



## Press Release

Brussels. March 31st, 2025. For immediate publication

### **Subject: Successful “Deep Dive” for the first FEAP NextGen Academy training**

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On March 25<sup>th</sup> and 26<sup>th</sup>, FEAP organized its first ever FEAP NextGen Academy training, bringing a class of young fish farming professionals from across Europe to the heart of Brussels for a “Deep Dive into EU institutions”. This training, sponsored by AquaSoja (Soja de Portugal) was a first for FEAP, whose members and team are developing increasing efforts into investing in youth and generational renewal in the European fish farming sector.

Following multiple exchanges over the past year with Young Aquaculture Professional Associations and Networks such as NOWA (the Network of Women in Aquaculture) YAS, (Young Aquaculture Society) and YoungFish Norway, FEAP decided in 2024 to develop a program called “FEAP NextGen”, aiming at connecting young fish farming professionals and providing them support and opportunities to get a better understanding of the European dimension of fish farming policy making.

When FEAP started a few months ago developing this idea, little did we expect to drive so much interest and so many applicants for this first edition. For this first training, FEAP received over a hundred applications, and choosing 15 participants for this first edition has been a tough process as we had to sort so many good profiles.

The whole process, from organisation to delivering, has been extremely energizing. Indeed, the team of participants (15 participants from 14 countries) hosted for two days created a unique blend of backgrounds, languages, professional skills, personal life stories, boldness, fun facts and high motivation. They made the most out of their two days and had the chance to meet with representatives from AAC, MAC, EATIP, FEFAC, DG Research, DG MARE, and MEPs including MEPs Gabriel Mato, Francisco Millán Mon, representatives from European Commission DGMARE and DGResearch as well as stakeholders from Market Advisory Council, EATIP, FEFAC and Aquaculture Advisory Council.

These meetings helped demonstrate how democracy and collective solution-making works. Bringing a critical eye and reality check of complexities of EU policy making, all understood the value and privilege of having organisations and institutions listening and carrying the voice of citizens, producers and consumers, to the highest level of decision making. Many participants brought to the table very practical questions and challenges faced by European fish farmers, which they could address first hand with the European stakeholders involved in the training.