

## Working Group 3: EU control and sanitary issues, consumer rules

### Minutes

Thursday, 30 November 2023 (09:30 – 13:00 CET)

Zoom

Interpretation in EN, ES, FR

#### Welcome from the Chair, Benoît Thomassen

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

**Adoption of draft agenda and of the last meeting minutes (20.09.23):** adopted

#### Action points of the last meeting

- **State-of-play of the action points of the last meeting - information**
- “Taste the Ocean” Campaign:
  - Secretariat to circulate a questionnaire to the members on existing awareness campaigns at the national level as well as to collect suggestions for other potential EU-level campaigns
    - Questionnaire circulated: 37 October – 6 November 2023
    - Draft advice circulated: 21 November 2023
- Cell-Based Protein of Aquatic Animals:
  - Agreed draft advice to be put forward to the Executive Committee for consideration and potential adoption
    - Advice adopted on 20 September 2023
- Substantiation and Communication of Explicit Environmental Claims:
  - Secretary General to hold an informal meeting with the most interested members to further analyse the draft advice, which will be followed by a written procedure for consideration by the Working Group
  - In case of significant comments under the written procedure, draft advice to be considered again in a future meeting of the Working Group
    - Two informal meetings took place with Oceana, EuroCommerce, ClientEarth, MSC, ADEPALE, EAPO, FEDEPESCA, and EMPA
    - WG3 Written Procedure: 14-28 November 2023
    - Consideration of minor comments as AOB



- Hygiene and Sanitary Issues:
  - Draft letter, addressed to the Commission services, on the lack of a scientific opinion from EFSA in the context of the legislative amendment affecting the stiffening procedure to be put forward to the Executive Committee via written procedure
    - Letter to DG MARE & DG SANTE adopted on 23 November 2023

## Food Waste

- **Presentation of the proposal for a directive on EU-level targets for the reduction of food waste by Commission representative**

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

The Chair recalled that, in the context of the Farm to Fork Strategy, the Commission committed to adopt a proposal of legally binding EU-level targets for food waste reduction. On 30 March 2022, the MAC adopted advice about the topic. In July 2023, the Commission published the proposal for a directive. Under the proposal, Member States must reduce food waste, by the end of 2030, by 10% in processing and manufacturing, and by 30% (per capita) jointly at retail and consumption (restaurants, food services and households).

Anne-Laure Gassin (DG SANTE) thanked the MAC for the comments provided at the time of the publication of the Commission's impact assessment. Ms Gassin drew attention to the United Nation's Sustainable Development Goal 12.3: "By 2030, halve per capita global food waste at the retail and consumer levels and reduce food losses along production and supply chains, including post-harvest losses", which serves as the framework for EU action, as Member States are fully committed to meeting the target. In the EU, and globally, despite the commitments and measures taken, progress is not at the pace and the scale required, which means that the target risks not being met by 2030.

Ms Gassin highlighted that Champions 12.3, a global coalition of public and private representatives to champion progress on target 12.3, at their September 2023 meeting, concluded that the world was lagging behind in the ambition to reduce food waste and losses, as companies and governments were not acting at the necessary pace.

Ms Gassin outlined the situation in the EU concerning reduction of food waste. Since 2019, obligatory monitoring, under a common definition and methodology, for Member States is in place. Two rounds of publication of data by EuroStat took place. The most recent one was in September 2021. The data showed that food waste levels were stable, meaning an insufficient reduction of food waste across the EU. In 2021, over 58 million tonnes of food waste were generated, with an estimated market value of 132 billion EUR, around 10% of the food made available at retail and consumption. In the EU, as is the case worldwide, the greatest hotspot is at consumption. In the EU, 48% of food waste is



generated at consumption level and households. Processing and manufacturing generated 21% of food waste. Restaurants and food services and primary production each generated 9%. Retail and other distribution of food generated 7% of food waste.

Ms Gassin explained the impacts of food waste in the EU. Food waste accounts for 16% of greenhouse gas emissions from the EU food system. Besides the 132 billion EUR in associated market value, there are also 9 billion EUR spent in waste collection and treatment. There is unnecessary spending by consumers, since a 4-person household could save 400 EUR per year. Additionally, there is an ethical dimension, as over 37 million EU citizens cannot afford a high-quality meal every second day.

Ms Gassin emphasised that, to make tangible progress towards the Sustainable Development Goal 12.3, the Commission proposed legally binding food waste reduction targets. This would ensure accountability from Member States to develop comprehensive, effective, integrated food waste reduction programmes. Member States would have to reduce, by 2030, food waste by 10% in processing and manufacturing, and by 30% (per capita) in retail, restaurant food services and households. The targets are focused on the hotspots. Progress on the legally binding targets will take place. By 2027, the Commission would review the progress made by Member States, including the possibility to adapt the targets. Early achievers can be rewarded too.

Ms Gassin provided an overview of the legal text, which consists of a revision of the Waste Framework Directive. The legislative proposal was adopted by the Commission on 5 July 2023 and is under interinstitutional negotiations. In terms of content of the proposal, the food waste provisions are focused on Article 9a (prevention of food waste generation) and Article 29a (food waste prevention programmes). Under Article 9a, measures are foreseen to develop and support behavioural change interventions, to identify and address inefficiencies in the functioning of the food supply chain, while ensuring a fair distribution of costs and benefits of prevention measures, and support for training and skills development as well as facilitation of access to funding opportunities. The previously mentioned targets are also foreseen in Article 9a. Under Article 29a, Member States will need to adapt their food waste prevention programmes and each Member State is asked to designate the competent authorities responsible for coordination.

Ms Gassin provided information on the views of the co-legislators and other institutions. The European Economic and Social Committee adopted an opinion on 25 October 2023 and the main change suggested is that the reduction of food waste should only apply to avoidable waste. To date, the monitoring and target in the EU covers total food waste, including edible and inedible parts. It would be very complex to reach agreement with Member States on the fraction of edible food. Given the urgency of the matter, the focus of the European Commission is on reduction of total food waste. The European Economic and Social Committee also makes reference to date markings and recommends looking into harvest losses. Harvest losses are outside of the scope of the Waste



Framework Directive. In the view of the European Economic and Social Committee, it would be important to consider targets for primary production in the future. In the view of the Commission, targets for primary production would be premature, as the focus needs to be on the hotspots.

The European Parliament appointed MEP Anna Zalewska (ECR/PL) as rapporteur. The draft report is available. Several discussions took place in the ENVI and AGRI Committees. 521 amendments were tabled to the food and textile parts of the proposal. Some political groups would like alignment with the 50% target of the Sustainable Development Goal, while others believe that it would not be realistic by 2030. Among the amendments, there are doubts about the pertinence of a joint target for retail and consumption, calls to focus on avoidable food waste, calls to support consumer behavioural change (including via date markings), questions about how to deal with primary production, questions about 2020 as the baseline and the data quality, and calls for coherence with the revision of the Packaging Directive.

