



Multi-annual National Strategic Plans for the development of sustainable Aquaculture for the period 2021 to 2030

Summary ITALY

“Strategic Aquaculture National Plan 2021-2027”

1. State of the aquaculture sector

In Italy, aquaculture, although dominated by a few species, such as Mediterranean mussel, Manila clams, rainbow trout, sea bass and sea bream, is carried out in many different environments, with various degrees of technological progress and is characterised by farming practices strongly linked to the traditions of some territories, such as fish and shellfish farming in coastal lagoons (“vallicoltura”). Italian production is dominated by shellfish farming, and Italy is the EU’s first producer of Manila clams (*Ruditapes philippinarum*) and the only producer of autochthonous clam *Ruditapes decussatus*. Italy covers two-thirds of the EU production of Mediterranean mussels (*Mytilus galloprovincialis*) and accounts for 49 % of sturgeon eggs production (*Acipenseridae*) and 22 % of salmonid production mainly represented by rainbow trout (*Oncorhynchus mykiss*). Other species are mullets (*Mugilidae*), Atlantic trout (*Salmo trutta*), and European eel (*Anguilla Anguilla*). Marine-farmed species are mainly represented by sea bass (*Dicentrarchus labrax*) and gilthead seabream (*Sparus aurata*). In 2020, the total production from aquaculture was 122 853 tonnes, with a corresponding value of approximately EUR 394 million. The number of enterprises in the same year was 475. The total employment in the sector in 2017 was 4488.

2. Objectives for 2021 to 2027

- The protection of biodiversity.
- Strengthening institutional capacity and simplifying administrative procedures.
- Ensuring the development and sustainable growth of aquaculture through coordinated spatial planning and increasing the potential of sites.

- Promoting competitiveness of aquaculture production.
- Promoting a level playing field for operators and improving the organisation of the market for aquaculture products.

3. Objectives for Measures for 2021 to 2027 responding to the 13 key areas listed in the “*Strategic Guidelines for a more sustainable and competitive EU aquaculture for the period 2021 to 2030*”¹

1. Access to space and water

- Updating and implementing the regional plans for the areas allocated for aquaculture (AZA) in marine coastal and inland waters.
- Tools to promote social acceptability, dialogue and multi-level participatory process on the topic of AZA.
- Spatial planning and environmental monitoring of aquaculture sites, with reference to mollusc farming areas, in particular.
- Optimisation of water management for inland aquaculture.
- Promotion of: (i) integrated aquaculture and (ii) of the synergies between different production activities in the combined use of space; (iii) of aquaculture systems providing environmental services.

2. Regulatory and administrative procedures

- Simplification and harmonisation of aquaculture legislation and administrative provisions: Aquaculture Platform “ITAQUA” will be the place where this discussion will go on. It will be essential to simplify the procedures for issuing new licences and the related authorisation procedures, as well as to streamline the renewal procedures for aquaculture concessions. At the regional and municipal levels, it will be important to continue and implement coordination activities aimed at harmonising the various local regulations and reducing disparities in the costs of concession fees.
- Tools for organisational coordination and dialogue at national and territorial levels: facilitate the dialogue and participation of operators in the sector, producers’ associations and other actors in the institutional and private sector, and strengthen engagement in national, European and international actions, in particular at Mediterranean basin level. To this end, the Aquaculture Platform (ITAQUA) will be implemented as a working environment, interaction, exchange and programming useful to stakeholders and aquaculture operators.
- Coordination and systematization of aquaculture data collection.

¹ COM(2021)236 final

- Development of tools to promote the accessibility to EU funds for research and technological development in aquaculture.

3. Producer and market organisations

- Promotion and support of producer organisations (POs) across the supply chain to support community-led social strategies for sustainable growth of the sector.
- Timely recording of developments in the market for aquaculture products and consumption to support market plans.

4. Control

Development and optimisation of traceability and control systems (Regulation (EC) No 1224/2009 and Regulation (EC) No 1379/2013).

5. Diversification and adding value

Innovation in the supply chain and the development of new products for new generations of consumers.

6. Environmental performance

- Investments to improve the competitiveness, sustainability, profitability and resilience of aquaculture farms.
- Promotion of highly compatible aquaculture systems and/or providing environmental services.
- Monitoring and management of introductions of alien species for farming purposes.

7. Animal welfare

- Reducing the use of veterinary medicines in aquaculture, preserving animal welfare, and limiting antibiotic resistance, as set out in the EU One Health Action Plan, including in animal production, is a priority for the economic and environmental sustainability of aquaculture production and for consumer safety.
- Set up plans to prevent disease outbreaks (e.g, vaccines)
- Implementing good farming practices in order to protect animal welfare.

8. Communicating on EU aquaculture

Improving at the national level the social acceptability of aquaculture and contributing to enhancing the value of aquaculture products and ensuring that consumers are properly informed.

9. Integration in local communities

Integrate and promote aspects related to aquaculture and its products directly to the local communities, for example, implement targeted activities in the context of CLLD and FLAGs strategies.

10. Data and monitoring

- Coordination, system and management of data collection in the aquaculture sector: Optimising data collection in the aquaculture sector, in line with European and international standards, is crucial in order to improve the quality of statistical processing and to ensure timely transmission within the various platforms (see EUROSTAT, SIPAM — FAO-GFCM and FAO-FishStat).
- Improving the efficiency of data collection management and the integration of the various types of data will facilitate the planning and management of the financial resources allocated to these issues.

11. Knowledge and innovation

- Tools for accessibility to European funds for research and innovation in aquaculture: Fostering dialogue between public/private research bodies, industry companies and industry associations in order to increase the number and quality of projects submitted in response to European, national and regional project calls dedicated to supporting innovation and research in aquaculture.
- Support for employment, training and vocational qualification.
- Supporting research, innovation and its scalability, improving knowledge and transfer of results for business needs.

4. Funding

The strategic guidelines are based on financial programming in the 2021-2027 EMFAF, in other European funds (see H2020, RDP, Interreg, etc.), and in regional sectoral policies.