

Executive Committee

Minutes

Wednesday, 26 January 2022 (14:00 – 17:00 CET)

Zoom (Online)

Interpretation in EN, ES, FR

Welcome from the Chair, Guus Pastoor

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

Adoption of draft agenda and of the last meeting minutes (06.07.21): adopted

Action points of the last meeting

- **State-of-play of the decision made during the last meeting - information**
- Work Programme of Year 6 (2021-2022):
 - Secretariat to incorporate the proposed amendments
 - Draft work programme to be recirculated for approval via written procedure
 - Amendments incorporated
 - Urgent written approval: 19 to 23 July 2021 (approved)
- External Performance Review:
 - Secretariat to prepare draft terms of reference, which will be circulated for approval via written procedure
 - Written procedure: 30 July to 6 August 2021 (approved)
- Inter-Advisory Council's Coordination:
 - At the 15 July 2021 meeting, representatives to raise the importance of additional information on the Specialised Committee on Fisheries, particularly market coverage
 - Issue raised by MAC representatives
- Participation of Observers:
 - Secretariat to incorporate the proposed amendments
 - Draft guidelines to be recirculated for approval via written procedure
 - Pending
- Website:
 - Secretariat to proceed with the review of the website
 - Members to provide suggestions via email
 - Update of the website undertaken and ready to go live



United Nations Food Systems Summit

- **Presentation about the outcomes by Audun Lem, Deputy-Director, Fisheries and Aquaculture Department, FAO**

Audun Lem (FAO) recalled that the Sustainable Development Goal 14 focuses on the ocean, but aquaculture and in-land fisheries are equally important. FAO is the custodian agency for four out of the ten indicators of SDG14, meaning that FAO is responsible for the methodology and assists countries in their reporting, when requested. Mr Lem drew attention to SDG 14.4 on the status of stocks. FAO is covering the status of marine commercial fish stocks on a regional basis in the SOFIA report. Now, countries must also individually report on their own fish stocks. It is an exercise that requires significant amount of data. Several countries are dependent on capacity building and on data from other entities. Fish stocks continue to deteriorate slightly, but the negative trend slowed down. There are positive news and examples of countries implementing fisheries management measures and achieving improvements. About 2/3 of marine fish stocks are at MSY level or better, which represent around 72% of all commercial landings. The challenge remains for 1/3 of fish stocks.

Concerning SDG 14.6 on international instruments and IUU fishing, Mr Lem highlighted that there was some improvement. More and more countries are taking action at national level and are adhering to international guidelines and agreements, such as the Port State Measures Agreement. Unfortunately, there is still no progress in WTO concerning harmful fisheries subsidies. Regarding SDG 14.7 on the contribution of fisheries to the GDP of small island developing countries, the situation is quite stable. There is an overall slight improvement. Fisheries is increasing its share in the GDP of many countries and regions of the world. On SDG 14.b on access of small-scale fisheries to marine resources and markets, there is also an overall improvement. Even though only half of the countries adopted measures to implement the FAO's Voluntary Guidelines on Small-Scale Fisheries, SDG 14.b is close to being met. As for the six indicators outside of FAO, Mr Lem explained that there is a problem of lack of data. The methodology is robust, but there are not enough datasets. There is only clear improvement concerning SDG 14.5 on marine environment and the creation of MPAs. The creation of MPAs does not solve all problems. It is necessary to take into account the needs and interests of fishers and local communities within the MPAs.

Mr Lem explained that the United Nations Food Systems Summit was convened to assess progress and to encourage the international community to develop further initiatives to achieve the goals. In July, in Rome, there was a Pre-Summit that brought together policymakers and civil society, the private sector, experts, among others. The Summit took place in New York in September. The Summit was organised by the UN with input from the UN agencies, including the FAO. The outcome was positive. It brought significant attention that food systems are fundamental to guarantee the achievement of the goals, but also to provide healthy and nutritious food to a growing world population. The Summit was particularly important in the context of COVID-19 and its additional challenges. The pandemic led to an increase in hungry people and extreme poverty in the world. The food situation is also being affected by other ongoing conflicts. The Summit recognised that food systems have a critical impact on livelihoods, health and wellbeing of people. It has a fundamental bearing in the management of natural resources and ecosystems. The current food system presents



structural weaknesses and some unsustainable trends, which together with existing inequalities in the access to healthy diets, require accelerated and concerted actions.