Concerning the joint target for retail and consumption, the Commission believes that it is appropriate, as it is foreseen in the Sustainable Development, Member States are used to this approach, and it provides flexibility to Member States in the implementation of measures. On 2020 as a baseline, despite the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic, EuroStat confirmed the data quality, so the Commission believes that it is the most appropriate year, as it is the first year with monitoring. The Commission services are looking closely into the coherence with the revision of the Packaging Directive, which might lead to the adoption of further guidance.

In the Council, the file is being led by the ENV Council configuration, but there were also discussions in the AGRIFISH Council. Exchanges took place in July and in October 2023. The planning under the Belgian Presidency remains to be seen. The main issues raised by Member States focused on 2020 as the baseline year, data comparability, focus on total food waste vs edible parts of food, mixed views on the target levels, plus some questions on the absence of a target for primary production.

Ms Gassin illustrated how the legislative proposal and the targets fit into EU toolbox on food waste prevention. Since 2018, there are legal obligations for Member States to reduce, measure and monitor food waste. A common EU methodology to measure food waste consistently was established. The EU is the only region in the world with a common methodology. In 2016, a multistakeholder platform was established to assist in the sharing of best practices, the EU Platform on Food Losses and Food Waste. The platform brings together international organisations, Member States, players in the food supply chain, and NGOs. Under the platform, there are five specific sub-groups to share solutions and to scale-up. The Commission adopted guidelines to facilitate food donation and guidelines to optimise safe use of food in feed. There have been discussions to improve better understanding and use of date marking.



Ms Gassin drew attention to the European Consumer Food Waste Forum, a two-year EU pilot project that brought together academics and food waste reduction practitioners to work together and define solutions and tools to point to the most effective options to reduce consumer food waste. A compendium of tools, best practices and recommendations was published. DG SANTE is working with the Joint Research Centre to develop a range of tools to disseminate the findings of the projects, while focusing on key target groups: schools, food businesses, and policymakers and other players. The project will culminate on a public event on 5 June 2024 to further disseminate the findings. The Commission representative committed to providing more information about the event in the future. She added that, on 8 December 2023, in the context of the COP28, the Joint Research Centre and DG SANTE were organising a workshop on consumer food waste.

Ms Gassin mentioned that, under the Horizon programme, research and innovation projects were funded to assist drive measures on food waste. Under the Single Market Programme, grants were provided to stakeholders to support food waste measurement and prevention. In 2022, the focus was on supporting actions in the HoReCa sector. In 2023, the focus is on supporting consumer behavioural change. Furthermore, the Commission convened a European citizen's panel on food waste, which met three times to debate and recommend actions to prevent food waste in the EU. Outcomes were published in February 2023. The Commission representative drew attention to the EU Food Loss and Waste Prevention Hub, an online tool to share information on activities for food waste prevention, which includes actions from Member States.

- **Exchange of views**

Paulien Prent (Visfederatie) asked about the Commission's opinion on initiatives to reduce food waste, such as prolongation of shelf life, that provide more food safety in the food supply chain.

Anne-Laure Gassin (DG SANTE) replied that the Commission was interested in the initiatives mentioned by Ms Prent, as food waste reduction requires an integrated approach. Some actions need to be targeted at consumers, while others need to be targeted at the food value chain. Innovation from food business operators to extend shelf life can have an impact in preventing food waste. Date marking practices from operators can also have an impact. When possible, from a food safety perspective, the use of a "best before date" is preferable, as the food remains safe for human consumption after the date. Through the previously mentioned platform, the aim is to share information on efforts and successes. The Joint Research Centre published a report on efficiency and effectiveness of food waste prevention initiatives, which includes a calculator that allows stakeholders to assess the effectiveness of their efforts. At the last meeting of the platform, two stakeholders presented their views on pathways to reduce food waste. There are food supply chain approaches, often through public-private partnerships, and consumer-facing campaigns.



Pierre Commère (ADEPALE) drew attention to the need for articulation between food safety measures and food waste reduction measures, in line with concerns expressed by the European Parliament and the European Economic and Social Committee. In certain cases, sanitary authorities impose precautionary measures that lead to an excessive destruction of products. Mr Commère recalled a recent case in France where, due to the minimal presence of ethylene oxide in fish preserves, operators were obliged to destroy preserves valued at 150 million EUR, when the sanitary risk was negligible. He highlighted that his organisation was preparing a guide about food waste, so he was available to contribute to the potential development of new advice by the MAC.

Anne-Laure Gassin (DG SANTE) expressed understanding for the issue raised by Mr Commère. The safety of food and of the supply chain cannot be compromised. It is important to follow the developments and to maintain dialogue. As an example, when DG SANTE worked on guidelines for food donations, there was a detailed analysis of the allowed actions to clarify the implementation of the relevant rules. National authorities should also make such an analysis, since they are responsible for the implementation of the rules. The guidelines of the Member States are not always very clear. Ms Gassin exemplified that, in relation to the guidelines for food donations, stakeholders drew attention to the freezing of meat and meat products for redistribution for donations. DG SANTE worked with experts to introduce a legislative amendment to allow the described freezing practice in the distribution for donations, as a way to ensure the food safety of the practice.

Jacopo Pasquero (Conxemar) agreed with Mr Commère about the need for policy coherence. Mr Pasquero wanted to know whether the Commission services conducted an assessment on how to integrate these objectives with the existing legislation on food safety, since, sometimes, food is wasted due to appropriate reasons related to food safety concerns. Mr Pasquero highlighted that, sometimes, food is wasted because consumers do not buy it. The food was saved at the processor's level, but then moves to the wholesaler and is not purchased. Therefore, mechanisms should be developed to use this food that the average consumer considers to be of lower quality, for example in schools and public procurement. This would apply to food products that are still, from a nutritional perspective, good, but with an appearance that does not appeal to the average consumer. He argued that primary production is a significant contributor to food waste, so he wondered whether, to ensure a level-playing-field, the Commission services would reconsider covering primary production in the proposed targets.

Anne-Laure Gassin (DG SANTE) emphasised that policy coherence is an ongoing objective of the Commission services, including through the involvement and consultation of different Directorates. On food that is not purchased, Ms Gassin recognised that there was a problem of supply and demand in the chain. Food operators are the best placed to face the problem. There are increasingly other channels to direct these products to. As an example, following a revision of the marketing standards for agricultural products, it is clear that products that do not meet the standards can be sold directly.



Concerning the food waste at consumer's level, the Commission representative argued that it was necessary to change perceptions about food, particularly on its value and use. Skillsets about management of food in households has been lost. As for covering production in the legislation, the Commission's impact assessment explains why targets are not proposed. The first focus should be on the two major hotspots of food waste generation in the EU. The environmental impact of food wasted at the primary production's level is much less than in the rest of the chain, since there has not been transportation, processing, and storing yet. The Commission has proposed to review the targets in 2027, which could lead to more comprehensive targets. In any case, the interinstitutional negotiations were still ongoing.

