



Brussels,  
[MARE.A.2/LBS](#)

**Subject: Recommendation on the request by DG MARE of technical studies on aquaculture**

Dear Mr Thomsen,

I would like to thank you for your *Recommendation on the request by DG MARE of technical studies on aquaculture*, and to update you on the study you refer to in your recommendation, on “*Potential nutrient, carbon and fisheries impacts of large-scale seaweed and shellfish aquaculture in Europe evaluated using operational oceanographic model outputs*”.

We are well aware of the potential of shellfish aquaculture to produce protein with a low carbon and environmental footprint, but to have any appreciable impact on our climate and environmental targets, we would need a scaling up that is way beyond current production. If the new study indicates that this is, in principle, feasible, then it will help the Commission design policies to make it happen.

The encouraging results of the completed study were published in September this year in the marine fisheries, aquaculture and living resources section of the peer-reviewed journal “*Frontiers of Marine Science*”<sup>1</sup>.

The follow-up project started in July this year. The Aquaculture Advisory Council will be invited to participate in the stakeholder workshop, to be held at the end of the first year.

We agree that discussions between DG MARE and the Aquaculture Advisory Council would help in the identification and definition of possible topics for future studies under

---

<sup>1</sup> [M.Johnson et al. “Potential nutrient, carbon and fisheries impacts of large-scale seaweed and shellfish aquaculture in Europe evaluated using operational oceanographic model outputs” Front. Mar. Sci., 17 September 2024.](#)

Mr. Brian Thomsen  
Chairman of the AAC  
brian@danskakvakultur.dk  
Rue Montoyer, 31  
B – 1000 Brussels  
Belgium

the European Maritime, Fisheries and Aquaculture Fund, as well as research topics under Horizon Europe. My services will inform and discuss with you envisaged studies or topics in the context of MARE-AAC biannual meetings and of AAC working group meetings, in order to gather your views and expertise.

I take this opportunity to refer to another ongoing study on the *assessment of environmental benefits of aquaculture* and on the challenges and opportunities in promoting those benefits. The objective of this 18-months study is to identify scientific evidence on the nature and magnitude of the environmental benefits offered by farming of bivalve molluscs, as well as extensive and semi-intensive fish farming in ponds and wetlands. The AAC has been consulted by the contractor to participate in a survey in relation to this study. We would echo this encouragement of your close participation in this work.

I would also like to refer to the expected launch of the study on *feed for aquaculture* in the coming weeks, which had already been announced to the AAC. We will ensure that the AAC is duly consulted during the preparation of this study. We also would like to encourage your close cooperation with the consortium in charge of this study.

I am looking forward to our continued fruitful cooperation. Should you have any further questions on this reply, please contact Ms Julia Rubeck, our Advisory Councils coordinator, via the functional mailbox [MARE-AC@ec.europa.eu](mailto:MARE-AC@ec.europa.eu).

Yours sincerely,

Charlina VITCHEVA

c.c.: Cynthia Benites: [cynthia.benites@aac-europe.org](mailto:cynthia.benites@aac-europe.org); [secretariat@aac-europe.org](mailto:secretariat@aac-europe.org);