

Executive Committee Minutes

Thursday 30 January 2020
16:00-17:40
Avenue de Cortenbergh 168,
1000 Brussels

Welcome from the Chair, Guus Pastoor

Adoption of agenda and minutes last meeting (03.09.19): adopted

Vice-Chairmanship of both the General Assembly and Executive Committee of the MAC

- **Presentation of the candidacies**
- **Vote on the Vice-Chair of the MAC (2019-2020)**

The Executive Committee re-appointed, by consensus, Sean O'Donoghue and Christine Absil as Vice-Chairs of the MAC.

Endorsement of new members of the General Assembly

- **Swedish Pelagic Federation Producer Organisation (SPFPO)**

The Executive Committee endorsed, by consensus, the Swedish Pelagic Federation Producer Organisation (SPFPO) as new member of the MAC.

H2020 Project: "A common European framework to harmonise procedures for plastics pollution monitoring and assessments" (NIVA)

- **Presentation by Bavo de Witte (ILVO)**

Click [here](#) to access the presentation.

Bavo de Witte (ILVO) presented the EUROqCHARM consortium, led by NIVA, for the H2020 Call - CE-SC5-29-2020 - A common European framework to harmonise procedures for plastics pollution monitoring and assessments. Mr de Witte invited the MAC to participate in the stakeholder network, which would require around two participants.



The Chair asked if specific knowledge would be necessary.

Bavo de Witte (ILVO) responded that the consortium was missing seafood knowledge, but the MAC representatives would not need to be experts on analysis.

EMPA wanted to know if the project was looking into reference methods to measure microplastics in seafood products or in all food products. They wanted to know the funding available for the project. They suggested that it could be more useful to look into solutions for contamination.

Bavo de Witte (ILVO) explained that the project would cover biota and seafood. The protocols for seafood are not restricted to seafood. Standardised protocols can be applied in a broader way. The main focus is the marine environment, so seafood, water, and sediments. The total budget of the project is 2 million €. The project is focused on the analytical perspective and measuring. There are many research projects on mitigation of plastic pollution, research is needed in both areas.

EMPA wanted to know why the project was not focused on urban waste water, instead of food.

Bavo de Witte (ILVO), explained that the EU is issuing a call for harmonisation, in order to determine the status of microplastics present in the environment.

Visned wanted to know if there was coordination between different scientist working on the development of these protocols.

Bavo de Witte (ILVO) explained that there are different protocols developed by several groups. The EU is asking for harmonisations. There are two proposals for harmonisation under this call. The project includes 15 partners. In terms of laboratories, there are 50 partners involved.

COPA COGECA wanted to know if there were Italian partners in the project. They offered to provide contact information in relation to ongoing projects in the Adriatic Sea.

VisNed wanted to know if microplastics were considered marine litter. The industry is currently discussing how to prevent litter. They wanted to know if the European Commission had asked to cover microplastics in relation to the MSD indicator for litter.

Bavo de Witte (ILVO) explained that the call asks for standardised protocols for macro, micro, and nanoplastics. The degree of standardisation is much higher on the macroplastics.

VisNed disagreed on the existence of good indicators for plastic litter on the beach, since these are counted by item and not by KG.



EAPO wanted to know what is expected as part of the stakeholder network.

Bavo de Witte (ILVO) explained that there would be several webinars and a final meeting in Brussels. The stakeholder network will receive the results of the project. It will be asked for their insight around two times per year. The network will be expected to disseminate the project's output through their network and social media.

The Chair highlighted that the project was connected to the MAC's workshop on plastics. The Chair argued that there was a large potential of members that could provide input and disseminate.

EMPA stated that, if the project is about creating standardised methods for investigating the presence of microplastics, they were not sure that the MAC could contribute, since it would be quite technical.

EuroCommerce argued that involvement in a research project was too outside of the MAC's overall mission.

The Chair proposed to inform the AAC on this project and for the Secretariat to consult with aquaculture members to determine if there was sufficient interest to join the stakeholder network as well as experts to participate in project meetings. A written answer would be sent.

Relationship with other Advisory Councils

- **Exchange of views**

The Executive Committee agreed to postpone this agenda item.

Retailers' relationship with the Market Advisory Council

- **Exchange of views**

The Chair explained that he received a letter from EuroCommerce expressing the possibility of leaving the MAC due to the lack of capacity.

