

Working Group 1: EU Production

Minutes

Thursday 11 June (14:00 – 17:30 CEST)

Copa Cogeca (Meeting Room B), Rue de Trèves 61, 1040 Brussels

Interpretation in EN, ES, FR

Welcome from the Chair, Julien Lamothe

[Presentation](#)

Adoption of the agenda and of the last meeting's minutes (23.03.26): adopted.

Action points

- EU Strategies for Islands and Coastal Communities:
 - Secretariat to circulate a questionnaire to the members to collect inputs, which will serve as basis for the development, via an urgent written procedure, of draft advice, to be finalised during the month of April 2026.
 - Advice adopted on 24 April 2026
- Multiannual Financial Framework:
 - Secretariat to request, via email message, in advance of the June 2026 meeting, further information from DG MARE on the proposed budget expenditure tracking and performance framework.
 - Agenda point scheduled (15:30 CET)
- EU Aquaculture Campaign
 - Agenda point on the development of the 2027 campaign for aquatic foods to be scheduled under the draft agenda of the September 2026 meeting
 - Pending

Common Fisheries Policy

- **Exchange of views on the evaluation of the Common Fisheries Policy Regulation**

The Secretary General provided an overview of the key elements of the advice on “Evaluation of the Common Fisheries Policy (2014-2024)” adopted on 8 July 2025. According to the advice, the economic sustainability of the fisheries and aquaculture value chain is increasingly at risk. Particular concerns include rising costs, uncertainty, labour shortages, weak generational renewal, reduced availability of local fishery products, limited development of aquaculture and limited improvements to the EU’s self-sufficiency rate. According to



the EU advice, the EU is a leader on consumer transparency and labelling, even though there are different views among the membership on the way forward for prepared and preserved products. The advice emphasised the importance of Producer Organisations and of the Advisory Councils. According to the advice, the Regulation provides for a strong sustainability and governance framework, covering control and monitoring, the fight against IUU fishing, and data collection. However, there is challenging complexity for implementation by operators, which related to reporting, traceability, control, and links to the legislation. The advice identified various challenges, such as Brexit, an unstable geopolitical context, international competition, inflation and rising operational costs, unstable markets and price volatility, behavioural changes and shifts in consumption patterns, and labour shortages. Overall, the objectives of the policy are relevant, but implementation can be insufficient or uneven.

The Secretary General provided a summary of the main findings of the Commission's evaluation report, which was published in April 2026. According to the report, the CFP strengthened the scientific basis and governance of fisheries management, notably through improved data collection and scientific advice. However, the economic performance was not as expected, as there was insufficient rationalisation of capacity, reduced landings, stagnation of aquaculture production, while the processing sector showed more resilience. Coastal communities observed mixed results. In the catching sector, job security and wages were undermined by a weak economic model, ageing vessels, and low attractiveness for new generations due to work conditions. The aquaculture sector faced issues of generational renewal due to administrative burden and efficiency issues. The processing sector appeared relatively more resilient and with a better economic performance. The evaluation pointed to a moderate contribution to food security due to static or declining fisheries and aquaculture production. On the international level, the policy contributed to the active building of partnerships, access to non-EU waters, an improved level playing field, and the fight against IUU fishing, while also facing an increased dependence on imports. Shortcomings were identified in control, enforcement and compliance. The report concluded that the "CFP Regulation remains very important and relevant tool to manage a common natural resource and related economic activity in a changing world" and that "inefficiencies and gaps identified in the evaluation and by stakeholders are often dependent on the full implementation of its provisions or provisions of secondary legislation".

The Secretary General recalled that, under the Work Programme for Year 10 (2025-2026), the MAC committed to producing advice on the Commission's evaluation report. The Secretary General encouraged the members to share their views on the results of the evaluation and on the way forward. In his view, it could be relevant to wait for further clarity on a potential legislative proposal for a revision of the framework of the Common Fisheries Policy.

Luís Sousa (ALIF) expressed concerns about the overall results of the Common Fisheries Policy, underscoring that the economic performance was a crucial point of concern. Generational renewal remained a significant problem. Mr Sousa pointed out the constraints linked to the Common Fisheries Policy, including the lack of



public financing for the renewal of fishing vessels and the limited support for fleet modernisation. In his view, further reflection by the Commission was needed. A revision of the policy should aim for improvements.

Pim Visser (NOVA) recalled that, in line with the applicable area of competence, the MAC's advice focused on the market dimension. Mr Visser underscored the market implications of the introduction of the landing obligation in 2023, as there was a need to develop processing capacity and market outlets for fish not fit for human consumption. Without the existing exemptions, the value chain, particularly fish auctions, would have been significantly impacted. He volunteered, in case of a revision of the Common Fisheries Policy Regulation, to share research undertaken by the fish auctions on the impacts of the landing obligation.

