

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

### Minutes

Friday, 28 March 2025 (09:30 – 13:00 CET)

Zoom

Interpretation in EN, ES, FR

Welcome from the Chair, Benoît Thomassen

#### [Presentation](#)

Adoption of the agenda and of the last meeting's minutes (30.01.25) Adopted

#### Action points

- **State-of-play of the action points of the last meeting - information**
- Packaging and Packaging Waste Regulation:
  - Following an informal exchange with the most interested members, draft advice on “Packaging and Packaging Waste Regulation: Impacts of the package reuse targets for the EU, fisheries, aquaculture and fish processing industries” to be considered via urgent written procedure.
    - Advice adopted on 18 March 2025.

The Secretary General recalled that, at a previous meeting, due to the lack of availability of DG ENV representatives, the planned presentation on the Packaging and Packaging Waste Regulation had not been possible. Following new availability, the presentation had been rescheduled for the 28 March 2025 meeting of the Executive Committee. He recalled that members who were not members of the Executive Committee could still follow the presentation as observers.

#### Animal Welfare

- **Presentation on the legislative proposal on the protection of animals during transport and related operations by Commission representative**

#### [Presentation](#)

Ellen Rietsema (DG SANTE) explained that the current legislation, Council Regulation (EC) No 1/2005, covers the transport of live vertebrate animals for economic activities but lacks specific welfare requirements for aquatic animals, though general principles in Article 3 and some administrative procedures apply. Aquatic animals are not defined in the mentioned regulation.



Ms Rietsema explained that the scope of legislative proposal remains the protection of animals during transport related to economic activities and introduces additional provisions for aquatic animals. The proposal defines “aquatic animals” as fish, cephalopods, and decapods. The proposal excludes the transport of ornamental fish, direct deliveries to food businesses, zoo animals, CITES-listed animals. Some derogations are taken in the proposal for the transport of animals used for scientific purposes. In this proposal, animals imported from third countries must meet equivalent standards to those set out in the Regulation.

Ms Rietsema highlighted that the general provisions in Article 4 include that no person shall transport animals or cause animals to be transported in a way that causes undue suffering to animals or is likely to cause undue suffering to it. In addition, transported aquatic animals shall be provided with water in sufficient volume and quality. Administrative provisions include organiser and transporter authorisations, driver and attendant training, certificates of approval for the means of transport, obligations for transporters and certificates for transport to third countries. Serious infringements are foreseen, such as in the case of transporting aquatic animals without monitoring water parameters.

Ms Rietsema drew attention to new specific conditions for aquatic animals in Annex II that focus on design and maintenance of transport means, handling to prevent injuries, water quality monitoring, fitness for transport, proper loading, unloading and post loading practices, and periodic welfare and water quality inspections during transport. The Commission representative informed that the proposal includes empowerments for the Commission to adopt tertiary legislation to update the technical rules in Annex II based on the latest scientific developments.

Ms Rietsema provided information on the next steps of the legislative steps. As the Commission adopted the legislative proposal, the co-legislators (the Council and European Parliament) are now considering the proposal and preparing amendments. This means that the Commission does not have the mandate anymore to make direct changes to the legislative proposal. After the co-legislators finish their preparation works, the trilogues begin to agree on the final legislative text.

- **Exchange of views**

The Chair wanted to know why the species listed by CITES, such as sturgeon, were out of the scope of the legislative proposal. The Chair also asked for more information on the expected controls, as the requirements seemed very general.

Ellen Rietsema (DG SANTE) replied that the issue of the CITES species had also been raised by stakeholders and by the Council. The Commission would be open to widening the scope to include these species under the general provisions. Ms Rietsema argued the current general requirements are already enforced for over 20 years. She added that the European Commission had designated a European reference centre on the welfare of aquatic animals, which assists the Member States with the enforcement of the requirements.



Paulien Prent (Visfederatie) asked about the inclusion of decapods in the scope of the legislation. Ms Prent informed that AIPCE-CEP submitted a paper to the European Commission on the transport of decapods, which explained the existing best practices. She argued that the transport of decapods in water was against the best practices.