Solène Chambard (ADEPALE) drew attention to the guide on food waste reduction developed by her association. In France, there is a legal obligation for enterprises to make a diagnosis about food waste practices. The guide is adapted to the practices of the enterprises of the sector. In the development of the guide, some issues came up, such as the importance of clear definitions, including on what is edible and non-edible, and on what is loss and waste. The definitions are quite difficult and can vary between FAO, the EU, and France. Ms Chambard emphasised the importance of providing flexibility to enterprises. In France, there is a reporting system, which serves as a pilot project for the EU, but it is not always well adapted to collect data, since it is not sufficiently specific.

Anne-Laure Gassin (DG SANTE) thanked Ms Chambard for the examples. In the EU, Member States are responsible for monitoring food waste. In meetings with DG SANTE, the French authorities have presented their monitoring actions. At EU-level, there is no definition of "edible" and "non-edible", which is why the proposed targets do not make a differentiation based on that. Member States provide some data on the edible part of the food waste to EuroSat, but does not allow to determine exact percentages. In the Commission's Staff Working Document there is an estimation on the matter based on research from the Joint Research Centre. Ms Gassin encouraged Ms Chambard to share the guide in the EU Food Loss and Waste Prevention Hub.

Solène Chambard (ADEPALE) thanked Ms Gassin for the suggestion and informed that the French authorities were aware of the guide.

- **Way forward**

The Chair asked Ms Gassin about her expectations of input, including advice, from the MAC to the Commission services, particularly on good practices in the fisheries and aquaculture value chain.

Anne-Laure Gassin (DG SANTE) welcomed views and advice, adding that the advice of 30 March 2022 connected to the inception impact assessment had been useful. Ms Gassin also welcomed sharing of solutions implemented by the sector developed by the sector. The EU Platform on Food Losses and



Food Waste has a closed membership, but occasionally external guests were invited for *ad hoc* issues, so there was a possibility for interaction.

The Chair recalled the advice adopted in March 2022 and asked the Secretary General for his views on a potential way forward.

The Secretary General responded that the way forward depended on the members. ADEPALE seemed interested in sharing good practices. Potentially other members would be interested in sharing their practices. Additionally, the Commission's legal proposal could be analysed to determine about potential suggestions of amendments. Otherwise, the Working Group could merely monitor the legislative developments.

Jacopo Pasquero (Conxemar) expressed interest in the drafting of advice.

Paulien Prent (Visfederatie) agreed with Mr Pasquero.

The Secretary General suggested the circulation of a questionnaire based on the legislative proposal, plus to gather examples of good practices and solutions. The input provided by the members could be used to prepare a draft advice.

Anne-Laure Gassin (DG SANTE) suggested the provision of insights about the challenges concerning measurement and monitoring of food waste.

### Sustainable Food System Framework

- **Presentation of the Chief Scientific Advisory's scientific opinion "Towards Sustainable Food Consumption" by Prof. Eric Lambin, Group of Chief Scientific Advisors**

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

The Chair recalled that, in the context of the Farm to Fork Strategy, the Commission announced the adoption of a horizontal framework law to accelerate and facilitate the transition to a sustainable food system. The adoption of the legislative proposal was planned for Q4 of 2023. On 15 February 2022, the MAC adopted advice on the topic. On 13 December 2022, a new piece of advice inspired by the Commission's public consultation was adopted. In June 2023, the Group of Chief Scientific Advisors published the scientific opinion "Towards Sustainable Food Consumption" with a set of recommendations for a mix of policy interventions.

Eric Lambin (GCSA) provided an overview of the Scientific Advice Mechanism. This group was established by the European Commission to provide independent scientific evidence and policy recommendations to the European institutions by request of the College of Commissioners. The





mechanism is composed by the Group of Chief Scientific Advisors, SAPEA (consortium of academy networks), and a secretariat. The Group of Chief Scientific Advisors is composed of seven members with time-limited terms. SAPEA identifies the top scientists in Europe in the relevant field to create working groups to review scientific evidence, exchange, and write a report (evidence review). The scientists must be fully independent. Under the European Commission's Directorate-General for Research and Innovation, there is a unit responsible for the secretariat. The Scientific Advice Mechanism does the interfacing between the scientific community and the European Commission.

Mr Lambin outlined how the Scientific Advice Mechanism works. First, there is a request from the European Commission, which can be on any topic. Second, a SAPEA working group writes an evidence review report. Third, the Advisors write a Scientific Opinion based on the evidence to make recommendations. Lastly, the evidence and recommendations are handed to the Commission. He mentioned several examples of delivered advice, highlighting advice on "food from the oceans" and on "a sustainable food system for the EU".

Mr Lambin informed that the Scientific Opinion "Towards Sustainable Food Consumption" was published in June 2023 together with the evidence review, which are both publicly available for consultation. The scoping question for the mentioned scientific opinion was: "What tools could be used at EU level, in addition to those mentioned in the 2020 Farm to Fork Strategy, to overcome the barriers preventing consumers to adopt sustainable and healthy diets, fostering the necessary change towards sustainability in the food environment?".

Mr Lambin explained that, first, the group looked into the definition of "sustainable and healthy diets". This notion relates not only with the composition, but quantity and frequency of foods. There are indicators that high-income countries need to shift towards a more plant-based diet, including more legumes, fruits and vegetables, nuts and seeds. Also, there needs to be a shift towards less meat (mostly red and processed meat), less foods rich in saturated fat, salt and sugar, less snacks with poor nutritional qualities, some ultra-processed foods, sugary drinks, and alcohol. Plus, a need to reduce food waste all along supply chain. He emphasised, that, in the context of a liberal democracy, people can choose what food they eat. Nevertheless, consumers should be accountable for the externalities on public health and the environment. There is also a principle of level-playing-field, meaning that products should be able to compete and that consumers have access to all products, especially healthy and sustainable products.

Mr Lambin drew attention to the concept of "food environment". Discussions tend to focus on the producer's side and the consumer's side. In reality, the steps in between have very significant influence on what is produced and eaten. "Food environment" is anywhere that people obtain, eat, and discuss food. This includes restaurants, bars, digital platforms, canteens, home kitchens, retail stores, supermarkets, among others. Scientific evidence demonstrates that changes in the food



environment is what drives changes in consumer behaviour. This is linked to accessibility, affordability, and availability of desirable food. He also drew attention to the concept of “policy mix”. Consumer behaviour cannot be changed by a single policy intervention. There must be multiple complementary policies that reinforce each other. An effective policy mix includes “soft measures”, such as information and reporting, and incentives and motivation, plus “hard measures”, such as rules and mandates.

Mr Lambin explained that the first recommendation was about the need to coordinate the adoption of a coherent mix of complementary policies that include instruments addressing incentives, information on healthy and sustainable food, and regulatory measures. There should be a multistakeholder process that continuously develops and updates the long-term vision on healthy and sustainable diets to ensure that it is accepted by all supply chain actors. There should be coherence between different interventions. Food system governance is highly fragmented in Europe.

