

On the EC's Communication on Transforming the EU's Blue Economy for a Sustainable Future

Background

The European Commission published on 17-May-2020 a Communication on a new approach for a sustainable blue economy in the EU under the title of 'Transforming the EU's Blue Economy for a Sustainable Future'¹.

This communication sets out an agenda for the blue economy to play a major role to achieve the European Green Deal's objectives. It acknowledges that due to its dynamism and innovation potential, the sector is well placed to drive the green transition, replacing unchecked expansion with clean, climate-proof and sustainable activities that tread lightly on the marine environment.

The Communication sets a focus shift from 'blue growth' to a sustainable 'blue economy'.

This Position paper states the Federation of European Aquaculture Producers' opinion on the new Communication from the European Commission.

1. On making the transition from 'Blue Growth' to a 'Sustainable Blue Economy'

The Communication states that Europe's blue economy provides 6.3 million direct jobs, many in regions where there are few alternatives. It encompasses all industries and sectors related to oceans, seas and coasts, whether they are located in the marine environment or on land. The Commission will reach out to all maritime stakeholders to engage with them in this action.

1. The FEAP welcomes the Communication and highlights the central role of aquaculture in the sustainable blue economy. This federation will actively cooperate with the Commission and the Member States to pursue the shaping of a sustainable blue economy in a fair and equitable way.
2. The FEAP agrees with the Commission that a sustainable blue economy will create tangible opportunities for new jobs and businesses. These will be created to work mitigating the impacts on oceans and coasts and building a resilient economic model based on innovation, a circular economy, and a respectful attitude to the ocean.
3. The federation supports the conceptual shift from 'blue growth' to a sustainable 'blue economy' but strongly emphasises that, in the case of aquaculture, growth is an objective by itself and that without expansion there will be no sustainable future for EU aquaculture. This need for growth in aquaculture is clearly stated by the Commission in its Strategic guidelines.

¹ 'Transforming the EU's Blue Economy for a Sustainable Future', COM(2020) 286 final <https://ec.europa.eu/info>