

## Executive Committee

### Minutes

Wednesday, 20 September 2023 (15:30 – 17:00 CET)

Copa Cogeca, Rue de Trèves 61, 1040 Brussels

Interpretation in EN, ES, FR

#### Welcome from the Chair, Yobana Bermúdez

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

**Adoption of draft agenda and of the last meeting's minutes (03.07.23):** adopted

#### Action points of the last meeting

- **State-of-play of the decision made during the last meeting - information**
- Role and Impact of China on World Fisheries and Aquaculture:
  - Topic to be addressed in a more comprehensive manner in Working Group 2, including potential further exchanges with Nigel Peacock
    - Agenda item scheduled for 20 September 2023 Working Group 2 meeting
- Secretariat:
  - Secretary General to send e-mail to DG MARE's Advisory Councils Coordinator requesting information on the appropriate procedures as well as the acceptability of a "hybrid solution" (direct work contract for the Secretary General position and outsourcing of the support staff positions via a service contract) for the organisation of the Secretariat
  - Invitation to tender for the outsourcing of the administrative and financial services to be published on the website, based on the previous open tender procedure
  - Secretary General to prepare a comparison between the tender procedure and the costs of hiring of support staff directly
  - Recruitment offer for the Secretary General position to be published on the website
    - Information provided in the background documents circulated ahead of the previous meeting
      - Email sent to ACs Coordinator on 6 July 2023 (reply pending)
      - Tender published on the website on 17 July 2023
      - Recruitment offer published on 17 July 2023
- Work Programme of Year 8 (2023-2024):
  - Amended draft Work Programme to be formally submitted to DG MARE and put forward for approval by the General Assembly



- Draft budget to be further amended by the Management Team and the Secretariat to eliminate the foreseen deficit
- Amended draft budget to be formally submitted to DG MARE and put forward for approval by the General Assembly
  - Work Programme and budget submitted to DG MARE on 20 July 2023
  - Work Programme and budget submitted to DG MARE on 20 July 2023

### Membership of General Assembly

- **Endorsement of new member Irish Fish Producers Organisation (IFPO) from Ireland**

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

The Secretary General provided an overview of the Irish Fish Producers Organisation (IFPO), which covered the estimated GDP of the Irish seafood industry, the key landings indicators for Ireland, national context and challenges, the role of the organisation, their members, and key sectoral and member challenges.

*The Executive Committee endorsed the Irish Fish Producers Organisation (IFPO) as a new member of the General Assembly*

- **Endorsement of new member Union du Mareyage Français (UMF) from France**

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

Adrien Simonnet (UMF) provided an overview of the Union du Mareyage Français (UMF), which covered the information about the fish first processing industry of France, the activity and characteristics of the companies, the membership and aims of the organisation, plus their main concerns.

*The Executive Committee endorsed the Union du Mareyage Français (UMF) as a new member of the General Assembly.*

### Working Groups

- **Reporting by Julien Lamothe, Chair of Working Group 1**

Julien Lamothe (EAPO) reported back on the different agenda items of the 19 September 2023 meeting of Working Group 1:

- Awareness and Role of Producer Organisations (project presentation): FROM Sud Ouest presented the “ikejime” project financed under their Production and Marketing Plan.
- Joint MAC/NWWAC/NSAC Focus Group on Brown Crab: The working group reached agreement on the text prepared by the joint focus group. The working group agreed to put forward the text to the Executive Committee for consideration and potential approval.



*The Executive Committee approved the joint MAC/NWWAC/NSAC advice “Brown Crab”.*

- European Market Observatory for Fisheries and Aquaculture (EUMOFA): The working group considered a draft advice on scope and priorities of the previously suggested price structure analysis of the supply chain of the EU tuna sector. The working group agreed to put forward the text to the Executive Committee for consideration and potential approval.

*The Executive Committee approved the advice “European Market Observatory for Fisheries and Aquaculture (EUMOFA): Price structure analysis of the supply chain of EU tuna sector within the global tuna market: Scope & Priorities”.*

- Common Market Organisation: MEP Izaskun Bilbao Barandica presented the European Parliament’s draft own initiative report “Implementation of the Common Market Organisation (CMO) Regulation in fisheries and aquaculture”, which was followed by an exchange of views with the members.
- Awareness and Role of Producer Organisations (draft advice): EAPO presented a proposal of advice on “market measures put in place to adjust and stabilise the market”. The working group considered the draft advice, agreeing to put forward the text to the Executive Committee for consideration and potential approval.