María Luisa Álvarez Blanco (FEDEPESCA) argued that the effects of the policy on the specialised retail sector were not adequately reflected in the evaluation. Ms Álvarez highlighted that only 50% of the fishery and aquaculture products consumed were covered by the mandatory information requirements foreseen under Article 35 of the Common Market Organisation Regulation. She wondered how consumption patterns would evolve in the course of the following decade.

Daniel Voces (Europêche) mentioned that, under various consultations, the supply chain indicated largely negative results. Mr Voces underscored the significant decline in EU landings. While the evaluation report stopped in 2023, FAO and EUMOFA data showed a downward trend in 2024 and 2025. Mr Voces argued that the consideration by the Commission that the fishing fleet's economic model was weak was unfair to the sector. In the recent years, the sector faced many external shocks, including competition from third countries. The decisions of the Commission also impacted the economic results. The business model should be considered under the upcoming 2040 Vision for Fisheries. He highlighted that, due to decisions taken in Regional Fisheries Management Organisations, there were less EU fishing vessels operating in non-EU waters. Worldwide, the EU was becoming less influential. The contributions of the fishing sector to EU landings and catches were decreasing. Nevertheless, FAO data showed different trends for fishing fleets across the rest of the world. Therefore, he wanted to know how the Commission planned to address the decline.

Vanya Vulperhorst (Oceana) stated that, considering the previous assessment done by the MAC on the Common Fisheries Policy framework, it was not necessary to revisit the matter. Ms Vulperhorst argued that it would be more relevant to focus on the Common Market Organisation Regulation, recalling that Commissioner Kadis had recently drawn attention to gaps there. Therefore, it would be relevant to undertake further work on the gaps identified under the Common Market Organisation.

Matthew Gréant (EJF) stated that, considering the previously adopted advice, it was not necessary to proceed with new work. Mr Gréant argued that the Working Group should wait for the Commission's proposals and then react accordingly.

Luís Sousa (ALIF) emphasised that the EU fishing fleet was composed of ageing vessels, which translated into a lack of attractiveness. No public financing was provided for the renewal of vessels. In the case of Portugal,



the average age of fishing vessels was 40 years, which included many vessels made of wood. Therefore, with the described conditions, it was not relevant to discuss innovation. In his view, the lack of conditions impacted working conditions and the attractiveness of the sector.

Sven Langedijk (DG MARE) highlighted that many of the issues raised were addressed in the evaluation report, which followed a broad consultation process. The report identified challenges related to the business model, profitability, fleet renewal, and attractiveness. The ageing fleet also impacted the energy transition of the sector. Further reflections would be undertaken by the Commission, including for the preparation of the 2040 Vision for Fisheries and Aquaculture. While a formal decision on a potential reform of the Common Fisheries Policy Regulation was still pending, the challenges raised by stakeholders were recognised and reflected in the evaluation report.

- **Way forward**

The Chair commented that some of the points raised by the members linked to the work of the other Advisory Councils, but that the economic performance of the entire value chain needed to be considered by the MAC. The Chair suggested that, at that stage, it was not relevant to proceed with a new piece of advice. Once there were developments at the EU's level, the Working Group could reassess.

Common Market Organisation

- **Presentation on the evaluation of the Common Fisheries Policy Regulation, focusing on Common Market Organisation aspects, by Sven Langedijk (MARE A4)**

Sven Langedijk (DG MARE) presented the main findings of the evaluation in relation to the Common Market Organisation aspects. The evaluation assessed the objectives of the policy, including to support an efficient, transparent and competitive market. The evaluation examined the main instruments and tools, while taking into account the previous study on the Common Market Organisation Regulation.

Mr Langedijk emphasised that Producer Organisations helped mitigate market pressures and effects. The overarching framework performed well. The number of Producer Organisations remained stable over time, with a wider distribution across Member States. However, participation remained uneven, particularly for small-scale coastal fisheries and aquaculture producers. Collaboration across the supply chain remained low. While the Commission would not propose changes to the fundamentals of the functioning of Producer Organisations, it was important to address existing challenges and facilitate accessibility and cooperation.

Mr Langedijk explained that there was an increase in the competition in the EU market. Retail prices of fishery and aquaculture products increased steadily, though at a lower rate than overall food prices. At the same time, apparent consumption declined. Demand was increasingly concentrated on a limited number of



species. There was a growing preference for preserved and processed products. Price increasingly became a key driver of purchasing decisions.

Mr Langedijk drew attention to the decline in the EU's self-sufficiency rate. There was a decrease in domestic landings, impacted by uneven recovery of fish stocks. There was also a slow growth of aquaculture sector. EU producers expressed concerns in relation to level playing field and fairness in the market.

