



The Director-General

Brussels,  
MARE.A4/ D3

Mr. Guus Pastoor,  
Chairman  
Market Advisory Council  
rue de la Science, 10  
B-1000 Brussels

**Subject:           MAC Advice on European Market Observatory for Fisheries and  
                          Aquaculture (EUMOFA)**

Dear Mr. Pastoor,

Thank you for your letter of 30 September 2019 and for the valuable advice, which MAC provides on EUMOFA.

DG MARE has carefully analyzed your letter and you can find our comments as regards your concrete proposals in annex.

I'm looking forward to our continued cooperation. Should you have any further question on this reply, I invite you to contact Ms. Pascale Colson, coordinator of the ACs ([pascale.colson@ec.europa.eu](mailto:pascale.colson@ec.europa.eu); +32 2 29 56273).

Yours sincerely,

Bernhard FRIESS  
Acting Director-General

Enclosure:           MAC recommendations and reply by DG MARE

## ANNEX: MAC RECOMMENDATIONS AND DG MARE REPLY

MAC recommendations	Reply DG MARE (accepted / partly accepted / rejected)
<p>The MAC calls for <b>consistency of First Sales Notes data</b>, particularly regarding timelines and weekly/monthly issues. If the Sales Notes do not provide the required data, the European Commission should explore alternative options.</p>	<p><b>Accepted</b>            EUMOFA collects and disseminates first-sales data originating from MS on the basis of sales notes. EUMOFA agreed on a routine and put it in place with each MS and that represents the fastest way to transmit data and have them published, taking also into account the need to proceed to quality checks. The system currently in place is therefore considered to be the fastest and most consistent, taking into account technical constraints and MS resources. With a concern for continuous improvement of quality and comparability of data collected, EUMOFA launched a process for further harmonising first sales data collected from MS. This task was kicked off in September 2019 at the occasion of the annual meeting with national contact points. A mandatory guideline on rules for first sales data collection, validation and transmission will be elaborated to the attention of MS. EUMOFA will also review the explanations provided on its website regarding data coverage and related limits in order to increase clarity and transparency.</p>
<p>EUMOFA should provide <b>additional data on aquaculture</b>, such as production and fish feed price data. Additionally, the MAC recommends the development of a statistical information system on aquaculture, which could follow the existing model for the agricultural sector.</p>	<p><b>Partly accepted</b>            EUMOFA is currently collecting and harmonising aquaculture production data from official sources (EUROSTAT, FAO, FEAP). DG MARE will explore the feasibility of integrating these data with fishmeal/oil production and price, starting with the identification of official sources of data (e.g. IFFO). As concerns the setting up of a statistical information system for aquaculture, DG MARE recalls that EUMOFA is a market intelligence tool aimed at collecting data from existing sources. Setting up a statistical information system on aquaculture does not fall within EUMOFA's mandate. However, DG MARE will</p>

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	<p>assess to what extent the existing model for agriculture can be adapted to the aquaculture sector and to what extent it contributes to providing market intelligence.</p>
<p>The MAC believes that it would be beneficial for EUMOFA to include <b>data concerning consumption and expenditure</b> in quantity and value per month of all fisheries and aquaculture products.</p>	<p><b>Partly accepted</b>  EUMOFA already collects monthly volumes and values of fresh species consumed by households in 12 MS.  EUMOFA has planned to provide household consumption (volume and values) for all products on a yearly basis, but the preliminary analyses carried out on these data to that end are not conclusive as available data are not reliable.  EUMOFA is exploring solutions to address this quality issue. Although it is clear that yearly data are not as useful for operators as monthly data, it is nevertheless more likely that EUMOFA won't be able to provide monthly data given the fact the quantity of monthly households' data recorded is not sufficient to provide a representative picture.</p>
<p>The MAC further believes that EUMOFA should make its data available in a <b>more timely</b> manner, in order to improve its usefulness for the interested stakeholders</p>	<p><b>Rejected</b>  As far as first sales data are concerned, EUMOFA publishes:  - weekly data: max 1 week after the week of reference;  - monthly data: max 1 month after the month of reference.  For all other stages of the value chain, a shorter timing than what is currently proposed by EUMOFA is not possible either due to technical time needed for the elaboration of data (e.g. data from Eurostat) or for pre-existing rights on their dissemination (e.g. household consumption may be published only 2 months after the reference month).  Besides, EUMOFA provides a first-sales data section, with a compilation external links providing real time data. But these data are raw data, not directly comparable, nor usable under the form of tables or reports.  EUMOFA provides also trade data on a weekly basis, in the week after the week of reference.</p>