Javier Ojeda (FEAP) underscored that, when compared to the transport of terrestrial animals, the transport of aquatic animals was very delicate. The sector has been working on the topic for several decades. Regarding the definition of “aquatic animals”, Mr Ojeda wondered about the point in which legally there is an animal, wondering if eggs and small larvae were included. In his view, it was necessary to define the means of transport in a more precise manner. He commented that the co-legislators expressed interest in including the towing of ponds, which was quite far from the original aim of original proposal. He highlighted that the measurement of ammonia in the water was technically complex. The presence of veterinarians at loading and unloading would be rather complex, impacting the competitiveness of the sector.

Adrien Simonnet (UMF) wondered about the exclusion of the CITES-listed species, as there was a risk of contradiction with the specific legislation on the protection of these species, including with the specific authorisation. These contradictions could cause delays in the transport operations.

Ellen Rietsema (DG SANTE) clarified that eggs and larvae were out of the scope of current regulation and of the legislative proposal. Ms Rietsema stated that the Commission services were aware of the ongoing discussions in the European Parliament on inclusion of other means of transport. The Commission was also aware of the complexity with the monitoring of certain water quality parameters such as ammonia, and on the presence of veterinarians during (on)loading. Concerning decapods, Ms Rietsema argued that it was important to include them in the proposal, even though she was aware that their transport requirements are different than for fish. As for the CITES-listed species, while excluded from the scope, the general provisions could still be relevant to them. The legislative proposal does not clash with the CITES-specific rules. Further harmonisation could be considered. Ms Rietsema further highlighted that the Commission is not in a position to make changes to the legislative text.

Paulien Prent (Visfederatie) asked about the most relevant points of contact in the Parliament and in the Council to discuss the transport of decapods. Ms Prent underscored that the transport in water was harmful for decapods.

Ellen Rietsema (DG SANTE) recalled that the legislative proposal was being considered by the Parliament and the Council. She advised Ms Prent to contact MEPs or the national authorities to raise her concerns.

- **Way forward**

Paulien Prent (Visfederatie) expressed disappointment that, following the submission of the AIPCE-CEP paper in 2023, the European Commission had not adequately addressed the issue of decapods. Ms Prent called for action to address the topics, as the transport in water caused stressed in decapods.



Javier Ojeda (FEAP) explained that most of the transport of aquatic animals took place on the production's side. In the past, the Aquaculture Advisory Council (AAC) worked on the topic. The MAC would have to focus on the perspective of the transport when going to the market. It could be potentially relevant to collaborate with the AAC on the topic. Mr Ojeda expressed agreement with the points raised by Ms Prent on the transport of decapods.

The Secretary General recalled that the advice of the Advisory Councils was directed at the European Commission and the Member States. Therefore, the MAC could still adopt advice to influence the upcoming interinstitutional negotiations, particularly the Council's position.

Katarina Sipic (AIPCE-CEP) informed that her organisation had been contacting MEPs to request the exclusion of decapods from the scope. While the timeline was challenging, in her view, it was important to take action on the topic. Otherwise, there would be mistreatment of decapods during transport.

María Luisa Álvarez Blanco (FEDEPESCA) informed that her organisation submitted several comments to MEPs concerning the legislative proposal, as it could impact the transport to small fishmongers. Ms Álvarez expressed support for the intervention made by Ms Sipic.

Adrien Simonnet (UMF) highlighted that the European Parliament was already agreeing on amendments. Therefore, the MAC would have to proceed promptly.

The Secretary General recalled that, as the interinstitutional negotiations had not yet initiated, there was still an opportunity to influence the final legislative text.

Javier Ojeda (FEAP) explained that, in the EU, there was no aquaculture production of decapods. Work on the welfare of decapods had been mainly pursued by NGOs.

Paulien Prent (Visfederatie) emphasised that the AIPCE-CEP policy paper provided a scientific description of transport of decapods. Ms Prent expressed availability to share the paper.

The Chair asked the Secretary General to contact the AAC Secretariat to check about previous work on the transport of aquatic animals. The Chair suggested to proceed with the development of advice via a written procedure, which should focus on the transport to market.