Mr Langedijk stated that, on labelling rules, the report revealed an increase in transparency and in the level playing field. The mandatory information requirements were generally valued by consumers, but some of the origin information remained too technical. There was some demand for additional details, for example on catch and harvest date, environmental information, and vessel flag. It was important to consider that prepared and preserved products, not covered by the mandatory information requirements, represented a growing share of consumption.

Mr Langedijk emphasised that the Common Market Organisation Regulation provides clear added value in ensuring market functioning, transparency, and stability, while contributing to a level playing field through common EU rules. From a broader economic perspective, the evaluation identified various vulnerabilities, such as ageing fleets, rising costs, and exposure to energy prices, impacting market performance. Expected economic gains had not fully materialised.

Mr Langedijk informed that the Commission was reflecting internally on the next steps. He encouraged the members to share their views on the conclusions of the evaluation, including potentially missing aspects.

- **Exchange of views**

Javier Ojeda (FEAP) agreed that Producer Organisations generally worked well but added that there were some shortcomings. In the aquaculture sector, there were still no Transnational Associations of Producer Organisations. While, in theory, these organisations could be established, in practice, it was not possible due to the legal requirement to base the association in one Member State. He argued that, as identified in various reports and workshops, these associations could be beneficial for the aquaculture sector.

The Chair recalled that point raised by Mr Ojeda was also addressed in previous advice on the functioning of Producer Organisations.

María Luisa Álvarez Blanco (FEDEPESCA) emphasised that the price of fishery and aquaculture products increased less than in other food products, because the sector had been unable to transmit the costs. Consumers were increasingly looking for convenient products with high levels of processing, moving further away from the fresh supply chain. At the same time, the fresh supply chain faced pressure to transmit mandatory information elements in a faster manner. For consumers, due to reduced transparency requirements, it was harder to understand or know more about the processed products. Ms Álvarez argued



that the new rules on digital traceability actually dropped the mandatory transmission of the information elements. In practice, the transmission of the information required manual input. She called for consumption and education campaigns for a better understanding of the products and their origin. In her view, legislative changes continuously impacted the same parts of the value chain.

Vanya Vulperhorst (Oceana) emphasised the importance of the transmission of information for retailers, including fishmongers, and consumers. The transmission enabled informed choices. Retailers and consumers could, for example, prioritise products that follow the EU's high standards. In her view, the provision of flag State information could improve the economic performance of EU fishers and processors, showing the added value of the EU standards. Ms Vulperhorst recalled that, from 2029 onward, traceability requirements under the Fisheries Control Regulation would be applicable to prepared and preserved fishery and aquaculture products. The transmitted data could be used for sourcing decisions and for consumer information. While the catch area information could be rather technical, gear and flag information remained useful.

Sylvie Becaus (VVV) highlighted that the Common Market Organisation Regulation did not include explicit provisions on the role of fish auctions. Ms Becaus emphasised that fish auctions were the first point of the value chain, receiving the necessary information from primary producers. Therefore, she wanted to know how the Commission saw the role of auctions in the future.

Nicolás Fernández Muñoz (OPP72) argued that, while positive work was done on consumer information, not enough was done to promote the consumption of healthy products. The consumption of fishery products should be promoted, safeguarding the primary sector, in line with the sector's contribution to nutrition and sustainability. Mr Fernández wondered about the importance of the primary sector for the EU. The EU tried to achieve the best standards in the world, but also continuously undermined the future of the sector. In his view, the evaluation report did not acknowledge the Commission's own failures.

Pim Visser (NOVA) underscored the importance of fish auctions to link the various parts of the supply chain and to transmit information. Mr Visser called for a revision of the freshness criteria foreseen under the marketing standards framework.

Christine Absil (Good Fish), concerning the promotion of fish as a healthy product, drew attention to the work of the VeriFish project. The project had recently launched a mobile app to share information on health and sustainability of fishery and aquaculture products.

Mariano García García (Federación Andaluza de Cofradías de Pescadores) highlighted the importance of the fish auctions for the differentiation of fishery products. Taking into account the origin, fresh, locally landed fish should be differentiated, increasing consumer confidence. Mr García mentioned that large companies were able to certify products from fisheries far away. In his view, the focus should be on rewarding the local fresh fishery products.



Luís Sousa (ALIF) stated that he understood the comments of the representatives of the Spanish fishing sector, since the value chain was increasingly dependent on imported raw materials. Mr Sousa underscored the administrative burden caused by CATCH and called for simplification. He mentioned that the issue of level playing field should be addressed both in relation to dependence on imports and within the EU. He recalled that consumers were increasingly prioritising price, which also meant prioritising other food products over fishery and aquaculture products.

