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IMPACT OF EU FUNDING ON LATVIAN AQUACULTURE: PRODUCTIVITY, COMPETITIVENESS AND PERSPECTIVES

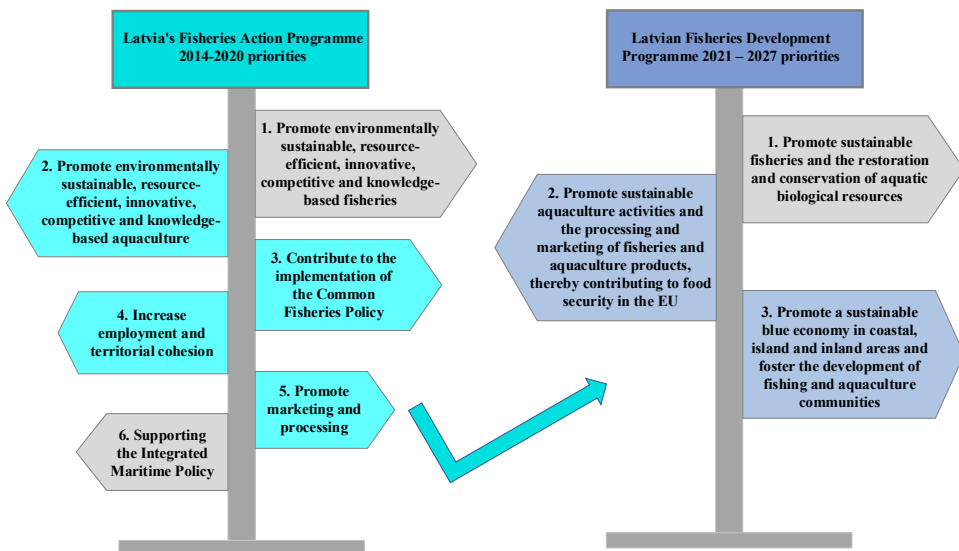
Krista LAKTUKA^{1*}, Dace LAUKA²

^{1,2} *Institute of Energy Systems and Environment, Riga Technical University, Āzenes iela 12/1, Riga, LV-1048, Latvia*

* **Corresponding author.** Email address: krista.laktuka@rtu.lv

Abstract – The eligibility period for the 2014–2020 Operational Programme of the EU's European Maritime and Fisheries Fund (EMFF) closed at the end of 2023. The allocation under the EMFF to the Latvian fisheries and aquaculture sector was more than €130 million, distributed in accordance with Latvia's Fisheries Development Action Programme 2014–2020. The primary objective of this research is to analyse the outcomes attained through the allocation of funding and ascertain the extent to which Latvian aquaculture productivity has augmented, alongside its competitive standing and sustainability across both domestic and global markets. This includes integrating technological advances and innovative practices into existing aquaculture companies, as well as providing funding for projects that stimulate the creation of new aquaculture companies, such as the promotion of community-led local development strategies and the collection and availability of sector-specific data that could indirectly contribute to the development of the sector. A cost-effectiveness analysis was conducted to ascertain the anticipated return on the EU funding provided and evaluate the amplified growth prospects within the aquaculture sector. The results show that the performance indicators and targets set for the aquaculture sector as part of the funding allocation are vague and consequently do not lead to a recognisable increase in aquaculture productivity or added value.

Keywords – *Aquaculture; European maritime and fisheries fund; economic impacts; funding allocation; productivity growth*



Priorities set out in the Latvian Fisheries Development Programmes, under which EMFF funding is allocated.