

Executive Committee

Draft Minutes

Monday, 23 May 2022 (13:30 – 16:45 CEST)

Zoom / Martin's Brussels EU Hotel (Hybrid)

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's minutes (29.03.22): adopted

Pierre Commère (AIPCE) informed that, on 19 May 2022, Commissioner Sinkevičius launched the Blue Economy Observatory. Mr Commère expressed willingness to receive more information from DG MARE about the role of the new observatory.

The Chair suggested to request further information from the European Commission in writing. Further discussion on the topic could be scheduled, if needed.

Pim Visser (VisNed) proposed, as AOB, a discussion on weighing and de-icing and the influence on the market, particularly in the context of the Fisheries Control Regulation. Mr Visser expressed willingness for this topic to be addressed with the European Commission.

Action points of the last meeting

- **State-of-play of the decision made during the last meeting - information**
- FAO:
 - Secretariat to contact FAO about participation in September 2022 meeting, in order to annually exchange views concerning COFI meetings
 - Ongoing
- Farm to Fork Strategy:
 - Secretariat to prepare paper summarising advice related to Farm to Fork Strategy initiatives, in order to prepared ahead of exchange of views with MEP Karleskind
 - At a later stage, Secretariat to contact MEP Canfin about a potential exchange of views concerning ENVI-related topics
 - Summary paper prepared by the Secretariat
 - Contact with MEP Canfin: Pending
- Scientific, Technical and Economic Committee for Fisheries (STECF):
 - Participation as active observers at the meetings on the EU Aquaculture Sector Economic Report to be requested



- Pending
- Performance Review:
 - Secretariat to prepare a paper summarising the conclusions and recommendations of the report, in order to prepare for a discussion on potential actions at the next meeting
 - Under the draft agenda of the next meeting, agenda item on the contingency plan in case of unavailability of the Secretary General to be scheduled
 - Summary paper, including contingency plan, circulated: 17 May 2022
- Inter-Advisory Council's Cooperation:
 - Management Team to request a meeting with the LDAC's Management Team, in order to discuss competence and cooperation in topics of common interest
 - Request sent, pending decision on date
- Organisation of meetings:
 - Under the draft agenda of the next meeting, agenda item on the preferred method of organisation of meetings (i.e., in person, online, hybrid) to be included
 - Agenda item scheduled (16:00 CEST)

Farm to Fork Strategy

- **Exchange of views on initiatives with an impact on the market of fishery and aquaculture products**

Due to an expected change in schedule, MEP Pierre Karleskind was not available to participate.

Click [here](#) to access the summary paper.

The Chair informed that, despite efforts from the Secretariat, it was not possible to schedule an exchange of views with a member of the European Parliament's PECH Committee. A summary paper on advice related to the Farm to Fork Strategy initiatives was prepared and circulated by the Secretariat. The Chair invited members to provide their views on the adopted advice as well as on potential further actions.

The Secretary General provided an overview of initiatives affecting the EU market of fishery and aquaculture products, particularly with an impact on labelling and consumer information: sustainable food systems framework, the revision of the marketing standards framework, the revision of the Regulation on Food Information to Consumers, and the revision of the EU animal welfare legislation. The overview included lead DG, objectives, and main recommendations. The Secretary General also mentioned advice on other Farm to Fork Strategy initiatives: EU-level targets for food waste reduction, Code of Conduct for Responsible Business and Marketing Practices, the revision of EU rules on food contact materials, the review of the EU Promotion Programme for Agricultural and Food Products. The initiative on substantiating green claims was mentioned as another initiative affecting labelling and consumer information.

Pierre Commère (AIPCE) suggested for the reference to the revision of the EU animal welfare legislation to be edited to clarify that, for the market of fishery and aquaculture products, it will only cover aquaculture products.



Daniel Voces (Europêche) recalled that, at an Inter-Advisory Councils meeting, the Commission presented the action plan to conserve fisheries resources and protect marine ecosystems. Mr Voces wanted to know if the Commission formally consulted the Advisory Councils and how the Advisory Councils would be included in the action plan.

The Secretary General responded that the mentioned initiative was more relevant for the regional Advisory Councils, so it had not been followed closely in the MAC. The Secretary General expressed availability to contact the Commission about it.

Pim Visser (VisNed) asked about the planned follow-up for the summary paper. Mr Visser stated that it was a very useful and comprehensive overview.

The Secretary General responded that the main aim was, when planning an exchange of views with an MEP or another high-level guest about the Farm to Fork Strategy, for the Secretariat to send the summary paper to the invited speaker. It would allow the speaker to have a better understanding of the topics relevant to the MAC and the advice provided.