### Food Labelling

- **Presentation of the Special Report “Food labelling the EU – Consumers can get lost in the maze of labels” by Keit Pentus-Rosimannus (Member, European Court of Auditors)**

### Presentation

Keit Pentus-Rosimannus (European Court of Auditors) expressed hope that the Working Group would find the special report to be relevant and timely, even though the report did not address issues specific to



fishery and aquaculture products. The report responds to the increasing consumer demand for accurate and comprehensive food labelling, including on health, safety, and environmental aspects. Label-based choices impact consumer health and wellbeing, and food options have expanded. There has been a growing interest in food information and marking practices evolved. The recommendations are addressed to the European Commission.

Ms Pentus-Rosimannus informed that the Food Information to Consumers (FIC) Regulation ensures harmonised mandatory labelling and provides key information on nutrition and allergens. Seven out of 11 foreseen updates to the Regulation are pending. Three of updates have had not progress, namely on legibility, labelling of vegetarian/vegan food, and reference intakes. There are also outstanding actions regarding alcoholic beverages and origin labelling. There are also issues related to mandatory aspects, like food names, ingredient listing, and allergens, and issues related to voluntary information, such as nutrition claims, health claims, and labelling of organic products.

Ms Pentus-Rosimannus highlighted that information on labels can be confusing or misleading. Since labelling practices evolve continuously, these can be complex and confuse consumers. There is a growing number of voluntary labels. In 2013, 901 voluntary labels were identified. There are potentially misleading practices, for example on clean labels, uncertified qualities, misleading product names, and omission of information. There are environmental claims and risks of “greenwashing”. The legal basis is not always sufficient clear to prevent such practices. She argued that there was no systematic monitoring of consumer needs or label understanding by the Commission and the Member States. Insufficient attention is given to consumer information campaigns.

Ms Pentus-Rosimannus stated that control systems are in place, but there are significant shortcomings and weaknesses. The control systems can be complex and involve multiple authorities. The controls tend to focus on the mandatory information requirements, while the checks on voluntary information and on online retail are weak. In her view, food companies could take advantage of the weaknesses, for example on the lack of checks on nutrition claims, or on the lack of definition of “vegetarian” or “vegan”. The fines are not always dissuasive, effective, or proportionate. The reporting arrangements for Member States are cumbersome and lack added value.

Ms Pentus-Rosimannus informed that the report recommended to (1) address pending actions in the FIC and claims regulations, focusing on origin labelling and alcoholic beverages, (2) step up efforts to analyse labelling practices and, together with Member States, improve guidance for food companies, (3) systematically monitor consumer needs and their understanding of food labelling, (4) encourage Member States to strengthen their checks on voluntary labels and online retail, and (5) improve consistency and quality of data reported by Member States on controls and increase information sharing on food labelling issues with the public. The mentioned that, overall, the track record of implementation of recommendations of the Court of Auditors is positive, as the Commission has implemented 92% of the recommendations. In a few years, the Court of Auditor will follow-up on the implementation of the recommendations.





- **Exchange of views**

Emiel Brouckaert (EAPO) wanted to know whether “sustainability” labels had been addressed in the special report. Mr Brouckaert recalled that the European Commission had been considering the development of a sustainability label in the context of the marketing standards framework for fishery and aquaculture products.

Keit Pentus-Rosimannus (European Court of Auditors) drew attention to the recent Green Claims Directive, which was meant to avoid the extensive use of sustainability claims. At the moment, it was still too early to know how the directive would work in practice. The special report slightly touched on the topic, since there were similar issues related to the provision of voluntary information. No specific recommendations on the matter were made by the Court of Auditors. In her view, it was important to finalise the updates to the FIC Regulation.

Janne Posti (Conxemar) asked Ms Pentus-Rosimannus for more detail on how she viewed the recent adoption of the Green Claims Directive and its impact on environmental claims.

Keit Pentus-Rosimannus (European Court of Auditors) replied that it was too early to say. In her view, the directive went in the right direction. The Member States would have to update their national legislation. The Court of Auditors would be following the implementation carefully.

Laure Guillevic (WWF) wanted to know if Ms Pentus-Rosimannus believed that “traffic light” systems, based on colour coding, such as the Nutri-score label, were helpful for consumers.

Keit Pentus-Rosimannus (European Court of Auditors) responded that the European Court of Auditors had been careful not to choose the “best” label on nutritional aspects, since Member States have differing views on the preferred label. In her view, there were strong arguments in favour of the use of these labels, even though there were also some weaknesses. For consumers, the labels seem to be very easy to understand, but, in practice, the meaning of the colours is not always clear. It is not always clear whether the comparisons are made between product types or across all food products. The presence of similar products with different labels could also lead to fragmented information, confusing consumers.