On incentives, Mr Lambin stated that it was necessary to make healthy and sustainable diets the easy and affordable choice. Presently, “junk food” tends to be cheaper than the healthier options. Fiscal mechanisms should be identified to introduce meat and sugar taxes. These should not be punitive, but merely to internalise the externalities of these food products. The scientific evidence is not clear on the best fiscal mechanism (e.g., carbon pricing, consumer tax). Healthy and sustainable diets should be made more affordable, for example through lowering of VAT. It is also necessary to address root causes of poor nutrition with social policies aimed at eradicating poverty and investing in better education for all.

Mr Lambin underscored the importance of complementing fiscal incentives with the provision of trusted information on the environmental and health impacts of food to encourage better decision-making by consumers. National dietary guidelines should include sustainability criteria. Currently, very few national guidelines include sustainability criteria. These are very important for the transmission of information, plus for use by public canteens. Information campaigns and education programmes are important for the understanding of these interventions. The digital food environment should be used to inform consumers about sustainable diets. Regulating of online disinformation might be needed. Advertising for food products and drinks whose frequent consumption is unhealthy and unsustainable should be restricted. Currently, there are voluntary codes of conduct developed by the industry, but the evidence shows that these do not work.

Mr Lambin stated that new interventions to promote the availability and accessibility of products for healthy and sustainable products should be mandated. Member States should be encouraged to regulate the placement in retail outlets of food products. Evidence shows that the placement of the food products greatly influences the choices of consumers. The consumption of products in prominent display increases rapidly. Food product reformulation is required to increase availability



of healthy and sustainable food. Trade policy can play a role in the restriction of EU imports of food commodities from places where food production causes major environmental damage.

- **Exchange of views**

Paul Thomas (EAPO) wanted to know the standing of fish products in the overall recommendations. Mr Thomas emphasised that fisheries and aquaculture products were healthy products for diets and with a relatively low carbon footprint impact.

Eric Lambin (GCSA) explained that there were limited references to fish in the scientific opinion. The scoping question was not about defining a sustainable diet, but how to encourage consumers to move towards that sustainable diet, even though the introduction of the report includes a reference to the definition of “sustainable diets”. Some products, such as red meat, and food rich in saturated fat, salt and sugar, are mentioned, because there is a high level of scientific consensus of overconsumption in Europe.

Bruno Guillaumie (EMPA), concerning the “triangle of policy mix” mentioned by Mr Lambin, wanted to know if the power of each point of the triangle had been calculated, particularly in terms of consequences and speed of adaptation for the EU population. Mr Guillaumie stressed that the main question was about who should act and at what speed.

Eric Lambin (GCSA) agreed that the sequence of the different interventions was very important. The mandate of the Group of Chief Scientific Advisors was to provide recommendations based on scientific evidence. The literature recognises that economic incentives, such as the price, plays the most immediate effect in the behaviour of consumers. At the same time, the introduction of fiscal mechanisms to increase prices can lead to a negative reaction from citizens. Therefore, information actions are very important to explain the public health and environmental benefits. It is also important to explain the use of the taxes. Mr Lambin stated that it was difficult to prioritise interventions, because these are the responsibility of the different governance levels (EU, national, local). The scientific literature tends to analyse the effects of specific interventions, so there was not enough literature on the overall political actions.

Marilena Papaeti (EuroCommerce) highlighted that the proposal for a Sustainable Food System Framework was supposed to be published in 2023 and set common and agreed definitions of healthy and sustainable diets. Nevertheless, the framework was still not published, and the definitions were still not set. Ms Papaeti wanted to know if this had been an issue in the preparation of the scientific opinion.

Eric Lambin (GCSA) responded that it would have been easier for the Chief Scientific Advisors if the definitions were set beforehand, but the preparation of the scientific opinion started in 2022. Nevertheless, the scientific literature was quite clear on the need to shift towards a more plant-based diet for health and environmental reasons. The exact definition of “sustainable diets” does not have a great impact on the recommendations to accelerate the transition by consumers.



## Labelling requirements under the Common Market Organisation (CMO): implementation and compliance

- **Short presentation of the results of a Member States survey by a Commission representative (MARE A4)**

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

The Chair recalled that, under Article 48 of the CMO Regulation, the Commission had to provide a report on the implementation of the legislation. On 30 March 2022, the MAC adopted on the matter. The report on the implementation the CMO Regulation was published on 21 February 2023 and was presented at the 30 March 2023 meeting of the Executive Committee. DG MARE launched a survey with Member States on the implementation and compliance with labelling requirements under the CMO Regulation.

Gerd Heinen (DG MARE) recalled that Article 35(1) of the CMO Regulation sets out which mandatory information has to be provided on a label at the retail stage (final consumer or mass caterer): the commercial designation of the species and its scientific name, the production method, the area where the product was caught or farmed, the category of fishing gear used in capture of fisheries, whether the product has been defrosted, and the date of minimum durability, where appropriate. These are applicable to fresh, chilled, and frozen fishery and aquaculture products. Under another article of the CMO Regulation, operators can provide voluntary information.

Mr Heinen informed that the survey to the Member States was launched in April 2023. The questions referred to indication of responsible authority(s), the national control and check programmes, data on checks undertaken and cases of non-compliance in 2021 and 2022, and follow-up actions and sanctions. 25 Member States replied to the survey. The Commission representative further informed that, the previous week, the survey responses were discussed at a meeting of the Expert Group for Markets and Trade in Fishery and Aquaculture Products.

Mr Heinen outlined the key findings from the responses to the survey. The responsible authorities were clearly indicated by all Member States. There are differences across the Member States on the governance of the control system, since, in some Member States, it is quite centralised, while, in other cases, it is quite decentralised with regional and local layers. CMO labelling checks are often done jointly with hygiene inspections and other labelling checks. There are strong differences between Member States in terms of the priority level assigned to performing checks on the CMO labelling requirements specifically. The comprehensiveness and granularity of the control and inspection data provided by Member States varies widely.



There were also strong differences in terms of annual number of inspections, ranging from 0 to 3000 checks per year. Most responses were in the range of 100 to 800. Higher numbers of checks did not necessarily correspond to larger countries or to countries with important fishery and aquaculture markets. Checks are usually undertaken at all retail points of the supply chain and for both unpacked and pre-packed products. There are significant levels of non-compliance in numerous Member States, ranging from 15-20% to more than 50% in some cases. This confirmed previous indications of non-compliance from stakeholder feedback and reports. In most cases, it is not clear from the survey responses whether compliance gaps relate specifically to missing information on (a) species, (b) catch area, or (c) fishing gear, or combinations thereof.

The submitted survey responses did not show which level of the supply chain had particularly high non-compliance rates. Public studies and stakeholder feedback indicate that compliance with CMO labelling requirements tends to be generally higher for pre-packed products (e.g., at supermarkets) than it is for unpacked products (e.g., at fishmongers). The survey responses do not show whether the sanctions, including administrative warnings, pecuniary penalties, etc. issued in cases of non-compliance really act as an effective deterrent. The Commission representative expressed doubts about the deterrence effect, since, for operators, the likelihood of being subject to an inspection was quite low, and the sanctions were generally not very high.

