

European Association of Fish Producers Organisations

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



**EAPO / AEOP**

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## EU Code of Conduct on Responsible Food Business and Marketing Practices

### ***EAPO Annual report 2024***

#### I. **General information**

<b>Name in full + acronym</b>	The European Association of Fish Producers Organisations (EAPO)
<b>Contact person with contact details</b>	Zarah Bellefroid (EAPO Secretariat) <a href="mailto:info@eapo.com">info@eapo.com</a> H. Baelskaai 20, bus 0.2 8400 Oostende - Belgium Tel: +32 59 43 20 05
<b>N° in the transparency register*</b>	46491656228-65
<b>Date of signature of the Code</b>	16 July 2021
<b>Step of the food chain represented (ex: primary production, production, processing, trade, retail, ...)</b>	Primary production
<b>Who do you represent? (e.g. number of members, companies, SMEs)</b>	The European Association of Fish Producers Organisations (EAPO) represents 29 POs from 12 EU Member States, with approximately 3,700 vessels, 2 million tonnes of landings and € 2.1 billion first sale value. EAPO was founded in 1980. Every Fish PO recognized by its EU member state can apply for membership of the association.

**II. Annual report on EAPO’s activities in support of this Code**  
**(European Associations pledge)**

<p><b>Endorse the aspirational objectives set out in this Code (where applicable).</b></p>	<p>The European Association of Fish Producers Organisations (EAPO) has engaged to contribute to reaching the objectives of the EU-Green Deal in making the EU a climate-neutral continent by 2050, since its launch in 2019. Fisheries is a primary sector that provides healthy, sustainably caught animal proteins with the lowest carbon footprint of all nutritious protein sources. Seafood has the ability to help drastically reduce greenhouse gas emissions linked to food production and nutrition needs.</p> <p>On top of this non-rebuttable fact, the EU-fishing sector has on its own initiative already made significant efforts in making its fishing activities even more (environmentally, socially and economically) sustainable.</p> <p>Subsequently, EAPO signed the Code on 16 July 2021 and pledged to endorse the aspirational objectives set out in this Code.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Promote and disseminate this Code with(in) their constituencies.</b></li> <li>• <b>Encourage their members to align their sustainability actions and/or business practices to the aspirational objectives and targets of the Code and invite them, on a voluntary basis, to adhere to this Code, as appropriate.</b></li> </ul>	<p>Prior to signing the Code, the content of the Code and the subsequent commitment was first discussed during a meeting of the EAPO Executive Committee in July 2021.</p> <p>In order to disclose EAPO’s pledge to both members and interested parties, the corresponding letter was published on the <a href="#">EAPO-website</a> (<i>EAPO21-29 Pledge EU Code of Conduct on Responsible Food Business and Marketing Practices</i>).</p> <p>The EU-Green Deal and the Commission’s Farm to Fork-Strategy have been included in the EAPO work programme under the item “EU Green Deal” since 2020. Over the past years, this topic has also been addressed and discussed with EAPO members at numerous occasions such as the EAPO annual General Assemblies and the Members Meetings.</p> <p>EAPO-members are also encouraged to circulate the information regarding the objectives of the Code amongst their individual fishing companies. By doing so, they are provided with the necessary tools to align their sustainability actions to the aspirational objectives and targets of the Code, should they wish to do so.</p>

<p><b>Explore the possibility of developing sector-specific tools and resources in support of this Code.</b></p>	<p>EAPO's work programme, traditionally presented at the Association's annual General Assembly, clearly reflects the fishing industry's focus on sustainability. The EU-Green Deal, Farm to Fork and Biodiversity Strategy are some of the topics included. Consequently, these topics are closely being monitored by the EAPO Secretariat and its members throughout the work year. On a frequent basis, an update on the status of these topics is provided orally to the EAPO Executive Committee during its monthly meeting.</p> <p>EAPO is a member of the Market Advisory Council (MAC) and thus has contributed to several MAC-advice that address matters relevant for the market of fishery and aquaculture products; topics closely linked to the targets set out in the Code.</p> <p>Also, EAPO joined the <a href="#">EU's Agri-Food Chain Observatory</a>, an initiative to restore trust and transparency in EU food supply chains.</p> <p>In general, EAPO is committed to closely following up on all initiatives (both at national/EU-level) that are being undertaken to further improve the sustainability aspect of the fishing operations.</p>
<p><b>Continue to engage in dialogue with other food chain/systems actors and EU and international policy-makers to forge (new) relationships, exchange good practices and discuss challenges encountered, learn from each other (studies, projects) and create better mutual understanding, and identify opportunities for collaboration and potential partnership.</b></p>	<p>As a representative for the European fishing industry, EAPO is a member of the Market Advisory Council (MAC), one of the advisory entities listed in the Common Fisheries Policy, producing advice to the Commission amongst other related to responsible food business and marketing practices of fisheries and aquaculture products. EAPO is actively participating in the MAC working group on PEFCR. In this respect EAPO also closely follows the STECF's Expert working group on sustainability indicators for fishery products.</p> <p>The MAC brings together representatives of the entire seafood value chain (primary producers, processors, traders, suppliers, retailers, trade unions) and other interest groups (environmental and development NGOs).</p>

As an active member, EAPO has contributed to several MAC-advice that discuss topics closely linked to the targets set out in the Code. Topics of recently published MAC-advice include:

- [Provide insight on the Proposal on EU-Level Targets for Food Waste Reduction & Good Practices in the Fisheries and Aquaculture Market](#)
- [Taste the Ocean campaign and other potential campaigns for awareness about fishery and aquaculture products in the EU](#)
- [Substantiation of green claims](#)

In respect of the EU Biodiversity strategy, EAPO observes and participates where possible in Expert Groups, such as the Member States Expert Group on Maritime Spatial Planning and the Member States Coordination Group on the Marine Strategy Framework Directive.

As a constant factor, EAPO maintains a close communication line with representatives of the European Commission to discuss the latest developments concerning the Green Deal, Farm to Fork and Biodiversity-Strategy or sustainability efforts in general.