

WORK PROGRAMME FOR MARKET AC

Period: 01/10/2022 to 30/09/2023 (Year 7)

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 62 European, national and local organisations from 12 Member States (Belgium, Croatia, Denmark, France, Germany, Ireland, Italy, Netherlands, Poland, Romania, Spain, Sweden), representing the entire value chain (fisheries producers, aquaculture producers, processors, traders, suppliers, retailers, trade unions) and other interest groups (environmental and development NGOs). The Executive Committee of the MAC is currently composed of 21 members distributed in the following manner:

Value Supply Chain	
Primary Producers (Catching)	
	EAPO
	Europêche
	COPA-COGECA
	VisNed
	Les Pêcheurs de Bretagne
Primary Producers (Aquaculture)	
	EMPA
	FEAP
Processors, traders, suppliers and retailers	
	AIPCE
	CEP
	European Fishmeal
	EuroCommerce
	FRUCOM
	CONXEMAR
	ANFACO-CECOPECA
Workers (Trade Unions)	
	ETF
Other Interest Groups	
	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) Farm to Fork Strategy

In May 2020, the European Commission published the “Farm to Fork Strategy for a fair, healthy and environmentally-friendly food system”². The strategy is part of the European Green Deal, which aims to make Europe the first climate-neutral continent by 2050. The strategy aims to accelerate the transition to a food system that should have a neutral or positive environmental impact; help to mitigate climate change and adapt to its impacts; reverse the loss of biodiversity; ensure food security, nutrition and public health, making sure that everyone has access to sufficient, safe, nutritious and sustainable food; and preserve affordability of food while generating fairer economic returns, fostering competitiveness of the EU supply sector and promoting fair trade.

The strategy’s draft action plan includes several initiatives of direct and indirect relevance for the EU market of fisheries and aquaculture products. In the past two operational years, the MAC already adopted advice on several initiatives and will continue to follow-up on the upcoming year:

- Development of contingency plan for ensuring food supply and food security³
- Development of EU Code of Conduct for Responsible Business and Marketing Practices⁴
- Revision of EU marketing standards for fishery and aquaculture products
- Revision of consumer information rules⁵ (harmonised mandatory front-of-pack nutrition labelling, mandatory origin indication for certain products)
- Review of EU promotion programme for agricultural and food products⁶
- Proposal for a legislative framework for sustainable food systems⁷ (includes proposal for sustainable food labelling framework, and determining modalities for setting mandatory criteria for sustainable food procurement)
- Evaluation and revision of existing animal welfare legislation⁸
- Legislative initiatives to enhance cooperation of primary producers to support their position in the food chain and non-legislative initiatives to improve transparency
- Proposal on Corporate Sustainable Due Diligence Directive
- Enhancement of coordination to enforce single market rules and tackle food fraud
- Review of EU school scheme legal framework⁹
- Proposal for EU-level targets for food waste reduction¹⁰
- Revision of EU rules on Food Contact Materials¹¹

² <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX%3A52020DC0381>

³ <https://marketac.eu/food-supply-contingency-plan/>

⁴ <https://marketac.eu/code-of-conduct-for-responsible-business/>

⁵ <https://marketac.eu/public-consultation-on-revision-of-eu-regulation-on-the-provision-of-food-information-to-consumers/>

⁶ <https://marketac.eu/eu-promotion-programme/>

⁷ <https://marketac.eu/sustainable-food-system-framework-initiative/>

⁸ <https://marketac.eu/revision-of-eu-legislation-on-animal-welfare/>

⁹ <https://marketac.eu/health-environmental-value-of-seafood/>

¹⁰ <https://marketac.eu/eu-level-targets-for-food-waste-reduction/>

¹¹ <https://marketac.eu/revision-of-food-information-to-consumers-regulation-2/>

2) Market disturbances, including COVID-19 Pandemic and Russian Invasion of Ukraine

The outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic created major disturbances in the fisheries and aquaculture products market, resulting in very severe impacts throughout the entire supply chain. In the context of this crisis, the MAC assisted DG MARE through the transmission of information from members in informal and formal meetings, plus the adoption of advice on the impact and mitigation of the pandemic¹².