In the declarations and results of the Summit, there was a clear reference to fisheries. Sustainable fisheries management is fundamental for the conservation and sustainable use of the oceans and the seas, achieving SDG 14. A transition to a new type of global food system that must be more inclusive and take a human rights approach. The reference to decent work is getting significant importance, as underlined in SDG 8. There was a clear understanding that dialogue and partnerships between the public and private sector is fundamental. Academia, civil society, and consumers have a clear role in the development of the agenda. At the Summit, a new mechanism was created to support the UN 2030 Agenda by monitoring the situation and undertaking a review every two years. As a reaction to the outcomes of the Summit, FAO launched a new blue transformation initiative that addresses the transformation of food systems in the fisheries and aquaculture sector. Food transformation is needed to address the importance of the sector and to face the current challenges.

Mr Lem underscored that the role of the private sector is fundamental and encouraged private companies to contact the UN Global Compact to implement the objectives under Agenda 2030. Companies can improve their ways of operation to achieve the goals.

- **Exchange of views**

The Chair thanked Mr Lem for the clear overview, since it allows members to better understand the connection between different international and EU initiatives. The Chair recalled that, at the Working Group 3 meeting that took place the same day, members held a comprehensive discussion about the Commission's initiative on a sustainable food system framework, a topic on which the MAC has adopted several recommendations.

Bruno Guillaumie (EMPA) emphasised that the role of consumers is fundamental in the change of paradigm. At the same time, in the UN, FAO, and other international and regional organisations, there is not enough action to listen to consumers and to help them mobilise. Consumers should be involved in the definition of concepts and indicators of the transformation of food systems.

Audun Lem (FAO) responded that, in the case of the FAO, the direct counterparts are the member countries. The FAO does work with several stakeholders. In relation to certification, FAO works with different certification bodies. In relation to social responsibility and human rights, FAO works with several NGOs that represent consumers. Taking into account its geographical scope, FAO tends to work with international and regional-level associations. Mr Lem exemplified that, in the context of the International Year of Artisanal Fisheries and Aquaculture, FAO worked with large stakeholder associations that bring together the interests of artisanal fishers and aquaculture farmers.

The Chair emphasised that stakeholder organisations, including the MAC, have a role in the translation of policy ideas into practical actions for companies to undertake. Companies are aware in their role to drive consumption. If the information is presented correctly and honestly, it is possible to drive consumption.



Audun Lem (FAO) drew attention to several important events taking place in 2022, besides the International Year of Artisanal Fisheries and Aquaculture. In September, there is the FAO's Committee on Fisheries and the sub-committees on Aquaculture and on Fish Trade. The Sub-Committee on Fish Trade will address the proposed guidance on social responsibility in the value chain. The Sub-Committee on Aquaculture will address the proposed guidance on sustainable aquaculture. Eventually, these initiatives will be translated into EU and national legislation to be implemented by private companies. The UN Ocean Summit and the Our Ocean Summit will also be taking place to highlight the importance of healthy oceans, fisheries management, sustainable fisheries and sustainable and responsible consumption. In a few weeks, France will also be holding the One Ocean event in Brest.

The Chair expressed willingness to maintain contact on the mentioned initiatives.

Implementation of the Common Fisheries Policy

- **Exchange of views on the state-of-play in the implementation of the Common Fisheries Policy and perspectives after 2020 with MEP Gabriel Mato, European Parliament**

The Chair recalled that MEP Gabriel Mato was appointed rapporteur for the European Parliament's own initiative report on "the state of play in the implementation of the CFP and perspectives after 2020". A questionnaire sent by Mr Mato has been circulated. Extraordinary Working Group meetings will be taking place to address to the topic. The MAC will be particularly focused on market and socio-economic matters.

