

Statement

On the impacts of the WAR IN UKRAINE on European aquaculture

15 March 2022

Background

The European aquaculture sector is following with great consternation the development of the conflict in Ukraine caused by the unjustified aggression by Russia. It expresses its solidarity with all the Ukrainian people, families, and businesses, with special thoughts going to their fellow fish farmers in these extraordinarily difficult times. This is the moment to prove solidarity and strengthen united European cooperation. Moreover, in times of war, the focus on food security becomes of critical importance and it is essential to take the necessary steps early on to ensure that food supplies continue reaching those most affected, in Ukraine and the rest of Europe. The FEAP hopes that as soon as possible reason will prevail and that the space for bridge-building and reconciliation in freedom once again emerges.

Impacts of the Ukraine crisis

The war in Ukraine is impacting dramatically on European aquaculture. Fish farming in Europe is a very diverse sector that produces more than fifteen different species through a variety of farming systems. Each is affected with different degrees of intensity. The following are the common impacts:

1. Price of feed for farmed fish. Feed accounts for approximately 60% of the production costs of farmed finfish. The price of fish feed was already on a high point in January because of the post-covid raw materials supply tensions. A spike in the price of relevant vegetal raw materials (like wheat gluten, maize, sunflower oil, and rapeseed oil) has occurred as the Ukraine crisis unfolded because Ukraine is a major global player in the production of these agricultural products. Even though marine ingredients are also important in the formulation of fish feed, because of the tensions on the supply of vegetal raw materials, raises at fish feed prices are now being announced every week by feed manufacturers.
2. Availability of feed raw materials. Beyond the price crisis of fish feeds, the sourcing itself of these materials by fish feed manufacturers is at risk. Fierce competition between bioenergy and livestock uses to acquire the same raw materials in other markets has been unleashed. This includes a shortage of non-genetically modified raw materials (mainly soya), trace minerals, and antioxidants (of Russian origin).