Statistics on aquaculture

2006/0286(COD) - 12/12/2017 - Follow-up document

The Commission presents a report on the implementation of Regulation (EC) No 762/2008 of the European Parliament and of the Council on the provision of statistics on aquaculture by Member States.

The report is based primarily on the aquaculture quality reports submitted by the Member States for the reference year 2015. The previous evaluation reports on aquaculture statistics submitted under the Regulation were published in July 2012 (for 2008-2010 data), and June 2015 (for 2011-2013 data).

Timeliness and completeness: the report notes that in recent years, aquaculture statistics have evolved into **a stable set of data with fairly timely, complete and consistent output** for data users not only at the European and global levels, but at national level as well. They provide policymakers, industry and civil society with solid foundations on which to build the sector's future development.

Some Member States have continued to face **problems with the timeliness and punctuality** of the data collection and delivery. The Commission (Eurostat) has taken steps to find solutions with France and Italy, which have repeatedly been sending in data very late.

The dataset on fish eggs for human consumption posed difficulties for a number of countries. There were also some data gaps in the table linked to production from hatcheries and nurseries.

The Eurostat data collection **guidelines** introduced in 2015 have improved the geographical comparability of the data. The aquaculture statistics submitted to the Commission (Eurostat) under the Regulation are well **comparable** between the Member States.

Data confidentiality: the main shortcoming affecting the aquaculture statistics collected under the Regulation was the high number of confidential data cells. This state of affairs is linked to the detailed breakdown of the data required by the Regulation and to the specialised and concentrated structure of the aquaculture sector.

Administrative burden: the time and effort needed to collect, compile and process the data at national level every year varied a great deal. Half of the Member States needed less than 10 weeks and the other half more than 10 weeks to compile the datasets.

Member States reduced the burden on respondents, but **did not make clear, measurable efficiency gains.** The average annual cost of producing aquaculture statistics was EUR 66 000 per country. However, the average share of the data collection costs in the total economic value of aquaculture production was rather low.

Recommendations: the Commission will continue working with the Member States on **good practices, recommendations and guidelines** to reduce the amount of confidential data delivered to Eurostat under the Regulation. It strives for constant improvement in the quality and availability of European statistics.

In order to reduce the burden on Member States and respondents, the Commission has included in its Annual Work Programme 2017 **a project on streamlining and simplifying fishery statistics**. The project ensures coordination to dovetail with statistics collected under Regulation (EU) 2017/1004 and better harmonisation with the standard aquaculture questionnaire recommended by the Coordinating Working Party on Fisheries Statistics.

At the **national level** the use of electronic questionnaires should be further encouraged. National data collection guidelines and helpdesks offering respondents tailor-made support are other examples of good practices.