Gabriel Mato (European Parliament) explained that his aim, as Rapporteur, was to gather as much feedback as possible from stakeholders. The questionnaire is intended to provide an opportunity to reflect on whether the tools of the CFP Regulation remain useful or require reform. As informed by the Commission, there will not be a reform of the CFP. The questionnaire is not exhaustive and further comments are welcomed. In relation to the objectives of the CFP, in Mr Mato's view, some of the objectives are too strict and impossible to achieve, so these should be replaced with programmatic and reachable objectives. In 2013, it was impossible to predict all the impacts of the implementation. The objectives are not being met in the set deadlines. Some of them, such as on MSY, are impossible to meet, while other are very difficult to put in practice, such as the implementation of the landing obligation by 2019. As a consequence, the setting of unattainable objectives leads to fishery operators not trusting politicians.

Mr Mato argued that the current objectives are too focused on environmental considerations. Sustainability must reflect the three pillars: environmental, economic, and social. Fishers want to see oceans with plentiful fish stocks. At the same time, it is also desirable to have an ocean with plenty of fishing vessels and fishers working. It is necessary to ensure food security. Taking into account that fisheries and environment are under the same Commissioner, Mr Mato has emphasised several times to the Commission that fisheries should receive the same treatment as environment. From a social perspective, the fishing sector and related industries are fundamental for society, as was demonstrated during the COVID-19 pandemic. It is necessary to achieve a better balance between the environmental objectives and the socio-economic and food security objectives.



In relation to good governance, Mr Mato emphasised the importance of reflecting on how the EU promotes sustainability in fisheries. In the EU, in the past years, fisheries are losing importance in the Commission. For the last two Commissioners, it has been difficult to find the balance between fisheries and environment. Concerning the Advisory Councils, the early consultation and effective participation of stakeholders is fundamental to achieve viable and implementable legislation. The advice of the Advisory Council is important for the Commission and the Member States, but also for the European Parliament. In replies to the questionnaire, there was a suggestion to hold, once a year, a meeting with the Advisory Councils in the Committee on Fisheries of the European Parliament. It is also necessary to reflect on the Advisory Councils in the decision-making process.

Mr Mato emphasised that fisheries must be integrated in a wider policy context, such as the expansion of marine windfarms, the plan to protect biodiversity, the increased number of marine protected areas, and the public campaign from the NGOs to end bottom trawling. Fisheries is increasingly limited by environmental policy and by marine spatial planning. In the context of marine spatial planning, there is pressure from other large industries, which are more polluting than fisheries. From an economic perspective, fisheries might be a small sector, but it has significant importance in food security and for the development of coastal communities. Fisheries and aquaculture must be in a fair position in comparison with other industries and in the context of marine spatial planning. Mr underscored the need for a level-playing-field in comparison with foreign fleets active in the same waters as the EU fleet, but following much lower standards and putting their products in the EU market. This has a very negative impact on EU operators. The EU fleet is the most controllable, most sustainable, and most environmentally-friendly fleet in the world. If a level-playing-field is not possible, products from less sustainable fleets should be restricted. There should be reciprocity of the measures applied to products produced in the EU and imported products.

In terms of schedule, Mr Mato encouraged members to provide their replies to the questionnaire by the end of March 2022. In March, a public hearing will be taking place in the Committee on Fisheries of the European Parliament. In his view, the Advisory Councils should be involved in the public hearing. The drafting process is planned to start in April 2022.

The Chair drew attention to the relevance of the questions on the socio-economic elements, food security, and market aspects. The Chair highlighted that the Working Groups would be holding extraordinary meetings concerning the CFP and the CMO Regulations.

Juan Manuel Trujillo Castillo (ETF) congratulated Mr Mato on the elaboration of the questionnaire and his participation in meetings of Advisory Councils. MEPs should work together with Advisory Council as well as with the Fisheries Social Dialogue. Mr Trujillo expressed agreement with Mr Mato's views on the objectives of the CFP, which, by being unachievable, cause frustration in the sector. In December, when the AGRIFISH Council agrees on the TACs and quotas and on other restrictive measures, it goes completely against the work undertaken in the Advisory Councils along the year. There is a lack of scientific evidence. Policy-making must be holistic and not focus only on the environmental perspective. Social sustainability is fundamental.

Bruno Guillaumie (EMPA) noted that, even though he was aware of Mr Mato's concern for aquaculture matters, aquaculture was not fully addressed in the intervention. At present, the CFP



Regulation only covers aquaculture comprehensively in one article. Therefore, Mr Guillaumie wondered about the added value of having both aquaculture and fisheries in the same Regulation. There are some common issues, such as food security, the market, consumers, and exports, but the production methods are completely different. Many articles of the CFP Regulation cover technical aspects of fishing activities, which are not relevant for aquaculture producers.