María Luisa Álvarez Blanco (FEDEPESCA) argued that EU citizens had less and less knowledge on nutrition. Consumers were dependent on information that they did not always understand. In her view, consumers should be able to use knowledge learned at home. Ms Álvarez emphasised that it was important to avoid overwhelming consumers.

Keit Pentus-Rosimannus (European Court of Auditors) responded that the use of different labels aimed to provide a quick overview to consumers. Ms Pentus-Rosimannus underscored that it was important to have good data on how consumers understand labels. In her view, if labels are not accurate, it would be problematic. Therefore, an update on the collection of data was needed.



Pim Visser (NOVA) argued that even educated consumers were confused about food labels. Since consumers tend to prioritise price, Mr Visser wondered whether labels should be simplified. He added that it was necessary to have a marketing and communication perspective.

Keit Pentus-Rosimannus (European Court of Auditors) agreed that labels need to be understandable. Even in the case of the mandatory information requirements, there were issues related to the legibility and understanding. In the case of the voluntary provision of information by the producers, there were even more challenges, since operators used these for marketing reasons.

Pierre Commère (PACT'ALIM) asked about the provision of additional information about the food products via QR codes or web-based platforms.

Keit Pentus-Rosimannus (European Court of Auditors) replied that many apps were available, particularly in the case of online retail. Since producers want recognisable packages, there were doubts on whether QR codes were really a solution. The use of labels could be seen to make the product more interesting. She exemplified that, in the case of online retail, legibility was not an issue.

María Luisa Álvarez Blanco (FEDEPESCA) argued that not all countries provide education to citizens about food, which translated into a lack of capacity from consumers to understand their food and nutrition. In her view, simple labels are positive, but there are many complexities behind it. In her view, citizens should know more about food. Ms Álvarez Blanco called for the introduction of mandatory education on nutritional information in Spain, in a similar manner to Japan.

Keit Pentus-Rosimannus (European Court of Auditors) responded that the issue of education was not directly addressed in the report. Ms Pentus-Rosimannus emphasised that labels aim to transmit information, but these need to be clear and understandable.

Janne Posti (Conxemar) expressed concern about the rules for plant-based products imitating fishery and aquaculture products, since the EU legislative framework does not provide specific rules. Mr Posti highlighted that the MAC previously adopted advice on the matter. He argued that, from a nutritional point-of-view, fishery products cannot be replaced, in line with the Mediterranean diet. In his view, there was room for improvement of the legislation to avoid the use of commercial names of fishery products.

Keit Pentus-Rosimannus (European Court of Auditors) responded that the topic was not directly addressed in the report but recognised that there could be issues.

Patrick Murphy (IS&WFPO) expressed concern about the misrepresentation of products, particularly in the context of social media. Mr Murphy drew attention to a recent case in Ireland where prawns were being presented as wild-caught Atlantic products, when, in reality, these prawns were farmed and from a different region.



Keit Pentus-Rosimannus (European Court of Auditors) emphasised that the current legislative framework already foresees that labels cannot be misleading. If a product is placed on the market with misleading information, the case should be addressed by the regulators.

Patrick Murphy (IS&WFPO) highlighted that, in the case of fishery products, operators were obliged to record all of the information about the catching. Mr Murphy called on the European Court of Auditors to look into the presence of misleading information on the market and the corresponding distortion of competition.

Keit Pentus-Rosimannus (European Court of Auditors) responded that, in her view, it was not necessary to adopt further legislation on the matter. The FIC Regulation was applicable to cases of misleading information. The national authorities were responsible for the implementation, even though she recognised that checks were rare. If a complaint was submitted to the regulatory authorities, a solution would have to be provided, since the FIC Regulation already imposes rules against misleading information.

### Consumer Information

- **Presentation of the Special Eurobarometer 558 on “EU consumer habits regarding fishery and aquaculture products” by Commission representative (DG MARE A4)**

#### Presentation

Christophe Vande Weyer (DG MARE) presented the Special Eurobarometer 558 on “EU consumer habits regarding fishery and aquaculture products”, which was the fourth survey on the topic. The surveys take place every two or three years. The survey aims to understand consumer habits and perceptions, including concerns about prices. In terms of novelties, the survey investigates whether perceptions on prices and purchasing behaviour have changed, it covers algae products, and it addresses the correlation between consumption and the closeness to coastlines.

