

Seaweed Legislation: A Friend or Foe?

Maya Miltell, Senior Project Manager
SUBMARINER Network / s.Pro

Page 10 of 10



EU 'Regulations' apply equally to all member states, while 'Directives' give only a compulsory direction, which needs to be further specified and translated into national law by each member state.



DRAFT
Info Sheet on
Navigating
EU Regulations
Relevant to Algae

Author: Tina Maria Seligmann



#EU4Algae



Cultivation & Environmental Impact

Relevant Regulation:	Also affects...			
	Cultivation	Processing	Applications	Market & trade
Reg. (EU) 1380/2013 (Common Fisheries Policy (CFP))				
Directive 2014/89/EU (Maritime Spatial Planning (MSP))				
Reg. (EC) 708/2007 (Alien Species in Aquaculture) + Reg. (EU) 1143/2014 (Invasive Alien Species)				
Directive 92/43/EEC (Habitats)				
Directive 2000/60/EC (Water Framework)				
Directive 2008/56/EC (Marine Strategy Framework (MSFD))				
Directive 2008/98/EC (Waste Framework)				
Directive 2011/92/EU (Environmental Impact Assessment - EIA) - Amended by Directive 2014/52/EU				
Directive 2001/18/EC (Release of GMO Into the Environment)				
Reg. (EU) 511/2014 (Nagoya Protocol)				

Trade, Market Regulation & Labelling

Relevant Regulation:	Also affects...			
	Cultivation	Processing	Applications	Market & trade
Reg. (EU) 1379/2013 (Common Market Organisation (CMO) in Fishery & Aquaculture Products)				
Directive (EU) 2019/2161 (Omnibus Directive)				
Directive 2005/29/EC (Unfair Commercial Practices)				
Directive (EU) 2019/633 (Unfair Trading Practices in Agricultural & Food Supply Chains)				
Reg. (EU) 1832/2021 (Customs Tariffs)				
Reg. (EC) 1272/2008 (CLP - Classification, Labelling, Packaging)				
Reg. (EU) 1169/2011 (Food Labelling)				
Reg. (EC) 1924/2006 (Nutrition & Health Claims) + Reg. (EU) 432/2012 (Health Claims) and Reg. (EU) 957/2010				
Directive (EU) 2024/825 (Empowering Consumers (EmpCo))				
Reg. (EU) 2024/1143 (Geographical Indications & Traditional Specialities)				
Reg. (EU) 2018/848 (Organic Products) + Reg. (EU) 2021/1165 (List of Authorised Products for use in Organic Production)				

Food and Feed

Relevant Regulation:	Also affects...			
	Cultivation	Processing	Applications	Market & trade
Reg. (EC) 178/2002 (General Food & Feed Law)		X		
Reg. (EU) 2015/2283 (Novel food) + Reg. (EU) 2017/2470 and the Novel Food Catalogue	X			
Reg. (EC) 852/2004 (Food Hygiene (+ Guidelines on the Requirements of Food Hygiene Legislation: FSA (2006)))		X		
Directive 2002/46/EC (Food Supplements)				
Reg. (EC) 1333/2008 (Food Additives) + Reg. (EU) No 231/2012 + Directive 89-107 EEC		X		
Reg. (EU) 2023/915 (Food Contaminants)	X	X		
Commission Recommendation (EU) 2018/464 (Heavy Metal Concentrations in Seaweeds)	X	X		
Reg. (EC) 2073/2005 (Microbiological Criteria for food)		X		
Reg. (EC) 396/2005 (Pesticides in Food & Feed)	X	X		
Reg. (EC) 1829/2003 (GMO in Food & Feed)	X			
Directive 2002/32/EC (Feed Contaminants)	X	X		
Reg. (EC) 767/2009 (Feed)	X	X		
Reg. (EU) 68/2013 (Catalogue of Feed Materials) + Reg. (EU) 2017/1017	X	X		
Reg. (EU) 1831/2003 (Feed Additives)		X		