Agnes Lisik (Oceana) recalled that the CFP Regulation only entered into force eight ago. The first five years were focused on the development of legal tools for the implementation of the policy, such as the five multiannual management plans, the Technical Measures Regulation, discard plans, and tools for the implementation of the landing obligation. The implementation of the entire framework of the CFP Regulation started merely three years ago. Not enough time has passed to show the results and to fully implement the policy. In the view of her organisation and other NGOs, the CFP Regulation requires more time to achieve complete implementation. The CFP Regulation is a good framework for management with clear objectives and set timelines.

Ms Lisik encouraged Mr Mato to be ambitious in the implementation of the CFP. The EU should be a leader in terms of policy. Ms Lisik also encouraged Mr Mato to, instead of heavily criticising the Commission, to further scrutinise the Member States. Member States have a significant responsibility in the implementation of the CFP. Member States are not doing enough, as demonstrated in the increasing number of infringement procedures. Ms Lisik drew attention to concerns amongst small-scale fisheries, including in the Canary Islands, about the quota distribution in Spain and in other Member States. The implementation of Article 17 does have socio-economic consequences.

Ms Lisik recalled that, the previous year, her organisation together with six other NGOs delivered a comprehensive policy paper on the CFP Regulation, which was sent to MEPs, Member States, and the Commission. The paper identifies the key challenges, weaknesses, solutions, and constructive assessments. There are legal tools available, but the policy requires better implementation, instead of a reform. Ms Lisik expressed agreement with Mr Mato's comments on the external aspects of the CFP Regulation. The internal and external aspects need alignment. Ms Lisik expressed interest in exchanging bilaterally concerning the standards applicable to imports. The IUU Regulation is a positive example from the EU concerning the external dimension.

Daniel Voces (Europêche) thanked Mr Mato and his office for the questionnaire and for the balanced view on the CFP. There are few voices defending a balanced management of resources. It is important to have fish, but also fishers to capture the fish. Mr Voces expressed agreement with Mr Mato's considerations on the objectives of the CFP Regulation. In 2013, there was political ambitious, but it was clear, from a scientific perspective, that the objectives were not achievable. It is not possible to achieve MSY levels for all fish stocks. The landing obligation does not work in practice and is very difficult to control. The situation will not be solved with additional control measures. It has led to a lack of trust and to a negative image of fishers in the media. In the context of the Social Dialogue, several initiatives have been undertaken several socio-economic initiatives, including the promotion of Council Directive (EU) 2017/159 and of the ILO Convention 188. In the CFP Regulation, there should be a balance between the protection of fish stocks and the protection of fishers.



In terms of food security, as demonstrated in presentation on market supply by AIPCE-CEP representatives at the Working Group 2 meeting of the previous day, there is a continuous decrease in the supply by EU fishers. There is a decrease of the fleet and a loss of employment. The policies of the EU are focused on compensation, instead of on promotion. In terms of political structure, Mr Voces wondered if it was appropriate for fisheries to be addressed together with the environment, instead of receiving the same treatment as agricultural policy. In the TFEU, fisheries and agriculture are addressed in the same chapter. In relation to international governance, there are consequences from Brexit, as in seen in the approach of Norway to their fisheries resources. The market should be used as a measure to negotiation.

In terms of level-playing-field, Mr Voces emphasised that everyone should act under the same rules. In relation fisheries management, there are concerns with the expansion of windfarms, the commitments to establish Marine Protected Areas, and stricter environmental measures. Presently, trawl fisheries are being vilified. There is no reason for this, since these fisheries have been adequately managed by the EU and the fish stocks are at MSY level. These is a common fishing gear in the EU and in the rest of world, which is covered by many certification schemes. Mr Voces thanked Mr Mato for the participation in the meeting and expressed willingness to exchange bilaterally.

Sean O'Donoghue (KFO) praised Mr Mato for his informal initiative with the Advisory Councils. Mr O'Donoghue underscored the importance of focusing discussions on market topics. Mr O'Donoghue also encouraged Mr Mato to hold discussions with other Advisory Councils.

