



FEAP position on Fish Welfare

The FEAP is the united voice of the European aquaculture producers, representing 22 members out of 21 countries. FEAP represents a wide range of farmed species that include Atlantic salmon, rainbow trout, seabass, seabream, carp, catfish, turbot, cod, sturgeon and meagre.

The FEAP strives to assure the welfare of fish farmed in Europe. Fish farmers are the owners of their fish stocks and are responsible for them.

FEAP's position

- 1) Fish are not a single species but many and with considerable biological differences between them, including welfare needs. Furthermore, fish farming in Europe is a very diverse activity taking place both in marine and fresh waters and using different production systems such as tanks, ponds and sea pens.
- 2) FEAP promotes a holistic approach to fish welfare in which specific welfare issues must be considered alongside the limitations of the physical farming environment, workers safety, environmental protection, product quality and economic viability.
- 3) European fish farmers follow rules and regulations on health and animal welfare that apply to fish.
- 4) FEAP understands that Good Practice at farm level is key to ensuring the adequate welfare of fish and, for this reason, promotes their uptake within the industry.
- 5) The farming of fish is a young activity when compared to other livestock production. For this reason, even today important gaps exist in scientific knowledge on this matter. Furthermore, reference centres such as those used in the agriculture sector should be created for the aquaculture sector. FEAP recommends the promotion of further scientific research on fish welfare, in particular welfare indicators.
- 6) FEAP considers that when addressing fish welfare, the whole life cycle of the fish has to be addressed.
- 7) FEAP recognises the importance of adequate training for fish farm workers on this issue.
- 8) FEAP wishes to highlight that fish welfare should not contribute towards the un-level playing field with respect to other fish products, both imported into Europe or caught by fishing fleets.
- 9) FEAP understands the relevance of communication to make society aware of how European farmed fish are treated. FEAP is concerned with the misleading communication actions on fish welfare which have recently appeared in the media.