Pim Visser (VisNed) expressed concern that the Farm to Fork Strategy was mainly focused on the agriculture sector and land-based production. Despite the Commission's efforts, fisheries and aquaculture production do not seem to adequately fit in the strategy. Mr Visser argued that, for example, the marketing standards framework were primarily a B2B framework, but that now are being used by the Farm to Fork Strategy for different objectives than the original ones. Producers need the marketing standards framework in B2B situations and are quite satisfied with their current functioning.

Sean O'Donoghue (EAPO) expressed satisfaction with the quality of the summary paper, which could be used for potential future exchanges with invited speakers. Mr O'Donoghue recalled that, at the previous day's Working Group 3 meeting, it was agreed, as an action item, that the Secretariat would prepare a background document outlining ongoing Commission initiatives affecting the fisheries and aquaculture sector. He suggested that the document could be analysed at a future meeting of the Executive Committee, in order to determine how well the MAC is addressing these initiatives.

The Chair agreed that it was difficult to keep track of all the initiatives undertaken by the Commission, including the connection between the initiatives and the relevance for the MAC. The Chair highlighted that the Working Groups would continue to follow-up on the initiatives mentioned in the paper.

Working Groups

- **Reporting by Sean O'Donoghue, Chair of Working Group 1**

The Chair informed that Working Group 1 held a useful exchange of views on the functioning of the Common Market Organisation. There was agreement on a way forward concerning the update of the guidelines and good practices document on Production and Marketing Plans. The working group held an exchange of views with Commission representatives concerning the impact of increased fuel prices in the context of the Russian invasion of Ukraine. It was agreed, as an action point, to resume the



informal meetings with MARE A4 concerning the market impacts of the invasion. Mr O'Donoghue proposed the adoption of the draft advice on transnationality of fishery and aquaculture producer organisations and inter-branch organisations.

The Executive Committee approved the draft advice on transnationality of fishery and aquaculture producer organisations and inter-branch organisations.

Mr O'Donoghue proposed the adoption of the draft advice on the 2022 Annual Economic Report on the EU Fishing Fleet. The draft sets forward recommendations ahead of the 13 to 17 June 2022 meeting of STECF. Mr O'Donoghue informed that the Secretary General and himself would attend as active observers.

The Executive Committee approved the draft advice on the 2022 Annual Economic Report on the EU Fishing Fleet.

- **Reporting by Pierre Commère, Chair of Working Group 2**

Pierre Commère (AIPCE) provided an overview of the agenda items addressed at the latest meeting of Working Group 2. On EU taxonomy for sustainable initiatives, there was an exchange of views with a DG FISM representative as well as presentations and interventions from members. It was agreed, as an action point that draft advice would be developed, via written procedure, based on the contributions of MSC and Européche. On Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated fishing and global governance, following a presentation of EJF's report on the Chinese distant-water fleet, it was agreed, as an action point, that the Secretariat would formally contact the LDAC Secretariat about the feasibility of joint work. Taking into account doubts about the volume of catch certificates verified and rejected due to IUU reasons, it was agreed that the Secretariat would check bilaterally with ClientEarth about the possibility of access, if needed, request the data from the Commission.

On exporting brown crab to the People's Republic of China, there are problems connected to health certificates. A certain level of harmonisation between Member States is missing. China maintains bilateral agreements with individual Member States, which brings added complexity to the recognition of health certificates. A letter will be sent to the Commission requesting an update. On Brazil's prohibition to export fishery products to the EU, Mr Commère explained that, in 2017, Brazil suspended exports, because of a risk of failing SANTE audits. In March 2022, Brazil presented an action plan to DG SANTE. A written question will be resent to the Commission requesting an update on the action plan and subsequent audit. On the Focus Group on Trade, draft Terms of Reference were presented, but it was agreed that these required further work before adoption.

Alexandre Rodríguez (LDAC) informed that the LDAC had recently launched a consultation to their members on fishing capacity, IUU fishing, and human rights and labour abuses by the Chinese distant-water fleet, which were topics also relevant for the MAC. EJF is the main proponent of the initiative. In the following weeks, LDAC would be establishing a Focus Group to consider the draft text and recommendations. There was a significant number of comments from the members. Mr Rodríguez emphasised the importance of the topic, so no strict deadline was imposed, ensuring that sufficient discussion could take place. Input from the MAC would be quite relevant. Mr Rodríguez encouraged



the MAC to cooperate with the LDAC on this initiative, while highlighting that the LDAC would need to follow their rules of procedure.