Gabriel Mato (European Parliament), as a response to Mr Trujillo's intervention, expressed availability to participate in the Fisheries Social Dialogue upon invitation. Mr Mato expressed agreement with Mr Trujillo's comments about the TACs and quotas and recalled that he voted against the restrictive measures on the Mediterranean Sea. The scientific studies were not taken into account. In his view, for the recovery of the Mediterranean Sea, there are better solutions than cuts and limitations of fishing efforts, such as selectivity.

As a response to Mr Guillaumie's intervention, Mr Mato stressed his conviction that aquaculture must be promoted. In his role as Rapporteur, he encouraged the change of EMFF to EMFAF. There is a shortage of supply, and the EU is a deficit market of seafood products. It would not make sense to encourage more imports of seafood products from third countries with lower standards. Concerning the inclusion of aquaculture and fisheries under the same regulation, Mr Mato stated that he did not have a firm position on the matter. These are complementary activities with common objectives.

As a response to Ms Lisik's intervention, Mr Mato emphasised that his office maintained constant contact with her organisation. Mr Mato recognised the importance of ambition, but the ambition should also be focused on social and economic aspects. Mr Mato agreed that there are problems in the implementation by Member States. It is the responsibility of the Commission to scrutinise the Member States.

As a response to Mr Voces's intervention, Mr Mato underscored the fundamental role of the social and economic pillars of sustainability as well as of food security. As a response to Mr O'Donoghue's intervention, Mr Mato expressed willingness to participate in meetings of other Advisory Councils.



He recognised the importance of food security, market, and socio-economic topics. There should be high quality fishery and aquaculture products available for consumers in the market.

- **Way forward**

The Chair recalled that extraordinary Working Group meetings would be taking place, which would address the issues raised in Mr Mato's questionnaire. The advice would be focused on market aspects, which would be complemented by advice on the technicalities of fisheries management from other Advisory Councils. The Chair emphasised the importance of meeting the demand of consumers for fishery and aquaculture products and of reaching the available market potential.

Functioning of the Common Fisheries Policy and of the Common Market Organisation

- **Exchange of views on European Commission's targeted consultations on the 2022 reports on the functioning of the Common Fisheries Policy and the Common Market Organisation**

- **Way forward**

The Chair recalled that the European Commission launched two targeted consultations on the CFP and on the CMO and that MEP Mato circulated a questionnaire on the CFP. Concerning the CFP, the consultation and the questionnaire are similar. The Working Groups will hold extraordinary meetings, in order to address these consultations and to adopt advice that can be submitted to the European Commission and to MEP Mato.

The Secretary General explained that the Commission's targeted consultation on the CFP will contribute to the report on the functioning of the CFP that must be published by the end of 2022. Regional level discussions are planned for April 2022. An event is expected to be organised in the summer. The report on the CFP will also take into account supporting studies and other reports, for example on the SFPAs and on regionalisation. The Secretary General further explained that the Commission's targeted consultation on the CMO covers general aspects, POs, consumer information, competition rules, and market intelligence. The report on the functioning of the CMO must also be published by the end of 2022.

In order to gather input to draft advice, the Secretariat circulated a questionnaire on the CMO Regulation with the same questions as the Commission's targeted consultation. The Secretariat circulated a questionnaire on the CFP Regulation, which takes into account market-related points raised in the Commission's targeted consultation and in MEP Mato's questionnaire. In February, extraordinary meetings dedicated to the CMO and CFP Regulations will take place, chaired by the Chair of Working Group 1 and the Chair of Working Group 3. The Secretariat will compile the replies to the questionnaires and prepare drafting proposals for consideration at the extraordinary meetings. The aim is for the adoption to be close to the 28 February 2022 deadline of the Commission.

Sean O'Donoghue (EAPO) informed that the extraordinary meeting on the CMO would take place on 4 February 2022.



The Executive Committee agreed on the way forward.

Performance Review

- **Presentation of interim report by Benoît Guerin, BG Sea Consulting**

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

The Chair recalled that the Executive Committee adopted Terms of Reference for the performance review, in line with the indications of the Commission. The external consultant, Benoît Guerin, initiated the work and held interviews with several members.

