

POST-2020 EU FUNDING FOR AQUACULTURE



WHY SHOULD EUROPEAN AQUACULTURE RECEIVE STRUCTURAL FUNDS POST2020 ?

The following opinions have been provided by individual Member Associations of the FEAP that represent professional fish farming within the European Union and compiled by the FEAP Secretariat.

Recent European-level studies, reports and opinions have clearly indicated the need for and the potential of contributions from European aquaculture to:

1. Providing high quality, safe and highly nutritious food for the European consumer
2. Sustaining and creating jobs in rural and coastal areas, creating prosperous communities
3. Offsetting imports of seafood within the EU market
4. Contributing to European food security, a position of increasing importance

Such aspects are already recognized within several European strategies and policies, where sustainable growth is foreseen, underlining aquaculture's resource efficiency and key contributions both to the Bioeconomy and the Circular Economy.

Independent of European support funding opportunities, European aquaculture's potential has been restricted by a range of issues, including – at national levels - bureaucratic red-tape and the administration/availability of aquaculture sites. Governance improvements in many Member States appear to open new opportunities for the sustainable development of European aquaculture.

Many improvements in aquaculture require investment – in materials, stocks and skills – and innovations, new products and processes all require attention to markets and management (e.g. Product Environmental Footprint). Funding is essential to assure a supportive, growth approach to such investments and developments.

The interpretation and application of European and national laws affecting aquaculture, directly or indirectly, have fluctuated considerably – leading to a lack of vision for the sector, preventing strategic planning by the economic actors of the aquaculture value chain.

Many who are active in EU fish aquaculture are young enterprises – which need support that ENABLES aquaculture development. The delivery of positive socio-economic and environmental contributions of the smaller farms, notably freshwater ones, are medium to long term goals that still require financial support to achieve these contributions.

Establishing a level playing field for European aquaculture is of the highest priority for the profession. Structural funding is needed to assist development and adaptation of the sector within a highly competitive marketplace to assure its contributions to food security, jobs and Blue Growth.