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Chair

Aquaculture Advisory Council

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Charlina Vitcheva

Director General DG MARE

European Commission

Brussels, Belgium

Sandra Gallina

Director General DG SANTE

European Commission

Brussels, Belgium

Brussels, 26 May 2025

Subject: Delayed EFSA farmed finfish and invertebrate mandates and animal welfare revision

Dear Mrs Vitcheva,

Dear Mrs Gallina,

I am writing to you in my capacity as Chair of the Aquaculture Advisory Council (AAC) to respectfully request the publication of the pending EFSA mandate on farmed trout, and provide a timeline for the other EFSA mandates on farmed finfish and invertebrates, foreseen by the 2021 [Roadmap](#) for future EFSA animal welfare scientific opinions in the context of the Farm to Fork Strategy.

Draft opinions on Turkeys and Beef cattle announced by this roadmap were presented at the EFSA Scientific Panel on Animal Health and Welfare on 9 April 2025, in accordance with the indicative roadmap. In this roadmap, the first aquatic animal mandate on farmed salmon and trout (now split into two separate mandates), was supposed to be the next mandate to be issued last June 2024.

We fully acknowledge that the roadmap is intended to serve as an indicative guide. However, it has now been ten months since the provisional publication date initially set forth. In light of this significant delay, we would be grateful for clarification regarding the underlying reasons, as well as a clear indication from your services concerning the revised timeline for publication.

While we recognise that the European elections held last year may have contributed to shifts in institutional focus, we also understand that EFSA's scientific assessments are intended to remain independent of political developments, given their essential role in safeguarding the public interest.

It is particularly important to underscore that these mandates are critical to informing the ongoing revision of animal welfare legislation. This includes the revised proposal on Animal Transport, currently under review, which marks a significant milestone as the first binding EU legislation to address the welfare of aquatic animals.

It should also be noted that EFSA's existing scientific opinions on farmed finfish date back over fifteen years. Since then, the field of aquatic animal welfare has evolved significantly, with more than 12,000 scientific publications on the subject emerging since 2015 alone.



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This growing body of knowledge is supported by both producers and civil society organisations, as evidenced by the recent AAC [recommendation](#) on the Code of Good Practices on Fish Welfare.

In view of the above, we respectfully request the publication of the EFSA mandate on farmed trout, and the provision of a finalised timeline for the publication of the remaining EFSA opinions on farmed finfish and invertebrates.

We remain at your disposal for any further engagement required to support this important work.

Yours sincerely,

Brian Thomsen
Chair
Aquaculture Advisory Council

