

NOTE - INTERVENTIONS at FAO COFI

EATiP assisted as an observer at the 10th meeting of the Sub-Committee on Aquaculture of the FAO Committee on Fisheries in Trondheim, Norway, on behalf of the European Aquaculture Society. You can find the draft meeting report attached (NOT for distribution!).

The Sub-Committee asked for an appropriate tool to benchmark and critically evaluate past activities. It was recommended to develop national management plans, a global plan of action, the development and sustainable use, including case studies on Aquatic Genetic Resources, based on the newly drafted FAO report. The issue of genetic improvements through selective breeding, GMO and gene editing was debated, but no common standpoint was taken. FAO has taken the initiative to promote a Progressive Management Pathway for Improving Aquaculture Biosecurity. The need to build upon existing knowledge and experience, based on standards from the World Organisation for Animal Health, and to establish a separate working group and pilot programme on this topic was requested. The importance of knowledge on the microbiome and on economic sustainability was emphasized.

On the role of aquaculture in food security, different members pointed at the need to further look into alternative feed ingredients to supplement existing compounds. A holistic approach to aquaculture is still largely missing and needs to be supported, as one of the ways to enhance consumer acceptance.

FAO has initiated a process to develop Sustainable Aquaculture Guidelines. Research, innovation and education were mentioned to be of major importance for the further development of the sector, its productivity, environmental performance, biosecurity and impacts of climate change. The establishment of public-private and regional partnerships are believed to encourage research on aquaculture technologies, upscaling and technology transfer.

EATiP made the following interventions:

1. On aquaculture innovation: “Exchange of pre-competitive knowledge, especially on new technologies and operation methods for better control and higher production efficiency of the production, can contribute to an optimized production. The uptake and adaptation of tools and methods, that have proven their efficiency in other sectors, should also be encouraged as a way to stimulate high-precision farming practices that lead to a predictable livestock performance. Open and inclusive dialogue between industry, scientists and policy makers, as well as between experts across different disciplines and the public support of initiatives with a high degree of industrial involvement and relevance is of key importance to achieve true innovation in aquaculture. Experiences from multi-stakeholder, industry-driven European networks, already involved in partnering initiatives in South-East Asia and across the North and South Atlantic, may in this respect be taken better advantage of in the stimulation of international collaboration. Blue invest and similar funding programmes which encourage company-driven innovation and business-to-business/research-to-business interactions have been proven to be successful, and are therefore encouraged to be strengthened. Still, we believe that more attention should be given to the facilitation of demonstration actions and full-scale pilots, co-funded nationally in partnership with the industry, to scale up promising technologies and methods.



2. On other business: “Further to the suggestion of the EU to promote more intersession activities, EAS and EATiP hereby confirm their interest to engage with the FAO Secretariat in organizing special sessions at their international meetings during the next intersession period, more specifically at the EATIP Annual Stakeholder meeting in June 2020 in Brussels and at the EAS conference in Ireland in October 2020.”

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