



Codes of Practice and Better Management Practices in Aquaculture – towards a worldwide overview of COP/BMP documents in aquaculture

Call for contributions to FAO overview of COPs/BMPs in aquaculture

The FAO Aquaculture Service calls for contributions to the development of a worldwide overview and databank of Codes of Practice, Codes of Conduct, Best (Better) Management Practices, Technical Guidelines, etc. in aquaculture.

We would like to invite all those interested in the promotion of sustainable aquaculture development to advise FAO of the existence of COP/BMP documents in their countries or regions. In particular, all aquaculture producer associations and farmer organizations are encouraged to send to FAO their Codes of Practice, Codes of Conduct, Best (Better) Management Practices, Technical Guidelines, etc. COPs/BMPs in aquaculture, as available with national and international organizations, would also be important and should also be contributed. These documents could be sent to FAO in hard copy format or electronic format, or, if available online, by informing FAO of the relevant website, internet link or URL. For further information on the scope of this initiative, please see further below Background and Scope.

Your collaboration and contributions to this initiative will be most appreciated, and your participation will be duly recognized and acknowledged.

Jiansan Jia
Chief
Aquaculture Service
Fisheries and Aquaculture Department
Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO)

Direct contact: For all correspondence & information on this activity, please communicate with Mr Uwe Barg, Fishery Resources Officer (Aquaculture) via email: uwe.barg@fao.org, or directly by phone: ++39-06-57053454.

Background and scope

In its efforts to promote improvements in aquaculture management and governance, the FAO Aquaculture Service (FIRA) has undertaken a range of initiatives, in line with the mandate and provisions given in the 1995 FAO Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries (CCRF). Not only has FAO facilitated informed pertinent discussions at the FAO Aquaculture Sub-Committee during its 2006¹ and 2008² Sessions, but FIRA has developed an online compilation of National Aquaculture Legislation Overviews (NALOs³) in addition to National Aquaculture Sector Overviews (NASOs⁴). The FAO Aquaculture Sub-Committee in its first and second Sessions^{5,6} supported the FAO initiative of developing a data bank of national codes and other useful material produced by organizations, including NGOs, to be made available to all FAO member countries. The Sub-Committee recommended FAO to develop a web-based reference of aquaculture codes of practice as a means to facilitate information exchange.

There has been an increasing trend in the development Codes of Practice (COPs) and Better Management Practices⁷ (BMPs) in aquaculture, in addition to related Codes of Conduct (COC), principles, guidelines, standards, and other such soft law instruments, which are most often voluntary in nature. These are often aiming at a range of targets, for example, improving farm management performance or sectoral governance measures, farmer capacity-building as well as self-regulation and self-policing, product quality assurance, or enhanced consumer communication and market shares. There are numerous initiatives at national and international levels⁸ as well as major players active in the development or review of soft law instruments in aquaculture, including, for example, WAS and regional chapters, FEAP, GAA, ACC, ISFA, NACA, NASCO, SEAFDEC, WWF, WorldFish Center, FAO and others.

The present FAO initiative is focused on such soft law instruments in aquaculture and is designed to generate, review, organize and publish available information on COPs and BMPs in aquaculture worldwide. This activity provides the FAO with the opportunity to publish reviews on development, uses and trends of COPs, BMPs and related guidelines in

¹ <http://ftp.fao.org/docrep/fao/meeting/013/j8098e.pdf>

² <http://ftp.fao.org/docrep/fao/meeting/013/k2845e.pdf>

³ <http://www.fao.org/fishery/nalo/search/en>

⁴ <http://www.fao.org/fishery/naso/search/en>

⁵ <http://ftp.fao.org/docrep/fao/005/y7084t/y7084t00.pdf>

⁶ <http://ftp.fao.org/docrep/fao/006/Y5094T/Y5094T00.pdf>

⁷ The term 'better' is preferred rather than 'best' because aquaculture practices are continuously improving (today's 'best' is tomorrow's 'norm')

⁸ In a CCRF survey in 2002 FAO Members indicated that they have some 140 codes or instruments with which to promote responsible aquaculture; whereby 53 were developed by governments, 33 by producers, 18 by suppliers, 17 by manufacturers and 19 by others (FAO, 2002).

<http://www.fao.org/DOCREP/MEETING/005/Y8370E.HTM>

aquaculture. This activity also provides the basis for developing an online resource, web-based compilation of available aquaculture COP & BMP documents and/or links to online sources (URLs) of such COP & BMP documents. Such a web-based compilation would complement the above mentioned compilation of NALOs and NASOs.

The present activity foresees that six regions and one major country (China) will be covered in the preparation of regional reviews and one country review on COP/BMPs in aquaculture. Each region/country will be covered by one author. In addition to China, the six regional reviews will cover:

1. Sub-Saharan Africa
2. South Asia and Central Asia
3. Southeast Asia, Japan, Korea (Democratic People's Republic), Korea (Republic of), and South Pacific
4. Near East and North Africa
5. Europe and North America
6. Latin America and Caribbean

Any suggestions you may have, and every contribution you might be able to provide in support of this initiative will be most welcome and will also be duly acknowledged.

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Contact & mailing address:

Uwe Barg, Fishery Resources Officer (Aquaculture)
Fisheries and Aquaculture Department
Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO)
Viale delle Terme di Caracalla
00100 Rome
ITALY

Email: uwe.barg@fao.org
Phone: (+39-06) 570 53454
Fax: (+39-06) 570 53020