



EUROPEAN COMMISSION
DIRECTORATE-GENERAL FOR MARITIME AFFAIRS AND FISHERIES

Maritime Policy and Blue Economy
The Director

Brussels
MARE.A.2/BVT

Dear Petitioner,

The Commission agrees that farming carnivorous animals such as octopuses may possibly risk adding pressure on the environment, in particular on wild fish stocks. “*The strategic guidelines for a more sustainable and competitive EU aquaculture for the period 2021 to 2030*”¹ recommend that the Commission and Member States support diversification of EU aquaculture to types of aquaculture with better environmental performance such as the farming of low-trophic species (molluscs, algae and herbivore fish) which do not require animal feed. These guidelines also stress the need to ensure sustainable feed systems. This means using feed ingredients that are sourced in the way that is most respectful of ecosystems and biodiversity. In addition, in the framework of the Farm to Fork Strategy, the Commission is preparing to revise the EU’s animal welfare legislation. The revised legislation will be based on the best available scientific evidence and advice. The Commission has therefore mandated the European Food Safety Authority (EFSA) to provide new scientific opinions, by the first half of 2023 at the latest, on the welfare of a number of species, the majority of which are currently covered by EU animal welfare legislation. Marine invertebrates do not belong to this category.

However, the Commission and EFSA have agreed on a roadmap² for upcoming scientific opinions on the welfare of additional animal species, to be delivered from 2023 to 2030, including on certain invertebrate animals. The roadmap will allow the Commission to – if and when considered necessary – further respond to the objectives highlighted in the Farm to Fork Strategy, namely to broaden the scope of the current legislation and to keep it scientifically updated, after the adoption of the proposals scheduled in 2023.

Yours faithfully,

Christos ECONOMOU
Acting Director

¹ COM(2021)236 final

² https://ec.europa.eu/food/system/files/2021-10/aw_eval_revision_roadmap_efsafsa.pdf