



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

Summary SLOVENIA

“National Strategic Plan for the Development of Aquaculture in the Republic of Slovenia for the period 2021-2030”

1. State of the aquaculture sector

The aquaculture sector in Slovenia is divided into:

- Freshwater aquaculture: cold-water farming and warm-water farming. There are also installations with RAS systems and aquaponics.
- Mariculture, mainly for shellfish farming.

In the Republic of Slovenia, trout are the most common cold-water species, with rainbow trout (*Oncorhynchus mykiss*), brown trout (*Salmo trutta m. fario*) and golden trout (*Salvelinus fontinalis*) being the most abundant. Carp (*Cyprinus carpio*) are the most abundant of the warm-water species, with the occasional so-called complementary species, which are reared together with them in polyculture. Sea bass (*Dicentrarchus labrax*) and Mediterranean mussel (*Mytilus galloprovincialis*) are farmed in the sea, as well as the boat mussel (*Venus verrucosa*), and oysters (*Ostrea edulis*) are also being experimented with. Two RAS systems are used to breed North African snapper (*Clarias gariepinus*) and the Siberian sturgeon (*Acipenser baerii*), and one system is used to breed various species of trout. Aquaculture production in 2020 was 1670 tonnes.

A total of 102 entities are active in the sector with a registered aquaculture activity (source: Central Register of Aquaculture Facilities and Commercial Ponds).

2. Objectives for 2021 to 2027

- Promoting sustainable aquaculture activities and in particular increasing the competitiveness of aquaculture production, while ensuring that aquaculture activities are environmentally sustainable in the long term.
- Promoting the marketing, quality and added value of fishery and aquaculture products and their processing.
- Interventions contributing to the facilitation of a sustainable blue economy in coastal and inland regions as well as the promotion of the sustainable development of fishing and aquaculture communities.

Growth targets

There are established that 20 new aquaculture licences and 2 new recirculation systems will be in operation in 2030 (with 3 innovations in place). Another growth target is that 39 entities purchasing water quality improvement equipment through public tenders as climate change action.

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

- Slovenia completed the process of preparing a single MSP in 2021.
- Monitoring of the environmental impact of new mariculture areas as well as a study on performance of the current mariculture areas as a mitigating measure in order to be able to declare new areas for mariculture.

2. Regulatory and administrative procedures

- It is expected that administrative authorisation procedures will be shortened as a result of measures and regulations in Slovenia, including the granting of water permits.
- Slovenia has a Digital Economy Transformation Strategy in place that will make a significant contribution to shortening aquaculture licensing procedures. By the end of 2022, electronic construction permits will be implemented. Funds will also be earmarked to improve the digital skills of aquaculture SMEs.

¹ COM(2021)236 final

- A mitigating measure as a result of the Strategic Environmental Assessment: a creation of interservice working group to study aquaculture and diminishing impact of climate change, changing regulatory framework and others.

3. Public health, animal health and welfare

- In the coming period, Slovenia aims to at least maintain the health status of aquaculture farms but of course the long-term goal is still a VHS/IHN-free status for the whole territory of Slovenia.
- Promoting the exchange of good practice and knowledge activities to be funded under the Programme for the implementation of the European Maritime, Fisheries and Aquaculture Fund for the period 2021-2027 (P ESPRA 2021-2027).
- In order to ensure public health, shellfish farmers will be compensated for the loss of income during a given period by the P ESPRA 2021-2027 in case of biotoxins and harvesting bans. Compensation will also be granted to aquaculture farmers in NATURA 2000 areas due to specific farming conditions, as well as to those who decide to switch to organic aquaculture. Compensations are foreseen as well for shell-fish farmers in the occurrence of biotoxins and prohibition of harvesting.
- The P ESPRA 2021-2027 will also be used for knowledge sharing in this field (training on animal welfare and exchange of best practices in this field, including within the EU), networking as well as exchange of best practices.

4. Climate change adaptation and mitigation

- A sectoral vulnerability assessment and possible solutions and adaptations to climate change will therefore be prepared in cooperation with other ministries within the Strategic Framework for Climate Change Adaptation in the Republic of Slovenia.
- Under the P ESPRA 2021-2027 a study will be financed on the options for a transition to organic aquaculture. Once the results of the study are ready, decisions will be made on to what extent the support to the transition to organic aquaculture could be given.

5. Communicating on EU aquaculture

In the 2021-2030 perspective, the improvement of the situation will be supported by activities to achieve new skills (training in product labelling, quality schemes, pooling) and promotional activities to inform consumers about the benefits of eating fish and aquaculture products and decision-makers about the aquaculture sector through networking activities and the publication of a newsletter. In the context of studies, we have planned a study on the nutritional value of shellfish, the results of which will

certainly help to guide promotional activities and improve voluntary labelling. EU aquaculture communication will be supported as well.

6. Integration in local communities

- Local acceptance of aquaculture has been set under Community Led Local Development (CLLD) actions for inland areas involving aquaculture.
- Active involvement of the sector in the Fisheries Local Action Groups (FLAGs), thus fostering investments that will enable the development of local aquaculture communities, business opportunities, and training of stakeholders and the wider community on the sector.

7. Data and monitoring

The activities of the P ESPRA 2021-2027 will contribute to improving data collection and, if necessary, some other aquaculture-related data will also be collected under the Data Collection Framework (DCF).

8. Knowledge and innovation

In the period 2021-2030, the P ESPRA 2021-2027 will facilitate innovation in systems with more efficient water use (e.g. the use of nanobubbles, ozone, the use of certain bacterial cultures to improve the biofilter). Innovation related to the introduction of new species including algae, innovation in mariculture aimed at more efficient use of the available space and increased production, including through the introduction of multi-trophic mariculture will be supported as well. There may also be innovations to find solutions to sales problems, responding to the need for new market requirements such as organic sales or brand registration. The selected activities will be complementary to activities to be funded under Horizon Europe.

4. Funding

These activities can be concretely supported under the European Maritime, Fisheries and Aquaculture Fund for the period 2021-2027 and Horizon Europe Fund.