

## On the situation of organic aquaculture in the EU and an outlook for the future

### Background

The Farm-to-Fork Strategy<sup>1</sup> is at the heart of the Green Deal<sup>2</sup>. It faces the challenges of sustainable food systems and recognises the inextricable links between healthy people, healthy societies and a healthy planet. This strategy, and also the Biodiversity strategy<sup>3</sup>, address organic production and consider that the market for organic food is to continue growing and that organic farming needs to be further promoted. For EU Action Plan on organic farming<sup>4</sup> has been proposed by the European Commission in 2021 to help Member States stimulate both supply and demand for organic products. Commission Regulation (EC) 889/2008 laid down detailed rules for the implementation of Council Regulation (EC) 854/2002<sup>5</sup> on organic production and labelling. A more recent regulation was then adopted (Regulation (EU) 2018/848)<sup>6</sup> addressing non-meatfish.

### "Can 25% of European agricultural land be organic in 2030? What about waters?"

A growth objective for organic production has been set by the European Commission. It aims to dedicate at least 25% of EU agricultural land to organic farming by 2030 and a significant increase in organic expenditure. The European Commission's 2021 agriculture strategic guidelines<sup>7</sup> also encourage Member States and stakeholders to support increases in organic aquaculture production.

By 2020 organic farming in general accounted for 9.5% of agricultural land at EU 27 level. Consumption of organic products is steadily on the increase, having reached EUR 44.8 billion at EU 27 level, accounting for 4.7% of EU food consumption (including aquatic food). The total organic aquaculture production at EU 27 level in 2020 was estimated at 74,692 tonnes, representing only 0.4% of the total EU aquaculture production. Based on data collected by a EUROPA study<sup>8</sup>, the main aquatic species produced as organic in the EU in 2020 were mussels (71,995 tonnes, 10 % of total

<sup>1</sup> The Farm-to-Fork strategy for a fair, healthy and environmentally friendly food system [https://ec.europa.eu/farm2fork/en/key-messages\\_en](https://ec.europa.eu/farm2fork/en/key-messages_en)

<sup>2</sup> The European Green Deal: Setting out the first climate-neutral continent [https://commission.europa.eu/strategy-and-policy/environments/eu-green-deal\\_en](https://commission.europa.eu/strategy-and-policy/environments/eu-green-deal_en)

<sup>3</sup> EU Biodiversity Strategy for 2030: Bringing nature back into our lives [https://commission.europa.eu/strategy-and-policy/environments/biodiversity-strategy-2030\\_en](https://commission.europa.eu/strategy-and-policy/environments/biodiversity-strategy-2030_en)

<sup>4</sup> Action plan for organic production in the EU [https://commission.europa.eu/strategy-and-policy/environments/organic-production-action-plan\\_en](https://commission.europa.eu/strategy-and-policy/environments/organic-production-action-plan_en)

<sup>5</sup> Regulation (EC) 854/2002 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 18 May 2002 on organic production and labelling of organic products and repealing Council Regulation (EEC) 2091/91 <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX%3A32002R0054&fromDoc=32002R0054&fromDoc=32002R0054>

<sup>6</sup> Organic production (EU) 2018/848 and Commission Regulation (EU) 2018/848 on the implementation of Regulation (EU) 2018/848 <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX%3A32018R0848&fromDoc=32018R0848&fromDoc=32018R0848>

<sup>7</sup> Sustainable organic agriculture in the EU

<https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/tgm/table.do?tab=table&init=1&code=sdg12.2.1&plugin=1&plugin=1&code=sdg12.2.1&plugin=1&plugin=1>