- **Reporting by Benoît Thomassen, Chair of Working Group 3**

Benoît Thomassen (FEAP) provided an overview of the agenda items addressed at the latest meeting of Working Group 3. On Sustainable Corporate Governance, there was a presentation and exchange of views with a DG GROW representative. The initiative wants to enable companies to focus on long-term sustainability values, instead of short-term benefits. The working group decided to monitor legislative developments, but that it would likely be too late to influence the legislative proposal. On the legislative proposal for Empowering the Consumer for the Green Transition, there was a presentation by DG JUST representatives. For the fisheries and aquaculture market, the initiative's objective to tackle the proliferation of sustainability labels, quality marks and trust mark, in order to avoid greenwashing, is relevant. It was agreed, as an action point, that the Secretariat would prepare a background document summarising ongoing legislative initiatives.

On EU geographical indications and quality schemes, a presentation by a DG AGRI representative took place. The initiative is mainly directed at agricultural products, but also relevant for fisheries and aquaculture products. The working group agreed to monitor legislative developments. On the Sustainable Food Systems framework, there was a presentation by a DG MARE representative on the Commission's public consultation. The MAC has adopted advice on this initiative in the past. Members were encouraged to answer to the public consultation. The Secretariat will circulate a questionnaire to the members to prepare draft advice on the topics of the public consultation.

On Product Environmental Footprint Category Rules (PEFCR) for Marine Fish Products, at the previous meeting, it was agreed that the draft text prepared by the Focus Group would be divided into one document of political advice and another document of technical advice. The technical advice will require further meetings between the Focus Group and the Technical Secretariat. The political document was considered via written procedure. Following comments submitted by MSC, the draft was further considered at the meeting. Mr Thomassen proposed the adoption of the draft advice on PEFCR for Marine Fish Products.

The Secretary General recalled that, in relation to draft recommendation b) on the assessment of other possible options beyond the PEF method, it was agreed that an additional sentence would be included to better reflect the details in footnote 8.

The Chair highlighted that minority positions are expressed in footnotes. Since the views in footnote 8 were consensual, these should be reflected in the recommendation.

The Executive Committee approved the draft advice on the Product Environmental Footprint Category (PEFCR) for Marine Fish Products with recommendation b) reading "seriously assess other possible options, beyond the PEF method, to substantiate green claims, before reaching a decision. Relying on a single framework or method can be counterproductive and the limitations of a single LCA approach must be accounted for".



Performance Review

- **Exchange of views on conclusions and recommendations of the report**

Click [here](#) to access the summary paper, including the contingency plan in case of unavailability of the Secretary General.

The Chair recalled that, at the previous meeting, there was a presentation of the final report by the external consultant. The Secretariat prepared a summary paper highlighting the conclusions and recommendations of the external consultant. The Chair encouraged members to share their views on the summary and proposed follow-up actions.

The Secretary General provided a summary of the conclusions in relation to the internal functioning. Members expressed satisfaction with the participation in meetings, the running of the meetings, and the representation of interests. The Work Programme covers the priorities, but, in the view of the external consultant, it is probably too ambitious. There is a good and professional work environment, but a lack of sense of ownership over the MAC. The advice drafting process is open. The evaluation of the Chairs and the Executive Secretary were positive.

The Chair commented that, in accordance with the conclusions, the MAC was technically functioning well, but that improvements could be made to the Work Programme, particularly on the quantity of priorities. This should be addressed in the preparation of the Work Programme of Year 7. The Chair expressed concern about the lack of sense of ownership. In his view, it could be connected to the organisation of online meetings during the COVID-19 period, which meant that members had little opportunity to interact with each other. There should be physical meetings with social elements. The Chair expressed support for the organisation of study trips, as recommended by the consultant, which would allow the sharing of knowledge and experiences.

Sean O'Donoghue (EAPO) commented that the results were very positive for the functioning of the MAC. Mr O'Donoghue stated that he was unsure that there was a lack of sense of ownership. In the recent years, the development of advice has improved. In his view, the meetings were well organised, and the documents were circulated in a transparent manner.

The Chair agreed that the functioning improved substantially in the recent years. A significant number of pieces of advice was adopted and there were no problems in the approval process. The advice should reflect the views of the members.

Pim Visser (VisNed) expressed agreement with the Chair that the organisation of meetings in online settings, in the past two years, was detrimental in the drafting of complex pieces of advice. Mr Visser argued that, in order to increase the sense of ownership, it was important that a larger number of members participated in the drafting of advice, instead of expecting that the Secretariat together with one or two members assisting would prepare the drafts.