Mr Vande Weyer explained that the survey covered the 27 Member States. The survey took place from September to October 2024 with 26,510 interviews completed. The target population was 15+. The results of the survey showed that 58% of Europeans say they eat fishery or aquaculture products at home at least once a month, and 31% of Europeans say they eat fishery or aquaculture products at restaurants and other food outlets at least once a month. The cost of the product has become a key factor when buying fishery and aquaculture products (55%, which means +1pp since 2021). Their taste, smell or appearance are also a reason for almost never or never eating them (41%, meaning +1 pp). In terms of preference for the production, 36% of consumer prefer their products to be wild caught (+4 pp), 31% have no preference (+1 pp), and 8% prefer farmed products (+1pp). 18% of consumers say that they have eaten seaweed or algae products at least once a month over the last 12 months.

Mr Vande Weyer further explained that the findings illustrate a consumer landscape that values affordability, practicality, and transparency in the consumption of fishery and aquaculture products. Cost affects





consumers' decisions, leading to more cautious decisions in their spending on fishery and aquaculture products when purchasing power is tight. Purchase and consumption of frozen and tinned products are surpassing fresh products, likely due to their convenience and affordability. Practical and product-specific information on the labels remain essential for half of the respondents: expiration date, species name, method of production (wild or farmed) and origin are the most expected information, both for processed and non-processed products. The survey highlights the trade-off that consumers face between price and sustainability considerations. When introducing measures to enhance sustainability, it is crucial to consider both affordability for consumers and competitiveness of EU producers. In such context, aquaculture products may also be a cost-effective source of sustainable aquatic products. Promotion campaigns should focus on specific attributes of aquaculture products and sector (e.g. freshness, local, affordability, readiness, etc.).

Mr Vande Weyer informed that EUMOFA would also conduct a study on the consumption of fishery and aquaculture products, which would aim to complement the survey with a quantitative approach. The Commission representative recalled that a scoping paper for the study had been shared with the MAC. The study was expected to be published in early 2026. He took the opportunity to inform that EUMOFA would have a stand at the upcoming Seafood Global Expo. In the context of the fair, EUMOFA would also hold a conference about the consumption of fishery and aquaculture products.

- **Exchange of views**

Janne Posti (Conxemar) asked about the coverage and methodology of the survey, since the interviews seemed to have been taken place mainly in Northern Europe. There seemed to be limited interviews in Spain. In his views, this could have impacted the results of the study.

Christophe Vande Weyer (DG MARE) responded that the aim was to have representative samples with similar margins of error. Mr Vande Weyer expressed availability to look into the coverage and methodology and to provide a reply in writing<sup>1</sup>.

Guus Pastoor (Visfederatie) expressed agreement with the concerns raised by Mr Posti, as there are differences in consumer behaviour between Northern and Southern Europe. Mr Pastoor stated that consumers want more information, but questions remained on their willingness to pay for the associated costs. A growing number of regulatory obligations were translating into cost increases, which were not always transmitted to consumers. He wondered whether consumers were aware of these costs. Regarding algae and seaweed products, he expressed doubts about the availability of algae products in the EU market. On the consumer awareness about aquaculture products, he emphasised that aquaculture products were not

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<sup>1</sup> After the meeting, Mr Vande Weyer shared the methodological background of the survey with the Secretariat via email message. According to the Commission representative, it confirms the geographical representativity of the samples.



necessarily cheaper. Even though aquaculture salmon products were expensive, these remained popular on the market. He recognised that aquaculture products were needed to supply the market.

Christophe Vande Weyer (DG MARE) acknowledged that there is indeed a trade-off when it comes to providing information to consumers and costs, plus there were policy objectives to account for. In future editions of the survey, questions could be added about willingness to pay. On algae products, Mr Vande Weyer recognises that these products were a new trend in the market and not mainstream. There would likely be a follow up on the topic under the next edition of the survey. As for aquaculture products, the survey indicates that a significant part of consumers does not have a preference on the production type, which means that there is a potential to increase awareness efforts about these products.

