



Press Release

Athens, Greece - 12th - 12th February

Sustainable aquaculture in action: production, science and policy working together in the Mediterranean and the Black Sea

Over 130 persons gathered in Athens, Greece, and online for the FEAP-GFCM Technical Consultation on Sustainable Aquaculture Practices, highlighting the importance of structural producer engagement in regional aquaculture governance.

The two-day event, jointly organized by the Federation of European Aquaculture Producers and the General Fisheries Commission for the Mediterranean (GFCM) of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), with financial support from the European Union, brought together producers, national authorities, experts from the GFCM Technical Advisory Group (TAG) and Aquaculture Demonstration Centres, researchers and sector associations from across the Mediterranean and Black Sea region. The active participation of national authorities and the Italian Aquaculture Producers Organization further strengthened the practical focus of the discussions.

A strategic pillar of regional food security

Aquaculture continues to consolidate its role in Mediterranean and Black Sea aquatic food systems. According to The State of Mediterranean and Black Sea Fisheries 2023, total aquaculture production in 2022 reached 2.67 million tonnes, generating approximately USD 5.3 billion. Marine and brackish water aquaculture accounted for 140 000 tonnes, representing more than 45 percent of total aquatic food production in the region.

With projections indicating that fisheries and aquaculture production will need to increase by 34 to 29 percent by 2050 to meet future demand, sustainable aquaculture development is increasingly recognized as a central component of food security, economic resilience and FAO's Blue Transformation vision.

Regulatory clarity as a condition for sustainable investment

During the consultation, participants examined governance frameworks and responsible investment conditions needed to ensure balanced growth. Discussions underscored the importance of aligning environmental, social and governance principles with commercial viability and long-term planning.

Learning complexity and administrative fragmentation were identified as structural challenges in several countries. Participants highlighted the need for clearer procedures, improved interinstitutional coordination and predictable timelines. The digitalization of administrative processes and the establishment of transparent spatial planning frameworks were presented as practical solutions to reduce bottlenecks and enhance investor confidence.