Jean-Marie Robert (Les Pêcheurs de Bretagne) expressed his view, in line with the report, that the topics of work were very focused on the Commission's initiatives. At present, there is a significant



number of initiatives to keep track of and the MAC is expected to provide advice on these. At the same time, the MAC should develop advice on topics of its own initiative, particularly when members identify problems. Mr Robert highlighted that the recent draft advice on sulphites in crustaceans proposed by Mr Commère in Working Group 3 was an example of work on a concrete topic with a practical impact. This type of work can be complementary to the macro initiatives of the Commission.

The Chair agreed that the MAC was addressing a very significant number of overarching initiatives from the Commission, when it should also be addressing topics close to the business. The right input should be provided in the Working Groups. Members have the opportunity to propose topics.

Sean O'Donoghue (EAPO) expressed agreement with Mr Robert. Mr O'Donoghue exemplified that, in Working Group 1, attempts were made to include new agenda items, such as on the role of Producer Organisations. Each Working Group should propose work topics to be addressed by the MAC that go beyond the ongoing legislative initiatives.

The Chair, in relation to advice, stated that the report's conclusions were quite positive. As for transparency and communication, the Chair commented that there were some valid points made by the external consultant.

Sean O'Donoghue (EAPO), in relation to the recommendations to improve the transparency of advice, expressed disagreement with the inclusion of information on the origin, main authors and contributions. The advice is adopted on behalf of the MAC. In specific cases, there can be minority views, but generally there is consensus.

The Chair agreed with Mr O'Donoghue, adding that it was possible to consult the minutes of meetings to know further details, but that this information should not be explicit in the advice, since it is adopted on behalf of the MAC.

Pim Visser (VisNed) stated that circulation of short press releases to specialised media could be useful to increase awareness of the work of the MAC.

The Chair agreed with Mr Visser and invited members to provide media contacts, particularly in their countries of activity, to the Secretariat. The Chair encouraged members to provide views on the list of proposed actions.

Sean O'Donoghue (EAPO) stated that, in his view, a SMART approach was already being followed. Mr O'Donoghue expressed disagreement with the suggestion of a template, since it could become restrictive and formulaic. He expressed agreement with a reduction in the number of priorities in the Work Programme, but added that, in the context of the European Green Deal and the Farm to Fork Strategy, there was a more significant number of initiatives than in previous periods. The number of priorities should be reduced, but the MAC should continue to provide advice on relevant initiatives. Mr O'Donoghue was unsure about what the external consultant meant by the suggestion to follow-up on the advice concerning the Level-Playing-Field.



The Secretary General responded that, in the view of the consultant, the advice on Level-Playing-Field was an example of a very relevant “own initiative” and that, as such, it would be appropriate for the MAC to work on this topic again.

That Chair stated that it was an example of an “own initiative” undertaken in the past and that could serve as inspiration for future work. The Chair commented that the advice on Level-Playing-Field had required significant discussion, adding that he did not believe it was necessary to develop a second piece of advice on the same topic. The Chair suggested that the Working Groups and the Executive Committee should keep these topic suggestions in mind when preparing the Work Programme of the next operational year.

- **Way forward**

The Secretary General informed that the report was sent to the Commission services. According to the information received, the Commission services would not be reacting to the report. The aim of the reports was to encourage self-reflection in the Advisory Councils. The Advisory Councils are expected to develop actions to improve their functioning.

Work Programme of Year 6 (2021-2022)

- **Update on the accounts by Panos Manias, Financial Officer**

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

The Financial Officer provided an update on the realised operational expenses from October 2021 to May 2022. Group A “staff” increased in accordance with the period of the year. For, Group B “participation in meetings” the realised expenses were rather low, since only one hybrid meeting had been organised. The unused funds from Group B could be used to cover increased expenses in Group C “information and preparation of meetings”. Group C covers expenses with venues and audio-visual. Group D “operating costs” also increased in accordance with the period of the year. Group E “interpretation and translation” increases in accordance with the timing of the meetings. There were two main groups of meetings, which is why the realised expense is slightly above half of the budgeted expense. As for Group F “other contracts”, the realised expense is above the budgeted expense, since there were some previously unforeseen costs. The update of the MAC’s website was mostly covered by the budget of the previous operational year, but some functionalities were added later. There were also some expenses connected with the performance review.