Following a large-scale military build-up and weeks of extreme tensions, on 24 February 2022, Russia launched an invasion of Ukraine. The EU condemned Russia's military aggressing and has progressively adopted packages of sanctions, while providing assistance to Ukraine. This new crisis created new major disturbances in the market, particularly the significant daily fluctuation of fuel prices, which severely impacts the viability of the EU's fishing fleet. Examples of other relevant impacts include the lack of availability of feed for aquaculture, difficulties in sourcing certain raw material, shortages of vegetable oil for canning, and logistics, electricity, and inflation costs. The MAC has maintained informal and informal exchanges with DG MARE to assist in the development of measures.

These crises are clear examples of the importance of crisis preparedness to ensure support to operators and food security in the EU.

3) 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 market 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 impacted by multilateral and bilateral trade agreements, but also by autonomous policy instruments such as the Generalised Scheme of Preferences (GSP, Everything But Arms, GSP+), the ATQs Regulation, and the trade defence instruments.

Under the sixth operational year, the Initial Focus Group on Trade prepared a report on existing EU trade policy instruments and their impacts on the EU market¹³, which led to the adoption of an advice on the improvement of data concerning trade policy instruments and their impact¹⁴. The establishment of a new Focus Group on Trade is envisaged, to continue this work.

4) Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated (IUU) Fishing & Global Governance

The EU is a pioneer in the global fight against IUU fishing and the European Commission has taken a leadership position by promoting a "zero-tolerance" approach to IUU fishing. 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 the world's largest import market for fisheries and aquaculture products, the EU has a responsibility to ensure that products stemming from IUU fishing activities do not access the Single Market. As done in 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"¹⁵.

¹² <https://marketac.eu/covid-19-pandemic/>

¹³ <https://marketac.eu/wp-content/uploads/2022/03/Initial-Focus-Group-on-Trade-Report-21.03.2022.pdf>

¹⁴ <https://marketac.eu/trade-policy-instruments-and-impact-on-the-eu-market-for-fishery-and-aquaculture-products-improvement-of-data/>

¹⁵ E.g., <https://marketac.eu/iuu-fishing-by-ghana/>

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

As the European Commission's market intelligence tool, EUMOFA increases market transparency and efficiency, analyses EU market dynamics 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 main the established annual exchange of views on this report.

6) Landing Obligation

In line with Article 15(14) of the CFP Regulation, the European Commission reports annually on the implementation of the landing obligation based on information transmitted by the Member States, the Advisory Councils and other relevant sources. The landing obligation can have a significant socioeconomic impact on the market, including through the need for outlets for catches below minimum conservation reference sizes and the development of new market segments for unwanted catches. Due to the permitted discards under temporary exemptions to the landing obligation, there might also be problems of data availability and quality, which impacts the reliability of information, on a regional basis, on the market effects of the implementation of the landing obligation. The most recent MAC advice on the topic¹⁶, based on information provided by the members, showed no effects of the landing obligation on market prices and limited socioeconomic impacts. Therefore, in the upcoming operational year, it is relevant to analyse whether new developments will take place.

7) 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 to the Commission services on the reports, promote the submission of additional data by the members, and suggest topics of specific analysis, such as, for example, species, fleet segments, or geographical areas..., that should be considered by STECF, as well as more detailed data on aquaculture.

8) Substantiating Environmental Claims and Product Environmental Footprint Category Rules (PEFCR) for unprocessed Marine Fish products

Under the Circulation Economy Action Plan, DG ENV committed to launching an initiative on substantiating environmental claims of products and businesses. The initiative will require companies to substantiate claims about the environmental footprint of their products and services by using standards methods for quantifying them. The aim is to make the claims reliable, comparable and verifiable across the EU – reducing "greenwashing". At the same time, Product Environmental Footprint Category Rules (PEFCR) are being developed by external experts, including PECFR for unprocessed Marine Fish Products (both for wild catch and farmed) under a Technical Secretariat. As highlighted in previous advice¹⁷, horizontal rules on the communication of environmental performance of products will affect fisheries and aquaculture products. In this context, the development PECFR for Marine Fish will have particular importance.

