

WORK PROGRAMME FOR MARKET AC

Period: 01/10/2025 to 30/09/2026 (Year 10)

Background

As determined by point (b) of paragraph 2 of Article 43 of the Common Fisheries Policy Regulation, the Market Advisory Council (MAC) was established to promote a balanced representation of all stakeholders and to contribute to the achievement of the policy's objectives in the field of the EU market of fisheries and aquaculture products. The MAC was founded in 2016 under the legal form of a non-profit organisation based in Brussels and co-funded by the European Commission.

The General Assembly of the MAC is composed of 73 European, national and local organisations from 13 Member States (Belgium, Croatia, Denmark, France, Germany, Greece, Ireland, Italy, Netherlands, Poland, Portugal, Spain, Sweden), representing the entire value chain (fisheries producers, aquaculture farmers, fish auctions, processors, traders, suppliers, retailers, trade unions) and other interest groups (environmental and development NGOs, consumer groups). The Executive Committee of the MAC is currently composed of 21 members distributed in the following manner:

Value Supply Chain (60%)	
Primary Producers (Catching)	
	EAPO
	Europêche
	COPA-COGECA
	Killybegs Fishermen's Organisation
	Les Pêcheurs de Bretagne
Primary Producers (Aquaculture)	
	EMPA
	FEAP
Processors, traders, suppliers and retailers	
	AIPCE
	CEP
	European Fishmeal
	EuroCommerce
	FEDEPESCA
	CONXEMAR
	ANFACO-CECOPESCA
Workers (Trade Unions)	
	ETF
Other Interest Groups (40%)	
	MSC
	Oceana
	WWF
	ClientEarth
	EJF
	Good Fish

In line with Article 7a of Commission Delegated Regulation (EU) 2015/242, the MAC subjected itself to an independent performance review, which resulted in the adoption of a report in March 2022¹.

¹ <https://marketac.eu/performance-review-2019-2022/>

Mission and objectives of the MAC

MAC WORK PRIORITIES

Overarching long term and short-term work priorities (at least 3 priorities)

1) Common Fisheries Policy & Common Market Organisation

In 2024, the European Commission launched a consultation process on the evaluation of the Common Fisheries Policy (CFP) Regulation². The evaluation considers five key criteria (effectiveness, efficiency, relevance, coherence, and added value) to determine how the Regulation is performing regarding its objectives as well as existing and emerging needs. As one of the pillars of the CFP, the Common Market Organisation (CMO) is part of the evaluation. The evaluation is assessing how the current CMO Regulation has contributed to achieving the objectives of the CFP. To support this analysis, DG MARE commissioned an external study on Producer Organisations and consumer information.

Under the Work Programme of Year 9 (2024-2025), the MAC committed to providing advice on the evaluation of the CFP Regulation, including of the CMO elements. Previously, the MAC adopted advice on the functioning of the CFP³ and on the functioning of the CMO⁴ to assist the Commission in the preparation of the corresponding implementation reports.

2) European Ocean Pact

In 2025, the European Commission published a communication titled “The European Ocean Pact”⁵, aiming for a comprehensive strategy to better protect the ocean, promote a thriving blue economy and support the well-being of people living in coastal areas. The Pact brings together EU ocean policies under one single reference framework, addressing the significant threats facing the ocean, coastal communities, islands, and outermost regions.

The communication foresees various initiatives of interest to the MAC, such as the establishment of a high-level Ocean Board to monitor and implement the Pact, evaluation of the CMO Regulation to assess the effectiveness of the current labelling rules, EU-wide campaign on the benefits and the value added of EU-produced and sustainable aquatic foods, level playing field for European fishers, the evaluation and possible revision of the CFP Regulation, improvement of the sustainability of imported fishery and aquaculture products under the Autonomous Tariff Quotas (ATQs) regime, ratification and full implementation of the World Trade Organisation’s Fisheries Subsidies Agreement, addressing “flags of convenience”, zero-tolerance approach to Illegal, Unreported, and Unregulated (IUU) fishing, digitalisation of the CACH IT system, and a new strategic approach to fisheries external action.

3) Competitiveness - simplification and reduction of administrative burden

Under the Competitiveness Compass for the EU⁶, the Commission identified simplification as a priority, particularly a systematic effort to make procedures for accessing EU funds and getting EU administrative decisions simpler, faster, and lighter. The Compass sets a target of cutting the administrative burden by at least 25% for firms and by at least 35% for SMEs. These efforts are also detailed in the Commission’s communication on implementation and simplification “a simpler and faster Europe”⁷.

