

## Building an ecosystem approach to aquaculture

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Aquaculture growth worldwide involves the expansion of cultivated areas, a higher density of aquaculture installations and farmed individuals, and greater use of feed resources produced outside the immediate culture area. To ensure that such development of the sector does not carry negative impacts on the environment and on parts of society due to weak regulation or poor management, an ecosystem approach for aquaculture (EAA) is encouraged. "An ecosystem approach for aquaculture is a strategy for the integration of the activity within the wider ecosystem in such a way that it promotes sustainable development, equity, and resilience of interlinked social and ecological systems". This strategy should be guided by three main principles that should ensure the contribution of aquaculture to sustainable development: i) aquaculture should be developed in the context of ecosystem functions and services with no degradation of these beyond their resilience capacity; ii) aquaculture should improve human well-being and equity for all relevant stakeholders; and iii) aquaculture should be developed in the context of (and integrated to) other relevant sectors. The strategy must be implemented at least at three scales: the farm, the aquaculture waterbody/watershed or aquaculture zone and the global market.

These proceedings present the output of a workshop and include contributed papers on: definitions, principles, scales and management measures, human dimensions, economic implications and legal implications that are relevant for an ecosystem-based management in aquaculture. The document also includes two comprehensive reviews covering the status of brackish, marine and freshwater aquaculture within an ecosystem approach perspective.

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