Mr Heinen stated that the survey results confirm that the reasons for the significant non-compliance with the CMO requirements should be further examined. DG MARE would like to enquire whether the CMO requirements were clearly understood. Small operators might not be familiar with the legal obligations. DG MARE would also like to follow-up on the inspections done by Member States. It is important to reflect on the usefulness of the CMO requirements. Stakeholder feedback concerning the Commission's report on the implementation of the CMO Regulation already pointed to significant non-compliance and other issues (e.g., processed products not being covered by labelling requirements, lack of information on sustainability aspects). Against the described backdrop, the Commission is considering a targeted evaluation of the CMO labelling provisions.

- **Exchange of views**

Marine Cusa (Oceana) emphasised the relevance of hearing about non-compliance problems. Ms Cusa asked Mr Heinen to elaborate on his reference to reflecting on the usefulness of the CMO requirements, particularly whether this was about the framing of the legal provisions or about the usefulness of the information. Ms Cusa recognised that even experts had difficulties in evaluating the sustainability of products based on the information provided under Article 35. Concerning the delay of the legislative proposal for a Sustainable Food System Framework, she wondered whether sustainability information could be included under Article 35 of the CMO Regulation or as part of a revision of the marketing standards framework.



Gerd Heinen (DG MARE), on the potential targeted evaluation, specified that it was the labelling provisions that were under consideration. During stakeholder consultations on the report on the implementation of the CMO Regulation, this topic received significant attention. On the usefulness of the requirements, Mr Heinen informed that the feedback from the Member States included questions about whether all the mandatory elements were equally useful. For example, many consumers do not understand the meaning of the information on fishing gear. On the clarity of the requirements, there were questions on whether these were clearly drafted and practical, particularly for very small operators. As for sustainability aspects, conceptionally, sustainability information could be considered under Article 35, but no decision had been made. The use of voluntary provisions for the communication of sustainability information should also be considered.

Bruno Guillaumie (EMPA) commented that, in the case of the French shellfish products, checks usually took place during the festive season. These checks covered labelling, traceability, and hygiene rules. Mr Guillaumie gave the example of a shop, in 2020, that was closed down due to traceability issues. He argued that, at the professional level, the problem were not supermarkets, but with the restaurants. Concerning the compliance with labelling rules, online sales are an issue that needs to be addressed. The number of products sold online is increasing.

Gerd Heinen (DG MARE) responded that most Member States included online sales in their controls. Data was not provided on the exact number of checks done physically vs online. Concerning the HoReCa sector, Mr Heinen clarified that, presently, restaurants were not under the mandatory labelling provisions vis-à-vis final consumers for several reasons. In restaurants, consumers generally receive prepared/processed products, which are currently outside of the scope of the mandatory labelling requirements. Second, the labelling requirements clearly foresee that these are to be provided to the final consumer or mass caterer. Therefore, in the case of mass caterers, the legal obligation stops there, and it is not necessary to provide the information to the consumers. The Commission representative agreed that information at restaurant's level could be relevant for consumers, at least for the more interested ones. The traceability requirements for prepared and processed products following the recent revision of the Fisheries Control Regulation would need to be taken into account.

Vanya Vulperhorst (Oceana) wanted to know whether Member States provided information on the use of DNA analysis in their checks to determine the species. Ms Vulperhorst asked for information about the Expert Group for Markets and Trade in Fishery and Aquaculture Products.

Gerd Heinen (DG MARE) replied that some Member States stated that they do use DNA tests and are developing tools. This matter goes beyond non-compliance with labelling requirements, as it can amount to intentional food fraud. Mr Heinen informed that the Expert Group for Markets and Trade



in Fishery and Aquaculture Products usually meets twice a year. The latest meeting was a physical meeting after a long break due to COVID and quite fruitful in terms of exchange.

Silvia Gil (FEDEPESCA) emphasised that her association undertook several initiatives to provide training and skills development, disseminating legal requirements on traceability. Ms Gil drew attention to problems related to how the information is transmitted. It would be preferable to have transmission of information, in real time, via electronic means. Presently, in most cases, paper labels were used. She encouraged the Commission services to take these points into account in the future.

Gerd Heinen (DG MARE) expressed satisfaction that awareness and training campaigns were taking place. At the meeting of the Expert Group for Markets and Trade in Fishery and Aquaculture Products, some Member States argued that there was indeed a problem of awareness, particularly in the case of very small operators. As for digital transmission of information, Mr Heinen highlighted that the revision of the Fisheries Control Regulation placed more emphasis on that. Further digitalisation would further facilitate the labelling of the products.

Quentin Marchais (ClientEarth) wanted to know whether the survey to the Member States would be complemented with a study. Such a study could cover the 27 Member States and include samples from different cities across the EU. Mr Marchais commented that work undertaken by his organisation showed differences in implementation across regions and cities. Therefore, it was important to have a follow-up on what is happening on the ground, which should include a methodology on sampling of products. He also wanted to know whether the follow-up actions would be made public or communicated by the Commission services.

Concerning the comments about the usefulness of the labelling requirements, Mr Marchais called for caution regarding potential attempts to correlate non-compliance and lack of usefulness. It can be quite difficult to know which elements are relevant for consumers. There are several seafood consumers guides available that are based on the information available on the label. Labelling is connected to traceability. Therefore, if proper traceability is in place, it should not be difficult to transmit information to consumers.

Gerd Heinen (DG MARE) responded that the Commission would follow-up to the survey, but that the exact way was still under consideration. If a targeted evaluation was to take place, it would entail a study, including a follow-up with the authorities of the Member States and consultation of the stakeholders. As for an on-the-ground approach, Mr Heinen recognised that it could be quite useful, but that the Commission might have a limited legal mandate for such an approach. Any evaluation report would be made publicly available. He agreed that the mandatory information could be useful to consumers via the mentioned guides, which was something to be taken into account.



## Consumer Information

- **Presentation of proposal of joint work on the implementation of consumer information rules by Member States at the HORECA level by Cécile Fouquet, Aquaculture Advisory Council**

The Chair explained that, in March 2021, the Aquaculture Advisory Council (AAC) adopted a recommendation on consumer information, which urged the Commission to reinforce adequate and reliable consumer information in the HoReCa sector. At their 24-25 October 2023 Working Group 3 meeting, the AAC decided to follow-up on their recommendation with the Member States, potentially in collaboration with the MAC.

Cécile Fouquet (AAC) explained that, as a follow-up to the mentioned AAC recommendation, there were doubts amongst the AAC membership about to what extent the CMO Regulation's mandatory consumer information provisions were applicable to the HoReCa sector. The AAC Secretariat submitted a written question to DG MARE on the matter. The reply from Mr Frangiscos Nikolian, Head of Unit of MARE A4, was that HoReCa operators, as sellers of prepared and processed products, were not within the scope of Article 35 of the CMO Regulation. Therefore, these operators, when serving fisheries and aquaculture products, are only legally obliged to provide information to consumers about allergens.

