

“THE CONTRIBUTION OF FISHERIES AND AQUACULTURE TO FOOD SECURITY”

This event is in partnership with the European Economic and Social Committee and sponsored by Xunta de Galicia.

In focus:

With the new European Commission and new European Parliament soon in place, there is a big opportunity to raise awareness with policymakers. As a result, this event would serve to bring the issue of food security high in the political agenda, and to underline the important role that fisheries and aquaculture can play towards reaching this.

Context:

Europe is an important food exporter to the world. We know that aquatic foods are healthy foods, whether for human health or environmental impact. Hunger and malnutrition across the globe are far from being resolved and, there are growing risks that are dramatically aggravating food security worldwide. Pandemics, wars, climate change and biodiversity loss illustrate the vulnerability of our food systems to external factors. The need for resilient and sustainable food systems is essential to ensure food security and is becoming even more relevant with a population expecting to increase by nearly 2 billion people in the next 30 years (UN). At the same time, the climate-food systems nexus has become part of the discussions in the global processes. At the UNFCCC COP 28, more than 150 countries signed a declaration on Sustainable agriculture, resilient food systems and climate action thereby strongly linking the issue of climate change and food systems. In this context, aquatic foods play a considerable role, as they contribute to many UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Indeed, aquatic foods are an important source of long chain fatty acids, high quality proteins, and essential micronutrients important to human health; while the world will need 50% more food by 2030 due to a rising population (FAO), aquatic foods constitute essential components of a healthy diet. All in all, as aquatic products have a lower carbon footprint than any other animal production industry, fisheries and aquaculture sectors represent real assets to tackle the climate and biodiversity crisis as well as to provide healthy food and livelihoods to a growing worldwide population.

Objective:

This conference will demonstrate how aquatic foods contribute to achieving our climate objectives and ensure food security while, making food systems more sustainable and resilient. It will help us understand the key challenges and obstacles for aquatic foods such as space-squeeze, energy transition, etc, as well as how to increase the consumption of a variety of sustainable produced aquatic foods as part of a healthy diet. The objective of the event is to demonstrate the contribution of aquatic foods to food security, with the aim of ensuring access to healthy food to a growing population. It will enable knowledge-holders to interact, as well as to bring about key transformative recommendations to further build sustainable and resilient food systems. Therefore, scientists, academia, policymakers actors in the entire aquatic food system value chain, civil society and representatives of international organisations will be encouraged to participate.

DRAFT AGENDA

9.00-9.30 Welcome coffee

9.30 – 10.45 Keynote speeches:

- **Welcome and introductory remarks** by a representative of the European Economic and Social Committee - Piroska Kallay (EESC Member)
- **FAO** - The role of aquatic foods in addressing hunger and malnutrition for a growing population - Dr. Manuel Barange
- **EBCD** - Climate-foods systems nexus & aquatic foods
- **European Parliament** – Member of the Committee on Fisheries) (TBD)
- **European Commission representative** – Delilah Al Khudairy (Director)
- **European Council Presidency representative** – Marta Janakakis (TBC)

10.45 – 11.00 Coffee Break

11.00 – 13.00 1st panel on ‘Efforts towards healthy and sustainable diets’:

- Aquatic foods’ contribution to Sustainable Food Systems (Ambassador Jón Erlingur Jónasson, Chair of the UN Aquatic Blue Foods Coalition)
- Benefits of aquatic foods for human nutrition and health (Livar Frøyland - Norwegian Institute for Marine Research)
- Challenges and opportunities for the fisheries sector (Daniel Voces de Onaindi, Managing Director, Europêche)
- Progress towards achieving sustainable fisheries in the EU (Esben Sverdrup-Jensen EAPO)
- Challenges and opportunities for the aquaculture sector (Szilvia Mihalfy, Project Manager, Federation of European Aquaculture Producers)

Q&A session

13.00 – 14.00 Lunch Break

14.00 – 15.00 2nd panel on ‘Considering the social-ecological system of aquatic foods’:

- What makes resilient and sustainable aquatic food production? (Jorn Schmidt, Director for Sustainable Aquatic Food Systems, WorldFish) (online participation or video message)
- Debbi Pedreschi, Marine Institute (TBC)
- Outcomes of the Blue Food Assessment University of Stockholm, Beatrice Crona (TBC)
- Leiden University - Patrik Henriksson (TBC)
- European Commission (DG RTD) Nikos Zamboukas (TBC)

Q&A session

15.00-15.15 Coffee Break

15.15 – 16.15 **3rd panel on ‘Challenges & high-level trade-offs’ (40’):**

- Climate neutral and nature positive food systems: Dr. Antonia Leroy, Head of Ocean Policy, WWF EPO
- Climate change mitigation and adaptation: Carbon footprint and decarbonisation (Alfonso Villares Bermúdez, Councilor of the Sea, Xunta de Galicia)
- Energy security & food security: spatial squeeze and maritime spatial planning (Felix Leinemann, DG MARE)
- Conservation/restoration & sustainable management: Nature Restoration Law, 30 by 30 target and sustainable fisheries (Mark Dickey-Collas)

Q&A session

16.15-16.30 Closing remarks

17.00 Reception