² https://ec.europa.eu/info/law/better-regulation/have-your-say/initiatives/14203-Common-fisheries-policy-evaluation_en

³ <https://marketac.eu/advice-on-the-functioning-of-the-cfp/>

⁴ <https://marketac.eu/2022-report-on-the-functioning-of-the-common-market-organisation-cmo/>

⁵ https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/ALL/?uri=comnat:COM_2025_0281_FIN

⁶ https://commission.europa.eu/topics/eu-competitiveness/competitiveness-compass_en

⁷ <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=celex:52025DC0047>

4) Trade Agreements & Trade Policy Instruments

The EU market is heavily dependent on imported supplies to meet consumer demand. As part of its work to improve understanding of consumption trends and price developments, the MAC will continue to monitor and offer advice on both offensive and defensive opportunities in relation to the various ongoing EU negotiations with third countries on possible new free trade deals. The EU market is not only affected by multilateral and bilateral trade agreements, but also by other policy instruments such as the Generalised Scheme of Preferences (GSP, Everything But Arms, GSP+) and the ATQs Regulation.

The MAC will continue to monitor the initiatives of the Commission to improve the sustainability of imported fishery and aquaculture products under the ATQ regime⁸.

5) Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated (IUU) Fishing

The EU is a pioneer in the global fight against IUU fishing and the Commission has taken a leadership position by promoting a “zero-tolerance” approach. The EU IUU Regulation established an EU-wide system to prevent, deter and eliminate the import of IUU fishery products into the EU market and promotes reforms in third countries through its “carding system”. The Commission services have continuously updated the MAC on the cooperation with third countries and corresponding evaluations to promote reforms. As practice from previous years, the MAC will continue to produce advice to the European Commission on an *ad hoc* basis when significant cases of IUU fishing products entering the EU market are known or when actions take place under the “carding system”⁹.

6) Forced Labour

Forced labour and other human rights violations can be present on-board fishing vessels and throughout the supply chain. In the past, the MAC has provided advice concerning the occurrence of forced labour in the global supply chain of fishery and aquaculture products¹⁰. The MAC will continue to advise on this matter, on an *ad hoc* basis. The MAC will keep in mind that cases of forced labour can be linked to IUU fishing. Therefore, when relevant, these issues may be addressed jointly.

7) European Market Observatory for Fisheries and Aquaculture (EUMOFA)

As the European Commission’s market intelligence tool, EUMOFA increases market knowledge, analyses EU market dynamics and helps better informed business decisions and policymaking. The ex-post information provided by EUMOFA on volumes, values and prices of fisheries and aquaculture products, including imports and exports, is greatly appreciated by the members for the MAC. Among these, the annual “The EU Fish Market” has particular importance and the MAC aims to maintain the established annual exchange of views on this report.

In line with previous practice¹¹, the MAC will continue to provide suggestions for the annual work programme of EUMOFA, including on species profiles, thematic analyses, price structure analyses, and EUMOFA Talks.

8) Scientific, Technical and Economic Committee for Fisheries (STECF)

The MAC has an established collaboration with STECF, which is particularly focused on the Annual Economic Report on the EU fishing Fleet, the Economic Report of the EU Aquaculture Sector, and the Economic Report of the EU Fish Processing Industry. The practice includes presentations and exchanges of views on the mentioned reports. The MAC will also aim to ensure representation, as observers, in the relevant STECF Expert Working Group meetings. When appropriate, the MAC will also provide feedback on the reports, promote the submission of

⁸ <https://marketac.eu/integration-of-sustainability-criteria-under-the-regime-of-autonomous-tariff-quotas-for-certain-fishery-products/>

⁹ E.g., <https://marketac.eu/illegal-unreported-and-unregulated-fishing-in-the-outermost-regions-of-the-european-union/>

¹⁰ E.g., <https://marketac.eu/forced-labour/>

¹¹ <https://marketac.eu/suggestions-for-eumofa-work-programme-2024/>

additional data by the members, and suggest topics of specific analysis, such as species, fleet segments, and geographical areas that should be considered by STECF, as well as more detailed data on aquaculture and processing¹².

9) Fisheries Control Regulation

Following five years of negotiations on the revision of the EU fisheries control system regulation, the revised Fisheries Control Regulation was published on 20 December 2023, and its provisions will progressively enter into force between 10 January 2024 and 10 January 2029. From a market-perspective, several provisions of the revised Regulation are quite relevant for the entire supply chain, particularly on the traceability of fishery and aquaculture products and the new CATCH IT tool. The relationship between these provisions and the CMO Regulation, particularly on labelling and information to consumers is also especially relevant.

