



SEMINAR

PRESS RELEASE

For immediate release

Responsible production of marine ingredients to feed fish is a prerequisite for the sustainability of the sector

Brussels, March 4th 2010: “Can a growing aquaculture industry continue to use fishmeal and fish oil in feeds and remain sustainable?” This is the critical question the EP Intergroup on Climate Change, Biodiversity and Sustainable Development tried to provide answers to at a high level seminar organised in the European Parliament on 3rd March. Different experts, including academics, scientists, NGOs, private sector, and institutions, presented their views on the sustainability of aquaculture, especially the use of marine ingredients in fish feeds, - an issue at the centre of last week’s Hearing held by the EP Fisheries Committee. The EP Intergroup meeting was chaired by **Mr Gallagher, Member of the European Parliament (MEP)** and Chair of the subgroup “Fisheries and Aquaculture” of the Intergroup.

The seminar took place in the framework of the ongoing discussion on the reform of the Common Fisheries Policy, including aquaculture. **Mr Milana, MEP**, listened carefully to the discussion which will contribute significantly to his own-initiative report on “*A new impetus for the Strategy for the Sustainable Development of European Aquaculture*”. In the wake of the seminar, he encouraged participants to provide written suggestions to be fed into the report.

“Whatever the use of the fisheries resources, i.e animal/fish feed or human consumption, we need to have an effective management of fisheries with reliable data”, said **Dr Valdimarsson – FAO** -. Producing ingredients to feed fish in a responsible manner is a prerequisite for the sustainability of the sector and a key element for the future of the aquaculture industry. In this regard, certification mechanisms play a critical role in promoting sustainability. It was noted that both the Marine Stewardship Council (MSC) and the International Fishmeal and Fish Oil Organisation (IFFO Responsible Supply Standard) base their certification on demonstrating that fishery stocks are managed so as to comply with the FAO Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries, thus eliminating illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing. An encouraging sign is that countries with the most significant

fishmeal production, such as Peru, have developed precautionary fishery management policies.

Despite 10% annual growth in aquaculture, the usage of fishmeal and fish oil for aquaculture has remained steady in recent years. The reason for this stabilisation is the improved efficiency of their use, the arrival on the market of substitutes, and the growing use of trimmings from processing of fish for human consumption. As underscored by **Ms Purchase - Marine Conservation Society** -, raw materials to feed fish being limited resources, their use is becoming more strategic in order to maximise their exceptional nutritional properties and the content of healthy long-chain Omega 3-s. **Mr Hilbrands - Royal Ahold** – pointed out that the raw material market will define the best use of fishmeal and fish oil adding that sustainability (like food safety) should not become a competitive issue between food retailers.

Moreover, a number of research programs aim at finding replacement solutions to fishmeal and fish oil while keeping a similar nutritional quality. However, owing to the significant part that fish represents in the diet of many farmed fish species, **Mr Gallagher** argued that a complete substitution of marine ingredients would lead to less healthy products for fish and consumers.

The European Parliament is exploring ways of putting an end to the problem of the wasteful discarding of healthy fish at sea. “We have an ideal opportunity here to use immature or out of quota fish for processing it into fishmeal and fish oil, thus avoiding the horrendous waste and environmental pollution involved in their wanton dumping overboard”, argued **Mr Stevenson, MEP** and Chair of the Intergroup “Climate Change, Biodiversity and Sustainable Development”.

Other speakers:

- Jean-Claude Cuffe, European Commission
- Blake Lee-Harwood, Sustainable Fisheries Partnership
- Albert Tacon, Aquatic Farms Ltd
- Einar Wathne, EWOS AS
- Michael A Crawford, London Metropolitan University
- James Smith, Scottish Salmon Producers' Organisation
- Ragnar Tveteraas, University of Stavanger
- Jonathan Shepherd, International Fishmeal and Fish Oil Organisation

- Alberto Allodi, FEFAC
- Sachi Kaushik, INRA
- François Simard, IUCN

This meeting was organized by the Secretariat of the Intergroup composed jointly of the European Bureau for Conservation and Development (EBCD) and the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN).

***END

Contact: Secretariat of the Intergroup on Climate Change, Biodiversity and Sustainable Development

European Bureau for Conservation and Development (EBCD) – Mélanie LAMAISON –

Email: melanie.lamaison@ebcd.org – Ph: +322-230-30-70