



Press Release

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EU aquaculture left behind: FEAP condemns structural bias in Commission's CFP evaluation

The Federation of European Aquaculture Producers (FEAP) issues a stark warning over the European Commission's evaluation of the Common Fisheries Policy (CFP) Regulation (EU) 2013/2012, published on 30 April 2024. While welcoming the Commission's effort to assess the past decade, FEAP concludes that the evaluation is structurally biased against aquaculture, fails to draw necessary conclusions from clear evidence of stagnation, and offers no credible foundation for the upcoming 2024 Vision for Fisheries and Aquaculture.

Despite the CFP's explicit inclusion of aquaculture, the evaluation treats the sector as a marginal afterthought. It lacks a dedicated intervention logic, overlooks the direct link between EU aquaculture stagnation and declining EU food self-sufficiency, and admits that key governance tools—Multi-annual National Strategic Plans for Aquaculture (MNSPAs) and the Open Method of Coordination (OMC), have had only "limited impact" on financing and access to space.

"The Commission's evaluation identifies many of the problems but refuses to draw the necessary conclusions," said Javier Ojea, FEAP Secretary General. "After more than a decade of voluntary cooperation with Member States, EU aquaculture has not grown. Our self-sufficiency in fishery and aquaculture products has fallen from 46.1% to 38.1%. For the five most consumed species, it is just 17%. The evaluation sees this but fails to connect the dots. Voluntary tools for Member States have failed. It is time for binding governance, harmonised standards, and a genuine commitment to strategic autonomy."

FEAP's analysis highlights eight critical failures, including the complete absence of common environmental indicators for aquaculture, the omission of climate adaptation as a binding requirement, and the incoherence with other EU policies such as the Nature Restoration Regulation and the Birds Directive, an omission FEAP calls "intentional."