Under the eight operational year, the MAC adopted advice on the Terms of Reference of the study on feasible traceability systems and procedures for prepared and preserved fishery and aquaculture products¹³. Under the ninth operational year, the MAC adopted advice on the planned delegated act on additional rules for traceability of fresh and frozen fishery and aquaculture products and markings of lots.

The MAC will continue to assist the Commission in the implementation of the new provisions of the Fisheries Control Regulation, particularly the development of the study on feasible traceability systems, the adoption of the delegated rules, and the entry into force of the digital catch certificate (CATCH IT) system.

Work priorities identified for each Working Group and Focus Group (where available)

Working Group 1 (EU Production):

- Common Market Organisation (production and marketing plans, producers and interbranch organisations, planning, stabilisation of markets)
- European Maritime and Fisheries and Aquaculture Fund
- Marketing Standards framework
- Implication of Fisheries Control Regulation on EU production
- Landing obligation (e.g., available uses, market outlets, effects on prices, socioeconomic aspects, infrastructure and cooperation across the supply chain)
- EUMOFA's work programme (species profiles, case studies, conferences)
- Economic viability of the fleet and of the aquaculture sector (collaboration with STECF)
- Sustainability criteria for fishery and aquaculture products

Working Group 2 (EU Markets):

- Supply (annual status and trends)
- Trade with third countries (Community Customs Code, General System of Preferences, Free Trade Agreements, Economic Partnership Agreements, World Trade Organisation)
- Imports and tariffs (tariff suspensions, tariff quotas)
- Price developments "from sea to table"
- Market trends and consumer behaviour (responsible sourcing and processing)
- Banning IUU fishery products from entering the EU market, fight against forced labour, due diligence

¹² See e.g., <https://marketac.eu/stecfs-annual-economic-report-on-the-eu-fishing-fleet-2025/>, <https://marketac.eu/inclusion-of-indicators-of-economic-sustainability-in-the-stecfs-eu-aquaculture-sector-report/>, <https://marketac.eu/stecfs-economic-report-on-the-fish-processing-industry-2021/>

¹³ <https://marketac.eu/terms-of-reference-of-the-study-on-feasible-traceability-systems-and-procedures-for-prepared-and-preserved-fishery-and-aquaculture-products/>

- Implication of Fisheries Control Regulation EU market (traceability along the supply chain/ transmission of consumer information)
- Economic performance of the EU fish & seafood processing sector (collaboration with STECF)

Working Group 3 (EU Controls and Sanitary Issues, Consumer Rules):

- Consumer information and labelling (FIC and CMO Regulations)
- Voluntary information, including certification schemes
- Hygiene and sanitary issues
- Plastic and marine pollution
- Substantiation and communication of explicit environmental claims
- Product Environmental Footprint Category Rules for Marine Fish

Other possible issues of interest:

- European Oceans Pact
- Competitiveness (simplification and reduction of administrative burden)
- 2040 Vision for Fisheries and Aquaculture
- Strategy for External EU Fisheries Action
- Energy transition of the EU's fisheries and aquaculture sector
- Indicators for fishery and aquaculture products, dealing with environmental, social, and economic sustainability

Planned recommendations for year 10:

No	Issue/subject	Link with the CFP	WG/FG at the origin of the recommendation	Planned date of adoption (if available)
1	Strategy for External EU Fisheries Action (sustainable value chains and trade, fight against IUU fishing, market-dimension of SFPAs)	Article 2.5.g)	WG2	November 2025
2	2026 Annual Economic Report on the EU Fishing Fleet (Terms of Reference)	Article 2.5.c)	WG1	January 2026
3	Market-related aspects of the revised Fisheries Control Regulation (traceability, marking of lots, catch certificates)	Article 2.5.g)	WG2	May 2026
4	Work Programme of EUMOFA, including suggestions of case studies and talks	Article 2.5.g)	WG1	May 2026
5	FAO's Committee on Fisheries (EU's mandate)	Article 2.5.c)	WG2	May 2026
6	Commission's report on the evaluation of the Common Fisheries Policy Regulation, incl. the Common Market Organisation Regulation	Article 2.5.g)	WG1, WG2, WG3	July 2026