The Financial Officer showed a graphical overview of the budget expenditure compared to the realised expenditure, which demonstrated that 52% of the annual budget was used. A month-to-month overview of the expenditure was also shown. In the first three months of the operational year, the expenditure was relatively low, since no meetings took place. The first group of meetings took place in January 2022 in online format. The meetings were originally planned to take place in person, which explains the relatively low expenditure. In March 2022, the second group of meetings took place online, which led to a significant increase in expenditure.



The Financial Officer provided a comparison of meeting expenses in accordance with different settings, which used as examples the in person meetings of October 2018, the costs budgeted per meeting in Year 6, the hybrid meetings of March 2022, and the hybrid meetings of May 2022. These took into account travel costs, accommodation and per diem, rental costs, meeting costs (lunch, coffee, dinner, etc.), and AV equipment rental costs. The budget of Year 6 was prepared based on the cost of previous in person meetings in the years prior to the COVID-19 outbreak. The costs of the hybrid meetings of March 2022 stayed in a similar level. Due to the uncertainty with the level of attendance, the venue rented in March 2022 was larger than it was actually needed. In the case of the May 2022 meetings, based on the previous experience, the Secretariat anticipated that the majority of members would participate online, so a smaller venue was rented.

The Financial Officer outlined the income from members and from Member States. The income from members is at a similar level than the two previous financial years. As for the Member States, the number of financial contributions increased. Contributions from Slovenia and from France were still expected.

Sean O'Donoghue (EAPO) asked for confirmation that travel costs were not included for the hybrid meetings of May 2022 in the comparison presented.

The Financial Officer confirmed that was correct.

Pim Visser (VisNed) wanted to know if the Commission's financial rules allowed the transfer of income between different budget lines.

The Financial Officer explained that, in the past, the Advisory Councils were required to submit budgetary amendments for approval to the Commission. These rules were changed. The Advisory Councils are allowed to move income across budget lines.

The Chair stated that, in terms of staff, there was a service contract, which would ensure the continuation of the Secretariat services. In some Advisory Councils, it was also common practice to contract external experts for specific tasks, which can assist in discussions. In the case of the MAC, that has not taken place. The Chair highlighted that, if members believed that external expertise was needed, the budget would be able to accommodate the cost.

Organisation of meetings

- **Exchange of views on preferred method of organisation of meetings**

The Chair highlighted that the presentation under the previous agenda item allowed members to understand the budgetary impact of the different methods of organisation of meetings. Members had experience in the three possible methods. The Chair expressed support for the organisation of some Working Group and Focus Group meetings on an online format. The hybrid meetings presented difficulties related to the limited number of in person participants compared to the large number of online participants, which impacted the flow of the discussions. Hybrid meetings represent significant costs. In person meetings are also a possibility, but it was important to keep in mind that the



Commission encourages the organisation of hybrid and online meetings, in order to reduce expenses, facilitate their participation, and decrease the environmental impact. The Chair argued that the September 2022 meetings should be organised in physical format, since it will include a General Assembly meeting. The Chair encouraged members to share their preferences.

Sean O'Donoghue (EAPO) recalled his experience with hybrid meetings in other Advisory Councils. The hybrid format creates a division of the participants into two groups. The number of in person participants becomes limited and it is difficult to be sure of the participation of the online participants. Therefore, meetings should be fully in person and some meetings, taking into account the Commission's views, should be fully online. Mr O'Donoghue called for the September 2022 meetings to take place in physical format in Brussels.

Pim Visser (VisNed) expressed agreement with the previous intervention.

Christine Absil (Good Fish) stated that physical meetings was the preferable option. At the same time, online meetings also have advantages in terms of costs and carbon footprint. There could be some alternation between physical and online meetings.

Quentin Marchais (ClientEarth) agreed that fully physical and fully online meetings was the most appropriate solution. Mr Marchais requested more information on the timeline of the meetings and corresponding format.

The Secretary General recalled that there was agreement to organise the September 2022 meetings in person. The Secretary General suggested organising the January 2023 meetings in person, since there would be elections for the Executive Committee and chairmanship positions. The March 2023 meetings could take place fully online. The Commission strongly encouraged a reduction of travel costs by 20%. Therefore, the organisation of, at least, one group of meetings online per year would be appropriate.

The Chair agreed with the suggestion from the Secretary General. The Chair argued that General Assembly meetings should always take place in a physical format.

Angeles Longa (EMPA) also agreed that fully physical and fully online meetings was the most appropriate. Hybrid meetings lead to double costs. Ms Longa exemplified that she travelled from Galicia, which requires additional days for travel, but that, due to the significant number of online participants, she was not fully benefiting from the interaction with the other participants. It was difficult to judge the reactions of the online participants.

