



ALIGNING THE PRIMEFISH CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE BLUE GROWTH STRATEGY

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The Framework: A Market-intelligence Tool for the EU Seafood sector

Contributing to the strengthening of the European fisheries and aquaculture sectors is the main goal of the Horizon 2020 research project PrimeFish. With this aim, the project has analyzed the productivity and competitiveness of the fisheries and aquaculture sector, its legal framework, seafood value chains, consumption trends and impact of seafood consumption on the health and the environment. The focus

species are cod, salmon, trout, herring, pangasius, and seabass and seabream.

This portfolio could be integrated in the missions-based approach of DG Research¹, as well as DG MARE current policy initiatives and market analysis (e.g. EUMOFA). In addition, shared working areas have been identified with the Advisory Councils (in particular the Market Advisory Council and the Aquaculture Advisory Council).

PrimeDSS -
Software Tool



Objectives of the session

- Presentation of **PrimeFish results** linked to Blue Growth objectives
- Identification of synergies with **policy initiatives**
- Finding out **opportunities** in current policy-making processes

PrimeFish Results: Opportunities for Further Development

Building on the outputs of the breakout groups and plenary discussions, four related policy initiatives were identified.

1. Consumer labels on products farmed in the EU or caught by EU vessels

The European Commission (EC) will launch a **study on origin and consumers expectations** that will also offer inputs for the Common Fisheries Policy (CFP). Specifically, the MAC is analyzing if ecolabels act as a market access requirement (see point 2).

Related to this initiative, two proposals voted by the European Parliament asked for a label for either fishery products either sustainable aquaculture products [2017/2118(INI)²; 2017/2129 (INI)³].

Most relevant questions are:

- what information is meaningful for the consumers (linked to the EC initiative on front of pack information⁴, involving DG Sante and the JRC)
- need of a level-playing field in the market (linked to the current evaluation of common marketing standards, see point 3)

There are some issues related to the recognition and interpretation of B2C standards by consumers, although some of them have been active for more than 25 years. Consumers are the main drivers of the demand of such schemes together with retailers that detect these trends (i.e., news published by French journal Le Monde⁵). Integration of different standards, focused on healthy, environmental or social impacts is perceived as a challenge. For instance, the Global Salmon Initiative (GSI) works an example of the integration of different standards, as it was studied in the PrimeFish report on voluntary standards.



PrimeFish report on voluntary market-based labelling and certifications schemes:

<http://bit.ly/2QahDPK>

¹ For further information on the mission-oriented approach, visit:

<http://bit.ly/2qV67tf>

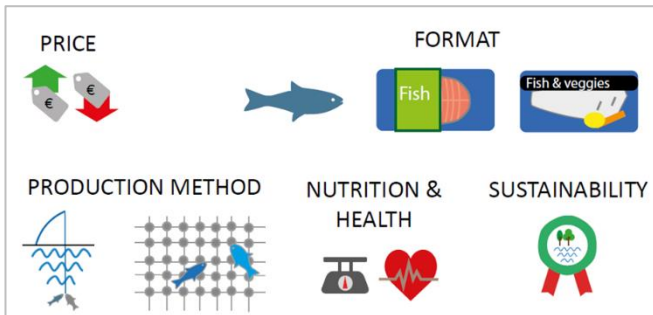
² <http://bit.ly/2QaikbO>


³ <http://bit.ly/2Q27YLh>

⁴ For further information on this initiative, visit: <http://bit.ly/2Kju2M8>

⁵ <https://lemde.fr/2zgQAc3>

For **voluntary claims**, there is a strong interest in detailing how they affect consumers' behavior and, in particular, the information on the origin of the products. In the case of PrimeFish, the relevance given by consumers to origin was already covered by previous studies; therefore, this indicator had to be removed from the survey on Willingness to Pay (WTP) in order to effectively collect information on other attributes (price, production method, format, sustainability certification, nutrition and health claim). Collected data of WTP survey could be used for further analysis of localness.