Following this reply, AAC members expressed concern about the lack of information to consumers available at the HoReCa's level. Considering the increasing economic importance of the HoReCa sector for the EU producers of aquaculture products, these operators would like to ensure that more information is provided to consumers. The AAC decided to establish a Focus Group to reflect on the matter. Prior to that, the AAC considered that it would be important to involve the MAC, since it is where expertise on the matter lays. The AAC would like to work together with the MAC to find a solution for the provision of information to consumers at the HoReCa level.

Ms Fouquet, on behalf of Mr Brian Thomsen, Chair of the AAC, suggested the establishment of a joint focus group on consumer information at the HoReCa's level.

- **Way forward**

The Chair asked the Secretary General to provide information on the appropriate procedure to establish a joint focus group between two Advisory Councils.

The Secretary General replied that, usually, Terms of Reference are jointly prepared and approved by each Advisory Council. In some Advisory Councils, the practice is for the Terms of Reference to be adopted by their Executive Committee. In the case of the MAC, in accordance with the "Guidelines





on the functioning of the Focus Groups”, these are adopted by the responsible Working Group. The Terms of Reference should determine the responsible Secretariat for the organisation of the work or establish a rotation system. The Terms of Reference should also determine the membership of the Focus Group. Afterward, the Focus Group prepares a draft text, which, once agreed upon, is put forward for consideration and potential adoption by the corresponding Working Group and Executive Committee of the two Advisory Councils.

The Chair expressed his support for the establishment of the joint focus group and encouraged members to express their views on the matter.

Christine Absil (Good Fish) expressed support for the establishment of the joint focus group and expressed interest in participating as a member.

Anne-France Mattlet (Europêche) expressed support for the establishment of the joint focus group and expressed interest from her association in participating.

Silvia Gil (FEDEPESCA) agreed with the importance of reflecting on the mentioned matter, and expressed interest, on behalf of her association, of participating in the joint focus group.

Pierre Commère (ADEPALE) stated that, if a joint focus group was established, a representative of AIPCE-CEP should participate as a member to ensure the representation and the expertise of the processing and trading sector.

Paul Thomas (EAPO) expressed interest in the establishment of the joint focus group, adding that the catching sector should be represented, which could be done by his association.

Marine Cusa (Oceana) expressed interest, on behalf of her association, in participating in the potential joint focus group.

Paulien Prent (Visfederatie) agreed with Mr Commère, adding that international discussion in AIPCE-CEP on their representation in the joint focus group would take place.

Jacopo Pasquero (Conxemar) agreed with Mr Commère and Ms Prent. Mr Pasquero argued that it could be relevant to include a representative of the HoReCa sector as an observer in the focus group.

The Chair asked the Secretary General about the current representation of the HoReCa sector amongst the membership of the MAC. The Chair also asked about the rules to involve observers.

The Secretary General replied that there was no member specifically representing the HoReCa sector. Concerning observers, the MAC approved “Guidelines on the Participation of Observers in Meetings”,



which allowed their participation, with the accord of the Chair of the meeting and if there was no opposition from the registered members.

The Chair stated that, in his view, it would be useful to include a representative of the HoReCa sector in the work.

Quentin Marchais (ClientEarth) expressed interest in the establishment of the focus group, adding that his association has worked on the topic.

Bruno Guillaumie (EMPA) stated that, in his view, it was not necessary to search for a representative of the HoReCa sector. The Comité National de la Conchyliculture (CNC) is a member of the AAC. The CNC is an interbranch organisation and it includes restaurants among its membership.

The Chair proposed for the Secretary General and Ms Fouquet to work together on a first draft version of the Terms of Reference for the establishment of a joint focus group. Afterward, the draft Terms of Reference could be put forward for consideration and potential adoption.

Cécile Fouquet (AAC) informed that, under their work programme, the AAC committed to adopting a recommendation on consumer information by October 2024.

### Awareness Campaigns

- **Presentation of the results of the Secretariat’s questionnaire on potential campaigns for awareness about fishery and aquaculture products in the EU**

The Secretary General recalled that, at the previous meeting, DG MARE representatives presented the third season of the “Taste the Ocean” campaign and members agreed to prepare advice on the matter of awareness campaigns about fishery and aquaculture products. The Secretariat circulated a questionnaire to the members from 27 October to 6 November 2023. Replies were received from FEDOPA, Conxemar, and PSPR. After the circulation of the draft advice, preliminary feedback was received from FEDEPESCA, EAPO, WWF, and FEAP.

- **Consideration of draft advice**

The Secretary General presented the draft advice to the members, providing an overview of section 1 “background” and section 2 “potential other future awareness campaigns by the EU”. In section 2.1 “messaging”, WWF submitted preliminary feedback suggesting the addition of “status of the stocks” as part of the messaging.

Paulien Prent (Visfederatie) suggested to rephrase the new paragraph, since consumers could confuse “healthy fish” and “healthy stocks”.



Marine Cusa (Oceana) suggested to write “sustainable fish stocks”, instead of “healthy fish stocks”.

Paulien Prent (Visfederatie) agreed with Ms Cusa’s suggestion.

Christine Absil (Good Fish) emphasised the importance of well managed stocks, adding that she agreed with the rewording to “sustainable fish stocks.

Silvia Gil (FEDEPESCA) expressed concern about the introduction of complex concepts in an awareness raising campaign, since consumers cannot check about the status of the fish stock directly in the product’s label. The issue of sustainable fish stocks could be covered under the sub-point about the framework of the Common Fisheries Policy, since the policy encourages sustainable stocks. Ms Gil suggested that the sub-point on sustainable fish stocks could be merged with the sub-point about on the framework of the Common Fisheries Policy and committed to sending a suggestion of redrafting.

The Secretary General explained that, concerning the reference to “other influential campaigns” in sub-section 2.1., WWF believed that it was not appropriate to name and shame the documentary “Seaspiracy” and suggested the deletion of the sentence “this is particularly needed to mitigate the effect of other influential campaigns, which give a negative and not always accurate picture of the sector”.

Paulien Prent (Visfederatie) expressed preference to maintaining a general sentence without a reference to “Seaspiracy”, since, in her view, it was a valid point.

Marine Cusa (Oceana) thought that a reference to “other influential campaigns” could be somewhat misleading, because, without the reference to “Seaspiracy”, it becomes unclear to what kinds of campaigns the text is referring to, which could include NGO campaigns. In her view, the sentence should be reworked with WWF.

Quentin Marchais (ClientEarth) expressed agreement with Ms Cusa. Mr Marchais suggested referring to “in some cases could give a negative view”. He agreed that WWF should be involved in a rewording of the sentence, adding that he would be favourable to a full deletion.

Paul Thomas (EAPO) emphasised that the issue of the fisheries sector with “Seaspiracy” is the coarse and overarching views provided on the global fishing sector, which does not correspond to the specificities of the European fishing practices. Mr Thomas stated that he was not opposed to deleting the reference to “Seaspiracy”, but argued for maintaining a sentence introducing some granularity.

