

European Association of Fish Producers Organisations

Association Européenne des Organisations de Producteurs dans le secteur de la pêche



EAPO / AEOP

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Report on the EAPO market working group workshop on voluntary certification

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On Wednesday 20th January, the European Association of Fish Producers Organisations (EAPO) market working group hosted its second workshop on voluntary sustainability certification.

Following the first workshop held in November, it was agreed to explore the idea of setting up one or several European Responsible Fisheries Management (RFM) schemes. The objectives of the second workshop were to capitalise on the experience of the RFM schemes existing around the world. It was an opportunity for members to learn more about the challenges that can be encountered when setting-up these schemes and when seeking accreditation.

To this avail, four RFM schemes were presented during the workshop. They covered different geographical areas and topics (fisheries, aquaculture, chain of custody, retailers). In addition, the four RFM schemes were at a different stage in their development with some amongst the first recognised by Global Sustainable Seafood Initiative (GSSI), while others are still in the process of being developed.

The first presentation was given Ms. Kasumi Suto, Vice-Chief of the Secretariat of the Marine Eco-Label Japan Council (MEL) and Mr. Hisanori Kanno, Chief of the Secretariat of the MEL. Ms. Suto gave an insightful explanation on the scheme. The MEL v2 scheme had been recognised by GSSI in 2019. The robust and credible scheme certifies at the moment 6 fisheries, 35 aquaculture and 43 wholesalers, processors and retailers under the chain of custody certification.

It was followed by the presentation of the Alaskan RFM by Mr. Jeff Regnart, RFM Program Manager and Mr. Mark Fina, President of Certified Seafood Collaborative (CSC). The rich presentation detailed the steps the scheme had been through, the costs it entailed and the resources available to build on past experiences.

Mr. Friðrik Friðriksson, Chief Human Resources Officer at Brim and Dr. Kristján Thórarinsson, Ecologist at SFS presented the Iceland Responsible Fisheries scheme. Interesting information on the setting up of such schemes and the issues that might be encountered were presented.

To conclude the presentations, Ms. Marianne Svorken, Scientist at Nofima, presented the recent development in Norway, accompanied by Mr. Vito Romito, Fisheries Assessor at Global Trust

Certification LTD. Noteworthy details on the project were given along with suggestion of ways to kick-off such scheme.

Following the presentations, participants were given the opportunity to ask some questions during a short Q&A session. Additional information was given on several topics: on the budget to set up an RFM; the uptake of the RFM compared to the MSC; the representation of parties in the board of RFM schemes; the importance of the FAO Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries in terms of giving a frame to the schemes; and on the costs for clients of the schemes.

The workshop allowed participants to gain understanding on an extensive number of points regarding RFM and their setting-up. EAPO's ExCom, will now carry-on the discussion in a much more informed way during the next ExCom meeting.