

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

## Summary HUNGARY

### “Hungary National Aquaculture Strategic Plan 2021-2030”

#### 1. State of the aquaculture sector

Aquaculture in Hungary is dominated by extensive and semi-intensive pond farming. Intensive aquaculture is also increasing because of the rich geothermal resources that provide competitive advantage. Common carp is the dominant species of pond fish production in Hungary, while intensive aquaculture is dominated by North African catfish. Hungary has been one of the two largest producers of this species (or species hybrid) in the EU since 2001 and the third largest producer of common carp in the EU since 2009 after Poland and the Czech Republic. In addition to rearing North African catfish (mostly in flow-through systems), there is also a smaller proportion of trout and sturgeon rearing in Hungary. In 2019, the volume of the production was 17 337 tonnes, and 383 enterprises were active in the production of fish. The fish farming sector had an annual production value of HUF 15.9 billion in 2019.

#### 2. Objectives for 2021 to 2027

- Building resilience and competitiveness
- Participating in the green transition
- Ensuring social acceptance and information to the consumer
- Increasing knowledge and innovation

##### Growth targets

The following targets are set for 2030: 16,600 tonnes of fish will be produced in ponds and 6,700 tonnes of intensive fish will be produced. In terms of production methods, there will be 27,500

ha of lakes in operation, 20 farms with new combined systems or multifunctional agriculture and 3 intensive systems. The area of lakes devoted to organic fish production will reach 20%.

### 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*”<sup>1</sup>

#### 1. Access to space and water

Hungary is not planning to designate aquaculture areas centrally. At the same time, it is important to improve social awareness of aquaculture’s potential for rural development and to develop transparent land use criteria that can contribute to the identification of areas that are particularly suitable for aquaculture activities at the territorial level. It’s necessary to develop a set of criteria and guidance for regional and municipal authorities and authorities involved in spatial planning in order to facilitate the designation of suitable areas for aquaculture activities based on international guidances (e.g.: FAO, TAPAS, AquaSpace), models developed by the TAPAS and ClimeFish projects, domestic legal requirements and scientific results (e.g.: waterlogging risk data, ecosystem services of fishponds, impact of fish ponds on water quality).

#### 2. Regulatory and administrative procedures

- Cutting red tape and simplifying administration at both European and national levels are important priorities.
- Amending the relevant legal provisions to allow more time-consuming authorisation procedures to be carried out in parallel (extension of one-stop shops, strengthening cooperation between administrations).
- Reducing the administrative burden in licensing requires the cooperation of the Ministry of Agriculture and the Ministry of the Interior, with the involvement of the Prime Minister's Office as the Ministry responsible for government administration.
- The Ministry of Agriculture will initiate the establishment of a coordination working group under the measure “Improving the legal framework for fisheries and aquaculture management, administrative simplification” involving the relevant ministries and authorities, as well as the Hungarian Aquaculture and Fisheries Inter-branch Organisation (MA-HAL), with the aim of reviewing and

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<sup>1</sup> COM(2021)236 final

possibly simplifying the legislation and procedures for the authorisation of fish farming.

- The Ministry of Agriculture plans to draw up and issue a guide describing in detail and in a clear manner the official procedures in force, the related administrative requirements and fees, both in paper and online form, in order to ensure wider accessibility.

### 3. Animal health and public health

- The measure ‘Support to investments for the establishment, capacity-building and modernisation of pond aquaculture’, by upgrading old, outdated infrastructure, will contribute to improving fish health and, indirectly, to greater food safety.
- The measure “Innovation and technological development in aquaculture and fish processing” includes improvements related to fish health.
- Drawing up a guide to good pond aquaculture practices, including fish health aspects, and revision of the guidelines on good hygiene practices in fish processing, which was completed in 2009.

### 4. Climate change adaptation and mitigation

The most important tool for developing pond aquaculture and combined intensive-extensive aquaculture system with a special focus on climate resilience is the measure ‘Support for environmental investments in aquaculture and fish processing’, as well as the measure ‘Support for maintaining the natural value of fishponds’ contributing to the maintenance of ponds. Another important tool to improve environmental sustainability and climate neutrality is innovation in the sector (measure “Innovation and technology development in aquaculture and fish processing”). Finally, the measure “Improving the legal framework for fisheries and aquaculture management, administrative simplification” supports the preparation of a sectoral climate adaptation plan based on broad consultation and taking into account the latest models and scientific evidence, which will provide a coherent framework for measures aiming at climate neutrality in the sector and underpin their effective implementation.

### 5. Producer and market organisations

- Amendment to Act XCVII of 2015 on certain aspects of the organisation of the markets in agricultural products and on producer and interbranch organisations in order to bring it into line with the EU Regulation.
- The measure ‘Support for the setting up of producer organisations.