 PrimeFish report on consumers' willingness to pay for seafood products:
<http://bit.ly/2BhU3II>

EUMOFA has carried out a previous analysis in the report **"EU consumer habits regarding fishery and aquaculture products"**¹. Its conclusions outline:

- Limited growth of per-capita consumption volumes, but an increase of large-scale retailers market shares to the detriment of other sales channels.
- Positive effects on consumption of promotional initiatives towards non-regular consumers and non-consumers, diversified services and national campaigns for non-regular consumers and (partly) non-consumers in "sensitive issues" (E.g. health).
- Analysis of diverse behavior in consumers belonging to different socio-professional backgrounds, ages, etc.
- Regarding labelling, only "Date of catch or production" was considered relevant by consumers, so extending information may not be interesting for consumers or provoke information fatigue, if the information is not relevant for the target group.

2. Discussion on the possibility of an EU eco-label

Ecolabels no longer providing price premiums but instead **converting themselves in a condition for entering market** were the reason behind a pilot project on the presence of voluntary claims on seafood products in the EU⁶. The report explored three options: strengthening the effectiveness of the credibility of claims with a stricter control on voluntary information on labels, establishing minimum requirements on sustainability and certification processes with further support to international standards, and, finally, a new Union-wide eco-label scheme with a positive impact on credibility and

public control. The European eco-label option would imply a high cost and with the detriments of the questionable acceptance of eco-labelled products, overlapping with pre-existent national schemes, among others.

PrimeFish studies on consumers' willingness to pay for seafood products and segmentation showed that there is, in general terms, **a premium price for products with claims on sustainability and nutrition/health** (i.e. trout with a claim on

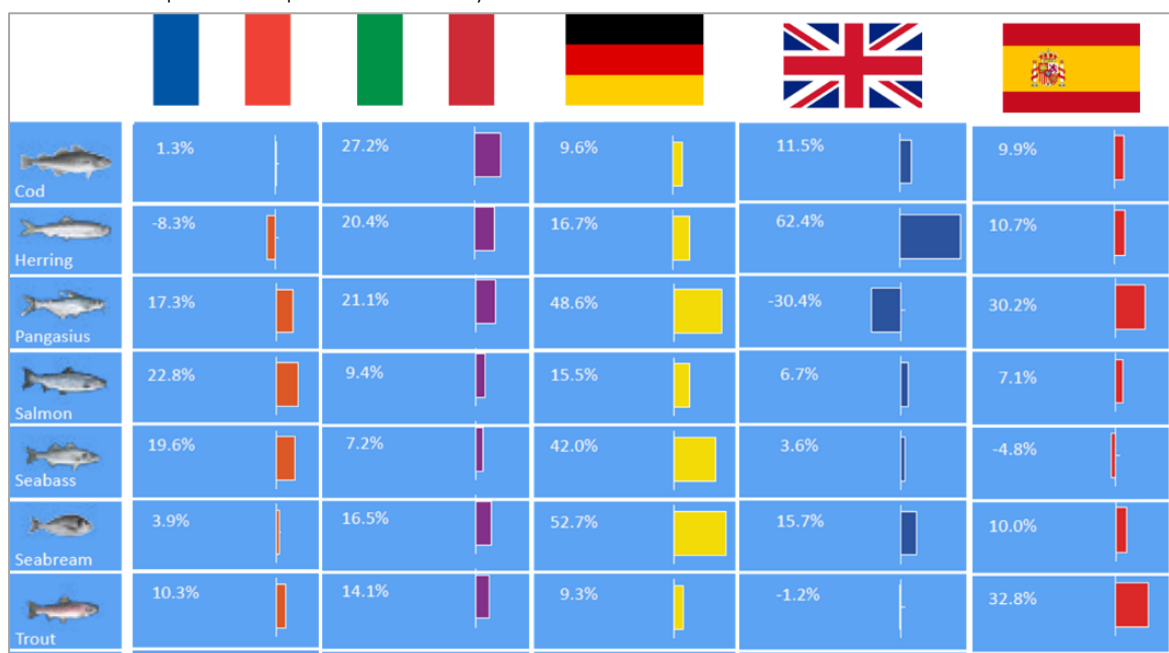


Figure 1. WTP for seafood products with a sustainability claim

⁶ Available at: <http://bit.ly/2KeoHW4>



health and nutritive attributes in Spain). There are also **specific market niches driven by these claims** and showing the highest rates of expenditure (i.e. self-efficacious convenience niche in France).