María Luisa Álvarez Blanco (FEDEPESCA) stressed the increasingly high environmental and social standards imposed by the EU, while important, could undermine the primary sector, the processing sector, and the retail sector. As the EU was already the best performer in the world, a further increase of the standards could lead to a self-destruction of the value chain, since operators must compete with non-EU countries.

Adrien Simonnet (UMF) called for a focus on simplification under any potential reform of the Common Market Organisation. Administrative burden, including from the Fisheries Control Regulation, significantly impacted operators. While additional information for consumers could be useful, it was also important to avoid excessive complexity.

Sven Langedijk (DG MARE) acknowledged the frustrations expressed on the performance of the sector. Mr Langedijk informed that the issue of Transnational Associations of Producer Organisations was being addressed by DG MARE. The level playing field in relation to third countries, which linked to high environmental standards and with consumers information requirements, would also be examined. On consumption behaviours, Mr Langedijk recognised that, even though the prices of fishery and aquaculture products increased less than other food products, there was still a decline in demand. The provision of information on origin and flag State could be considered. In his view, the issue of the promotion of fishery and aquaculture products as healthy went beyond the Common Market Organisation Regulation. The role of auctions would be taken into account, including under the simplification initiatives of DG MARE. He added that, on some issues, such as on the applicability of information requirements to prepared and preserved products, there were differing positions across the members, which would also be considered by DG MARE.

Gerd Heinen (DG MARE) acknowledged that DG MARE would need to further consider how to approach the existing labelling requirements, particularly in the context of the HORECA sector. In the case of the marketing standards framework, Mr Heinen informed that DG MARE was looking into the freshness criteria and the size categories. He encouraged the members to share their views on that matter.

- **Way forward**

The Chair highlighted that there were key technical issues, such as labelling rules and marketing standards, for the supply chain. There were also broader structural concerns linking the Common Fisheries Policy and market performance. The Chair commented that the expected economic benefits had not materialised, expressing doubts about the relevance of a production-focused approach in the context of a decline in EU



capacity. He called for further reflection on the socio-economic objectives of the policy, including from a consumer perspective. He encouraged the members to read the report, to better focus future work.

Simplification and Reduction of Administrative Burden regarding the Common Market Organisation

- **Exchange of views on the initial simplification assessment of DG MARE with Sven Langedijk and Marta Janakakis (MARE A4)**

[Presentation](#)

Marta Janakakis (DG MARE) recalled that the European Commission's Communication on "A Simpler, Clearer and Better Enforced EU Rulebook" emphasises three core pillars: simplification, implementation, and enforcement. The approach builds on the existing Better Regulation framework, so that legislation can be practical, coherent, and enforceable. Key elements include simplifying EU rules "by design", reducing unnecessary administrative burden, limiting "gold-plating", and strengthening enforcement mechanisms. The Commission representative outlined the roadmap of Commissioner Kadis for the 2025-2029 period, which includes a comprehensive screening of the legislative acquis of DG MARE through stress-testing, systematic evaluations, implementation dialogues, and stakeholder workshops. The stress testing would aim to identify inconsistencies, overlaps, and areas where simplification or clarification is needed, supported by both legal and economic analysis.

Ms Janakakis explained that the stress testing of the Common Market Organisation framework covered the Common Market Organisation Regulation, the two implementing regulations, the common marketing standards, including for preserved sardines and sardine-type products, for preserved tuna and bonito, and for certainty fishery products, and international standards under the FAO Codex Alimentarius. She outlined several points for discussion: extension of the rules of Professional Organisations to non-members, codification and empowerments to the Commission to adopt delegated and implementing acts under the common marketing standards framework, revision of the freshness and size categories under the common marketing standards framework, the development of a consolidated EU-level repository of national lists for commercial designations, the selection of the FAO ASFIS database or of the FishBase database, and potential empowerments to the Commission to review the list of products in Annex I of the Regulation.

The Chair encouraged the members to share their views. The Chair emphasised the importance of analysing the legislative acquis from the perspective of simplification, since there could be complexity due to the links between different pieces of legislation.

María Luisa Álvarez Blanco (FEDEPESCA) emphasised the importance of a regulatory framework adapted to microenterprises. Ms Álvarez provided the example of the exemptions for microenterprises under the Packaging and Packaging Waste Regulation.



Luís Sousa (ALIF) recalled that the definition of “SMEs” was based on a recommendation from the European Commission from 2003. Despite significant economic developments, the definition had not been updated. He wondered whether the existing thresholds remained appropriate.

Pim Visser (NOVA) underscored the importance of a clear position from the MAC concerning a potential revision of the freshness criteria under the common marketing standards framework. Concerning the extension of rules of Professional Organisations to non-members, Mr Visser commented that the extension was dependent on the legislation of each Member State, which varied significantly across the EU, risking an uneven playing field. In relation to potential revisions of the size categories or of scientific names codes, he asked for caution to avoid fragmentation.