EuroCommerce explained that it was rather difficult, internally, to dedicate enough time to attend Working Groups and Executive Committee meetings. EuroCommerce had a meeting with several active members of the MAC, which underlined the importance of integrating the whole supply chain in the MAC. EuroCommerce is sensitive to this strong plea and is reconsidering and reengaging with the MAC.



EuroCommerce argued that there should be further attempts to convince BEUC to join the MAC. They explained that the Commission's observatories on agriculture are increasing, which makes it difficult to have dedicated people to the various supply chains. EuroCommerce supports integrating the processes. They argued that, in the MAC's decision-making process, it should be easier to determine where their decision is needed. At the next EuroCommerce Food Committee, they will try to determine a dedicated expert.

The Chair expressed appreciation for their efforts, recognising, that, as an advisory body to the European Commission, there is a significant level of bureaucracy. The MAC should address which markets it is looking at, since many of the Commission's requests focus on the beginning of the value chain. The MAC should, perhaps, consider more items connected to the end of the value chain, such as nutritional labelling, consumer information, and labelling of vegetarian products. When setting out the Work Programme, it is the opportunity to determine the subjects for the following year. The Chair invited EuroCommerce to signal their interests, in order to be included in the meeting agendas and in the work programme.

AIPCE-CEP highlighted that the exchange of views with DG MARE's Acting Director-General demonstrated a change of focus towards the consumer. They expressed appreciation for EuroCommerce's presence in the MAC.

MSC emphasised that there are several topics which are relevant for stakeholders at the end of the chain. These should be included in the next work programme.

Good Fish Foundation, emphasised their organisation is working quite close to consumers and is in contact with the Dutch member of BEUC. They highlighted that it is quite difficult for consumer organisations to be present in the ACs.

MAC & AAC European Parliament Lunch Seminar

- **Reporting back**

Click [here](#) to access the seminar report.

The Secretary General provided an overview of the lunch seminar.

- **Outcomes**

The Secretary General highlighted, as the main outcome, MEP Van Dalen's request to the EP PECH Secretariat to include, in the next EP PECH Committee Coordinators Meeting's agenda, the set-up of a system of liaising between specific PECH Committee MEPs and the Advisory Councils. At the 3 December PECH Committee Coordinators meeting, MEP Van Dalen asked to replicate the experience.



The PECH Secretariat was mandated to circulate a list of ACs and meetings and MEPs were asked to signal their interest. The list of ACs were circulated at their 21 January meeting, but the signalling of interest was postponed to their next meeting.

External Representation of the MAC – Reporting Back

- **DG MARE Workshop on traceability of fishery and aquaculture (10 October 2019)**

Click [here](#) to access the workshop report.

The Secretary General provided an overview of the workshop. Following a request by DG MARE, the Secretary General was rapporteur for session 2 of the workshop. DG MARE invited the ACs to be represented by a maximum of 5 representatives each. Due to the high interest among MAC members, the Secretariat contacted other AC Secretariats regarding their unused seats and was able to secure more seats.

The MAC was represented by: Pierre Commère (ADEPALE), Andrew Kuyk (AIPCE), Giorgio Rimoldi (ANCIT), Asmaa Rabea (EuroCommerce), Mark Zeller (EuroCommerce), Jens Høj Mathiesen (Danish Seafood Association), Georg Werner (Environmental Justice Foundation), Christine Absil (Good Fish Foundation), Guus Pastoor (AIPCE), Sean O’Donoghue (KFO), Claudia Orlandini (LIFE), Janne Posti (MSC), Natalie Hunter (MSC), Dana Miller (OCEANA), Pim Visser (Visned), Alexandre Cornet (WWF), Antonia Leroy (WWF), Selim Azzi (WWF), Katrin Poulsen (WWF), and Karim Ben Romdhane (WWF). The members did not make interventions on behalf of the MAC.

- **EFCA Advisory Board Meeting (21 October 2019)**

Click [here](#) to access the conclusions of the meeting.

Daniel Voces (Europêche) explained that, at the EFCA Advisory Board meeting, concerning the landing obligation, he had informed EFCA that the MAC had agreed that more information on the effects of the landing obligation on the market was necessary. Mr Voces also raised the concerns expressed by NGOs that the landing obligation was not being properly implemented, the reputational concerns of retailers, and the difficulties for the producer organisations. Concerning the advice on marketing standards for processed products, Mr Voces informed EFCA on the majority and minority views. Mr Voces presented the MAC’s advice on the Level Playing Field. Concerning the EMFF, he referred to the Commission’s reply on control and enforcement, plus to the agreement that funding should be provided for the new electronic system.