Guus Pastoor (Visfederatie) exemplified that seabass and seabream were already successful aquaculture products on the market, but the issue was the insufficient supply.

Patrick Murphy (IS&WFPO) requested more information on what caused the change in the priorities of consumers, particularly the decreased interest in environmental aspects. Mr Murphy suggested to expand the survey to include questions about the producers. In his view, consumers should be aware of the reduction in operators, the consolidation of companies, and the costs faced.

Christophe Vande Weyer (DG MARE) responded that, at that point, only assumptions could be made on the changes of priorities of consumers. Consumers showed an increasing sensitivity to prices. There was a general pressure on the revenues of households. The war in Ukraine led to an increase in energy prices. Across the Member States, there are differences in the impact to revenues. For example, in some Member States, there was an indexation of the salaries to inflation. Products perceived as “higher end” have lowered in priority for consumers. Mr Vande Weyer informed that DG MARE had expected the recent high inflation would have an impact on demand already earlier. He stated that he took note of the comments made, adding that it was up to the operators to communicate on the matters raised.

Vanya Vulperhorst (Oceana) highlighted that her organisation launched a campaign, “Follow the Fish”, on consumer information, which aimed to expand the minimum requirements, including for the fishery and aquaculture products sold in the HORECA sector. Ms Vulperhorst recalled that DG MARE launched an awareness campaign on fishery and aquaculture products, the “Taste the Ocean” campaign, but she wondered if other angles had been considered by the Commission services. She drew attention to the prices of EU products and the competition with imported products. In her view, the tool on the sustainability of fishery products being developed by DG MARE could be useful.

Christophe Vande Weyer (DG MARE) acknowledged that there was a complexity between supplying the market and the increasing dependency on imports. Mr Vande Weyer emphasised that it was necessary to ensure the competitiveness and profitability of producers. He expressed availability to discuss the issues raised with his communication colleagues. The survey demonstrated the importance of the price in purchasing decisions.



Emiel Brouckaert (EAPO) wanted to know whether the survey included questions on the preference between EU produced products and imported supply. Mr Brouckaert drew attention to the concerns raised in the recent special report on food labelling of the European Court of Auditors, as there was a tension between providing more information to consumers and confusing the consumers with too much information.

Christophe Vande Weyer (DG MARE) responded that there was no question specifically on that preference. The survey included a question about the interest on the information about the flag of the fishing vessels, which showed relatively low interest. Mr Vande Weyer responded that the European Commission's views were in line with those of the European Court of Auditors. In his view, the current regulatory framework was fit for purpose, but enforcement needed to be improved.

Adrien Simonnet (UMF) drew attention to the issues of legibility of labels and understanding by consumers. According to several French studies, consumers faced difficulties in understanding information about origin and other aspects foreseen in the Common Market Organisation Regulation.

Christophe Vande Weyer (DG MARE) responded that the survey did not look directly into the issue of legibility. Mr Vande Weyer exemplified that many consumers did not understand the FAO areas. Mr Vande Weyer recalled that DG MARE commissioned a study on the state-of-play of the Common Market Organisation Regulation, which would address the pertinence of the consumer information provisions.

María Luisa Álvarez Blanco (FEDEPESCA) expressed concern about the views on prices. Operators were unable to transmit the real value of fishery and aquaculture products, as consumers perceived them to be expensive. Ms Álvarez argued that it was necessary to work on the consumer understanding of the health value of the fishery and aquaculture products as well as of the demanding work conditions faced by the operators. She emphasised that there was a difference between price and value. She argued that there was a lack of marketing, as it impacted the way that consumers use their time and budgets.

Christophe Vande Weyer (DG MARE) stated that he took note of the comments, adding that the Spanish authorities communicated similar suggestions. Mr Vande Weyer agreed that fishery and aquaculture products should be presented in an attractive way that reflects their intrinsic value.

Guus Pastoor (Visfederatie) highlighted that surveys in the Netherlands showed similar patterns of decrease in consumption, particularly among young people. Mr Pastoor argued that, if someone does not receive education on eating fish, then they will not consumer in older age. In his view, there was no significant shift from fishery and aquaculture products to vegetarian products, but here was a significant shift towards chicken products due to the attractive price. In his view, it was necessary to analyse consumer trends across age groups in comparison with other products, including vegetarian products.