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<p>EUMOFA’s website should not require <b>professional-level skills to navigate</b> and should take into account users who do not have expertise in accessing market data, so that it can be the first choice for the stakeholders searching for market data. Furthermore, a help-line should be put in place, in addition to the existing “query” facility.</p>	<p><b>Partly accepted</b>  EUMOFA provides several ways of accessing the data:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- simple tables, for non-expert users;</li> <li>- advanced tables, for expert users;</li> <li>- bulk download, for downloading all the data in raw format;</li> <li>- other user-friendly consultation tools (e.g. map of EU first sales, dashboard, etc.).</li> </ul> <p>Beyond extraction tools, EUMOFA disseminates also pdf reports, with updated and detailed data in Annex.  Nevertheless, DG MARE takes note of this recommendation and will seek path for improving general user-friendliness and ergonomics of the tool.  A contact-us email box is in place and EUMOFA Team provides answers within max 48 hours. Furthermore, a toll-free number is available for any technical support (<a href="http://www.eumofa.eu/help">http://www.eumofa.eu/help</a>).  User-friendliness has become more of a central concern for the development of new functionalities.</p>
<p>The MAC emphasises that <b>errors highlighted by users</b> in the data must be acknowledged and corrected by EUMOFA.</p>	<p><b>Rejected</b>  DG MARE has no evidence of unanswered requests and invites the MAC to provide all details about these cases.</p>
<p>The MAC would like to stress the importance of increasing <b>training sessions</b>, for example through live demonstrations at the Seafood Expo Global event or in Member States, and Webinars.</p>	<p><b>Accepted</b>  EUMOFA is participating to several fisheries and aquaculture events in Europe (Seafood Expo Global, Conxemar, Aquaculture Europe, European Maritime Day, North Atlantic Seafood forum, etc.) providing presentations and training on the tool. EUMOFA proposes also 3 to 6 training sessions annually in MS for the administration and stakeholders and is available for any possible training or webinar users would like to organise. This is repeated regularly.</p>
<p>The MAC recommends the <b>advertising of EUMOFA’s value in trade publications</b> and <b>websites</b>, which could include suggestions on where to find</p>	<p><b>Accepted</b>  So far, EUMOFA has been promoted only through institutional channels at EU</p>

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seasonal data.	<p>and MS levels. The communication plan of EUMOFA does not envisage the advertisement on trade publications or other commercial media. However DG MARE can explore this possibility and assess the opportunity to communicate through these channels, taking into consideration the legal and financial implications.</p> <p>Currently, EUMOFA is quoted by numerous external websites, publications and official documents (80 monthly quotations In average).</p>
<p>The MAC invites the European Commission to perform <b>additional price studies</b> via EUMOFA, without prejudicing competition laws. In the future, the MAC will discuss specific species for which prices studies by the European Commission would be particularly relevant.</p>	<p><b>Accepted</b></p> <p>EUMOFA has released 19 price transmission case studies and other 6 are planned to be released in the forthcoming months. Furthermore, EUMOFA analyses a specific species in a specific market, in its “Monthly Highlights” publication.</p> <p>EUMOFA can cover any additional species that is considered relevant by and for the sector.</p>
<p>Finally, the MAC considers that it would be beneficial for the Commission to develop an <b>yearly evaluation of the users</b> of EUMOFA and, especially, of their purpose</p>	<p><b>Accepted</b></p> <p>Pursuant to a user survey carried out in 2017, focusing on the website, EUMOFA revamped the website in 2018 and has planned to launch a new similar survey campaign in 2020.</p> <p>Furthermore, in order to cover all services of EUMOFA, a group of pilot testers and users was set up in 2018, composed of a variety of sector stakeholders of the whole supply chain.</p>