



Open Method of Coordination (OMC) for the sustainable development of EU Aquaculture

Interim evaluation

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Background “Aquaculture in the EU”

- ❖ Aquaculture in the EU employs around **75,000 people** - an **important primary industry** in many less well developed coastal & rural locations.
- ❖ Aquaculture is **largely a Member State competence**.
- ❖ **Challenges, barriers and threats** that face EU aquaculture are **common across many countries**.
- ❖ The CFP set up the **Open Method of Coordination** for aquaculture.
- ❖ The Commission developed in 2013 **Strategic Guidelines** for the sustainable development of EU Aquaculture.

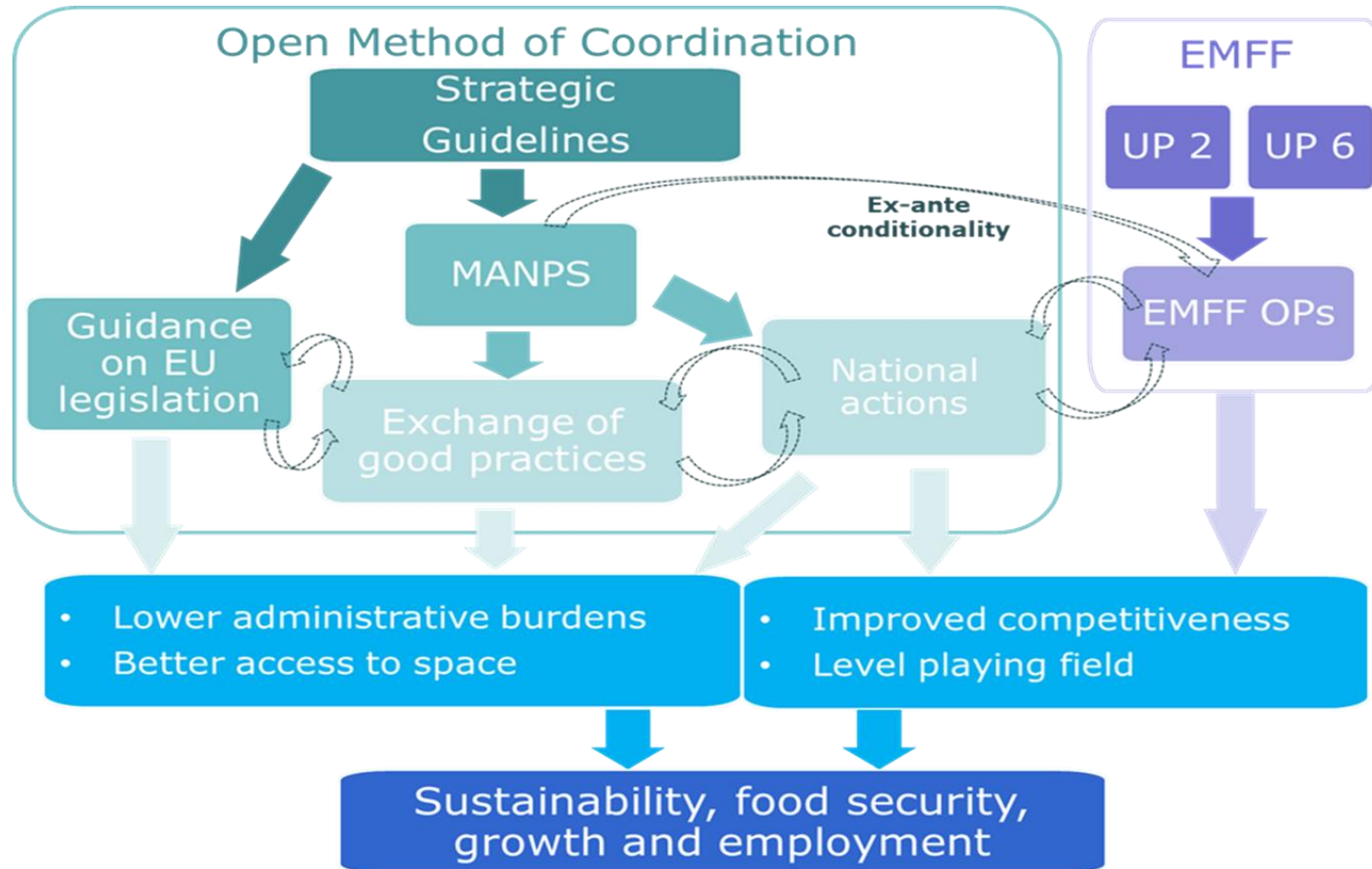


The Open Method of Coordination (OMC)

- ❖ A **voluntary process** for cooperation between the Commission and the Member States to promote the sustainable development of EU aquaculture.