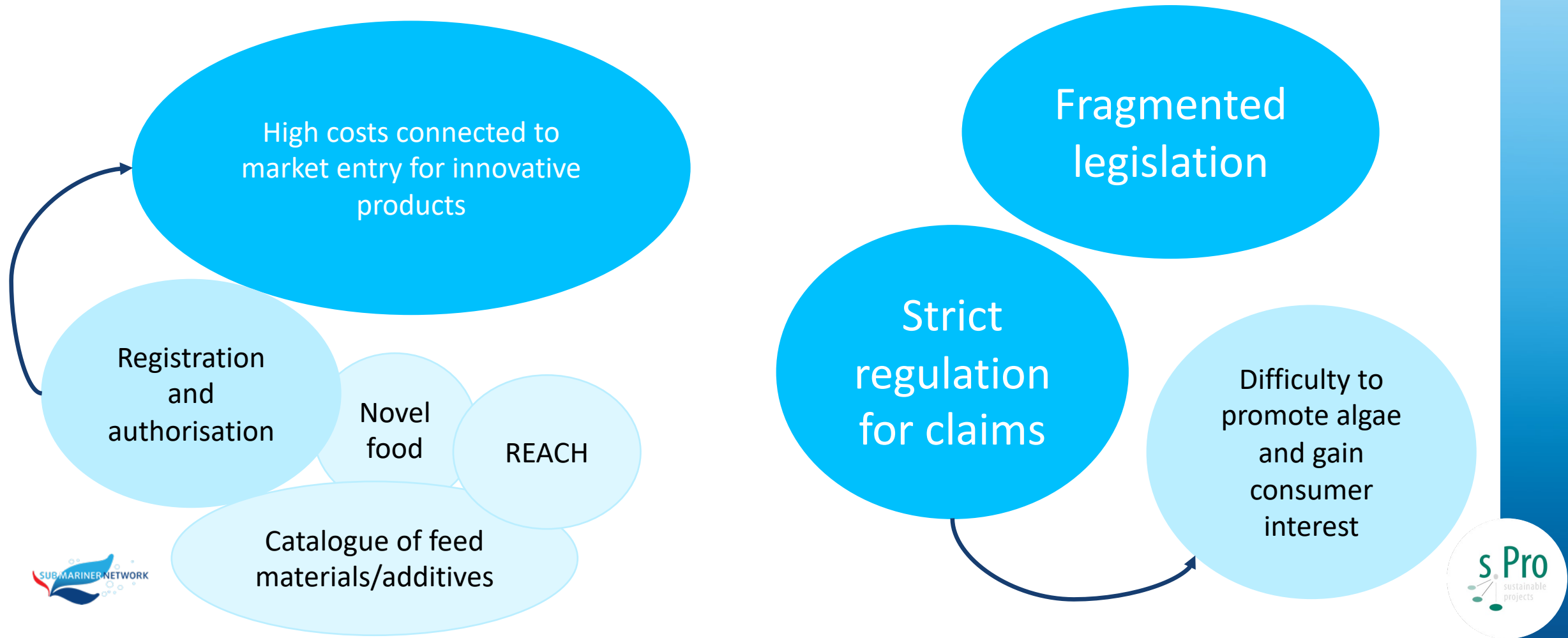
Food and Feed

Relevant Regulation:	Also affects...			
	Cultivation	Processing	Applications	Market & trade
Reg. (EC) 178/2002 (General Food & Feed Law)		X		
Reg. (EU) 2015/2283 (Novel food) + Reg. (EU) 2017/2470 and the Novel Food Catalogue	X			
Reg. (EC) 852/2004 (Food Hygiene (+ Guidelines on the Requirements of Food Hygiene Legislation: FSA (2006))		X		
Directive 2002/46/EC (Food Supplements)				
Reg. (EC) 1333/2008 (Food Additives) + Reg. (EU) No 231/2012 + Directive 89-107 EEC		X		
Reg. (EU) 2023/915 (Food Contaminants)	X	X		
Commission Recommendation (EU) 2018/464 (Heavy Metal Concentrations in Seaweeds)	X	X		
Reg. (EC) 2073/2005 (Microbiological Criteria for food)		X		
Reg. (EC) 396/2005 (Pesticides in Food & Feed)	X	X		
Reg. (EC) 1829/2003 (GMO in Food & Feed)	X			
Directive 2002/32/EC (Feed Contaminants)	X	X		
Reg. (EC) 767/2009 (Feed)	X	X		
Reg. (EU) 68/2013 (Catalogue of Feed Materials) + Reg. (EU) 2017/1017	X	X		
Reg. (EU) 1831/2003 (Feed Additives)		X		