PrimeFish report on consumers' willingness to pay for seafood products: <http://bit.ly/2BhU3II>



PrimeDSS tool for targeting market segments: <http://dss.primefish.eu/index.php/login>



PrimeFish fact-sheet on EU consumers segments and their willingness to pay for seafood products: <http://bit.ly/2Bh4goT>

Another PrimeFish study points out how consumers **react to negative news on the topic of seafood production** looking for further information and/or certified or organic products and changing their diet or chosen species. Regarding the source of the information, informal (i.e. blogs) and formal (i.e. government corporative web) sources have a similar impact

3. EU marketing standards

DG MARE is carrying out an evaluation of EU marketing standards⁷ with the inputs of the Market Advisory Council (MAC) and the Expert Group for Markets and Trade in Fishery and Aquaculture Products (MTFAP). It focuses on factors affecting the quality of seafood products, market needs, coherence with EU rules on food safety, hygiene, consumer information, conservation rules and other norms and standards currently regulated by Reg. (EU) No 1379/2013, Council Reg. (EC) No 2406/96, Council Reg. (EEC) No 1536/92, and Council Reg. (EEC) No 2136/89.

4. Promotional campaigns on seafood consumption in the framework of the European Maritime and Fisheries Fund (EMFF)

Promotional campaigns emphasizing health benefits of fish consumption are one of the possible lines of action of the future EMFF (2021-2027)⁸ as outlined by the MAC in its opinion⁹. Among its priorities, there is also the existence of market tools and consumer information.

In this line, PrimeFish study on the effects of seafood consumption on sustainability and health outlines the cost-effectiveness of these measures concludes that promoting fish consumption seems socially desirable, as the benefits

on consumers' intentions and could work as possible ways to react to a food crisis.



PrimeFish report on social awareness, fish consumption and negative press: <http://bit.ly/2qULHko>



Figure 2 Self-efficacious convenience market segment (France).

PrimeFish analysis of seafood value chains offers information on actors' expectations regarding standards and different roles play by main actors in the value chains of salmon, herring, cod, trout, seabass, seabream and pangasius in 9 countries.



PrimeFish report on evaluation of industry dynamics, opportunities and threats to industry: <http://bit.ly/2S2I9ZH>

would exceed the associated cost imposed on consumer, industry and public sector with a possible cost-benefit assessment of around 100 million euros.



PrimeFish report on impacts of increased fish consumption on economic, health and environmental attributes: <http://bit.ly/2A3qVTx>