9) EU Taxonomy for Sustainable Activities and Draft Technical Screening Criteria for Fishing, Aquaculture Activities

In 2018, the European Commission published the "Action Plan: Financing Sustainable Growth", which called for the creation of a common classification system for sustainable activities, an "EU taxonomy". In 2020, the Taxonomy

¹⁶ <https://marketac.eu/annual-report-on-the-implementation-in-2021-of-the-landing-obligation/>

¹⁷ <https://marketac.eu/recommendation-of-mac-concerning-product-environmental-category-rules-pefcr-for-marine-fish-for-human-consumption/>

Regulation established the basis of the EU taxonomy by setting out four overarching conditions that an economic activity must meet to qualify as environmentally sustainable, plus the establishment of six environmental objectives. An economic activity shall qualify as environmentally sustainable where that economic activity contributes substantially to one or more of the environmental objectives, does not significantly harm any of the environmental objectives and complies with the technical screening criteria to be established by the Commission. The taxonomy translates the EU's climate and environmental objectives into criteria for specific economic activities for investment purposes. Mandatory disclosure obligations are introduced for some categories of companies and investors. The Platform on Sustainable Financing, an expert group, was established to advise on the further development of the EU taxonomy. Draft technical screening criteria for fishing activities are under development by the Platform.

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

Working Group 1 (EU Production):

- Common Market Organisation (production and marketing plans, labelling, extension of the rules, producers and interbranch organisations, planning, stabilisation of markets)
- European Maritime and Fisheries and Aquaculture Fund
- Marketing Standards framework (incorporation of sustainability criteria in common marketing standards)
- Implication of fisheries control on EU production
- Landing obligation
- EUMOFA case studies
- Economic viability of the fleet and of the aquaculture sector
- Market perturbations: effect of COVID19 crisis; impacts of Russian invasion of Ukraine

Working Group 2 (EU Markets):

- EU market 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 tariffs (including tariff suspensions and quotas)
- SPS and TBT issues
- Market trends and consumer behaviour (responsible sourcing and processing)
- Entry of IUU fishing products
- Implication of fisheries control on EU market (traceability)
- Economic performance of the EU fish processing sector

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

- Consumer information and labelling (FIC and CMO)
- Voluntary information, including certification schemes
- Traceability (issues other than those tackled by Working Group 2)
- Hygiene and sanitary issues
- Plastic and microplastic pollution in the oceans
- Packaging
- Food waste reduction

Focus Group on Trade:

- Impact of trade policy instruments (TBC)

Other issues of interest if any:

- DG JUST's initiative on empowering the consumer for the green transition
- EU initiative to effectively ban products produced, extracted or harvested with forced labour
- Revision of the Guidelines & Good Practices for Production and Marketing Plans document¹⁸ originally developed by the MAC in 2018

Planned recommendations for year 7:

No	Issue/subject	Link with the CFP	WG/FG at the origin of the recommendation	Planned date of adoption (if available)
1	Work Programme of EUMOFA, including suggestions of analysis topics	Article 2.5.g)	WG1 and WG2	January 2023
2	Annual Report on the implementation in 2022 of the landing obligation (particularly new developments when compared to previous advice)	Article 2.5.a)	WG1	March 2023
3	Russian Invasion of Ukraine	Article 2.5.c)	WG1 and WG2	March 2023
4	Legislative Proposal on Revision of Food Information to Consumers (FIC) Regulation	Article 2.5.h)	WG3	March 2023 ¹⁹
5	2023 Annual Economic Report on the EU Fishing Fleet	Article 2.5.c)	WG1	May 2023
6	Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated (IUU) Fishing	Article 2.5.g)	WG2	September 2023
7	Farm to Fork Strategy initiatives	Article 2.5.g)	WG3	September 2023
8	2022 Economic Report on the EU Aquaculture Sector	Article 2.5.e)	WG1 and WG3	September 2023
9	Legislative Proposal on the Revision of the Marketing Standards Framework	Article 2.5.g)	WG1 and WG3	TBC/TBD ²⁰

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)

¹⁸ <https://marketac.eu/mac-guidelines-good-practices-production-marketing-plans/>

¹⁹ Dependent on the date of adoption of the legislative proposal by the European Commission.