- **Way forward**

The Chair concluded that the September 2022 and January 2023 meetings would take place in a physical format in Brussels. General Assembly meetings should always take place in physical format. Afterwards, there would be meetings organised in a fully online format.



Inter-Advisory Councils' Coordination

- **Reporting back by Pedro Reis Santos, Secretary General, on the following meetings:**
 - **Inter-Advisory Councils (29 April 2022)**

The Secretary General informed that the Vice-Chairs and himself participated in the Inter-Advisory Councils meeting of 29 April 2022. The Inter-Advisory Councils meetings are organised by DG MARE to discuss policy items with all the Advisory Councils. Members could follow the meeting as observers. DG MARE will prepare minutes, which will be circulated to all members. The addressed topics were the Russian invasion of Ukraine, the energy transition in the fisheries sector, the reports on the functioning of the Common Fisheries Policy and of the Common Market Organisation, the Sustainable Blue Economy, and the Single Use Plastics Directive.

The Secretary General highlighted that the most relevant agenda item for the MAC was on the Common Market Organisation. Following a request from the Secretariat, Mr Christophe Vande Weyer (MARE A4) repeated his presentation at the 24 May 2022 Working Group 1 meeting.

- **Inter-AC Brexit Forum (5 May 2022)**

The Secretary General informed that he had attended the Inter-AC Brexit Forum meeting of 5 May 2022. The Inter-AC Brexit Forum was established by five Advisory Councils affected by Brexit. There was a discussion and approval of the Terms of Reference, plus an update on the organisation and mandate of the Specialised Committee on Fisheries by a Commission representative. The Secretary General added that market topics were not explicitly addressed, so he did not make interventions at the meeting. Minutes prepared by the NWWAC Secretariat will be circulate to all members.

- **Inter-Secretariats (12 May 2022)**

The Secretary General informed that the Financial Officer and himself had participated in the Inter-Secretariats meeting of 12 May 2022. The Inter-Secretariats meetings are organised between DG MARE and the Secretariats to exchange on administrative and financial matters. Each Secretariat was asked to inform on the follow-up actions undertaken to implement the new Delegated Act on the rules on the functioning of the Advisory Councils. In the case of the MAC, there were no specific follow-up actions, since previous practices of the MAC were already in line with the new rules. At the Inter-Secretariats meeting, the Secretary General informed DG MARE about the conclusion of the performance review. The planning of meetings was discussed, since DG MARE is seeking an earlier overview of the dates and topics.

The Secretary General further informed the lump-sums and financial aspects were also discussed. The Commission will change the way that financial support is provided to Advisory Councils. DG MARE agreed on the use of lump sums and less controls at the end of the operational year. The financial contribution to each individual Advisory Council will be different. Prior to the Inter-Secretariats meeting, the Secretariats were asked to present estimations of their costs for the upcoming years. DG MARE services believe that 294.204,80€ is appropriate for the MAC. The Secretariat is satisfied



the reduction rather limited compared to other potential figures. This amount will be valid for a period of four years. Between each operational year, there will be automatic increases due to inflation or increases in accordance with consumer prices.

The Secretary General added that DG MARE's Director-General Vitcheva officially approved the change to the lump-sum approach. Some Advisory Councils had already started the transition to the new financial approach. An official letter confirming the amount of financial support suggested by the DG MARE services is still missing. The DG MARE services provided new templates for the annual Work Programme and the implementation of the lump-sum approach. In order to receive the full financial contribution of the Commission, the MAC must meet at least 50% of the deliverables (meetings and recommendations) committed in the Work Programme.

The Chair emphasised that, taking into account the need to meet 50% of the deliverables, members must reflect carefully on the commitments expressed in the Work Programme. In the past operational years, the MAC was able to meet the commitments, but additional caution was required for the upcoming operational years.

- **MAC-LDAC Management Teams Meeting (TBD)**

The Secretary General recalled that, at the previous meeting, there was an action point for the Secretariat to send a request to the LDAC Secretariat for the organisation of a meeting between the two Management Teams to discuss topics of common interest. The request was sent to the LDAC Secretariat. LDAC expressed openness to the organisation of the meeting, but suggested the undertaking of preparatory work for a structure approach, such as a common Roadmap or Terms of Reference for collaboration. The LDAC Secretariat suggested the use of a previous proposal for a coordinated MAC-LDAC approach on market issues on Level-Playing-Field (regulatory and competition aspects of access to the EU market).