- Better communication by the administration of the achievements of other European aquaculture producer organisations through the publication of a good practice guide in other countries, conferences and workshops.

## 6. Control

The measure 'Support for fisheries control', the main objective of which is to establish a control system. In particular, a QR-code-based fish product traceability system is envisaged, partly considering the experience of other Member States.

## 7. Diversification and adding value

The measures contributing to this action are:

- "Support to investments for the establishment, capacity-building and modernisation of pond aquaculture"
- "Support to investments for the establishment, capacity-building and modernisation of intensive aquaculture"
- "Support for environmental investments in aquaculture and fish processing"
- "Innovation and technological development in aquaculture and fish processing", "Support to investments for the establishment, capacity-building and modernisation of fish processing plants, slaughterhouses and points of sale".

The measure "Promoting fish consumption" contributes to increasing the number of quality fish products identified by certification marks, geographical indications, or organic certificates, to promote these products, to raise awareness of them and to increase fish consumption.

## 8. Environmental performance

- During the implementation of the measure "Support to investments for the establishment, capacity-building and modernisation of pond aquaculture", the assessment of the environmental performance of applicants should be a priority when designing the conditions for calls and assessing grant applications.
- The measure "Support for the maintenance of natural values in fishponds".
- The measure "Innovation and technology development in aquaculture and fish processing" is another important tool to improve environmental sustainability.
- The measures "Promoting fish consumption" and "Promotion to strengthen the social acceptance of the sector" contribute to increasing organic aquaculture.

- It would also be important to recognise at a European level the ‘green-infrastructure’, environmentally friendly, ‘quasi-organic’ nature of traditional extensive-semi-intensive fishponds.

## 9. Animal welfare

- The measure “Support to investments for the establishment, capacity-building and modernisation of pond aquaculture” will contribute to improving fish welfare by upgrading old, outdated infrastructure.
- During the implementation of the measure “Support to investments for the establishment, capacity-building and modernisation of fish processing plants, slaughterhouses and points of sale”, the killing of fish with due regard to animal welfare considerations will be an important aspect.
- The measure “Innovation and technological development in aquaculture and fish processing” includes fish welfare improvements.

## 10. Communicating on EU aquaculture

- Hungary intends to continue the "Get hooked!" promotion and marketing campaign in the 2021-2027 period, which is framed by the measure "Promoting fish consumption".
- The measure “Promotion activity to strengthen the social acceptance of the sector” aims to improve social awareness of the potential of aquaculture for rural development, its sustainability and the food safety aspects of aquaculture products. The Fisheries Information System (HALir) is part of this measure and contributes to improving the public’s knowledge of aquaculture, among others.
- In order to improve consumer information, the measure “Support for fisheries control” aims to develop a QR-code-based fish product traceability system.

## 11. Integration in local communities

The measures are directly connected to the previous section. In addition, the spread of the multifunctional fish farming concept, which brings aquaculture close to people by opening up pond farms to visitors and providing tourism services linked to fish farming and based on the natural values of pond farms (fishing tourism, ecotourism, gastro-tourism, etc.) can also play an important role in the social acceptance of aquaculture.

## 12. Data and monitoring

- The measure ‘Supporting data collection, management and use’ aims to improve the statistical data on fisheries and aquaculture and the monitoring of the MAHOP Plus operational programme.



- In the frame of the measure “Promotion activity to strengthen the social acceptance of the sector”, the development of an app linked to the HALir system (Fisheries Information System) as a general data repository for fishing and fisheries management and integrating the environmental, meteorological, water and licensing data of aquatic facilities for fish production and catching.

### 13. Knowledge and innovation

During the implementation of the measure “Innovation and technology development in aquaculture and fish processing”, priority shall be given to proposals that meet the domestic and EU RDI needs identified previously. No less important is the improvement of the sector’s capacity to generate profit and maintain jobs in the frame of the National Aquaculture Strategy Plan’s infrastructure development and investment support measures mentioned previously.

## 4. Funding

- Hungarian Fisheries Management Operational Programme 2021-2027 (MAHOP Plus) provides the primary financial source for the implementation of the NAS.
- Given the limited resources of the EMFAF, synergies with other European funds (including Horizon Europe) and national grants are essential.
- National aid to the sector is significantly limited by EU state aid rules, but the administration intends to maintain some of the existing aid schemes in the future. Some of them come from the Ministry of Agriculture, and – similarly to other aid schemes – their compatibility with EU state aid rules is monitored by the State Aid Monitoring Office (TVI). The national resources of aquaculture RDI include basic funding for budgetary research organisations, competitive tenders from the NRDIFund (National Research, Development and Innovation Fund) and direct expenditure by enterprises.