²⁰ Idem.

MAC planning of meetings

MAC PLANNING OF MEETINGS (from 01/10/2022 to 30/09/2023)

No	Date (for the first 6 months, please provide precise dates)	Main 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)
	October 2022	- Impact of trade policy instruments on EU market	Focus Group on Trade Online (Zoom)	No		
	November 2022	- Impact of trade policy instruments on EU market	Focus Group on Trade Online (Zoom)	No		
	January 2023	- EUMOFA - Presentation of AER Fleet - EMFAF National Programmes - Russian invasion of Ukraine	Working Group 1 Physical (Brussels)	Yes	- Presentation on approved EMFAF national programmes	2
	January 2023	- EUMOFA's 2022 EU Fish Market Report - Trade - AIPCE's Finfish Study - Russian invasion of Ukraine	Working Group 2 Physical (Brussels)	Yes	- Presentation of EUMOFA EU Fish Market - Update on trade developments	2
	January 2023	- Food Information to Consumers	Working Group 3 Physical (Brussels)	Yes	- Presentation of legislative proposal on FIC Regulation	2
	January 2023	- Reports on the functioning of CMO and CFP Regulations - Election of Executive Committee members - Election of Chair of Executive Committee and General Assembly - Election of Working Group Chairs	General Assembly Physical (Brussels)	Yes	- Presentation of reports on functioning of CMO and CFP Regulations	1

January 2023	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Adoption of advice - Update on work and finances - Election of Vice-Chair(s) of Executive Committee and General Assembly 	Executive Committee Physical (Brussels)	No		
February 2023	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Impact of trade policy instruments on EU market 	Focus Group on Trade Online (Zoom)	No		
March 2023	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Landing obligation 	Working Group 1 Online (Zoom)	Yes	- Exchange of views on landing obligation reports	2
March 2023	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Trade - IUU Carding System 	Working Group 2 Online (Zoom)	Yes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Update on trade developments - Update on IUU carding system 	2
March 2023	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Substantiating Green Claims 	Working Group 3 Online (Zoom)	Yes	- Update on legislative proposal on green claims and PEFCR	2
March 2023	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Adoption of advice - Update on work and finances 	Executive Committee Online (Zoom)	No		2
May 2023	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Marketing Standards 	Working Group 1 Physical (Brussels)	Yes	- Update on development of marketing standards proposal	2
May 2023	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Trade - IUU Fishing 	Working Group 2 Physical (Brussels)	Yes	- Update on trade developments	2
May 2023	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - EU-level targets of food waste reduction - Food Contact Materials (FCMs) 	Working Group 3 Physical (Brussels)	Yes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Presentation of legislative proposal on food waste - Presentation of legislative proposal on FCMs 	2
May 2023	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Adoption of advice - Update on work and finances 	Executive Committee Physical (Brussels)	No		
July 2023	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Preparation of Work Programme and Budget of Year 8 	Executive Committee Online (Zoom)	No		
September 2023	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Presentation of STECF Economic Report on Aquaculture 	Working Group 1 Physical (Brussels)	Yes	- Exchange of STECF report	2
September 2023	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Trade - IUU Fishing 	Working Group 2 Physical (Brussels)	Yes	- Update on trade developments	2

	September 2023	- Farm to Fork Strategy initiatives	Working Group 3 Physical (Brussels)	Yes	- Update on Farm to Fork Strategy initiatives	2
	September 2023	- Update on work done and finances - Approval of Work Programme and Budget for Year 8 - FAO COFI Meeting	General Assembly Physical (Brussels)	No		