Paulien Prent (Visfederatie) argued that there were documentaries or so-called “documentaries” that lacked nuance and projected a certain image of the fishing sector. In her view, it was important to include a reference in the text to the lack of nuance in this messaging.



Jacopo Pasquero (Conxemar) stated that the purpose of the sentence was to demonstrate the importance of the “Taste the Ocean” campaign and of other potential campaigns, since there are competing messages from radical sources with significant influence on consumers.

The Secretary General suggested “this is particularly needed given that there has been influential messaging, based on specific practices, directed at consumers that lacks nuance and can give a negative image of the sector” as alternative wording. The Secretary General provided an overview of the remaining preliminary feedback received concerning section 2.1., including a new sentence suggested by FEDEPESCA on the importance of highlighting the role of all stakeholders in the value chain, especially the role of the retail sector.

Christine Absil (Good Fish) stated that, in her view, the sentence “in addition, in the traditional format, fishmongers play a prescriptive role, influencing the consumer’s purchasing decision” was unnecessary. The awareness campaigns should be more general. The Commission should play the role of providing accurate information.

Bruno Guillaumie (EMPA) agreed with Ms Absil. In the case of the shellfish sector, there was no prescriptive role from fishmongers, since the majority of the sales are done directly by the producer to the consumer or to a supermarket. Several actors of the value chain can play a prescriptive role, providing explanations to the consumer about the products. Mr Guillaumie recognised that it was important to have a direct contact between the consumer and a professional of the sector.

Silvia Gil (FEDEPESCA) highlighted that the aim was to emphasise the importance of the different actors of the fisheries value chain, which includes different marketing channels besides fishmongers. Nevertheless, in her view, it was important to value the role of fishmongers, since it is where consumers purchase products for at-home consumption. Several studies show that, in the traditional format, consumers consume 25% more of fishery and aquaculture products than when buying from other channels, which is due to the mentioned prescriptive role. Ms Gil stated that she would not oppose redrafting the text. In the experience of her association, in Spain, awareness campaigns involving fishmongers have worked very well, as it is possible to show the values behind.

The Secretary General suggested to delete the sentence mentioned by Ms Absil, but to maintain the rest of the additions proposed by FEDEPESCA. The Secretary General proceeded with an overview of the last paragraph of section 2.1. that is focused on the concept of seasonality. According to Conxemar, in the case of fishery and aquaculture products, the concept of seasonality was not that relevant, since a high proportion of the products are processed and frozen. According to WWF, seasonality of wild-caught fish is important, frozen food can have a higher carbon footprint, and their own seafood guides include seasonality criteria.



Marina Cusa (Oceana) expressed agreement with WWF, since seasonality is a significant aspect of sustainability. In her view, the concept of seasonality should be highlighted, instead of dismissed. Season is very important for EU and local products, fresh products, and shellfish products. Ms Cusa argued that seasonality is one of many aspects of sustainability, so it would be unusual to only highlight that one in the text. Therefore, she would prefer to delete the paragraph or to include a paragraph on the importance of seasonality.

Jacopo Pasquero (Conxemar) argued that seasonality is about freshness. The assumption that fresh equates to sustainable is wrong. Fresh products can be sustainable or unsustainable depending on various factors. Mr Pasquero recognised that seasonality can be a sustainability criterion in certain cases following specific criteria, but should not automatically signify sustainability.

Paul Thomas (EAPO) stated that the concept of seasonality can be rather difficult for the fishing sector. As an example, in the case of scallops, there are seasons for capture, but there are due to legal procedures and permits. On the other hand, in the case of seabass, the seasons for capture are based on the reproduction phase. The concept needs to be better defined. Therefore, he agreed with Mr Pasquero that seasonality could be one of the aspects in some cases, but not the only one. He added that he would not oppose a deletion of the paragraph.

Bruno Guillaumie (EMPA) highlighted that, in the case of the EU shellfish farming, there are seasons, so seasonality was relevant. Mr Guillaumie argued against the financing of awareness campaigns that would defend imported shellfish products.

Christine Absil (Good Fish) drew attention to the experience of her organisation with the concept of seasonality in their seafood guides. In the Netherlands, there was misinformation caused by suppliers to restaurants by linking sustainability and seasonality. The concept is much more complex than it appears, so she agreed with Mr Pasquero and Mr Thomas that, if to be introduced, it would have to be in a very careful manner. A seasonal product should not be automatically assumed as being sustainable.

Pierre Commère (ADEPALE) agreed that it was difficult to link seasonality and sustainability. Additionally, in the text, the reference to processing making products last longer would be more linked to food security than sustainability.

Jacopo Pasquero (Conxemar) highlighted that the website of the “Taste the Ocean” campaign includes a page titled “sustainable fish and seafood” with five tips to assist consumers choose the most sustainable options and that “respect the seasonality” is the first tip. Mr Pasquero argued that the complexity of seasonality should be highlighted, instead of being used as a concept to guide consumers towards sustainability.



The Secretary General suggested to redraft the paragraph on the concept of seasonality together with the members that intervened the most about the matter, so that it could be reconsidered at a later stage. The Secretary General provided an overview of subsections 2.2. “target audience” and 2.3. “scope of products covered”, adding that significant preliminary feedback was received concerning the latter subsection.

Marine Cusa (Oceana) expressed agreement with the preliminary feedback of EAPO and FEDEPESCA that the awareness campaigns should cover EU products, not imports.

Pierre Commère (ADEPALE) explained that, in his preliminary feedback, he suggested to replace “imported” with “outsourced”, because there was a confusion between local and imported products. The opposite of “local” would be “long-distance”, which actually includes EU sourced products.

Paul Thomas (EAPO), regarding the reference to the EU’s geopolitical role, argued that advice on awareness campaigns was not the best suited document to approach the subject. If the topic was to be addressed, it should be in a specific piece advice about competitiveness.

Garazi Rodríguez Valle (APROMAR) expressed the opposition of her association to the promotion of products imported from third countries. Awareness campaigns undertaken by the EU should be in line with the policy strategies, which includes the aim of reducing dependency from third countries.

Bruno Guillaumie (EMPA) expressed the opposition of his association to the use of EU funding to promote imported products. If a product goes through customs, then it qualifies as an imported product.

Yannis Pelekanakis (FEAP) expressed agreement with the previous three interventions. Mr Pelekanakis expressed support for a campaign that promotes the consumption of aquaculture products, but added that it should be in line with the EU’s strategic policies, such as the European Green Deal and the Farm to Fork Strategy. This means reducing the dependency on imports and increasing the self-sufficiency rate of the EU’s food system. Therefore, his association was against the inclusion of imported products in EU-led awareness campaigns.

Quentin Marchais (ClientEarth) agreed with Mr Thomas that the geopolitical angle did not fit the advice on awareness campaigns.