*The Executive Committee approved the advice “Market measures put in place by Producer Organisations to adjust and stabilise the market of fishery and aquaculture products”.*

- AOB: IS&WFPO suggested to, in a future opportunity, exchange about the available financial support under the Brexit Adjustment Reserve.

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

Pierre Commère (ADEPALE) reported back on the different agenda items of the 19 September 2023 meeting of Working Group 2:

- Trade Agreements & Trade Policy Instruments: Mr Vidar Ulriksen, State Secretary in the Norwegian Ministry of Trade, Industry and Fisheries, delivered a presentation on the ongoing negotiations on market access for fisheries and aquaculture products to the EU, which was followed by an exchange of views with the members.
- Fisheries Control Regulation: Representatives of the Spanish authorities delivered presentations about the revision of the Fisheries Control Regulation and about the EU’s catch certificates framework.
- EU Market Supply: EuroCommerce delivered a presentation of their report “The State of Grocery Retail 2023”.



- Banning Forced Labour: Draft advice on forced labour in the fisheries and aquaculture market was considered. The working group agreed to continue the consideration of the text via a written procedure of two weeks.
- Role and Impact of China on World Fisheries and Aquaculture: MEP Pierre Karleskind presented the European Parliament’s draft own initiative report “Implications of Chinese fishing operators for EU fisheries and the way forward”, which was followed by an exchange of views with the members.

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

Benoît Thomassen (FEAP) reported back on the different agenda items of the 20 September 2023 meeting of Working Group 3:

- “Taste the Ocean” Campaign: DG MARE representatives delivered a presentation about the launch of the third season of the EU-level awareness campaign. The working group agreed that the Secretariat would circulate a questionnaire on current national campaigns as well as on suggestions for potential future EU-level campaigns.
- Cell-Based Protein of Aquatic Animals: The working group considered a draft advice about cell-based protein of aquatic animals, agreeing to put forward the text to the Executive Committee for consideration and potential approval.

*The Executive Committee approved the advice “Cell-Based Protein of Aquatic Animals”.*

- Substantiation and Communication of Explicit Environmental Claims: The working group considered draft advice on the substantiation and communication of explicit environmental claims. The working group agreed that the Secretariat would organise an informal meeting with the most interested members in the topic to analyse some pending issues in the draft text. Afterward, a written procedure for the consideration of the draft advice would take place.
- Hygiene and Sanitary Issues: PSPR provided an update on the ongoing update to food hygiene rules for products of animal origin, specifically stiffening of smoked fillets. The working group agreed that a draft letter addressed to the Commission services on the lack of a scientific opinion from EFSA on “stiffening” would be put forward to the Executive Committee via written procedure.

## Secretariat

- **Decision on the structure of the Secretariat**

The Chair recalled that, as previously agreed, a recruitment offer for the Secretary General position was published on the website. One application was received, from Pedro Emanuel dos Reis Santos, the current Secretary General, which was approved by the Executive Committee via email.



The Chair also recalled that, as previously agreed, a call for tender for administrative and financial support services for the Secretariat was published on the website. One application was received, from EBCD, the current provider of secretariat services. The application was within the costs foreseen in the MAC's operational budget for the 2023-2024 period.

The Chair informed that she met with the Director of EBCD to further discuss the terms of the tender. The tender would have a value of € 37.210,00, excluding VAT, per year. Based on the mentioned meeting, the Chair suggest including a clause in the services contract for an annual review of the full annual price to reflect the inflation rate in Belgium. Furthermore, the contract should include the possibility to annually review the functioning of the support services and the allocated work hours.

*The Executive Committee agreed to the celebration of a contract for administrative and financial support services, for the period of three years, with EBCD, including a clause for an annual review of the price in line with the inflation rate of Belgium.*

### Statutes

- **Approval of modifications to the Statutes, in accordance with the Code of Companies and Associations of Belgium**

The Chair recalled that, following the introduction of the new Code of Companies and Associations, associations incorporated under the laws of Belgium have to proceed with the conversion of their Statutes before 1 January 2024.

*The Executive Committee agreed to proceed with the required modifications in accordance with the new Code of Companies and Associations and to submit the updated text of the Statutes to the approval of the members of the General Assembly.*

### Seat

- **Approval of the transfer of the seat of the association**

The Chair recalled that rental contract would be celebrated with Regus, with the total value of €1.989,24 per year (VAT included), which included business address services, live receptionist services, and workspace access. The Chair proposed the transfer of the seat of the MAC ASBL to "Regus EU Commission, Schumanplein 6 Brussels 1040".

