



EUROPEAN COMMISSION
DIRECTORATE-GENERAL FOR MARITIME AFFAIRS AND FISHERIES

The Director-General

Brussels,
MARE.A.2/BVT

Subject: AAC Recommendation on the impact of climate change on EU mussel production

Dear Mr Brian Thomsen,

I would like to thank you for your mail of 30th October 2025 including the “*Recommendation on the impact of climate change on EU mussel production*”.

In this Recommendation, the Aquaculture Advisory Council specifically calls upon the European Commission to:

- ***Adapt European financial instruments:***
 - *Create a climate emergency fund for shellfish businesses, providing immediate support in the event of mass mortality or sudden production drops.*
 - *Revise the functioning of EMFAF to offer faster and better-adapted compensation for recurrent crises.*
 - *Simplify and harmonize administrative procedures across Member States to accelerate crisis response.*

The mid-term evaluation of the EMFAF - that will be soon published - will provide an assessment of the effectiveness of the current instruments.

Regarding the upcoming MFF, the discussions on the proposal are ongoing with the co-legislators. Any decisions will be taken in the context of the legislative process and subsequent negotiations with the European Parliament and the Council.

- ***Strengthen research, monitoring, and innovation:***

Mr. Brian Thomsen
Chairman of the AAC
Email : brian@danskakvakultur.dk
Rue de la Science, 10
B – 1000 Brussels
Belgium

Commission européenne/Europese Commissie, 1049 Bruxelles/Brussel, BELGIQUE/BELGIË - Tel. +32 22991111
Office: J-99 05/014 - Tel. direct line +32 229-50483

charlina.vitcheva@ec.europa.eu

- *Support the creation of a European mussel mortality observatory, centralising biological, health, and environmental data.*
- *Encourage the development of predictive models to anticipate crises (extreme temperatures, anoxia, predation, etc.).*
- *Promote zootechnical applied research (farming in deeper waters, adaptation of farming techniques, diversification of cultures) to foster innovation and farm resilience.*
- *Strengthen cooperation between producers, scientists, and authorities through European consultation platforms.*

There are several EU-funded projects aimed at supporting the resilience of aquaculture to climate change, including bivalve mollusc farming. The EU co-funded the ongoing SHELLFISHBOOST project ⁽¹⁾ for the breeding of bivalve molluscs to build resilience to climate change impacts. Furthermore, two other Horizon Europe projects on minimising climate impact on aquaculture – including shellfish farming - started in May 2025 (OCCAM ⁽²⁾) and in July 2025 (ActFast ⁽³⁾).

The study launched in January 2024 on the “*Assessment of ecosystem services of bivalve mollusc farming and fish farming in ponds and wetlands, and challenges and opportunities in promoting those benefits*” also covers both climate challenges and climate benefits of this type of aquaculture. The final report will be published in the coming weeks.

Currently the EU Aquaculture Assistance Mechanism is preparing a document on “*Challenges in the bivalve mollusc farming sector and ways to address them*”. The AAC has been consulted on the draft document. We foresee that the document will be published on the EU aquaculture website in March 2026.

- ***Co-develop with Member States a plan to safeguard and expand current aquaculture areas, incorporating potential relocations of aquaculture activities in response to climate change impacts.***

The Commission has no competence to co-develop with Member States such a plan. With the support of the EU Aquaculture Assistance Mechanism, the Commission prepared and published in December 2024 a Staff Working Document on “*Climate-change Adaptation in the Aquaculture Sector*”⁽⁴⁾ to encourage Member States to adopt measures to adapt to climate change. The document includes good practices that can be applied to shellfish farming. A first session of online training was organised over 2-4 June 2025. A second session of the online training is planned for early 2026. An e-learning module is already available online ⁽⁵⁾.

⁽¹⁾ [Boosting the resilience of European shellfish production against climate change-related challenges through genetic selection | Bluepartnership](#)

⁽²⁾ [Operationalizing Climate Change Adaptation and Mitigation for aquaculture | OCCAM | Project | Fact Sheet | HORIZON | CORDIS | European Commission](#)

⁽³⁾ [Actions for Climate Transition by developing Future Aquaculture Strategies and Technologies | ActFast | Project | Fact Sheet | HORIZON | CORDIS | European Commission](#)

⁽⁴⁾ <https://aquaculture.ec.europa.eu/key-documents/climate-change-adaptation>

⁽⁵⁾ <https://aquaculture.ec.europa.eu/key-documents/climate-change-adaptation/implementing-strategic-guidelines-climate-change-adaptation>

I am looking forward to our continued fruitful cooperation. Should you have further questions on this reply, please contact Ms Julia RUBECK, coordinator of the Advisory Councils (MARE-AC@ec.europa.eu; +32.2.296.88.89), who will forward them to relevant colleagues.

Yours sincerely and with best wishes for Merry Christmas and a very Happy New Year,

Charlina VITCHEVA

c.c.: Cynthia Benites: Cynthia.benites@aac-europe.org; secretariat@aac-europe.org;