Christophe Vande Weyer (DG MARE) committed to looking into the matter for future editions of the survey.

### Common Fisheries Policy



- **Consideration of draft advice on the evaluation of the Common Fisheries Policy (questions 3, 5, 9)**

The Secretary General recalled that the draft advice had also been considered by Working Group 1. As proposed by Working Group 1, after the meeting, the document would be circulated for consideration via written procedure.

Vanya Vulperhorst (Oceana) expressed overall satisfaction with the document. In her view, the text should outline the legal framework on consumer information and include the different views among the membership.

Christine Absil (Good Fish Foundation) agreed that it was relevant to include the different points-of-view on the different types of consumer information. On the reference to voluntary certification schemes, Ms Absil argued that these should not be perceived as competing with the mandatory information requirements. The certification schemes provided a different function. Issues of “greenwashing” and chain of custody should also be taken into account.

Janne Posti (Conxemar) emphasised the importance of consistency, as it was difficult to avoid repeating previously adopted advice.

Adrien Simonnet (UMF) expressed support from his organisation to the inclusion of flag State information under the mandatory requirements.

Jules Danto (EAPO) called for the maintenance of the consensus positions, while avoiding going into the individual positions of each member organisation.

Christine Absil (Good Fish Foundation) expressed preference for the inclusion of the minority positions. Ms Absil recalled that, in past opportunities, the European Commission showed interest in knowing these positions too.

Alessandro Manghisi (Aquaculture Stewardship Council) agreed with Ms Absil.

Guus Pastoor (Visfederatie) also expressed agreement with Ms Absil.

- **Way forward**

The Secretary General informed that the suggestions would be integrated into the document. Afterwards, the document would be formally circulated via ordinary written procedure to be considered once again.

## AOB

- **Communication Campaign on EU Aquaculture**



## Presentation

Elizabeth Pek (DG MARE) presented the recently launched communication campaign on EU aquaculture. Ms Pek informed that the objective of the campaign was to increase awareness, understanding, and support for the development of aquaculture in the EU by focusing on the people behind the sector (aquaculture producers) and their role in sustainable food production. The target audience is EU citizens aged 25-45 who influence or have a stake in the development of EU aquaculture.

In the context of the Commission's priority of sustaining our quality of life, including food security, water, and nature, Ms Pek recalled that aquaculture is growing worldwide but not as quickly in the EU, facing obstacles such as lack of social acceptance for new aquaculture sites and insufficient awareness of its importance. The main messages of the campaign highlight that EU aquaculture creates jobs, provides healthy and nutritious protein, reduces reliance on food imports, and is supported by EU guidelines for sustainability.

Ms Pek informed that the campaign launched on 25 March 2025 with an event in Brussels. The campaign would run for three months across the EU, and included a paid and organic social media campaign, influencer involvement, and a range of digital assets available in 23 EU languages (except Gaelic). The campaign features testimonials from nine aquaculture producers, showcasing their work through videos and social media posts. Influencers will visit aquaculture sites and share content in various languages. To support the campaign, stakeholders were encouraged to share campaign materials, use the hashtag #EUaquaculture, and engage in activities to promote aquaculture awareness at national or local levels.





### Summary of action items

- Animal Transport
  - Secretary General to contact the AAC Secretariat to check about previous work on the transport of aquatic animals.
  - Secretariat to prepare a proposal of draft advice, with a market-perspective, to be considered by the Working Group.
- Common Fisheries Policy
  - Following the integration of the suggestions of the members, draft advice to be considered via written procedure.