7	Competitiveness – simplification and reduction of administrative burden	Article 2.5.c)	WG1, WG2, WG3	September 2026
8	Fights against Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated (IUU) Fishing & Forced Labour, Due diligence	Article 2.5.g)	WG2	September 2026
9	Trade (e.g., FTAs, ATQs, GSP)	Article 2.5.e)	WG2	September 2026
10	Economic Report on the EU Processing Sector	Article 2.5.c)	WG2	September 2026

Planned participation to Commission public consultations

Topic/subject	Link with the CFP	Deadline for the EU Survey (if available)	Planned date for adoption (if available)

MAC planning of meetings

MAC PLANNING OF MEETINGS (from 01/10/2025 to 30/09/2026)

No	Date (for the first 6 months, please provide precise dates)	Topics / Subjects of meeting	Type of meeting (physical/planned/hybrid)	European Commission participation requested (yes/no)	If Commission participation requested, specific issues to be dealt with	Priority for a Commission participation (from 1 to 4) (1= highest priority)
1	November 2025	- Annual Economic Report on the EU Fishing Fleet	Working Group 1 Online (Zoom)	Yes	- Presentation of Annual Economic Report on the EU Fishing Fleet	2
2	November 2025	- Strategy for External EU Fisheries Action - Trade	Working Group 2 Online (Zoom)	No		
3	November 2025	- European Ocean Pact	Working Group 3 Online (Zoom)	Yes	- Update on European Ocean Pact initiatives	2
4	November 2025	- Competitiveness - Adoption of advice	Executive Committee Online (Zoom)	Yes	- Presentation of Competitiveness Compass and communication on simplification	2
5	January 2026	- Annual Economic Report on the EU Fishing Fleet	Working Group 1 Physical (Oostende)	No		
6	January 2026	- EUMOFA's EU Fish Market Report - Trade - AIPCE's Finfish Study	Working Group 2 Physical (Oostende)	Yes	- Presentation of EUMOFA EU Fish Market - Update on trade developments	2
7	January 2026	- Consumer information	Working Group 3 Physical (Oostende)	No		

8	January 2026	- Formal approval of work programme & budget - Appointment of Executive Committee & chairmanship positions (2026-2029)	General Assembly Physical (Oostende)	No		
9	January 2026	- Adoption of advice	Executive Committee Physical (Brussels)	No		
10	March 2026	- Work Programme of EUMOFA	Working Group 1 Online (Zoom)	Yes	- Presentation of the Work Programme of EUMOFA	2
11	March 2026	- Trade - IUU Carding System - Competitiveness	Working Group 2 Online (Zoom)	Yes	- Update on trade developments - Update on IUU carding system	2
12	March 2026	- Common Fisheries Policy	Working Group 3 Online (Zoom)	Yes	- Update on Common Fisheries Policy	2
13	March 2026	- Adoption of advice - Update on work and finances	Executive Committee Online (Zoom)	No		
14	June 2026	- Common Market Organisation	Working Group 1 Physical (Brussels)	Yes	- Following the Commission's report on the evaluation of the Common Fisheries Policy, update on Producer Organisation rules	2
15	June 2025	- Fisheries Control Regulation	Working Group 2 Physical (Brussels)	Yes	- Update on Fisheries Control Regulation	2
16	June 2025	- Common Market Organisation	Working Group 3 Physical (Brussels)	Yes	- Following the Commission's report on the evaluation of the Common Fisheries Policy, update on labelling and consumer information rules	2
17	June 2026	- Update on work done and finances - FAO's Committee on Fisheries	Executive Committee Physical (Brussels)	Yes	- Update on EU's mandate for the FAO's Committee on Fisheries	2

18	June 2026	- Evolution of the EU's aquaculture production & of the EU fisheries and aquaculture market	10 th Anniversary Event & Conference (with AAC) Physical (Brussels)	Yes	- High-level presentation on the evolution of aquaculture production & of the fisheries and aquaculture market	1
19	July 2026	- Preparation of draft work programme and budget of the next operational year	Executive Committee Online (Zoom)	No		
20	September 2026	- STECF biennial Economic Report	Working Group 1 Physical (Brussels)	No		
21	September 2026	- Trade	Working Group 2 Physical (Brussels)	Yes	- Update on trade developments	2
22	September 2026	- Hygiene and sanitary issues	Working Group 3 Physical (Brussels)	Yes	- Update on hygiene and sanitary issues	2
23	September 2026	- Update on work done and finances	Executive Committee Physical (Brussels)	No		