Press Release

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Subject: **European aquaculture organisations meet Commissioner Kadis, call for strong political leadership to restore production growth**

The European Molluscs Producers' Association (EMPA), the Federation of European Aquaculture Producers (FEAP), and the European Aquaculture Technology and Innovation Platform (EATIP) met yesterday with European Commissioner Costas Kadis - responsible for Fisheries and Oceans, including aquaculture, to jointly address the urgent challenges facing European aquaculture and to contribute to the EU's Vision for Aquaculture towards 2040, including support for the sector within the upcoming Ocean Research and Innovation Strategy. Together, these organisations represent the entirety of the EU aquaculture sector.

Held in a small-committee format with the Presidents and Secretaries General of each organisation, the meeting focused on reversing the long-term decline of EU aquaculture, strengthening policy coherence, and defining clear priorities for competitiveness, spatial planning, research, and innovation.

The organisations stressed that while global aquaculture production continues to grow rapidly, European production has stagnated or declined for over 25 years. This downturn, they underlined, is not due to a lack of entrepreneurship, investment, or innovation within the sector, but rather to excessive bureaucracy, burdensome administrative processes, fragmented initiatives, insufficient recognition in spatial planning, and policy frameworks that generate consultations but deliver few results. As a consequence, strong EU demand for aquatic food is increasingly met by imports from countries with more coherent aquaculture policies.

The organisations called on Commissioner Kadis to champion stronger political leadership within the European Commission and across Member States, ensuring aquaculture is fully integrated into food policy, competitiveness strategies, research priorities, and environmental legislation.

Commissioner Kadis welcomed the exchange and reaffirmed his commitment to elevating aquaculture within the EU's food and blue-economy agenda. He stated: *"Aquaculture is a top priority in my portfolio, both for food security and for*