Benoît Guerin (BG Sea Consulting) explained that the following sources of information were used: qualitative semi-directed interviews with active members, observance and attendance of MAC meetings, online questionnaire to members, and analysis of a selection of pieces of advice. Semi-directed interviews with the Commission, MEPs, Member States, ACs, and experts are also planned.

Mr Guerin provided an overview of the preliminary results on the functioning. Regarding participation in meetings, members signalled that receiving up-to-date information from the Commission is a bigger incentive to participate than the drafting of advice. On representation of interests, there is a significant representation of the fishing industry, followed by the processing industry. The report also covers the geographical level of representation of the members. On running of meetings, there are efficient working procedures and a professional working environment, but a specific sense of ownership is lacking. On the drafting process, members fully agree that the process is transparent. There is an enormous effort in finding the right tone and wording out of the members' contribution, even though it is considered as watering down the members' opinions. The instrumental role of the Secretary General was pointed out several times in interviews. On quality of opinions, there is general satisfaction though some space for improvement. Members consider that the MAC is having impact on EU decision-making process, but that it is not possible to measure.

Mr Guerin shared initial reflections. There is a positive dynamic acknowledging the MAC's performance by its own members. There are very efficient working procedures. Numerous and high-level topics being addressed may lead the discussion away from the primary responsibilities of the MAC. The European Commission services should specify the contribution needed from the MAC. Advice would benefit from being specified and next steps would need to be tracked. Communication and working relationships with the European Parliament, the Member States, and experts should be strengthened. Concerning the completion of the review, Mr Guerin explained that there some pending issue to be clarified, such as clarification of the specific expectations of the Commission regarding the MAC's work and best timing for advice; getting a clearer view on the articulation between multiple EU initiatives potentially affecting the MAC; and to clarify other ACs' interests in market issues and check their interest of a shared list of good practices regarding AC-EC interactions.

Inter-Advisory Councils' Coordination

- **Reporting back by Pedro Reis Santos, Secretary General, on the following meetings:**



- **CCRUP's General Assembly and Working Groups (28-30 September 2021)**
- **LDAC's WG5 (19-20 October 2021) and Executive Committee (30 November 2021)**
- **AAC's WG3 (October 2021)**
- **Inter-Secretariats (4 November 2021)**
- **DG MARE – AC Secretariats (26 November 2021)**
- **DG MARE's Inter-Advisory Councils (19 January 2022)**
- **Preparation of position for LDAC-MAC-NSAC-NWWAC-PELAC meeting on Brexit (10 February 2022)**

The Secretary General informed that, in September 2021, he attended General Assembly and Working Group meetings of the CCRUP as an invited observer. The meetings included several high-level speakers, such as the Director-General of DG MARE, the Executive Director of EFCA, the Secretary of State for Fisheries of Portugal, among others. CCRUP expressed interest in joint work with the MAC on the entry of IUU products in the market.

In October 2021, the Secretary General attended a Working Group 3 meeting of the AAC, as is established practice. At the AAC meeting, several topics of interest to the MAC were raised, such as COVID-19, the STECF report on the aquaculture sector, socio-economic impacts of aquaculture, strategic guidelines, PEFCE for Marine Fish products, and the sustainable food system framework initiative.

In November 2021, the Secretary General attended Working Group 5 and Executive Committee meetings of the LDAC, as an observer, as is established practice. At the LDAC meetings, several topics of interest to the MAC were raised, such as implementation of the IUU Regulation, review of the control system, update on carding system processes, Morocco, China, flags of convenience, blue economy, trade policy, level-playing-field, GSP scheme, social dimension of the CFP and labour issues linked to imports and trade (new legislation on due diligence in value chain).

On 4 November 2021, there was a meeting between the Secretariats of the Advisory Councils. The meeting had an administrative purpose with the aim of improving coordination. The Secretariats discussed the structuring of joint AC-work and meetings on horizontal issues, the streamlining of fast-track procedures on urgent issues in the Executive Committees, and the interaction between the Commission and the Advisory Councils, including a discussion of joint messages at the next Inter-AC meeting.