⁷ Presentation of the initiative available at <http://bit.ly/2zgAXRT>

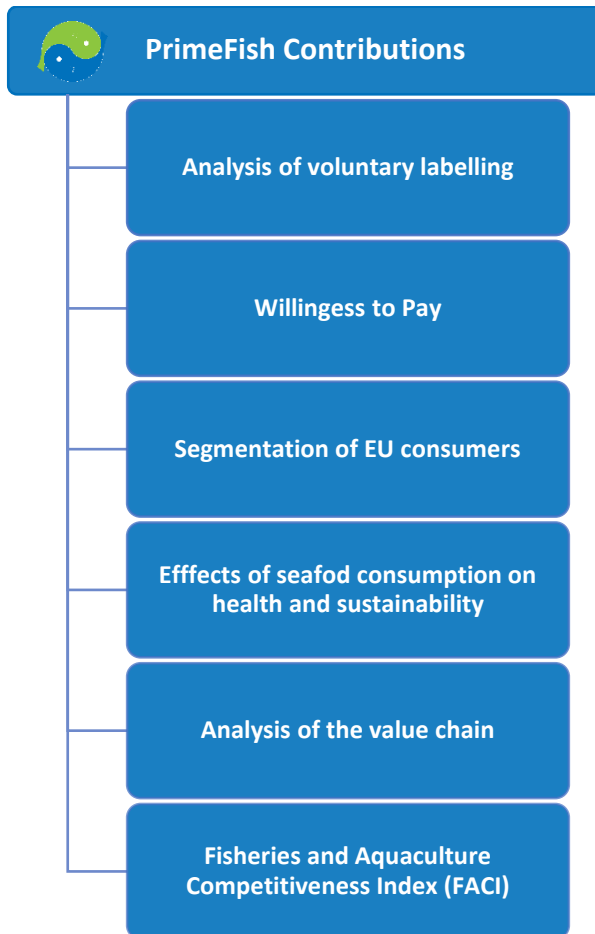
⁸ Draft report EMFF available at: <http://bit.ly/2KfkqBX>

⁹ MAC opinion available at: <http://bit.ly/2QUphwJ>



Spotting Opportunities

Policy-related opportunities



Policy initiatives



Research-related opportunities

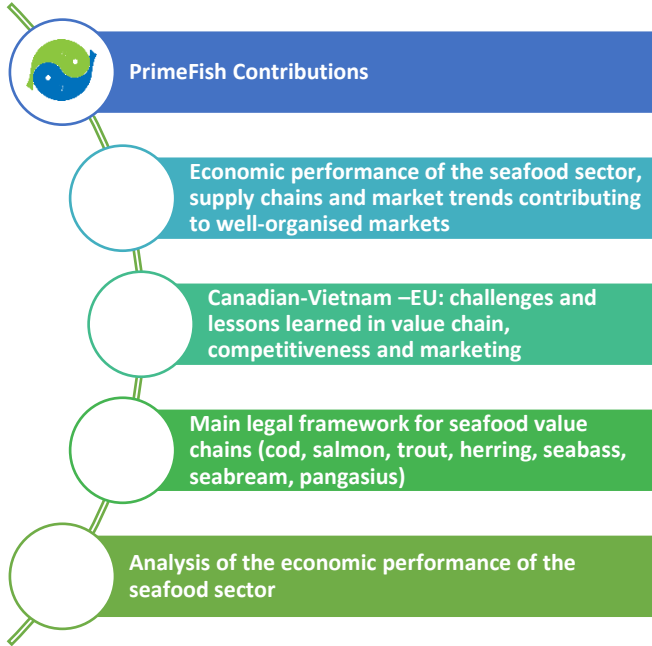
- **Market studies** with large panels and focusing on the origin of seafood products and/or behavioural experience of consumers.
- **Further research on demand:** who is the choice editor?
- **Further understanding of the industry** (e.g. Atlantic France).
- Integration of PrimeFish results with **other market tools**.
- **Traceability, transparency, certification along the value chain.**
- More studies on the **economic performance**.
- Linking **sustainability, productivity and competitiveness**.

Dissemination- related opportunities

- Including **sources of data** in charts and graphs.
- Influence on Member States for supporting **growth of aquaculture**.
- **Information for companies** (specially, technological companies).
- **More communication** on PrimeFish outputs (RTD, lay people, SMEs, Mediterranean basin...).
- **More meetings with Advisory Councils** with tailored content to match their interest and the project results.
- **Synergies with other research projects:** [Med-A](#) (i.e., social acceptability of aquaculture and future guidelines for policy-makers)



Alignment to the Blue Growth Agenda



PrimeFish Presentations

Global view on the seafood sector

The **Blue Economy and Blue Growth** strategy present clear opportunities of development for high potential sectors: aquaculture and blue biotechnology. Looking forward, the 2030 vision for the European seafood industry is consumer-driven and will be built on transparent, innovative and profitable value chains.

