

On the EC's Communication on the Strategic guidelines for a more sustainable and competitive EU aquaculture

Background

The European Commission published on 17-May-2021 a Communication on the *Strategic guidelines for a more sustainable and competitive EU aquaculture for the period 2021 to 2030*¹.

This communication reviews the Commission's Strategic Guidelines for the sustainable development of EU aquaculture adopted in 2013². Those guidelines have been the main pillar of the strategic coordination of aquaculture policy in the EU. By 2015, on the basis of these guidelines, EU Member States adopted Multi-annual National Strategic Plans (MNSPs) for aquaculture. The implementation of these MNSPs was supported by the exchange of good practices among EU Member States facilitated by the Commission and funding through the European Maritime and Fisheries Fund (EMFF) and other EU funds.

This Position paper states the Federation of European Aquaculture Producers' opinion on the new Communication from the European Commission on the *Strategic guidelines for a more sustainable and competitive EU aquaculture for the period 2021 to 2030*.

1. ON THE NEED FOR A NEW EU STRATEGY FOR AQUACULTURE

The European Green Deal and the Farm to Fork Strategy underline the potential of farmed seafood as a source of protein for food and feed with a low-carbon footprint which has an important role to play in helping to build a sustainable food system. Aquaculture creates jobs and economic development opportunities in the EU's coastal and rural communities. This sector can also help decarbonise the economy, fight climate change and mitigate its impact, reduce pollution, contribute to better preserving ecosystems, and to be part of a more circular management of resources.

1. The FEAP welcomes this bold and well-focused Communication and rates it as highly valuable for the EU aquaculture industry, both in the way it is structured and because of the quality its objectives, tools and messages. This federation takes good note of those issues in which it is requested to take direct action and will actively cooperate with the Commission, the Member States and the Aquaculture Advisory Council to pursue its Green Deal goals.
2. The FEAP is satisfied to notice that the European Commission has clearly taken on board that besides the importance of continuing to refine the environmental performance of European aquaculture, there is an urgent need to improve the economic competitiveness of EU fish farmers. Hence the title of the Communication.
3. The federation greatly agrees with the European Commission that a strategic and long-term approach for the sustainable growth of EU aquaculture is more relevant today than ever.

¹ Strategic guidelines for a more sustainable and competitive EU aquaculture. COM(2021) 236 final: <https://bit.ly/2RH0lp5>

² Strategic Guidelines for the sustainable development of EU aquaculture. COM(2013) 229 final <https://bit.ly/3h2Xd7v>