

Regional Aquaculture Highlights from the Asia-Pacific Region

Simon Funge-Smith, Jesper Clausen and David Lymer

FAO Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific (RAP), Bangkok, Thailand
Simon.Fungesmith@fao.org; Jesper.Clausen@fao.org; David.Lymer@fao.org

Aquaculture zoning in the Asia-Pacific Region

For many countries in the Asia-Pacific region, the general policies for aquaculture have been directed towards intensification and expansion of the sector. Accompanying expansion and growth, problems started to emerge relating to environmental degradation and losses due to disease problems in production facilities. These emerging problems have been dealt with, either through government regulation or modifications in production techniques by the sector itself. In solving these problems, both government and private sector have used aquaculture zoning as part of the overall aquaculture planning approach. Aquaculture zoning is considered a useful management tool and should be an integrated part of an overall strategy to develop aquaculture in a sustainable manner. The question today is how to improve implementation of the planned zoning to make sure the plans are translated into action at the production level. FAO is currently working together with its member countries in the Asia-Pacific Region to facilitate this process of translating plans into actions.

Zoning of aquaculture should not be used in isolation but in combination with other tools for management. Alongside the control requirements for addressing environmental impacts of the sector and management of disease and movements are the increasing requirements for traceability of aquaculture products. This is becoming a mandatory aspect of assuring food safety and to some extent quality presently for exported products, but the need for tracing products consumed domestically will be a natural development as consumers in the region become more concerned about food safety and the production methods used. It is crucial that countries in the region adapt to this change and new standards. Increased traceability is also a useful tool for better management of the production.

FAO have been requested to give technical assistance from the Government of Thailand to support the development of a practical aquaculture information management and traceability system including components of aquaculture zoning.

Certification of aquaculture products in the Asia-Pacific region

The focus on certification of aquaculture products in the region is continuing. During an APFIC Regional

Consultative Forum held in Ho Chi Minh City, Viet Nam in late 2007, there were clear recommendations for more regional involvement in developing standards and certification systems. The APFIC region accounts for the major proportion of global aquaculture production and further represents a wealth of technical knowledge on sustainable aquaculture which is of relevance to certification. This regional capacity has prompted the development of a number of national certification schemes which are tailored to the socio-economic status of the producer's and then especially small-scale producers. The workshop adopted five main recommendations to member countries in the region:

1. Regional capacity and experience should be used to develop a regional certification scheme; other schemes operating in the region should be harmonized to and in compliance with the forthcoming FAO Guidelines for Aquaculture Certification.
2. Schemes operating in the region should be developed and/or revised to benefit producers, allow for cluster certification and incremental improvement against targets, especially in view of the predominance of small-scale producers in the region and their constraints in complying with many certification schemes.
3. Ensure that the benefits of certification are maximized and cost controlled. It was recognized that the costs associated with compliance to most certification schemes are typically not offset by premium prices and/or other clearly documented benefits.
4. Certification should be developed in compliance with international norms on development of standards, transparency and the FAO guidelines, particularly with respect to including directly affected stakeholders. It was also recognized that aquaculture sustainability is a responsibility shared by a broad range of stakeholders.
5. Members support capacity building on better management practices and certification issues in addition to developing mechanisms that facilitate capacity building (e.g. financial, insurance-based). Most member countries in the region have significant resourcing and capacity constraints, at the producer level and within fishery institutions to implement certification.

For more information about the workshop and workshop documents please visit the APFIC website at: www.apfic.org.

Nepal – a country with an aquaculture potential

FAO conducted, in December 2007, a review of the development potential for fisheries and aquaculture as requested by the government of Nepal. The review concluded that while not a main agricultural activity, fisheries and aquaculture are an important supplement to the daily food in rural areas of Nepal with a real potential for further development. Clear policies for developing coldwater aquaculture as well as enhancing both human and institutional capacities on adaptive research and development on such areas as seed production, feed production, and genetic improvement of carp will be essential.



S.FUNGE.SMITH, FAO RAP

Nepalese woman working after her cages in Pokhara Lake

FAO extends assistance to Malaysia on public health and aquatic animal health issues

Through a TCP Facility TCP/MAL/3201 *Identification of capacity building needs of the Malaysian inspection system to meet international market requirements*, FAO extended technical assistance, in August 2008, to assist the government of Malaysia in identifying capacity building needs (quality and safety and aquatic animal health aspects) in order to comply with international trading requirements particularly to implement the recommendations brought forward by the EU Food and Veterinary Office (FVO) as an outcome of an FVO visit in April 2008. In 2005, Malaysia's exported fishery products are worth more than USD 600 M; while the ornamental fish export is about 9 percent of the global share, Malaysia being the second largest producer of ornamental fish next to Singapore.

New Regional TCP Project on Utilization of Trash Fish/Low Value Fish

TCP/RAS/3203 *Reducing the dependence on the utilization of trash fish/ low value fish as feed for aquaculture of marine finfish in the Asian region* was recently approved for implementation from July 2008 to June 2010. NACA is responsible for overall coordination and implementation of this TCP which involves China, Indonesia, Thailand and Viet Nam. An Inception Workshop will be held from 8-10 September 2008, Krabi, Thailand to finalize detailed project implementation.

RECENTLY COMPLETED EVENTS (from December 2007)

December 2007

- ▶ FAO/NAFRI Workshop on Agrobiodiversity, 11-12 December 2007 and FAO/EC National Workshop on Fisheries Law of Lao PDR, 14 December 2007, Vientiane, Lao PDR. Matthias.Halwart@fao.org/Simon.FungeSmith@fao.org
- ▶ Regional Workshop on Inland Fisheries and Aquaculture in Central Asia: Status and Development Prospects, 11-14 December 2007, Demre, Turkey. Raymon.VanAnrooy@fao.org/Gerd.Marmulla@fao.org

January 2008

- ▶ FAO Workshop on Establishing a Coordinating Working Party on Aquaculture Statistics (CWP-AS), 8-10 January 2008, Nakorn Nayok, Thailand. Rohana.Subasinghe@fao.org/Sachiko.Tsuji@fao.org

February 2008

- ▶ FAO Expert Consultation on Assessment of Socio-Economic Impacts of Aquaculture, 4-8 February 2008, Ankara, Turkey. Nathanael.Hishamunda@fao.org
- ▶ FAO Expert Consultation on Climate-related Transboundary Pests and Diseases, including Relevant Aquatic Species, 25-27 February 2008, Rome, Italy. Doris.Soto@fao.org/Melba.Reantaso@fao.org
- ▶ FAO Expert Consultation on Improving Planning and Policy Development in Aquaculture, 26-29 February 2008, Rome, Italy. Cecile.Brugere@fao.org
- ▶ FAO/NACA Consultative Workshop on Guidelines for Aquaculture Certification, 28-29 February 2008, London, UK. Rohana.Subasinghe@fao.org

March 2008

- ▶ FAO Training/Workshop on Diagnostics, Surveillance and Reporting of Aquatic Animal Diseases (TCP/BIH/3101), 18-21 March 2008, Fojnica, Bosnia and Herzegovina. Melba.Reantaso@fao.org

(continued on page 21)