

Expert Workshop on Comparative Environmental Costs of Aquaculture and other Food Production Systems

24-28 April 2006
Vancouver, British Columbia

The First Session of the Sub-Committee on Aquaculture of the Committee on Fisheries recommended future work be devoted to “undertaking comparative analyses on the environmental cost of aquatic food production in relation to other terrestrial food production sectors”, and specifically requested the Secretariat to undertake such a study and analysis. In response to that request, the FAO Fisheries Department with the support of the World Fisheries Trust (Canada) and the Vancouver Aquarium brought together international experts on aquaculture development, ecology, environmental economics, environmental impact analysis, energy analysis, and livestock farming in order to:

- ◇ advise FAO on appropriate and accurate accounting systems for comparing environmental costs of aquaculture and other terrestrial food production sectors;
- ◇ evaluate strengths and weaknesses of such accounting systems; and
- ◇ advise FAO on how to deal with this subject in the future.

A range of methodologies, including, Energy Analysis, Ecological Footprint Analysis, Life Cycle Assessment and Material Flows Accounting, were presented, along with results from some comparative case studies. Discussions highlighted the complexity of the request and the challenges it raises in terms of translating environmental impacts into costs and overcoming data, information and methodological gaps. The workshop proceedings and recommendations are being edited by WFT and FI staff and will be published in the FAO Fishery Proceedings Series.

For further information please contact Devin M. Bartley at (Devin.Bartley@fao.org).

Stewart Lampe, World Fisheries Trust



The mountains surrounding Vancouver provided an inspiring setting for FIRI staff (D. Bartley standing) to facilitate experts, seated clockwise from Bartley; Tam Mungkung (Thailand), Yogi Carolsfeld (World Fisheries Trust), Kenneth Brooks (USA), Cecile Brugere (FAO), Randy Brummet (WorldFish Centre), to examine environmental costs of aquaculture and other food production systems.