a specific topic and DG MARE nominates the relevant person to be contacted (even if in other EC Directorate-Generals such as SANTE, ENVI, etc...). The requested expert is occasionally unavailable during an AAC/WG meeting, and the substitute may not always have the same level of expertise as the person responsible for the case. In such situations, the WG Chair might decide to either accept the substitute or schedule a separate online event when the EC expert can attend, taking into account the extra costs and scheduling.

#### **B. Experts selected for the preparation of a study:**

Another kind of external experts are those chosen by a WG to prepare a study that will inform the AAC members about a specific topic. The AAC foresees a yearly budget of 12.000 EUR for this purpose.

When a WG decides to call for an external expert, Terms of Reference are drafted and approved before being published. The expert selection is made by the Chair, Vice-Chair and AAC secretariat and approved by the Focus Group and the Working Group. The expert is then contracted for a maximum period of a year to







deliver its work.

The comments received in the performance review about this kind of experts are positive.

### **How to improve the quality of external experts?**

The AAC can aim at improving the experts chosen by the WG Chairs but those designated by DG MARE cannot be chosen.

The secretariat always liaises with the EC person who will be in charge of the presentation, not only to organise the logistics of its presence but also to make sure that the AAC specific needs and request will be tackled by the presentation. Despite this, some experts did not always respond to the brief.

