



EUROPEAN COMMISSION  
DIRECTORATE-GENERAL FOR MARITIME AFFAIRS AND FISHERIES

Maritime Policy and Blue Economy  
The Director-General

Brussels  
MARE.A.4/CVW

**Subject: MAC recommendations on the support to Producer Organisations**

Dear Ms. Bermúdez,

I would like to thank the MAC for the recommendations that were sent on 29 September 2023 on the necessary support to be provided to Producer Organisations (POs) in view of their pivotal role in the implementation of the CFP objectives and, when the case arises, to support them stabilise the market and adjust production activities in times of crises.

I also greatly appreciate your thorough description of the POs' activities, mission and achievements. I can only repeat the conviction already expressed in previous replies that POs are key actors of the implementation of the CFP and CMO objectives on the ground.

Concerning your recommendation on the need to support POs in times of crisis through a flexible State Aid regime and specific crisis mechanisms to ensure market stability, specific sections <sup>(1)</sup> of the Temporary Crisis and Transition Framework <sup>(2)</sup> for State Aid were recently extended until 30 June 2024, and the Commission adopted revised Guidelines for State Aid in the fishery and aquaculture sector <sup>(3)</sup>, which are in force since 1 April 2023. Member States made a substantial use of the possibilities offered under that regime to support the sector, in particular to mitigate the impact of increasing production costs.

There also exists a crisis mechanism in the EMFAF (art. 26.2) that can be triggered in case of exceptional events causing significant disruptions on the markets. This mechanism allows *inter alia* for the support of storage by fishery POs. The Commission is closely monitoring the market developments to ascertain any market disruption.

With regards to the level of support to POs and their production and marketing plans (PMPs), I must recall that this is a process that is taking place between POs and their competent national authorities. Nevertheless, I can assure you that DG MARE is most attentive to the importance that Member States give to their POs, including in terms of

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<sup>(1)</sup> Enabling Member States to grant limited amounts of aid (section 2.1 of the Framework) and aid to compensate for high energy prices (section 2.4 of the Framework).

<sup>(2)</sup> [https://ec.europa.eu/commission/presscorner/detail/en/ip\\_23\\_5861](https://ec.europa.eu/commission/presscorner/detail/en/ip_23_5861)

<sup>(3)</sup> OJ C 107, 23.3.2023, p. 1

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financial support. We recall the role of POs and the necessity to support them adequately on multiple occasions (monitoring committees, MTFAP <sup>(4)</sup>).

Finally, DG MARE fully shares your view on the need to prioritise sustainably produced fishery and aquaculture products, on a market that is highly dependent on international trade. This is the reason why beyond the attention to the sustainability of EU fishers and farmers' activities, the Commission acts at the international level with a zero tolerance to IUU fishing, towards the promotion of sustainability in regional fisheries management organisations, the conclusion of sustainable fisheries partnership agreements with third countries, and the incorporation of sustainable fisheries and management of marine resources in EU trade agreements.

I am looking forward to our continued fruitful cooperation. Should you have any further questions on this reply, please contact Ms Julia Rubeck, our Advisory Councils coordinator, via the functional mailbox [MARE-AC@ec.europa.eu](mailto:MARE-AC@ec.europa.eu).

Yours sincerely,

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<sup>(4)</sup> Expert Group for Markets and Trade in Fishery and Aquaculture Products