On 26 November 2021, there was a meeting between DG MARE and the Secretariats of the Advisory Councils. The aim of the meeting was to discuss better planning of meetings, financing via lump-sum, the study on regionalisation, and amendments to the delegated act on the functioning rules of the Advisory Councils. In relation to the lump-sums, the Secretary General recalled that, under the current procedure, the Advisory Councils receive funding from the European Commission and, at the



end of the operational year, must provide a technical and financial report detailing the implementation of the work programme and of the budget. The Commission checks the expenditure to determine the amount eligible for funding. Unspent amounts are returned to the Commission. In the future, a lump-sum will be implemented. Under this new procedure, the Commission will provide funding based on expected expenses, but there will be no checks on the actual expenditure. The Advisory Councils will be able to maintain unspent funding. Based on the final report, the Commission will analyse whether the Work Programme has been met. This means that, at least, 50% of the meetings and of the deliverables must be met. The Commission expressed willingness to be flexible in the analysis of the results. The funding will be different for each Advisory Council. The MAC is expected to continue receiving €300.000 per year.

On 19 January 2022, DG MARE organised an Inter-Advisory Councils meeting with the presence of the Chairs and the Secretariats of the Advisory Councils. Other members were allowed to observe the meeting. The Commission delivered presentations on policy, including on the functioning of the CFP, new data collection work plans, the contingency plan for ensuring food supply and food security, the state-of-play of the programming process of the EMFAF, the sustainable food system framework, and taxonomy.

The Secretary General informed that a meeting between the LDAC, the MAC, the NSAC, the NWWAC, and the PELAC was planned for 10 February 2022 to discuss Brexit, particularly on how it will affect the functioning of the Advisory Councils. The regional Advisory Councils will discuss their competences in relation to advice on fish stocks. For the MAC, the most relevant point is the impacts on trade.

The Chair highlighted that, at the Inter-Advisory Councils meeting, the issue of replies to public consultations was raised. Several Advisory Councils find it difficult to reply to the questionnaires, because of the broad questions and the short timelines. The Chair wondered about the weight of advice from the Advisory Councils in public consultations. Individual citizens can reply to the public consultations. Therefore, each Advisory Council becomes one respondent out of many. According to the Commission, the Advisory Councils do not need to exactly follow the format of the questionnaires and can develop their own advice. The Chair exemplified that, in the case of the targeted consultations on the CFP and on the CMO Regulation, the MAC should use the questionnaires as starting points, but add any other relevant elements.

Sean O'Donoghue (EAPO) stated that the weight of replies to public consultations was a key issue in several Advisory Councils. Mr O'Donoghue proposed for the Secretariat to coordinate with the other Secretariats, in order to develop a joint letter on the matter. The role of the Advisory Councils should be recognised, including through specific consultations.

The Chair agreed that the role and the work of the Advisory Councils should be recognised. The Chair expressed support for Mr O'Donoghue's proposal.

The Executive Committee agreed with the development of a joint letter to the European Commission on the weight of advice in public consultations.



European Fisheries Control Agency (EFCA)

- **Reporting back on Advisory Board (8 October 2021) by Daniel Voces, MAC Representative**

Daniel Voces (Europêche) informed that a meeting of the Advisory Board took place on 8 October 2021. The Secretariat circulated the minutes of the meeting to the members. At the meeting, representatives had the opportunity to meet the new Executive Director and to present the role of their respective Advisory Councils. At the meeting, Mr Voces provided an overview of recent advice on control-related matters, such as on IUU activities by Ghana's industrial trawl sector, on the Biodiversity Strategy, on Brexit, and on flags of convenience. EFCA representatives expressed appreciation for the role of the MAC and expressed particular interest in the advice on flags of convenience.

Website

- **Reporting on update of official website by Pedro Reis Santos, Secretary General**

The Secretary General recalled that, at the 6 July 2021 meeting, there was agreement to proceed with an update of the official website to modernise visuals, improve user experience, and to develop a private area for members. The website is ready to go live. The Secretary General presented some examples of the new visuals, highlighting that the aim was to be representative of the different actors of the supply chain and the different products.

The Member's Area will require a password to access it and look similar to a forum, so that the Secretariat can publish documents, particularly draft ones, and members can leave comments. The homepage provides an introductory explanation on the work and role of the MAC. The membership page includes more detailed information about the individual associations. In relation to the advice section, the advice and the replies will be in the same page together with a summary table.