 <http://bit.ly/2DM79jP>

Insights into the supply of seafood products

The **Fisheries and Aquaculture Competitiveness Index (FACI)** points to areas where authorities can act to improve competitiveness of their seafood industry. It compiles a series of indicators assessing performance (country-level; company-level) based on basic requirements for competitiveness (public institutions, fisheries management...), efficiency enhancers (labour market, market size...) and innovation and sophistication (business sophistication, R&D). It joins survey-based data as well as secondary information of the Global Competitiveness Index of the World Economic Forum.

 <http://bit.ly/2KhCjQy>

Analysis of voluntary labelling and certification strategies shows that most certification schemes do not guarantee a price-premium; but act as a minimum guarantee continued access to certification-centric market segments. The GSI may stand as an example of the salmon industry re-asserting control of certification to achieve strategic sectoral precompetitive objectives. Companies in concentrated sectors (i.e., seabass and bream), emergent national schemes and producers' association could learn from these experiences.

 <http://bit.ly/2Bg2TGS>

The market and consumer perspectives

Negative press on salmon consumption affects the attitude of consumers by diminishing their perception of the value of health and environmental-related aspects. After reading such stories, consumers show higher intentions of looking for further

Key policy recommendations for a strong European Blue Economy



Substantial and sustainable food supply, compatible with healthy and productive oceans

Research with international partners

Facilitate coexisting sustainable marine and maritime activities

Ensure open access and interoperability of data

A case study: The industry needs of information

PrimeFish analysis of the seabass and seabream sector has backed Kontali's work in supporting Greek authorities to assess if there was a monopoly status in Greece, highly connected to the Turkey and Spanish bass and bream sectors.

Kontali, a PrimeFish partner and a company specialised on offering analysis information on the seafood sector, is making the transition from the off-line word to web-based reports offering interactive, dynamic and real-time market information with forecasts on market trends (volume and price), business performance, sector overview, product trends and consumers' preferences.

 <http://bit.ly/2A4Kpr4>



information and/or choosing certified or organic products or change their diets. Formal (i.e. government) and informal (i.e. blogs) sources of information achieve very similar levels of impact.

 <http://bit.ly/2QdjHGY>

Impact of seafood consumption impacts in a positive way on sustainability and consumers' health. For instance, an increase in fish consumption in France would result in healthier (avoidance of diseases and deaths) and more sustainable diets (diminished emission of greenhouse gases). In the same line, promoting fish consumption seems socially desirable, as the possible benefits would exceed the associated cost imposed on consumer, industry and public sector.

 <http://bit.ly/2RZfvaX>

'Sustainable label' and 'Nutritional & health claim' preferences varied among species and countries (likely affected by personal beliefs, attitude and trust). There is, in general, a price premium for seafood products with a claim on sustainability, and/or health and nutritional benefits in the studied countries (France, Germany, Italy, Spain, United Kingdom).

 <http://bit.ly/2KeZV8o>

Market segments related to health and environmental topics are characterised by the highest expenditure on seafood products in the studied countries (France, Germany, Italy, Spain, United Kingdom). They consumption may trigger cross-fertilization/spill-over across lead and lag segments/markets, as well as present opportunities for tailor-made policy action (e.g. health policy) and for more effective marketing strategies.

 <http://bit.ly/2R2OgxC>

PrimeFish Decision Support Tools

PrimeFish tools offer market-intelligence information for improving planning, production and product development opportunities for the European seafood sector. The Wiki, enabling access to the research done on PrimeFish (i.e. study on effects of negative press) and the PrimeDSS, the main container of interactive features offering tailored information on competitiveness, value chain, boom & bust cycles on prices, willingness to pay, success and failure product stories and market segments for seafood products. Registration at the PrimeDSS is open at:

 <http://www.dss.primefish.eu>

 <http://bit.ly/2DxzAkM>

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