Pablo Cadarso (Conxemar) argued that the 2003 recommendation setting the definition of “SMEs” was no longer appropriate. A 2025 recommendation provided for a new category for intermediate companies.

Marta Janakakis (DG MARE) informed that DG MARE could proceed with legislative proposals, for example under an Omnibus package, allowing the Commission to tackle situations where implementation differs across the Member States. Ms Janakakis recalled that, under previous advice, the MAC called for the simplification of the freshness criteria under the common marketing standards framework. It was worth discussing whether the visual checks remained relevant or whether the matter should be addressed under sanitary legislation instead. She asked for more clarity on the MAC’s position concerning the size categories, particularly on their relevance and corresponding administrative burden. Concerning the official commercial designations, instead of multiple national lists, the Commission could proceed with a consolidated EU-level list. In the case of the scientific names, there could be a decision to use only the FAO ASFIS database.

The Chair encouraged the Commission to share more elements on the corresponding administrative burden.

Pim Visser (NOVA) argued against the establishment of new codes for the scientific names, as it was important to maintain consistency.

Marta Janakakis (DG MARE) highlighted that the FAO ASFIS database was referenced in various pieces of legislation besides the Common Market Organisation framework.

Pim Visser (NOVA) recalled that, in some cases, for example in relation to the minimum conservation reference sizes, other databases were used.

Luís Sousa (ALIF) wondered about the possibility of Professional Organisations for the processing industry.

Javier Ojeda (FEAP) recalled that the processing sector could participate in Interbranch Organisations. Mr Ojeda highlighted that Producer Organisations were meant to address the small size of primary producers in the EU.



The Chair recalled that the legislative framework of Producer Organisations included an exemption from competition rules. Therefore, the establishment of Professional Organisations by downstream sectors could face regulatory constraints linked to competition rules.

Christine Absil (Good Fish) requested more information from the Commission on the identified problems and the expected outcomes, which would allow the MAC to provide structured input.

The Chair emphasised that the development of new advice would require careful analysis, while also taking into account previous recommendations. The Chair asked for guidance from the Commission to ensure that the advice was properly targeted, particularly on the potential consequences of amendments to the common marketing standards framework.

Sven Langedijk (DG MARE) recalled that the presentation was based on an initial internal assessment. The aim was to gather feedback to ensure that the simplification efforts were heading in the correct direction. To share more details, DG MARE would need to launch the official legislative revision processes. Mr Langedijk commented that the feedback from the Working Group seemed to be that more exchanges were needed before proceeding with any potential legislative revision.

Laurène Jolly (DG MARE) explained that Interbranch Organisations required the participation of primary producers. Producer Organisations benefited from a derogation from competition rules, as primary producers must comply with the Common Fisheries Policy Regulation, so the aim was to facilitate the collective management of the supply. Ms Jolly informed that the points on simplification would also be discussed with the national authorities.

Nicolás Fernández Muñoz (OPP72) requested more concrete information from DG MARE, particularly on what simplification would mean in practice.

Sven Langedijk (DG MARE) emphasised that DG MARE aimed to proceed promptly with the simplification efforts, but the concerns raised by the MAC would be taken into account.

- **Way forward**

The Chair proposed to proceed with the circulation of a questionnaire to collect feedback from the members on the key points identified by DG MARE.

The Secretary General expressed availability to engage bilaterally with MARE A4 to ensure that the proposed questionnaire was clear and relevant. The Secretary General indicated that he would ask for more information on the timeline of MARE A4, in order to determine whether a draft text could be considered at the September 2026 meeting or whether it would be necessary to speed up approval via a written procedure.



Emiel Brouckaert (EAPO) expressed support for the suggested approach. Mr Brouckaert highlighted the importance of undertaking preparatory work to identify the positions previously adopted by the MAC.

Multiannual Financial Framework

- **Presentation on the proposed budget expenditure tracking and performance framework by Eoin Mac Aoidh (MARE D3)**

Presentation

Eoin Mac Aoidh (DG MARE) presented the proposed expenditure tracking and performance framework under the future Multiannual Financial Framework (MFF) for 2028–2034, outlining the overall architecture and its implications for stakeholders, including the fisheries and aquaculture sector. Mr Mac Aoidh explained that the new MFF aims to simplify and harmonise the structure of EU funding, notably through a reduction in the number of programmes and the introduction of National and Regional Partnership Plans (NRPPs). While significant changes are foreseen across the EU budget, the fisheries and aquaculture sector will experience comparatively fewer modifications.