Jacopo Pasquero (Conxemar) underscored that the issue at hand was about consumption by EU citizens, not EU production. The awareness campaigns should be in line with the objectives of the EU. One of the objectives, within the Common Fisheries Policy, is to have effective management and sustainable fisheries within the EU. It is not possible to feed the population of the EU with only EU fisheries. Therefore, in line with EU policy, imports are needed. Mr Pasquero emphasised that it was



not about providing EU funding to third countries, but support to the EU processing sector, which is three times the size of the EU fisheries and aquaculture production sector. The EU processing sector provides employment and competitiveness. He added that the aim was not to exclude local products, but to be inclusive of the products chosen by EU consumers, while keeping in mind the available natural resources in the EU.

The Secretary General stated that, as consensus seemed unlikely on the coverage of imported products, two separate paragraphs with differing views would likely have to be included.

- **Way forward**

The Secretary General proposed for the Working Group to consider an updated version of the draft text at the January 2024 meeting.

## AOB

- **Substantiation and Communication of Explicit Environmental Claims**

The Secretary General recalled that, under the written consultation on the draft text “Substantiation and Communication of Explicit Environmental Claims (Green Claims Directive)”, some minor amendments were suggested by EuroCommerce and by MSC, as circulated prior to the meeting.

The Secretary General explained that, in the last paragraph of section 2 “requirements on substantiation of environmental claims (article 3)”, EuroCommerce suggested some editorial changes. In subsection 2.3 “all significant aspects and impacts to assess the performance”, EuroCommerce suggested to refer to “activity” of “object” to be clearer, as it is about the activity of the trader in its worker. In subsection 5.1 “environmental labels”, EuroCommerce suggested to refer to approval by the “verifier”, instead of the “competent authority”, to be legally correct. In subsection 5.2 “environmental labelling schemes”, EuroCommerce suggested to add “a good balance should be found” to make the reading easier.

Christine Absil (Good Fish) expressed support, on behalf of her association, to the last paragraph of section 6 “ex-ante verification of environmental claims and labelling schemes”.

The Secretary General explained that MSC suggested the deletion of recommendation I) “facilitate the use of secondary information use when claims need to be substantiated by large sets of suppliers as it is the case for fisheries and aquaculture”, as it could be in contradiction with previous statements on limiting the use of secondary information. EAPO agreed with the deletion, as the issue of database for secondary information was covered in the separate opinion of the last paragraph of section 2.



*The Working Group agreed on the amended draft advice on “substantiation and communication of explicit environmental claims (green claims directive)”.*





## Summary of action points

- Food Waste:
  - Secretariat to circulate a questionnaire to the members on the legislative proposal as well as to gather examples of good practices and solutions.
  - Draft advice, based on the input received, to be considered at the next meeting.
- Consumer Information:
  - Secretary General to collaborate with the AAC Secretary General on a first draft version of Terms of Reference for the establishment of a joint focus group on consumer information at the HoReCa's level, which will later be put forward for consideration and potential adoption.
- Awareness Campaigns:
  - Updated version of the draft advice to be considered at the January 2024 meeting.
- AOB:
  - Agreed draft advice on “substantiation and communication of explicit environmental claims (green claims directive)” to be put forward to the Executive Committee for consideration and potential adoption.



## Attendance List

Representative	Organisation	Role
Adien Simonet	Union du Mareyage Français (UMF)	Member
Amelie Laurent	Oceana	Member
Angeles Longa Portables	European Molluscs' Producers Association (EMPA)	Expert
Alexandra Philippe	Market Advisory Council (MAC)	Secretariat
Anna Rokicka	Polish Association of Fish Processors (PSPR)	Member
Anne-Laure Gassin	European Commission	Expert
Anne-France Mattlet	Europêche	Member
Benoît Thomassen	Federation of European Aquaculture Producers (FEAP)	Chair
Bruno Guillaumie	European Molluscs' Producers Association (EMPA)	Member
Carlos Ruiz Blanco	ANFACO-CECOPESCA	Member
Cécile Fouquet	Aquaculture Advisory Council	Observer
Christine Absil	Good Fish Foundation	Member
Elena García Caballero	Spain	Observer
Emiel Brouckaert	European Association of Fish Producers Organisations (EAPO)	Member
Eric Lambin	Group of Chief Scientific Advisors	Expert
Gaëtane Le Breuil	European Fishmeal	Member
Garazi Rodríguez Valle	Federation of European Aquaculture Producers (FEAP)	Member
Gerd Heinen	European Commission	Expert
Jacopo Pasquero	Conxemar	Member
Jaroslav Zieliński	Polish Fish Producers Association (PFPA)	Member
Jens Mathiesen	Danish Seafood Association	Member
Jérémie Souben	FEDOPA	Member
Joash Matthew	EU Fish Processors and Traders Association (AIPCE) / European Federation of National Organizations of Importers and Exporters of Fish (CEP)	Member
John Lynch	Irish South and East Fish Producers Organisation (ISEFPO)	Member



Representative	Organisation	Role
Julien Lamothe	ANOP	Member
Laure Guillevic	WWF	Member
Malgorzata Kieliszewska	Poland	Observer
Marcus Breuer	European Parliament	Observer
Marilena Papaeti	EuroCommerce	Member
Marine Cusa	Oceana	Member
Massimo Bellavista	COPA COGECA	Member
Matthias Keller	Bundesverband der deutschen Fischindustrie und des Fischgrosshandels e.V.	Member
Maximilian Schwarz	Market Advisory Council	Secretariat
Miguel Lizaso	European Commission	Expert
Niall Gerlitz	European Commission	Expert
Patrick Murphy	Irish South & West Fish Producers Organisation (IS&WFPO)	Member
Paul Thomas	European Association of Fish Producers Organisations (EAPO)	Member
Paulien Prent	Visfederatie	Member
Pedro Reis Santos	Market Advisory Council (MAC)	Secretariat
Pierre Commère	Association Des Entreprises de Produits ALimentaires Élaborés (ADEPALE)	Member
Poul Melgaard	Danish Seafood Association	Member
Quentin Marchais	ClientEarth	Member
Riccardo Pelani	COPA COGECA	Member
Rosalie Tukker	Europêche	Member
Sean O'Donoghue	Killybegs Fishermen's Organisation (KFO)	Member
Sergio López García	OPP Burela	Member
Silvia Gil	Federación de Asociaciones Provinciales de Empresarios Detallistas de Pescados y Productos Congelados (FEDEPESCA)	Member
Solène Chambard	Association Des Entreprises de Produits ALimentaires Élaborés (ADEPALE)	Member
Stefan Meyer	Bundesverband der deutschen Fischindustrie und des Fischgrosshandels e.V.	Member





Market Advisory Council

Representative	Organisation	Role
Thomas Kruse	Danish Fishers PO / Danish Pelagic PO	Member
Vanya Vulperhorst	Oceana	Member
Xavier Pires	ALIF	Member
Yannis Pelekanakis	Federation of European Aquaculture Producers (FEAP)	Member

