



Food and Agriculture
Organization of the
United Nations



General Fisheries
Commission for
the Mediterranean



FEDERATION OF
EUROPEAN
AQUACULTURE
PRODUCERS

Good management practices in fish health and welfare in the Mediterranean



Andrea Fabris

FEAP-GFCM Workshop – Rome - 18th January 2024





Food and Agriculture
Organization of the
United Nations



General Fisheries
Commission for
the Mediterranean



FEDERATION OF
EUROPEAN
AQUACULTURE
PRODUCERS

“**One Health**” perspective, the link between animal health and public health, the environment, food and feed safety, animal welfare, antimicrobial resistance and production and economic aspects

Revision of the animal welfare legislation will broaden its scope, make its enforcement easier and ultimately ensure a higher level of animal welfare.

Farmed fish will included

Recommendations and guidelines by WOAHA, EFSA, DG SANTE, AAC, FAO,.... Certification schemes

The Context for Animal Health & Welfare in EU and Mediterranean AREA





Food and Agriculture
Organization of the
United Nations



General Fisheries
Commission for
the Mediterranean



Animal Health Law (AHL - Regulation (EU) 2016/429), provides a general legal framework and dictates harmonized principles for the entire animal health sector

Reg. (EU) 04/2019 on **Medicated Feed** and Reg. (UE) 06/2019 on **Veterinary Medicines Products** paying more attention on AMR

Control by public health authorities under the rules established by Regulation (EU) 2017/625 on “**Official controls**”