Mr Mac Aoidh emphasised that a central element of the proposal is the introduction of a single, integrated performance framework to track both expenditure and results achieved across all EU funds. This includes a common methodology for monitoring spending, a streamlined set of indicators, and a unified reporting system, replacing multiple existing frameworks. The framework is built around horizontal principles applied across the entire EU budget, notably climate and environmental objectives, the “Do No Significant Harm” (DNSH) principle, social policies, and gender equality. These principles will be tracked through harmonised methodologies using predefined coefficients. It was noted that the DNSH principle is not entirely new and is already partly embedded in existing policies, including the Common Fisheries Policy. Future guidance is expected to further clarify its application across sectors, including fisheries.

Mr Mac Aoidh explained that the proposal also introduces a single gateway portal, which will centralise information on EU funding opportunities, expenditure, and performance. This aims to improve transparency and accessibility by consolidating multiple existing platforms into one entry point. In terms of monitoring and reporting, the framework will significantly reduce complexity by replacing thousands of indicators with a more streamlined list and establishing a single annual performance report for the entire EU budget.

Mr Mac Aoidh, regarding fisheries and aquaculture, stressed that a minimum allocation is foreseen within the NRPPs, alongside non-ring-fenced funding that Member States may allocate according to their priorities. While some sector-specific constraints remain (e.g., funding for certain measures), there is increased flexibility compared to the current programming period.



Mr Mac Aoidh highlighted that the reform was largely driven by findings from an impact assessment, which identified key challenges in the current system, including excessive complexity, fragmentation, duplication, and inconsistencies in reporting requirements across programmes. The new framework aimed to address these shortcomings through simplification, harmonisation, and improved performance tracking.

- **Exchange of views**

Yannis Pelekanakis (HAPO) raised questions regarding the application of the “Do No Significant Harm” (DNSH) principle to aquaculture, asking whether compliance with existing EU and national licensing frameworks would automatically ensure compliance, and who would bear responsibility in case of disputes.

Eoin Mac Aoidh (DG MARE) clarified that no additional requirements for operators were foreseen. Compliance would be ensured through the managing authorities, which should only launch public financing calls aligned with the DNSH principle, with applicants expected to comply accordingly. Mr Mac Aoidh stated that the issue would become clearer in an upcoming non-paper.

Dominic Rihan (KFO) wondered whether the proposed EUR 2 billion of ring-fenced funding for fisheries and aquaculture included the mandatory control and data collection activities undertaken by the Member States, expressing concern that, if that was the case, the funding available to the industry would be further reduced. In the case of Ireland, it would be mean that there would be no funding left for the industry. Mr Rihan warned that access to other funding sources would depend on national priorities. He expressed concern that, as the DNSH principle would be defined via guidance and non-papers, there could be differing interpretations across the Member States, resulting in an uneven playing field.

Eoin Mac Aoidh (DG MARE) clarified that data collection and control costs fell outside the ring-fenced amount, as these are obligations of the Member States. Mr Mac Aoidh highlighted that the NRPPs would be composed of non-ring fenced funding and would take into account shared management and other obligations, following a negotiated process. He underscored that the DNSH principle applied across the entire EU budget and to all sectors, reducing the chances of an uneven playing field. He added that it was important to ensure compliance with the Common Fisheries Policy and with the rules of the World Trade Organisation.

Adrien Simonnet (UMF) expressed concerns about the legal nature of the DNSH principle, since definitions in guidance documents could create uncertainty. Concerning the performance indicators, Mr Simonnet wondered about the apparent limited contribution of social criteria. He also wondered about the impact of the evaluation of the Common Fisheries Policy, as the development of the EU budget was going ahead of the broader reflection on the future of the policy. He called for the recognition of the role of the first buyers of fishery products.

Eoin Mac Aoidh (DG MARE) underscored that the DNSH principle was foreseen in the Commission’s legislative proposal. Concerning the social coefficients, Mr Mac Aoidh clarified that these reflected existing programmes



with specific social objectives. On the evaluation of the Common Fisheries Policy, he stated that both the policy and funding dimensions were being addressed in parallel.

Daniel Voces (Europêche) argued that the reporting exercise should be clear to citizens. The attribution of a value of 0 to social coefficients of fisheries and aquaculture risked not being understood by citizens. Mr Voces wondered whether fisheries-specific funding information would remain visible within the broader system, for example through the continuation of a website dedicated to fisheries and aquaculture funding. Concerning the DNSH principle, Mr Voces recalled that certain fleets were out of balance due to fluctuations in the allocation of fishing opportunities. There could be an impact on subsidies for fleet renewal or for decarbonisation, particularly due to diverging interpretations. He called for clear guidance.