- ❖ Under this OMC cooperation is **based on:**
 - ❖ Strategic Guidelines developed by the Commission in 2013
 - ❖ Multi-annual Aquaculture National Strategic Plans (MANPs) in 2015
 - ❖ Guidance Documents on EU legislation
 - ❖ Exchange of good practices

The Open Method of Coordination (OMC)



Interim evaluation of the OMC

External study

- Titel: *“Study on an interim evaluation of the open method of coordination for the sustainable development of EU Aquaculture”*
- Launched in October 2017
- Final meeting with contractor - next week
- Contractor: Coffey – Poseidon

Interim evaluation of the OMC

Objectives

1. To **assess** national and EU efforts to promote the development of the sector.
2. To **inform** Member States, stakeholders and the public on the achievements of the OMC in this sector;
3. To **provide input** for future policy making for sustainable EU aquaculture.

Interim evaluation of the OMC

Scope

- All OMC tools:
 - **2013 Strategic Guidelines,**
 - **MANPS,**
 - **Guidance on EU legislation,**
 - **Exchange of good practices**
- Period 2013 – 2017
- All Member States except Luxembourg



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Conclusions

- ❑ The OMC has given the European Commission **a more in-depth understanding** of the evolution of the aquaculture sector in the MS.
- ❑ The OMC tools contributed to **improved strategic planning**:
 - MS structured their **MANPs on the 4 priorities** of the EU Strategic Guidelines.
 - Increased focus on aquaculture **in other EU programmes & funds** (eg research).
 - Number of MS contributing/participating in the technical seminars confirms common interest and create **common goals**.
- ❑ Consulted stakeholders recognize **the added-value** of the OMC, notably:
 - increased cooperation/mutual learning
 - alignment with EU policies and objectives.

Conclusions (2)

- ❑ There has been **progress on the priorities of the Strategic Guidelines**:
 - most MS have an MANP and set quantified objectives for growth,
 - administrative procedures were analyzed and bottlenecks identified,
 - improvements in the integration of aquaculture in spatial planning
 - EMFF implementation was delayed, but the budget for EU aquaculture is significant (€1.8 billion)

- ❑ Most progress is made with **administrative simplification** and **spatial planning** - in some MS improvements in:
 - Number of processed aquaculture applications, success rates and new licenses;
 - Reductions in duration of licensing procedures.

- ❑ But the **underlying needs** of the aquaculture sector addressed by the OMC **still require action at EU level**.

Conclusions (3)

- ❑ The main **hindering factors** were due to:
 - complexity of the regulatory framework;
 - level of de-centralization;
 - number of entities involved;
 - "*promoting the level-playing field*" was not well-understood

- ❑ There is little information on **the impact of the OMC on the wider objectives of the CFP** (e.g. on sector growth and competitiveness). Only a few Member States could measure the direct effects in terms of sector growth.

Conclusions (4)

- ❑ It is difficult to do a **cost-benefit analysis of participation** in the OMC from a MS perspective. But MS consider that costs incurred are at an acceptable level.
- ❑ It is not possible to quantify possible **savings** in particular related to administrative simplification as there are no mechanisms at MS level to make these types of calculation. Also, any savings cannot be directly attributed to the OMC.
- ❑ But **direct costs** for MS and EC involvement in the OMC are at **appropriate** levels. And MS report that the **benefits** provided by the OMC **justify** their **time and resource commitment**, particularly as the OMC has increased cooperation and mutual learning.
- ❑ There is **scope for efficiency gains** in the use of OMC tools, e.g.:
 - strengthen collaboration at **regional level**
 - **technical guidelines** could be simplified and better disseminated

Conclusions (5)

- ❑ **Communication** is a key to exploit the high environmental, animal health and consumer protection standards, but
 - there has been **little formal advice, standardization or coordination** between MS, except 'Farmed in the EU'.
 - **Simple guidance**, based on practical experience of communicating to stakeholders in similar primary industries, would be useful.

- ❑ **EU environmental** objectives (in Natura 2000, WFD and MSFD) **are coherent** with **EU aquaculture** objectives. But there have been differences in interpretation and implementation, especially regarding consents to develop aquaculture in Natura 2000 areas.



Recommendations

1. **Review and update** the **Commission's 2009** ' for the Sustainable Development of European Aquaculture' and the **2013 Strategic Guidelines**.
2. Clarify "**enhancing competitiveness**" and "**creating a level playing field**".
3. Introduce some level of **outcome benchmarking**.
4. Continue the **use of MANPs** for sustainable aquaculture development. **Ex-ante conditionality for EMFF funding** has been useful.

Recommendations (2)

5. Provide more **practical guidance** to Member States for including aquaculture in **spatial planning**.
6. Allocate more resources to support coordination and communication at the **regional level**.
7. Develop a more formal **compilation and dissemination of good practices within the EU**, possibly via an online 'EU Aquaculture Platform'.



Next steps

- 1. Commission Staff Working Documents** on the interim evaluation of the OMC for EU aquaculture: adoption foreseen in September 2019
- 2. Review Strategic Guidelines:** start work soon
- 3. Intention to discuss with MS update of MANPS**



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Thank you !