



Global Conference on Aquaculture 2010

Farming the Waters for People and Food

Phuket Consensus: a re-affirmation of commitment to the Bangkok Declaration

Preamble

The Kyoto Strategy for Aquaculture Development adopted in 1976 facilitated the transformation of aquaculture from a traditional to a science-based economic activity. It promoted technical cooperation among developing countries to expand aquaculture development.

The UNEP Convention on Biological Diversity that came into effect in 1993 reflected the world community's commitment to manage biodiversity for the welfare of present and future generations

The FAO Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries promulgated in 1995 enshrined the principles of sustainability and responsibility in the practice of fisheries, aquaculture and trade in aquatic products.

The Bangkok Declaration and Strategy adopted in 2000 articulated 17 strategic elements for aquaculture development. These could be broadly summarised as: (i) a responsible farmer is justifiably rewarded; (ii) costs and benefits are shared equitably; (iii) society benefits from the practice and products of aquaculture; (iv) adequate, affordable and safe food is available and accessible to everyone; (v) the environment is conserved for the next generation, and (vi) the development of the sector is orderly.

At the threshold of this millennium, in September 2000 in New York, the global community adopted the United Nations Millennium Declaration which set the eight Millennium Development Goals.

The Paris Declaration adopted in March 2005, provides the guidelines for the correct targeting, effective coordination and efficient management and utilization of external assistance.

In the third World Food Summit on food security held in November 2009 in Rome, the leaders of nations pledged their renewed commitment to eradicate hunger at the earliest possible date.

Towards the end of the first decade in December 2009, the world agreed, in Copenhagen, to meet with resolve and a common purpose the challenges of climate change.

These global accords, with the Bangkok Declaration and Strategy as the core instrument for aquaculture development, shall continue to guide the development and management of aquaculture beyond 2010 through the first quarter of this century.

Re-affirmation of the Bangkok commitment

In line with the above and recognizing that:

1. The principles and strategies advocated by the Kyoto Strategy for Aquaculture Development, the FAO Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries, and the Bangkok Declaration and Strategy have served well the processes and goals of aquaculture development;
2. The two assessments of progress made in responsible aquaculture development and trade conducted in this first decade of the millennium -- the first, completed in 2005 and published as the State of World Aquaculture, the second in 2010 and appeared as the Global Aquaculture Review -- have shown that:
 - the progress has been made possible largely by efforts made in line with the Bangkok Declaration and Strategy;
 - the Strategy continues to be relevant to the aquaculture development needs and aspirations of States; and
 - there are elements of the Strategy that require further strengthening in order to enhance its effectiveness , achieve development goals and address persistent and emerging threats;

Recommendations

We the participants of the Global Conference on Aquaculture 2010 re-affirm our commitment to the Bangkok Declaration and Strategy for Aquaculture Development and recommend these actions:

1. ***Increase the effectiveness of governance of the aquaculture sector***, recognizing the crucial need for sound policies, strategies and plans in sustained development incorporating the principles of an ecosystem approach to aquaculture; and recognizing further that stronger institutions, improved capacity and more effective mechanisms of governance, including rules and regulations, the market, economic incentives, voluntary codes of practices, and responsible self-management, have enabled a more orderly and responsible development of aquaculture.

2. ***Encourage and facilitate greater investments in scientific, technical and social innovations***, recognizing that these assist in the resolution of productivity and sustainability issues that had earlier been deemed intractable, extremely costly or impossible to solve.
3. ***Conduct accurate assessments of the progress and contributions of aquaculture, including aquatic plants, to national, regional and global economies, poverty alleviation and food security***, recognizing that this will enable the aquaculture sector to formulate better-informed development policies, strategies and plans that governments and development partners will favourably consider for support and funding.
4. ***Intensify assistance to the small farmers***, recognizing that the small (resource-limited and/or subsistence) farmers comprise the vast majority of aquaculture producers in the world and recognizing further that they are the most vulnerable to impacts of natural and economic risks.
5. ***Support gender sensitive policies and implement programmes*** that facilitate economic, social and political empowerment of women through their active participation in aquaculture development, in line with the globally accepted principles of gender equality and women's empowerment.
6. ***Increase and strengthen collaboration and partnerships***, acknowledging the many economic and technical benefits to nations, governments and people, of Technical Cooperation among Developing Countries (TCDC), inter-regional cooperation, and institutional collaboration and partnerships; and further acknowledging that the capacities for sustainable aquaculture development and trade among regions and countries have been cost-effectively improved by economic and technical cooperation facilitated by appropriate investments in development assistance from donors and technical assistance from international development organizations.
7. ***Give special emphasis on Sub-Saharan Africa and the least aquaculturally developed countries and areas***, recognizing the need to urgently develop their vast aquatic resource potentials to accelerate their social and economic development, and recognizing further that this will narrow the disparities among regions and countries and contribute to increased global aquaculture growth. In this regard, we recognize that technical cooperation should be further intensified using international and regional mechanisms.

Implementation

The implementation strategy and mechanisms for the Bangkok Declaration and Strategy continue to be valid and relevant.

We note and commend the immediate initiative taken after the adoption of the Strategy in February 2000 to establish the FAO Subcommittee on Aquaculture of the Committee on Fisheries, and the subsequent support provided by FAO Member countries and other

organizations and institutions to the formation of regional aquaculture network organizations.

We note and appreciate the stronger collaboration that was fostered among several regional and international agencies and bodies; the formation of a global consortium on shrimp aquaculture and the environment; establishment of several regional aquaculture networks; and an increasing number of partnerships and alliances among government agencies, non government organizations, industry associations and farmer organizations. These cooperative mechanisms are illustrative of the increasing importance of cooperation in improving growth and enhancing the institutional environment for the sustainable development of the sector. These should be further strengthened and made sustainable with appropriate technical assistance and investments.

We recognize that a holistic approach to aquaculture development will promote effective and efficient synergies and linkages among the various economic sectors and leads to sustainable use of resources that are becoming scarce or increasingly demanded by other competing sectors.

We recognize that the lessons from the natural disasters and economic crises of this and the past decades could be an indication of impending threats to aquaculture development, which make us believe that the implementation of Bangkok Strategy shall benefit from the following considerations:

1. The rehabilitation of livelihoods from the tsunami of 2004 and other natural calamities, and the mechanisms adopted to cope with the global economic crises during the past decade have underlined the critical role of biodiversity in sustaining the flow of ecosystems services that enable rapid recovery and sustained development of aquaculture, the importance of infusing social and biological resilience into aquaculture systems and strengthening farmers' capacity to positively adapt to changes beyond their control; and the usefulness of risk management as a tool to reduce, mitigate and cope with the threats to farmers' livelihoods.
2. Economically viable and responsible aquaculture systems are resilient systems; adoption of better management practices, including by small-scale farmers based on cluster approach, enhance productivity and social and environmental responsibility; their net impact is to strengthen the ability of the aquaculture sector to successfully face the uncertainties and risks wrought by economic crisis and climate change.
3. The implementation of the Strategy should be guided by a governance mechanism that recognizes the power and limitations of the market is sensitive to negative public perception, promoted through intensified results-based consultations, public-private partnerships and cooperation, and monitored by FAO through progress reporting on CCRF.