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**Subject: EU aquaculture strategy**

We have earlier forwarded our general comments to current review of the “2002 Strategy”. However, in response to the successful conference held in November and subsequent talks with relevant stakeholders, we hereby wish to emphasize the points we find crucial.

**Objectives**

The new strategy should be more ambitious. The demand for fish is growing. EU is the world's biggest net importer of fisheries products and continues to increase its dependency on imports. We have witnessed a staggering growth in imports and we urge the Commission to address this issue and to give priority to volume growth.

**Communication**

Communication is critical. It is imperative that the new strategy is build upon a strong and coherent communication platform, which can properly present facts and address criticism and misconceptions about the industry.

**Regulatory framework**

EU farmers in all member states are having massive difficulties in obtaining the necessary licenses for growth. The strategy should recognize this as a critical barrier, and seek ways to craft and implement a flexible and dynamic licensing system.

### **Fair and free trade**

EU aquaculture is bound to comply with tight legislation on many issues. This hinders growth and import from third countries is growing at the expense of EU production. Such products are often produced with less respect for environmental issues, food safety etc. Trade disputes have also been highlighted for e.g. salmon and large trout with anti-dumping and/or safeguard actions being taken in several cases. In this case the potential for a permanent and real-time monitoring of markets could be envisaged.

### **Profitable R & D**

The strategy should focus on profitable R & D. The sector needs results that can be transformed into increased production and therefore R & D, industry needs and regulation must work together.

We should also like to take this opportunity to thank you and your colleagues for constructive and pleasant cooperation in 2007. We look forward to continue this in 2008, and we wish you and your family a merry Christmas and a happy new year.

Best regards

The Danish Aquaculture Organisation

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Brian Thomsen". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Brian Thomsen

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