- **Inter-ACs Meeting (9 November 2019)**

Click [here](#) to access the Secretariat’s meeting notes.



The Chair provided an overview of the meeting.

- **ICES MIAC and MIACO Meetings (15-17 January 2020)**

The Secretary General provided an overview of the meetings, highlighting that it was very specific to fisheries science, so not directly connected to the MAC's main areas of action. No statements were made on behalf of the MAC during the meetings. Nevertheless, it was a good opportunity to promote the MAC and to meet fisheries and aquaculture stakeholders.

AOB

- **Relationship between FGs, WGs, and ExCom**

Europêche, in reference to their intervention at the 30 January WG3 meeting, recalled that the Focus Group on Consumer Information began several months ago. Europêche argued that, in the first meetings, Matthias Keller signed as representative of Bundesverband der deutschen Fischindustrie und des Fischgrosshandels e.V. and later as AIPCE. At the last FG meeting, Europêche had asked Mr Keller specifically if he was expressing the views of all the seafood processors and traders represented by AIPCE-CEP and Mr Keller responded in the affirmative. Europêche emphasised that, at the last FG meeting, a compromise text was agreed upon. Therefore, it was counterproductive for another AIPCE-CEP member to argue completely against the compromise text at WG's level. Europêche underscored that they are not opposed to negotiating, but argued that reaching multiple compromises merely delays the process. They asked the Chair, as president of AIPCE-CEP, to ensure that representatives of his organisation are representing the views of AIPCE-CEP. Europêche recognised that the WG can review the draft text and that the FG does not reach final decisions. As such, they remained open to comments by other organisations, but expressed opposition to requests for substantial changes by organisations that already agreed at FG's level.

The Chair expressing his understanding for the issue raised by Europêche, arguing that it is connected to different expectations of the role of the FGs. Under Europêche's expectations, when a FG member intervenes, the FG member is speaking on behalf of a group/organisation, while other view a FG as a "think tank" to develop material to discuss at the WG's level. The role of the FG is to deliver a document to serve as a basis of discussions at the WG's level. If there are different perceptions on the role of the FG, then the issue should be addressed again by the Executive Committee.

Environmental Justice Foundation argued that Mr Keller's statement, at the last FG meeting, that he was speaking on behalf of the processors and traders of AIPCE-CEP allowed the FG to reach a compromise text. They further argued that FG members speaking on behalf of a group helps the drafting process.





VisNed argued that the MAC should avoid having the same disputes on specific issues at FG's, WG's, and Executive Committee's levels. VisNed emphasised that, at WG's level, they would not go against the work done by their own organisation at FG's level. All members should have the same perception. Otherwise, it is not efficient, but, it is, instead, frustrating, he concluded.

The Chair proposed including this topic on the agenda for the next Executive Committee meeting.



List of attendees

Representative	Organisation
Alexandre Rodríguez (observer)	Long Distance Advisory Council's Secretariat
Andrea Albertazzi	ETF
Andrew Kuyk	AIPCE-CEP
Ángeles Longa	EMPA
Anna Boulova	FRUCOM
Béatrice Gorez	CFFA-CAPE
Benoît Thomassen	FEAP
Brian O'Riordan	LIFE
Christine Absil	Good Fish Foundation
Christian Verschueren	EuroCommerce
Claudia Orlandini	LIFE
Daniel Voces de Onáindi	Europêche
Dovile Vaigauskaite	European Commission
Emiel Brouckaert	EAPO
Erik Bjørn Olsen	Danish Society for a Living Sea
Georg Werner	Environmental Justice Foundation
Guus Pastoor	AIPCE-CEP
Hans Nieuwenhuis	Marine Stewardship Council
Janne Posti	Marine Stewardship Council
Juan Manuel Trujillo Castillo	ETF
Katarina Sipic	CONXEMAR
Kathryn Stack	FEAP
Katrin Vilhelm Poulsen	WWF
Mathilde Voisin	Market Advisory Council
Marc Eskelund	EUfishmeal



Representative	Organisation
Massimo Bellavista	COPA COGECA
Pedro Reis Santos	Market Advisory Council
Pim Visser	VisNed
Rosalie Tukker	Europêche
Sean O'Donoghue	EAPO

