



**COUNCIL OF
THE EUROPEAN UNION**



Council Conclusions on a Strategy for the Sustainable Development of European Aquaculture

*2952nd AGRICULTURE and FISHERIES Council meeting
Luxembourg, 22 and 23 June 2009*

The Council adopted the following conclusions:

"THE COUNCIL

- RECALLING that the objectives of the Common Fisheries Policy to provide for the sustainable exploitation of living aquatic resources extends to the important sector of marine and freshwater aquaculture, taking account of the environmental, economic and social aspects in a balanced manner as well as traditional landscape heritage and the preservation of biodiversity;
- WELCOMING the activities of FAO and other international organisations related to the promotion of aquaculture;
- RECALLING that the EU strategy for sustainable aquaculture of 2002 led to significant progress in ensuring the environmental sustainability, safety and quality of EU aquaculture production;
- CONCERNED that despite this strategy the development of aquaculture in Europe has stagnated in the last decade in contrast to the high growth rate of the sector worldwide over the same period;

P R E S S

- RECOGNIZING the importance of aquaculture as a common good of general interest and a growing source of healthy and high-quality products, in particular against the background of the overexploitation of certain wild marine resources;
1. WELCOMES therefore the Commission's Communication entitled "Building a sustainable future for aquaculture, A new impetus for the Strategy for the Sustainable Development of European Aquaculture", presented on 14 April 2009, and ENDORSES its main objectives;
 2. In this context EMPHASIZES in particular the need to ensure a sustainable and more competitive European aquaculture sector that meets consumer demands;
 3. STRESSES the importance of ensuring a proper balance between aquaculture development and the environment and of providing the necessary conditions for the production of safe and high quality products as well as for fish health and welfare; in this context, INVITES the Commission and Member States to take measures aimed at preventing the transmission of fish diseases between Member States;
 4. NOTES that with a view to enhancing the competitiveness of the sector, it is essential to:
 - Simplify and improve coherence in the legislative framework, particularly licensing procedures, and reduce the administrative and other obstacles to the development of aquaculture at all levels, whilst taking into account the principles of subsidiarity and proportionality;
 - Where appropriate, develop Community guidelines for the national implementation of Community legislation;
 - Take account of the specific needs of aquaculture in the framework of integrated spatial planning and the management of water areas, while recognizing the sector as a rightful user of aquatic resources; and
 - Strongly promote aquaculture research and development, inter alia on species diversification, fish feed and waste reduction, its practical application, and technology transfer;
 5. EMPHASIZES that, while the development of European aquaculture must be market-driven, further economic assistance could provide a new impetus to this sector; INVITES the Commission and Member States to fully use existing funding mechanisms and possibly consider additional support to aquaculture, without prejudice to the next financial perspectives, directed in particular at innovative projects, young entrepreneurs, the environment-enhancing role of extensive aquaculture and, where appropriate, at the prevention and combating of environmental and health risks;
 6. ENCOURAGES the Commission, when developing the necessary measures to support the development of Community aquaculture, to take into consideration the specific problems which hamper the development of fresh water and marine aquaculture;

7. INVITES the Commission to bring forward, in its proposal for a reform of the Common Market Organisation in fish and aquaculture products, appropriate measures aimed at ensuring the proper functioning of the common market in aquaculture products;
 8. FURTHER CONSIDERS that it is important to promote exports of European aquaculture products and technology and to ensure a level playing field for domestic and imported aquaculture products through equivalent standards in full respect of trade rules;
 9. INVITES the Commission and Member States to address, where necessary, the adverse impact of cormorants on aquaculture, in particular by considering appropriate management plans;
 10. BELIEVES that it is essential to raise public awareness of the potential of aquaculture products to contribute to food security in a sustainable way; ENCOURAGES the Commission and Member States to put in place without delay a strong communication strategy aimed at improving the public image of European aquaculture and its products;
 11. SUPPORTS initiatives aimed at promoting sustainability in aquaculture development at global level and continued international cooperation, notably on environmental protection, labelling, certification and food security issues; and
 12. INVITES the Commission to present to the Council no later than by the end of 2009 a programme of actions as a follow-up to the Communication and to keep the Council regularly informed on progress with the implementation of such proposals."
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