Non- Food/Non-Feed Algae Products

Relevant Regulation:	Also affects...			
	Cultivation	Processing	Applications	Market & trade
Reg. (EC) 1907/2006 (REACH - Registration, Evaluation, Authorisation and Restriction of Chemicals)		X		
Reg. (EU) 2019/1009 (Fertilisers (FPR))	X			
Reg. (EC) 1107/2009 (Plant Protection Products)				
Reg.(EU) 528/2012 (Biocidal Products)				
Directive 2001/83/EC (Community Code for Medicinal Products)		X		
Reg. (EC) 726/2004 (Authorisation of Medicinal Products)		X		
Reg. (EC) 1223/2009 (Cosmetic Products)		X		
Reg. (EU) 2025/40 (Packaging and Packaging Waste)		X		
Reg. (EC) 1935/2004 (Food Contact Materials)		X		
Directive 2018/2001 (Energy from Renewable Sources)	X			

Common barriers identified



Good example: Danish hobby licence

The hobby licence is a simplified, non-commercial cultivation permit.

One page application, with a 4-6 week handling time.



havhøst

European seaweed on the global market



Example: Biostimulants

Seaweed could provide an opportunity to avoid fertilisers harming water quality.

During the process of bringing an algae-based biostimulant to market, Ocean Rainforest faced challenges with REACH compliance, particularly classification as a UVCB substance.

Due to the chemical extraction process, the material is unlikely to qualify for exemption.





Key takeaways

Seaweed lacks tailored regulation and often has to follow unfit legislation considering aquaculture.

Regulations fail to acknowledge the positive benefits seaweed can provide, both from a cultivation perspective and a substitution for less sustainable raw materials.

Current EU legislation is stricter than in other regions globally.

No reports or policy recommendations suggest recommend to remove safety, quality or sustainability requirements, but rather highlight complexity.



https://maritime-forum.ec.europa.eu/news/news-learn-how-eu-algae-initiative-supports-fishers-transitioning-seaweed-farming-euronews-green-2024-07-05_en



However, systematic barriers are consistently identified, and this limits the industry from realising its role as a **key player** in a sustainable economy integrating the blue and the green.

We should also focus more on the question: “Where are regulations related to other biomass and products unfair?”.



The status of seaweed regulation today...

The regulations have not kept up with the technological advancements and research, and this is what now hinders it from expansion.



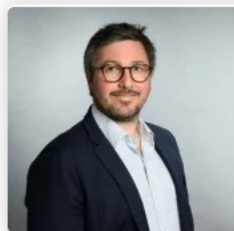
Seaweed needs to be recognised for its potential, and be allowed to compete fairly both with imports and comparable biomass.





What do we do?

- Regulations are slow to change. But not impossible.
- We need to identify what regulation can change, and how we can innovate policy.
- Only funding development in cultivation and product development creates these systematic gaps.
- **What regulatory changes could enable both the seaweed industry and the rest of society to be sustainable?**



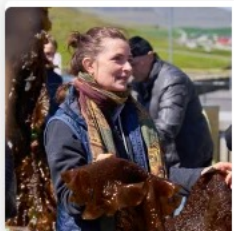
14:05 - 14:25 Keynote presentation
Mobilising financing for the European seaweed industry

Adrien Vincent, President, Albatros Advisory , France



11:05 - 11:25 Connecting the dots between and beyond individual seaweed projects: EU4Algae, the EU Mission Ocean and Waters, RootLinks and EITWater

Angela Schultz-Zehden, Managing Director, s.Pro sustainable-projects / SUBMARINER Network, Germany



11:25 - 11:45 Advancing Europe's seaweed sector: SeaMark results and pathways to commercial exploitation

Urd Grandorf Bak, Head of R&D Europe, Ocean Rainforest, Faroe Islands

SeaMark

D10.3, final deliverables and workshop results from final conference.

Roadmap to sustainably develop the European seaweed industry

Jueterbock, A., Hoarau-Heemstra, H., Wigger, K. et al. Roadmap to sustainably develop the European seaweed industry. npj Ocean Sustain 4, 22 (2025). <https://doi.org/10.1038/s44183-025-00122->

02/06/2025 | EBIC Position – COM reality check – REACH

Policy event presenting Circalgae project conclusions hosted by MEP Eric SARGIACOMO and the S&D group in the EU Parliament

 24 June 2026  09:00 - 11:00  Room Spinelli 5G305 - European Parliament.



Thank you!

Maya Miltell
mmi@submariner-network.eu



Sign up for the
network newsletter