New EU Rules for Health





Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations



General Fisheries Commission for the Mediterranean



FEDERATION OF EUROPEAN AQUACULTURE PRODUCERS



ParaFishControl

Interreg



Co-funded by the European Union

Erasmus+

Some Projects focused also on Fish Health & Welfare in the Mediteranean area





Food and Agriculture
Organization of the
United Nations

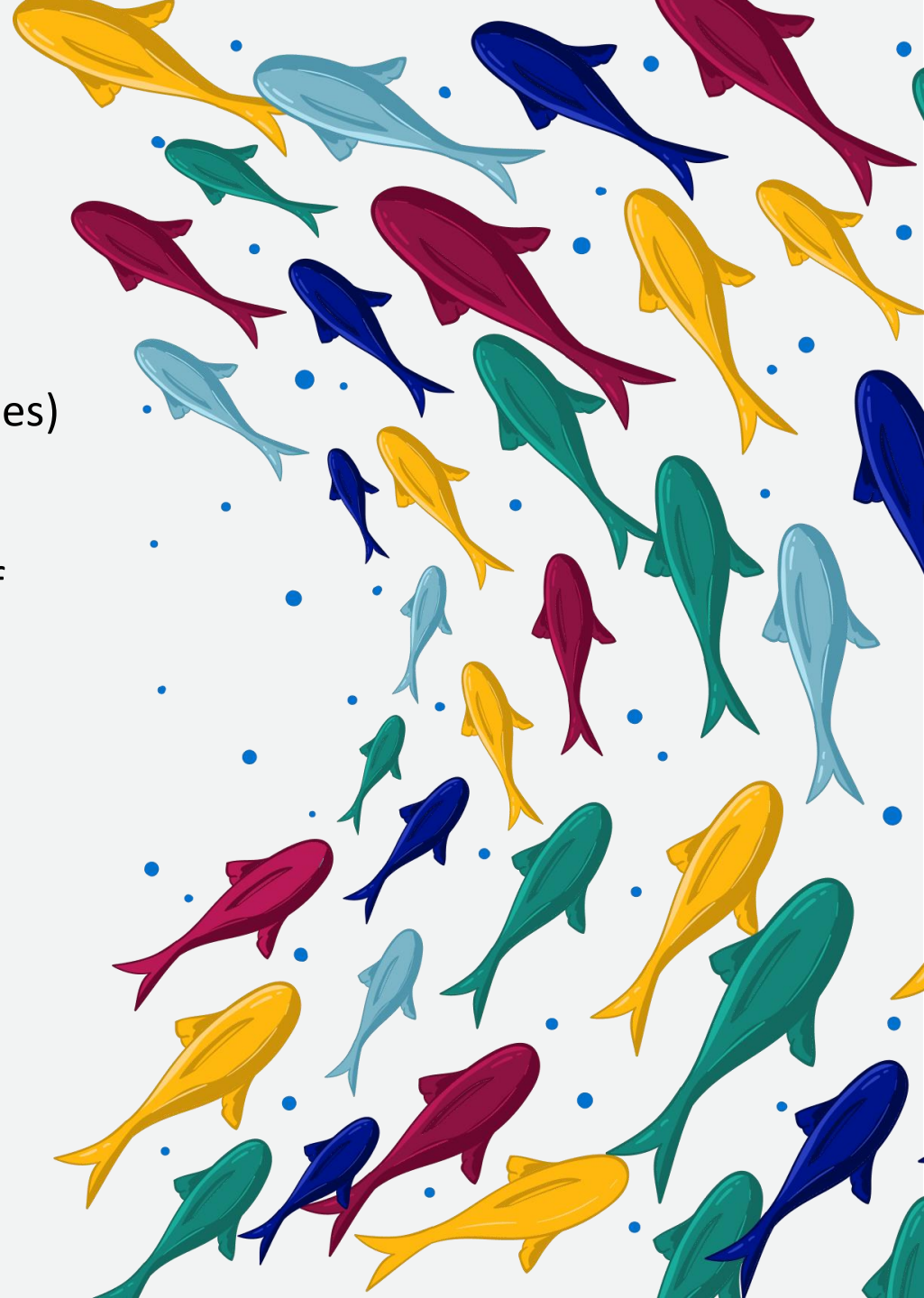


General Fisheries
Commission for
the Mediterranean



- Different fish species (due to physiological ethological characteristics, in some cases long biological and production cycles)
- Very different structural and managerial characteristics (micro enterprises, SMEs, ...) with different technologies and degrees of production intensification (from extensive to RAS)
- Evolving hydro-climate environment influencing the spread of diseases and other threats
- Emerging diseases
- Rules and laws are not always aligned
- Market trends