Eoin Mac Aoidh (DG MARE) responded that he was unaware whether a fisheries-specific website would be maintained, but that DG MARE would continue to ensure coherent communication on funding. Through the performance framework, the aim was to simplify the information, which must take into account various sources, while promoting results-based financing. Mr Mac Aoidh recalled that further legislative work would take place to clarify the DNSH principle.

Alessandro Manghisi (ASC) wondered whether the standards were aligned with the European Sustainability Reporting Standards developed by EFRAG.

Eoin Mac Aoidh (DG MARE) expressed availability to consult DG FISMA on the matter.

Gerd Heinen (DG MARE) acknowledged that there could be a need for coordination with EFRAG.

Nicolás Fernández Muñoz (OPP72) expressed deep concerns with the timing for the simplification of the structural funds, as the sector faced adversity and changes. The sector required specific aid to address these challenges, while risking a two thirds reduction in funding. Mr Fernández underscored that the 2013 revision of the Common Fisheries Policy Regulation recognised the importance of the three pillars of sustainability. In the context of the proposal for the next MFF, the fisheries sector would be in disadvantage against other economic sectors. In his view, the reflections and indicators proposed by the Commission were quite far from the practical realities of the sector.

- **Way forward**

The Chair emphasised that certain elements still needed further detail, such as the DNSH principle, which meant that the development of advice could be challenging.

Luís Sousa (ALIF) argued in favour of proceeding with advice. Mr Sousa expressed concern with the potential reduction by 66% in the funding for fisheries and aquaculture. In the case of Portugal, the proposed ring-fenced amount corresponded to ¼ of the current programming period. In comparison, the agricultural sector faced a potential reduction of 25% in funding.



The Chair acknowledged the importance of the funding amount, but recalled that, under a letter adopted in 2025, the MAC already put forward views on the financial envelope. The Chair explained that, in case the Working Group decided to proceed with new advice, it would be focused on technical aspects, namely on the performance framework and indicators.

Adrien Simonnet (UMF) argued that a draft annex for the performance indicators was publicly available. The European Parliament was proceeding with their position. Therefore, it could be relevant for the MAC to proceed with early reflections to feed into the institutional discussions.

The Chair proposed to proceed with a questionnaire to collect input from the members, which could be used as a basis for draft advice for consideration at the September 2026 meeting.

The Secretary General expressed support for the approach suggested by the Chair. The Secretary General recalled that the mentioned letter was signed by the 11 Advisory Councils. A reference to the letter could be made under the new piece of advice. He asked Mr Mac Aoidh for information on the expected timelines for the proposed budget expenditure tracking and performance framework, to ensure alignments between the MAC's procedures and the legislative process.

Eoin Mac Aoidh (DG MARE) responded that it was challenging to predict a timeline, since the legislative proposal covered all economic sectors. Mr Mac Aoidh informed that the guidance on the DNSH principle was planned for January 2027.

Conflict in the Middle East

- **Presentation on the emergency measures, including EMFAF crisis mechanism and Temporary State Aid Framework, to address increase in costs by Eoin Mac Aoidh (MARE D3)**

Eoin Mac Aoidh (DG MARE) recalled that, on 15 April 2026, the Commission triggered the crisis mechanism of the European Maritime, Fisheries and Aquaculture Fund to address the impact of the conflict in the Middle East. Member States could provide financial compensation for income foregone and for additional costs. As the stakeholders identified the origin of the crisis, the Commission started closely monitoring the developments, concluding that there was an exceptional event disturbing the market.

Mr Mac Aoidh explained that Member States could offer compensation, via national funding under the European Maritime, Fisheries and Aquaculture Fund, for expenditure incurred in 2026, even if the payments take place in 2027. As no additional EU budget was made available, the short-term compensation measures could have an impact on the long-term structural needs.

Mr Mac Aoidh informed that Member States could also provide compensation to affected operators via a specific Temporary State Aid Framework. The corresponding methodology was being developed by the Member States in coordination with the Commission.



- **Exchange of views**

Luís Sousa (ALIF) recalled that, while all Member States could adopt crisis compensation schemes, the methodology of the simplified cost options required acceptance from the national audit authorities. The corresponding administrative steps meant that implementation was not prompt. Mr Sousa argued that the European Commission should propose a common methodology. He also argued that the Commission should allow for the mobilisation of the funding ring-fenced for control and data collection activities.

Eoin Mac Aoidh (DG MARE) clarified that the compensation mechanisms did not require approval by the audit authorities, but mere consultation, to ensure accountability. Mr Mac Aoidh informed that an EU-wide template was considered, but that each Member States faced different scenarios and knows their sector better. The Commission held a technical seminar, and some Member States had already sent draft methodologies. FAMENT would be supporting the Member States. Concerning the mobilisation of ring-fenced funding, Mr Mac Aoidh recalled that, under the crisis measures to face the impact of the Russian invasion, the mentioned mobilisation was allowed because the European Maritime and Fisheries Fund was reaching the end of the programming period and almost depleted. The same logic was not applicable to the European Maritime, Fisheries and Aquaculture Fund.

