

PRESS RELEASE: Stakeholders unite to call for an EU Action Plan on Blue Foods

On 2 September, a coalition of leading organisations active in fisheries and aquaculture – EBCO, Europêche, EAPG, FEAP, and APCE/CEP – formally launched a joint call for an EU Action Plan on Blue Foods at the European Parliament (Brussels – Belgium). The organisations urged EU policymakers to take decisive action to integrate aquatic foods into Europe's broader food and sustainability strategies.

The [launch event](https://www.europarl.europa.eu/media/infocentre/press-releases/2024/09/02-09-2024-01), hosted by the Chair of the Committee of Fisheries of the European Parliament – Carmen Crespo Diaz, brought the spotlight on aquatic products – often overlooked in European food policy debates. At a time when climate disruptions, conflict, and geopolitical shifts are putting immense strain on global food systems, the message is clear: **an EU Action Plan for Blue Foods is not an option – it is a necessity!**

"Blue foods must be at the core of the EU's Ocean Pact and its sustainable food strategy. They are healthy, low-carbon, and essential for the resilience of our coastal regions. This action plan is a timely and science-based roadmap – we now call on the European Commission to move from vision to action by supporting responsible aquaculture, fair market conditions, and a competitive, future-oriented fisheries sector. There is no truly ambitious Ocean Pact without a strong commitment to blue food systems!" said Carmen Crespo Diaz.

Javier Garol, rapporteur on the [action plan](https://www.europarl.europa.eu/media/infocentre/press-releases/2024/09/02-09-2024-01) of the European Economic and Social Committee (EESC) on the Ocean Pact, informed that the EESC has supported the call for a Blue Food Action Plan as a vital step to modernise fisheries and aquaculture, secure Europe's food supply and boost the resilience of coastal communities.

The European Commissioner (DG MARE) – Paolo Lahnemann – was also present to react to the call and to inform on the latest developments in that regard.

Blue foods – which include wild-caught and farmed fish and seafood – provide essential nutrients such as omega-3s, vitamins, and minerals, while often having a **lower carbon and resource footprint** than many land-based proteins. At the same time, these foods support **millions of jobs in coastal and rural communities**, connecting the ocean to Europe's social fabric.

Europe's aquatic food sector faces significant challenges. According to the FAO, Europe is the only continent experiencing a decline in local aquatic production. In addition, EU per capita consumption of wild-caught seafood has reached its lowest level in a decade, according to the EUMODAP market observatory. This, despite of the fact that most European stocks are managed sustainably. This decline comes at a time when obesity and diet-related diseases are increasing across Europe.