



EUROPEAN COMMISSION
DIRECTORATE-GENERAL FOR MARITIME AFFAIRS AND FISHERIES

The Director-General

Brussels,
MARE/A2/EGG (2022)

Subject: Analysis of the Aquaculture situation in the Outermost Regions

Dear Mr. Pavón,

I would like to thank you for your letter of 19 May 2022 including the analysis of the Aquaculture sector in the Outermost Regions.

That analysis is a very valuable source of information for Commission's services. It rightly points out that the outermost regions face specific challenges linked to their remoteness, topography and climate, but also have specific assets on which to develop a sustainable blue economy, including sustainable and competitive aquaculture activities.

That analysis is particularly useful in the context of the programming of the European Maritime, Fisheries and Aquaculture Fund (EMFAF), as regards the action plans for the outermost regions that have to be attached to the programmes of the Member States concerned. These action plans should describe a strategy for the development of sustainable blue economy sectors in the outermost regions, including sustainable aquaculture, with ring-fenced financial resources. I encourage you to share your recommendations with the Member States concerned, to feed their strategic approach for the outermost regions as regards the programming and implementation of the EMFAF.

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In this context, the Commission has recently sent a letter to the national EMFAF managing authorities stressing the importance that Member States finalize their EMFAF programmes as soon as possible so to ensure a smooth assessment and consequent approval by the Commission. Indeed, it is crucial to put the funds to work and start implementation of projects on the ground without any further delays.

Moreover, the Strategic guidelines for a more sustainable and competitive EU aquaculture for the period 2021 to 2030¹ (the Guidelines) identify some of the challenges for the whole EU aquaculture sector also recognised in your analysis such as for example those related to regulatory and administrative framework, climate-change adaptation and mitigation or communication on EU aquaculture. These guidelines provide concrete recommendations in their Annex for the Commission, Member States and the Aquaculture Advisory Council to address those concerns.

Furthermore, allow me to highlight some of the areas in which the Commission is currently working for the aquaculture sector that could be of interest for you:

- 1) Communication to the consumer/citizen on EU aquaculture: the Commission is working on developing tools for an EU-wide communication campaign on EU aquaculture. Dissemination of this campaign will be supported by Member States and the AAC. The goal is to bring more attention and inform citizens of the benefits of aquaculture, and inform about the commitment of the EU, Member States and sector to ensure high quality food and the sustainable development of the activity. Thereby, EU aquaculture would gain further public support for the sector to grow. As you know, the Commission has already prepared, in consultation with EU Member States and the AAC, a brochure on EU aquaculture (available in all EU official languages), which I encourage you to disseminate as widely as possible in the Outermost Regions. You can find it in here: [A new strategic vision for sustainable aquaculture production and consumption in the European Union - Publications Office of the EU \(europa.eu\)](#). I encourage you to work closely with the AAC in this area.
- 2) EU Aquaculture Assistance Mechanism: this Mechanism will be launched in July. Its purpose is to support all relevant actors in the implementation of the Guidelines and the sustainable development of the sector. More concretely, this mechanism will support the Commission in the development of guidance documents on different aspects of aquaculture policy and practices, as envisaged in the Guidelines. Furthermore, it will provide for technical assistance to EU Member States and other stakeholders that wish to put those guidance documents into practice. In addition, this Mechanism will provide an online knowledge platform open to all stakeholders.
- 3) Innovation: The Commission is also working to ensure that aquaculture is sufficiently covered in EU funding programmes supporting innovation, including EMFAF (through the BlueInvest initiative), Horizon Europe, ERDF or ESF. An S3 (Smart Specialisation Strategy) brokerage session on aquaculture took place on 21 June to gather regional and national authorities, SMEs/start-ups, clusters/business hubs, universities and research institutes to discuss ideas to develop S3 interregional partnerships. I invite stakeholders in the Outermost Regions to make the most of these opportunities.

¹ [EUR-Lex - 52021DC0236 - EN - EUR-Lex \(europa.eu\)](#)

I am looking forward to our continued fruitful cooperation. Should you have any further questions on this reply, please contact Ms Pascale COLSON, coordinator of the Advisory Councils (Pascale.COLSON@ec.europa.eu; +32.2.295.62.73), who will forward them to relevant colleagues.

Yours sincerely,

(e-Signed)
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