Bruno Guillaumie (EMPA), in relation to the membership page, wondered if members were attributed based on their headquarters, plus whether there was a differentiation between level of geographical representation of the members (e.g., local, national, EU, international).

The Secretary General explained that members are grouped based on the Member States that endorsed their membership application, in line with the CFP Regulation. At present, there is no differentiation based on the level of geographical representation. The Secretariat received a similar suggestion from Christine Absil (Good Fish). The Secretary General suggested the addition of a line in the membership tables to inform on the level of representation.

AOB

- **Elections for the Executive Committee (2023-2026)**

Bruno Guillaumie (EMPA) requested information about the timing of the next elections for members of the Executive Committee, highlighting the need for members to coordinate in advance.



The Secretary General explained that elections take place every three years. The next election would be at the beginning of 2023. The Secretary General offered to provide more details bilaterally.

Summary of action points

- United Nations Food Systems Summit 2021:
 - Maintain cooperation and sharing of information with FAO
- Functioning of the Common Fisheries Policy and of the Common Market Organisation:
 - Extraordinary meetings of the Working Groups to take place in February 2022, in order to prepare advice
- Performance Review:
 - Presentation and exchange of views on the final report to take place at the next meeting
- Inter-Advisory Councils' Coordination:
 - Secretariat to coordinate with the Secretariats of other Advisory Councils to prepare a joint letter to the Commission on the weight of advice in public consultations



Attendance List

Representative	Organisation	Role
Agnes Lisik	Oceana	Member
Agnieszka Korbel	WWF	Member
Alexandra Philippe	Market Advisory Council	Secretariat
Alexandre Rodríguez	Long Distance Advisory Council (LDAC)	Observer
Anna Boulova	FRUCOM	Member
Audun Lem	Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO)	Expert
Benoît Guerin	BG Sea Consulting	Observer
Benoît Thomassen	Federation of European Aquaculture Producers (FEAP)	Member
Bruno Guillaumie	European Molluscs' Producers Association (EMPA)	Member
Carla Valeiras Álvarez	EuroCommerce	Member
Catherine Pons	Federation of European Aquaculture Producers (FEAP)	Member
Christine Absil	Good Fish	Member
Daniel Voces	Europêche	Member
Daniel Weber	European Fishmeal	Member
Els Bedert	EuroCommerce	Member
Frangiscos Nikolian	European Commission	Expert
Gabriel Mato	European Parliament	Expert
Georg Werner	Environmental Justice Foundation (EJF)	Member
Guus Pastoor	EU Fish Processors and Traders Association (AIPCE)	Chair
Ignacio Fresco Vanzini	Oceana	Member
Javier Ojeda	Federation of European Aquaculture Producers (FEAP)	Member
Jean-Marie Robert	Les Pêcheurs de Bretagne	Member
Jennifer Reeves	Marine Stewardship Council (MSC)	Member
Jérôme Dorgelo	Marine Stewardship Council (MSC)	Member



Representative	Organisation	Role
Joash Matthew	EU Fish Processors and Traders Association (AIPCE) / European Federation of National Organizations of Importers and Exporters of Fish (CEP)	Member
Juan Manuel Trujillo Castillo	European Transport Workers' Federation (ETF)	Member
Julio Morón Ayala	Organización Productores Asociados Grandes Atuneros Congeladores (OPAGAC)	Member
Karolina Majewska	European Commission	Expert
Katarina Sipic	EU Fish Processors and Traders Association (AIPCE) / European Federation of National Organizations of Importers and Exporters of Fish (CEP)	Member
Konstantinos Kalamantis	European Parliament	Observer
Laura Rull	Spain	Observer
Miguel Lizaso	European Commission	Expert
Pim Visser	VisNed	Member
Quentin Marchais	ClientEarth	Member
Roberto Carlos Alonso	ANFACO-CECOPESCA	Member
Sean O'Donoghue	European Association of Fish Producers Organisations (EAPO)	Member
Stylios Filopoulos	Aquaculture Advisory Council (AAC)	Observer
Yobana Bermúdez	Asociación Española de Mayoristas, Importadores, Transformadores y Exportadores de Productos de la Pesca y Acuicultura (CONXEMAR)	Member
Zarah Bellefroid	European Association of Fish Producers Organisations (EAPO)	Member