## Attendance List

Representative	Organisation	Role
Adrien Simonnet	Union du Mareyage Français (UMF)	Member
Alessandro Manghisi	Aquaculture Stewardship Council (ASC)	Member
Alex Vancoppenolle	Belgium	Observer
Alexandre Bonneau	SNCE	Member
Amandine Menu	PACT'ALIM	Member
Àngels Segura Unió	AECOC	Member
Anna Rokicka	Polish Association of Fish Processors (PSPR)	Member
Antonio Álvarez	FEDEPESCA	Member
Benoît Thomassen	Federation of European Aquaculture Producers (FEAP)	Chair
Camille Maisonneuve	Market Advisory Council (MAC)	Secretariat
Caroline Gamblin	PACT'ALIM	Member
Catherine Pons	Federation of European Aquaculture Producers (FEAP)	Member
Charlotte Gugenheim	European Commission	Expert
Christine Absil	Good Fish Foundation	Member
Christophe Vande Weyer	European Commission	Expert
Cristina Pita	Spanish National Research Council	Observer
Dominic Rihan	Killybegs Fishermen's Organisation (KFO)	Member
Ellen Rietsema	European Commission	Expert
Elizabeth Pek	European Commission	Expert
Emiel Brouckaert	European Association of Fish Producers Organisations (EAPO)	Member
Fabian Schäfer	Bundesverband der deutschen Fischindustrie und des Fischgrosshandels e.V.	Member
Fabijan Hrvatin Peronja	Ribarska Zadruga Friška Riba	Member
Gaetane Le Breuil	European Fishmeal	Member
Gerd Heinen	European Commission	Expert
Gisela Costa	University of Aveiro	Observer



Representative	Organisation	Role
Giuseppe Scordella	COPA-COGECA	Member
Guus Pastoor	Visfederatie	Member
Hommel Kassa	SCNE	Member
Iñigo Azqueta Ruiz-Gallardón	ANFACO-CECOPECA	Member
Ioannis Antonopoulos	European Commission	Expert
Isabel Alonzo Cabezas	Spain	Observer
Janne Posti	Conxemar	Member
Javier Ojeda	Federation of European Aquaculture Producers (FEAP)	Member
Jean-Marie Robert	Les Pêcheurs de Bretagne	Member
Jens Hons Mathiesen	Danish Seafood Association	Member
João Pereira	FRUCOM	Member
John Lynch	Irish South and East Fish Producers Organisation (ISEFPO)	Member
José Basilio Otero Rodríguez	Federación Nacional de Cofradías de Pescadores (FNCP)	Member
José Carlos Escalera Aguilar	FECOPESCA	Member
Juan Manuel Trujillo Castillo	ETF	Member
Juana Parada	OR.PA.GU.	Member
Jules Danto	European Association of Fish Producers Organisations (EAPF)	Member
Julien Daudu	Environmental Justice Foundation	Member
Katarina Sipic	EU Fish Processors and Traders Association (AIPCE) / European Federation of National Organizations of Importers and Exporters of Fish (CEP)	Member
Keit Pentus-Rosimannus	European Court of Auditors	Expert
Lana Bezinovic Sostar	European Commission	Expert
Laure Guillevic	WWF	Member
Linda Zanki Duvnjak	Ribarska Zadruga Friška Riba	Member
María Luisa Álvarez Blanco	FEDEPESCA	Member
Malgorzata Kieliszewska	Poland	Observer



Representative	Organisation	Role
Marcus Breuer	European Parliament	Observer
Niall Gerlitz	European Commission	Expert
Nicolás Fernández	OPP72	Member
Olivier Hottlet	FRUCOM	Member
Patrick Murphy	Irish South & West Fish Producers Organisation	Member
Paulien Prent	Visfederatie	Member
Pedro Luis Casado López	OPP80	Member
Pedro Reis Santos	Market Advisory Council (MAC)	Secretariat
Pierre Commère	PACT'ALIM / Eurothon	Member
Pieter Roden	Feedback EU	Member
Pim Visser	NOVA	Member
Poul Melgaard Jensen	Danish Seafood Association	Member
Rafael Piñero Scapachini	EuroCommerce	Member
Rosalie Tukker	Europêche	Member
Sergio López García	OPP7 Burela	Member
Stanislav Ralchev	European Commission	Expert
Stefan Meyer	Bundesverband der deutschen Fischindustrie und des Fischgrosshandels e.V.	Member
Szilvia Mihalfy	Federation of European Aquaculture Producers (FEAP)	Member
Thibault Pivetta	European Molluscs' Producers Association (EMPA)	Member
Thomas Kruse	Danish Fishermen P.O. / Danish Pelagic Producers Organisation (DPPO)	Member
Vanya Vulperhorst	Oceana	Member
Xavier Pires	ALIF	Member
Yobana Bermúdez	EU Fish Processors and Traders Association (AIPCE)	Member