- **Preparation for UN Ocean Conference (27 June – 1 July 2022)**

The Secretary General informed that the UN Ocean Conference would be taking place from 27 June to 1 July 2022 in Lisbon. Several Advisory Councils will be attending. The Secretary General and Vice-Chair Christine Absil registered to attend. The aim is to follow the discussions. The agenda will cover marine pollution, sustainable blue economy, sustainable fisheries, access for small-scale artisanal fishers to marine resources and markets, scientific knowledge, sustainable use of oceans, and the Sustainable Development Goals.

European Fisheries Control Agency (EFCA)

- **Reporting back on Advisory Board (4 April 2022) by Daniel Voces, MAC Representative**

Daniel Voces (Europêche) explained that, prior to the Advisory Board meetings, the Secretariat and himself would review the pieces of advice adopted, in order to present those related to fisheries control. At the EFCA Advisory Board meeting of the 4 April 2022, Mr Voces presented the advice on the functioning of the Common Fisheries Policy, according to which one of the major challenges was



the guarantee of effective control and consistent implementation of the CFP. On the implementation of the landing obligation, several challenges related to control are identified, such as fully documented fisheries, the impact of the landing obligation on the market, and that there is a lack of data. The MAC recognised that it continues to be difficult to estimate the impact of the landing obligation on the market. In relation to the external dimension of the CFP, the MAC has highlighted the need for fair competition and high level of standards for products in the market. In terms of EMFAF, there should be resources for the control of fishing activities. The advice concluded that the CFP remains an appropriate legal framework, but that the implementation of control and enforcement could be improved.

At the Advisory Board meeting, Mr Voces also presented the advice on the functioning of the Common Market Organisation. The advice drew attention to the importance of a level-playing-field and strengthening cooperation, audits, training and digital tools. In terms of traceability, the MAC called for ensuring traceability from sea to plate, which requires coordination and collaboration between all actors in the value chain. At the meeting, Mr Voces informed that the development of advice on the implementation of the landing obligation was ongoing.

Mr Voces recalled that, based on a rotation system between the Advisory Councils, the MAC representative was the representative of the Advisory Councils in the EFCA Administrative Board. Since he was not able to attend the Administrative Board meeting, Mr Voces asked Mr Julien Daudu, LDAC representative, to take his place. At the meeting, the members of the Administrative Board elected Fabrizio Donatella as the new Chair of the Administrative Board, replacing Veronika Veits. Presentations took place on the Joint Deployment Plans, ongoing initiatives, cooperation with UK, and the annual report of EFCA. Susan Steele, Director of EFCA, highlighted the importance of the interactions with the Advisory Councils, adding that the exchanges are very informative for the agency. Minutes of the meetings will be made available by EFCA.

AOB

- **Influence of weighing and de-icing on the market (Fisheries Control Regulation)**

Pim Visser (VisNed) explained that several Member States were facing infraction procedures by the Commission due to registration, weighing and transport of fish. In the cases that the fish is weighed in one Member State and the fisher wants to sell it in another Member State, the fish must be de-iced. There is weighing of the fish in the first Member State and in the second Member State, which means that there is no technical need for de-icing to take place. This practice reduces the shellfish of fishery products by two to three days. Therefore, this requirement also reduces the value of the catch. According to the Member States, this requirement is imposed by the Commission. On the other hand, the Commission services state that it is an imposition of the Member States.

Mr Visser recalled discussions in the North Sea Advisory Council, in the context of the revision of the Fisheries Control Regulation, about de-icing of fishery products. The Commission representatives were vague about the issue, but stated that de-icing should not be taking place. Yet, in practice, de-



icing is required from operators. Mr Visser argued that Director-General Vitcheva should be made aware of the issue and that a decision must be taken. The quality of the fish and the income of the fishers should not be negatively affected by an unnecessary procedure.

The Chair agreed with the relevance of the issue. According to food safety rules, fresh fish should be maintained at the temperature of melting ice. If the product is de-iced, there is a risk of failing that requirement. Therefore, the issue is connected both to food safety and shelf life. The situation hurts the income of fishers, traders and processors. The reduced shelf life makes the product harder to sell, impacting the price. In the past, de-icing was not a requirement.