*The Executive Committee approved the transfer of the seat of the association, as proposed.*

### Reimbursement Rules

- **Approval of update to the guidelines on reimbursement of travel expenses and subsistence allowances**

The Secretary General recalled that, in the context of the lump-sum approach, the Commission services provided new guidelines on the management of financial grants to the Secretariats of the



Advisory Councils. These new guidelines suggest higher rates of accommodation allowance and of daily allowance than those provided by the MAC. At the 30 March 2023 meeting, the Executive Committee considered a first for new guidelines on the reimbursement of travel expenses and subsistence allowance. At that meeting, it was agreed, as an action point, to await the finalisation of the new financial guidelines of DG MARE before proceeding with the approval.

The Secretary General further recalled that, since the previous meeting, DG MARE had approved the new financial guidelines for the Secretariats of the Advisory Councils. Ahead of the meeting, the Secretariat circulated an updated version of the draft “Guidelines for Reimbursement and Allowance due to Travel, Accommodation, and Subsistence Expenses”, which reflected the comments made by members at the previous meeting.

The Secretary General summarised the main points of the proposed new guidelines:

- If the place of departure is 50km or less: no reimbursement / allowances
- Travel expenses of members: Maximum of 350€, which covers:
  - Rail, standard class air travel, mileage allowance of 0.22 per km
  - Taxis fares are not reimbursed
- Subsistence allowance: 113€ per day
  - Place of departure of less than 100km away: 50% reduction
- Accommodation costs: 116€ per night
  - Possibility of extra night (meeting days + 1)
  - Exceptionally, two extra nights (meeting days + 2)

*The Executive Committee expressed agreement with the new “Guidelines for Reimbursement and Allowances due to Travel, Accommodation, and Subsistence Expenses”.*

#### **AOB**

None.



## Summary of action points

- Secretariat:
  - Chair to proceed with the celebration of a contract for administrative and financial support services, for the period of three years, with EBCD
  - Chair to send letter of appreciation to the Director of EBCD for the previous years
- Statutes:
  - Following the approval of the required modifications of the Statutes by the members, Secretariat to proceed with the corresponding filing in the clerk's office of the competent Commercial Court
- Seat:
  - Following the approval of the transfer of the seat of the association, Secretariat to proceed with the official registration of the transfer.
- AOB:
  - Ahead of the next meeting, Secretariat to prepare an overview comparing the costs of organising in-person, hybrid, and remote meetings
  - Financial Officer to calculate the current financial reserves



## Attendance List

Representative	Organisation	Role
Adrien Simonnet	Union du Mareyage Français (UMF)	Observer
Alexandra Philippe	Market Advisory Council	Secretariat
Anne-France Mattlet	Europêche	Member
Bruno Guillaumie	European Molluscs Producers Association (EMPA)	Member
Christine Absil	Good Fish	Member
Daniel Voces	Europêche	Member
Dawlat Bik	Market Advisory Council	Secretariat
Gaëtane Le Breuil	European Fishmeal	Member
Georg Werner	Environmental Justice Foundation (EJF)	Member
Guus Pastoor	EU Fish Processors and Traders Association (AIPCE)	Member
John Lynch	Irish South & East Fish Producers Organisation (ISEFPO)	Observer
Juan Manuel Trujillo Castillo	ETF	Member
Julien Daudu	Environmental Justice Foundation (EJF)	Member
Julien Lamothe	European Association of Fish Producers Organisations (EAPO)	Member
Laure Guillevic	WWF	Member
María Luisa Álvarez Blanco	Federación de Asociaciones Provinciales de Empresarios Detallistas de Pescados y Productos Congelados (FEDEPESCA)	Member
Pedro Reis Santos	Market Advisory Council (MAC)	Secretariat
Pierre Commère	European Federation of National Organizations of Importers and Exporters of Fish (CEP) / EuroCommerce (via proxy)	Member
Quentin Marchais	ClientEarth	Member
Roberto Carlos Alonso	ANFACO-CECOPECA	Member
Rosalie Tukker	Europêche	Member
Sergio López García	OPP Burela	Observer
Yobana Bermúdez	EU Fish Processors and Traders Association (AIPCE) / Conxemar	Chair