The production context







Food and Agriculture
Organization of the
United Nations



General Fisheries
Commission for
the Mediterranean

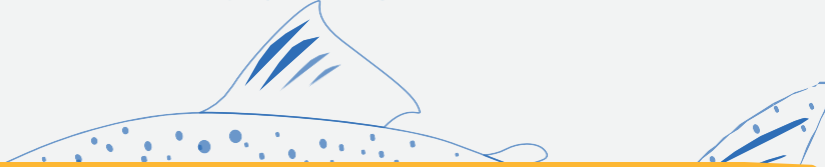


FEDERATION OF
EUROPEAN
AQUACULTURE
PRODUCERS

© APROMAR



MEDITERRANEAN MARINE FISH FARMING SECTOR CODE OF CONDUCT





Food and Agriculture
Organization of the
United Nations



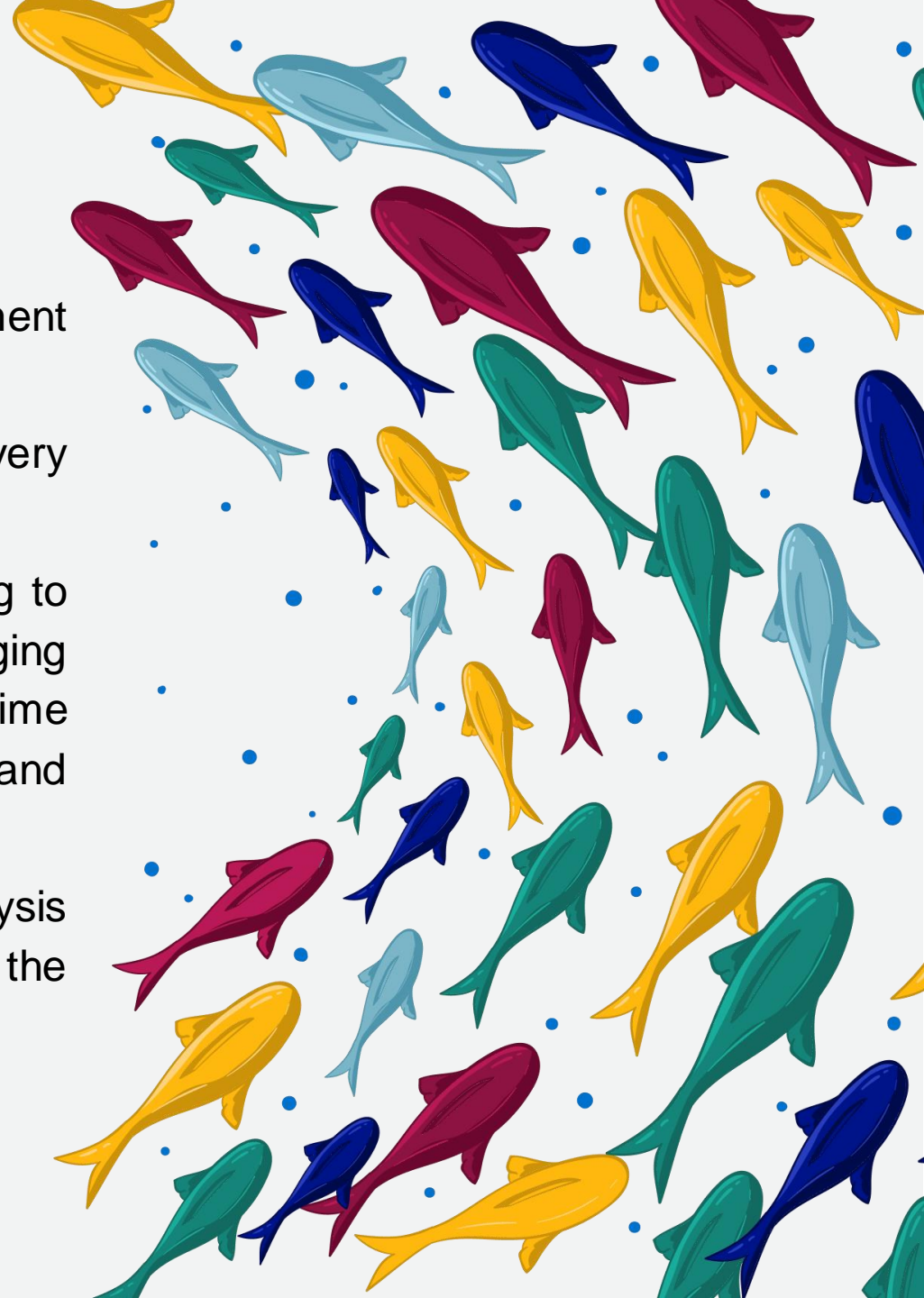
General Fisheries
Commission for
the Mediterranean



Depending on the structure of the aquaculture establishment considered:

- Health & biosecurity measures applied on the field can be very different and very variable.
- To assure the control of the factors, risks and pathway leading to the spread of pathogens and diseases, including emerging diseases, biosecurity measures need to be at the same time uniformly applied in all types of aquaculture production sites and have the involvement of all stakeholders concerned.
- Measures need to be adapted to site related risks analysis related to the structure of production, the production plan and the farming management and the environmental conditions.

Fish Farm GMPs for Health and Biosecurity measures





Food and Agriculture
Organization of the
United Nations



General Fisheries
Commission for
the Mediterranean



- a. Ensuring optimal environmental conditions to grow the fish.
- b. Adoption of a veterinary health plan based on prevention and vaccination to minimise the incidence and spread of diseases.
- c. Adoption and sharing among farmers, and staff training on good husbandry and management practices, including quarantining, vaccination, handling, feeding, transport, confinement, and harvesting.
- d. Encouraging the application of smart solutions and digital tools to enhance innovation and improve farm monitoring and production management.

Fish Farm GMPs for Health and Biosecurity measures





Food and Agriculture
Organization of the
United Nations



General Fisheries
Commission for
the Mediterranean

Responsible use of
therapeutic agents –
always administered
under veterinary control –
only where essential for
disease treatment to
avoid the risk of
antimicrobial resistance
and to improve animal
welfare.