Sean O'Donoghue (EAPO) explained that his Irish organisation was in a dispute with national authorities and the Commission on this matter. The Commission cannot claim that it is merely a responsibility of the Member States, since it is part of the Fisheries Control Regulation. According to the arguments presented, without a derogation, all products must be weighed at the point of landing. The responsibility for the accuracy of weighing rests with the buyer. Under the Fisheries Control Regulation, the control authorities are responsible to avoid the degradation of the fishery products. Mr O'Donoghue called for the drafting of a letter to the Commission setting out the problem and asking for clarification on specific articles of the Fisheries Control Regulation. The regulation does not state that weighing at the point of landing supersedes the food safety requirements.

Pim Visser (VisNed) highlighted that Article 74 of the Fisheries Control Regulation indicates that control should not be detrimental, but this Article refers to controls at sea. This should be mentioned in the proposed letter.

Sean O'Donoghue (EAPO) responded that Article 74.2 applied on land, not at sea.

The Chair expressed support for the drafting of a letter, suggesting that Mr Visser, Mr O'Donoghue and the Secretary General should prepare a proposal of draft. Afterwards, the draft could be circulated to the members of the Executive Committee for potential amendments and approval.

Pim Visser (VisNed) suggested the use of the written procedure for the consideration and adoption.

The Chair agreed with the suggested procedure.

- **Dates of next meetings**

The Chair informed that the next Executive Committee meeting would be taking place on 7 July 2022, from 09:00 to 11:00 CEST, in online format, in order to prepare the draft Work Programme of Year 7 (2022-2023). The next Working Group and General Assembly meetings would be taking place on 19 and 20 September 2022 in Brussels.



Summary of action points

- Farm to Fork Strategy:
 - Summary paper on initiatives affecting the market to be used in future exchanges of views with invited guests.
- Working Groups:
 - Adopted advice (PEFCR, transnationality of POs, and STECF's 2022 AER Report) to be sent to Commission and Member States.
- Performance Review:
 - Conclusions and recommendations to be kept in mind for upcoming Work Programme.
- Organisation of meetings:
 - Meetings to be organised, with some alternation, in physical or online formats. General Assembly meetings should take place in physical format.
 - September 2022 and January 2023 meetings to take place in physical format, while March 2023 meetings to take place in online format.
- AOB:
 - Draft letter to the Commission on the influence of weighing and de-icing on the market, in the context of the Fisheries Control Regulation, to be prepared by Pim Visser (VisNed), Sean O'Donoghue (EAPO) and the Secretariat for consideration via written procedure.



Attendance List

Representative	Organisation	Role
Alexandra Philippe	Market Advisory Council (MAC)	Secretariat
Alexandre Cornet	WWF	Member
Alexandre Rodríguez	Long Distance Advisory Council (LDAC)	Observer
Anne-France Mattlet	Europêche	Member
Antonio Lizcano	Spain	Observer
Benoît Thomassen	Federation of European Aquaculture Producers (FEAP)	Member
Catherine Pons	Federation of European Aquaculture Producers (FEAP)	Member
Cécile Fouquet	Aquaculture Advisory Council (AAC)	Observer
Christine Absil	Good Fish	Member
Daniel Voces	Europêche	Member
Daniel Weber	European Fishmeal	Member
Esben Sverdrup-Jensen	European Association of Fish Producers Organisations (EAPO)	Member
Francisco Javier De Las Peñas Rivero	Spain	Observer
Guus Pastoor	EU Fish Processors and Traders Association (AIPCE)	Chair
Jaroslawn Zieliński	Polskie Stowarzyszenie Przetworcow Ryb (PSPR)	Observer
Jean-Marie Robert	Les Pêcheurs de Bretagne	Member
Juan Manuel Elices López	Spain	Observer
Katarina Sipic	EU Fish Processors and Traders Association (AIPCE) / European Federation of National Organizations of Importers and Exporters of Fish (CEP)	Member
Massimo Bellavista	COPA COGECA	Member
Noémie Jegou	Market Advisory Council (MAC)	Secretariat
Panos Manias	Market Advisory Council (MAC)	Secretariat
Pedro Reis Santos	Market Advisory Council (MAC)	Secretariat
Pierre Commère	EU Fish Processors and Traders Association (AIPCE)	Member
Pim Visser	VisNed	Member





Market Advisory Council

Representative	Organisation	Role
Quentin Marchais	ClientEarth	Member
Roberto Carlos Alonso	ANFACO-CECOPESCA	Member
Rosalie Tukker	Europêche	Member
Sean O'Donoghue	European Association of Fish Producers Organisations (EAPO)	Member
Yobana Bermúdez	CONXEMAR	Member
Zarah Bellefroid	European Association of Fish Producers Organisations (EAPO)	Member