AOB

None.



Summary of action items

- Simplification and Reduction of Administrative Burden regarding the Common Market Organisation
 - Secretariat to circulate a questionnaire, based on the Commission's initial assessment, to collect input that will service as basis for draft advice.
- Multiannual Financial Framework
 - Secretariat to circulate a questionnaire concerning the proposed budget expenditure tracking and performance framework, so that draft advice can be considered at the September 2026 meeting.



Attendance list

Representative	Organisation	Role
Adrien Simonnet	UMF	Member
Alen Lovrinov	PRODUCER ORGANIZATION OMEGA 3	Member
Alessandro Manghisi	AQUACULTURE STEWARDCHIP COUNCIL (ASC)	Member
Amandine Menu	PACT'ALIM	Member
Anna Rokicka	POLISH ASSOCIATION OF FISH PROCESSORS	Member
Aodh O Domhnaill	IRISH FISH PRODUCERS ORGANISATION	Member
Arthur Yon	FROM NORD	Member
Bertrand Charron	AQUACULTURE STEWARDSHIP COUNCIL (ASC)	Member
Christine Absil	GOOD FISH	Member
Cristina Borges	PORTUGAL	Observer
Corine Vroom	VISFEDERATIE	Member
Daniel Voces De Onaindi	EUROPECHE	Member
Dominic Rihan	KFO	Member
Emiel Brouckaert	EAPO	Member
Eoin Mac Aoidh	EUROPEAN COMMISSION	Expert
Gerd Heinen	EUROPEAN COMMISSION	Expert
Grace Howe	THE NATURE CONSERVANCY (TNC)	Member
Giuseppe Palma	ASSOITICA ITALIA	Member
Iñigo Azqueta	ANFACO-CYTMA	Member
India Kennedy	IRISH FISH PRODUCERS' ORGANISATION (IFPO)	Member
Ingrid Morvan	COLEAD	Observer



Representative	Organisation	Role
Isabel Alonso Cabezas	SPAIN	Observer
Jarek Zielinski	ZPPR	Member
Javier Ojeda	FEAP	Member
Jean Marie Robert	LES PÊCHEURS DE BRETAGNE PO	Member
Jens Høj Mathiesen	DANISH SEAFOOD ASSOCIATION	Member
João Pereira	FRUCOM	Member
John Lynch	IRISH SOUTH & EAST FISH PRODUCER ORGANISATION	Member
José Carlos Escalera Aguilar	FECOPESCA	Member
José Basilio Otero Rodríguez	FEDERACION NACIONAL DE COFRADIAS DE PESCADORES	Member
Juan Manuel Trujillo	ETF	Member
Jules Danto	EAPO	Member
Julien Daudu	EJF	Member
Julien Lamothe	ANOP / EAPO	Chair
Linda Zanki Duvnjak	RZ FRISKA RIBA P.O.	Member
Linne Verhoeven	SEAFOOD EUROPE	Member
Luís Sousa	ALIF	Member
María Luisa Álvarez Blanco	FEDEPESCA	Member
Mariano García García	FEDERACION ANDALUZA DE COFRADIAS DE PESCADORES	Member
Marta Janakakis	EUROPEAN COMMISSION	Expert
Matthew Gréant	ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE FOUNDATION (EJF)	Member
Mike Turenhout	VISFEDERATIE	Member



Representative	Organisation	Role
Monika Kołodziejczyk	POLAND	Member
Nicolás Fernández Muñoz	OPP72	Member
Pablo Cadarso Rebolledo	CONXEMAR	Member
Patrick Murphy	IRISH SOUTH & WEST FISH PRODUCERS ORGANISATION (IS&WFPO)	Member
Pedro Luís Casado López	OPP80	Member
Pedro Reis Santos	MARKET ADVISORY COUNCIL	Secretariat
Pim Visser	NOVA DUTCH FISH AUCTIONS	Member
Sarah Hautier	EUROCOMMERCE	Member
Sergio Lopez Garcia	OPP PUERTO DE BURELA	Member
Sven Langedijk	EUROPEAN COMISSION	Expert
Sylvie Becaus	VVV	Member
Thibault Van Lierde	OPMEGA	Member
Thomas Kruse	DANISH PELAGIC PRODUCER ORGANISATION	Member
Vanya Vulperhorst	OCEANA	Member
Violaine De Neef	MARKET ADVISORY COUNCIL	Secretariat
Yobana Bermúdez Rodríguez	SEAFOOD EUROPE	Member
Yannis Pelekanakis	HAPO	Member