One example GMP: Reduction of AMR



Background

Antimicrobial resistance (AMR) occurs when bacteria, viruses, fungi and parasites change over time and no longer respond to medicines making infections harder to treat and increasing the risk of disease spread, severe illness and death. As a result of drug resistance, antibiotics and other antimicrobial medicines become ineffective and infections become increasingly difficult or impossible to treat.

It is recognised that antibiotic resistance poses a serious risk to both human and animal health, since resistant bacteria can be transferred between animals, animal products and people. The World Health Organisation has warned of a post-antibiotic era, where antibiotic resistance would cause more deaths than cancer.

The European Commission presented in 2011 its Action Plan against the rising threats from Antimicrobial Resistance¹ containing actions for implementation with EU Member States and identifying areas where measures are most needed. First in 2016 it published its One Health Action Plan against Antimicrobial Resistance² aiming to make the EU a best practice region, to boost research, development and innovation, and to shape the global agenda.

Healthy animals produce safer food.

Consumers in the EU and beyond should have access to the finest and safest European farmed fish products on the market. Therefore, European fish farmers and their veterinarians continue to work in concert to develop Veterinary Health Plans, optimised global surveillance and monitoring programmes. No fish farmer wishes to lower growth performance and lose fish through disease and infections. The FEAP strongly supports the improvement of veterinary skills and networking throughout Europe so as to improve and access best on-farm practices.

Antibiotics are sometimes used to treat farmed and pet animals for the same reasons as they are used to treat people: they are selectively used to treat and control specific diseases. Responsible prescription and use of antibiotics in all types of food producing animals, including fish, is a key consideration.

The focus for professional fish farming is on **disease prevention** rather than cure: antibiotics are therefore not used unless considered to be essential for disease treatment. Highest-Priority Critically Important Antibiotics (HP-CIAs) are very rarely used in European aquaculture, and only if their use is justified by sensitivity testing. The prophylactic use of antibiotics does not occur in European fish farming and is forbidden within the EU. The treatments with veterinary medicines that are unavoidable are fully traceable in order to ensure the absolute absence of drug residues in fish delivered to the market.

¹ Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament and the Council

Action plan against the rising threats from Antimicrobial Resistance <https://bit.ly/3J8E4G0>

² A European One Health Action Plan against Antimicrobial Resistance (AMR) <https://bit.ly/3dRA2wr>



- Farming practices
- Transport and handling
- Stunning and slaughtering

- Implementation and application of Operational Welfare Indicators (OWIs) and tools to measure and report on fish welfare.
- Inspection of behavioral and physical changes and mortalities, with prompt action if alterations are detected.
- Implementation of science-based, effective, safe stunning and slaughtering procedures, to minimise stress and suffering.

GMP for Ensure Fish Welfare

MANUALE
PER LA GESTIONE DEL CONTROLLO
DEL BENESSERE DEI PESCI
DURANTE IL TRASPORTO SU STRADA

REGOLAMENTO N. 1/2005 CE DEL CONSIGLIO DEL 22 DICEMBRE 2004
"SULLA PROTEZIONE DEGLI ANIMALI DURANTE IL TRASPORTO
E LE OPERAZIONI CORRELATE"



GUÍA SOBRE EL
**BIENESTAR
DE LOS PECES**
EN LA
**ACUICULTURA
ESPAÑOLA**

[Vol. 1]: Conceptos y Generalidades





Food and Agriculture
Organization of the
United Nations



General Fisheries
Commission for
the Mediterranean



- How to spread Good Practices in such diverse contexts
- How to respond to the proliferation of certifications that impose regulations more suitable for B2B than for the sustainable development of aquaculture (e.g. antibiotic-free certifications)
- How to train and transmit information and knowledge to aquaculture operators but also to the public administrations responsible for control

Some Challenges





Thank you!

... Questions?



Andrea Fabris – API Director
E-mail andreafabris@hotmail.com;
info@acquacoltura.org
Web: www.acquacoltura.org

ACQUACOLTURA.ORG