FAO's Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries and Technical Guidelines on Aquaculture

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The Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries (CCRF)[1] of FAO was adopted in October 1995 by over 170 Member Governments during the Twenty-eight Session of the FAO Conference. The process took four years from its initiation during the Nineteenth Session of the FAO Committee on Fisheries (COFI) in March 1991 which recommended that FAO develop the concept of responsible fisheries and to elaborate a Code of Conduct to achieve this. During the interim period since 1991, many activities, consultations and presentations in various international fora were undertaken.

Although a voluntary instrument, the CCRF represents a globally recognized international framework covering the world's marine, coastal and inland fisheries and including aquaculture. The Code which is based on major international agreements such as the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS), United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED) and the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) sets the principles and international standards of behaviour for responsible practices with a view to ensuring the effective conservation, management and development of living aquatic resources, with due respect for the ecosystem and biodiversity. It contains 12 articles covering all major issues and practices in fisheries and aquaculture including those related to its implementation, monitoring and updating and special requirements of developing countries (see Box 1).

Since its adoption in 1995, there have been a series of 9 FAO Technical Guidelines for Responsible Fisheries (see Box 2)

The FAO CCRF and the supporting technical guidelines are available in all FAO languages. The Code has also been translated in other languages. The Code is also supported by a number of booklets containing different thematic information about the Code and described in a non-technical manner.

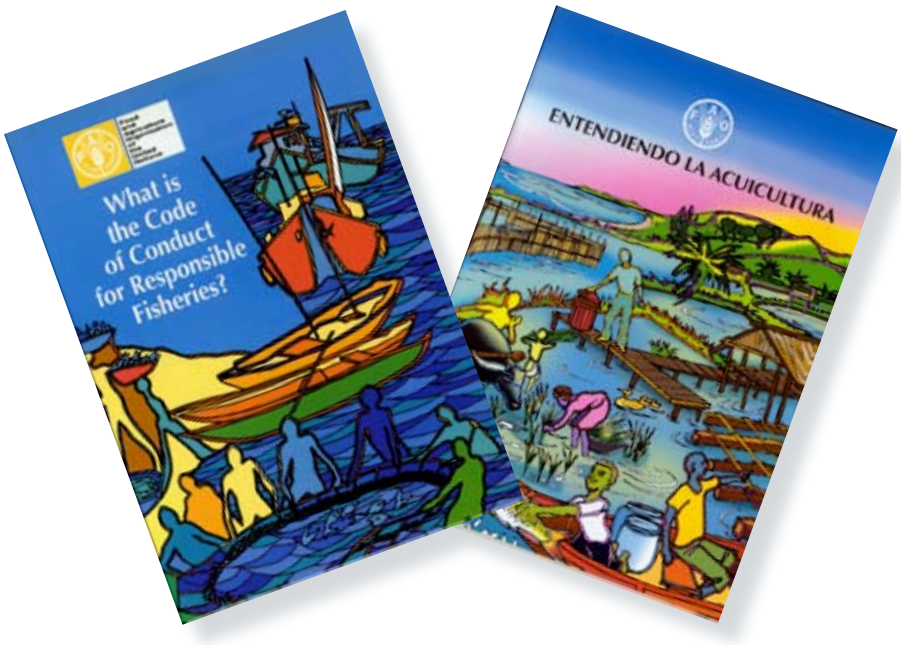
CCRF Technical Guidelines for Responsible Fisheries No. 5 – Aquaculture Development – and its supplements

The aquaculture section of the Code is contained in Article 9 on Aquaculture Development and which contains 4 principles on the following areas:

- Responsible development of aquaculture, including culture-based fisheries, in areas under national jurisdiction (9.1)
- Responsible development of aquaculture including culture-based fisheries within transboundary aquatic ecosystems (9.2)
- Use of aquatic genetic resources for the purposes of aquaculture including culture-based fisheries (9.3) and

Box 1

Art. 1 Nature and Scope of the Code
Art. 2 Objectives of the Code
Art. 3 Relationship with other International Instruments
Art. 4 Implementation, Monitoring and Updating
Art. 5 Special Requirements of Developing Countries
Art. 6 General Principles
Art. 7 Fisheries Management
Art. 8 Fishing Operations
Art. 9 Aquaculture Development
Art. 10 Integration of Fisheries intro Coastal Area Management
Art. 11 Post-harvest Practices and Trade
Art. 12 Fisheries Research



- Responsible aquaculture at the production level (9.4)

The **FAO Technical Guidelines for Responsible Fisheries No. 5 – Aquaculture Development**[2] – provides annotations to the above-mentioned principles. Such annotations are aimed to provide general guidance and should be taken as suggestions or observations which may assist interested parties in identifying their own criteria and options for actions, as well as partners for collaboration in support of sustainable aquaculture development.

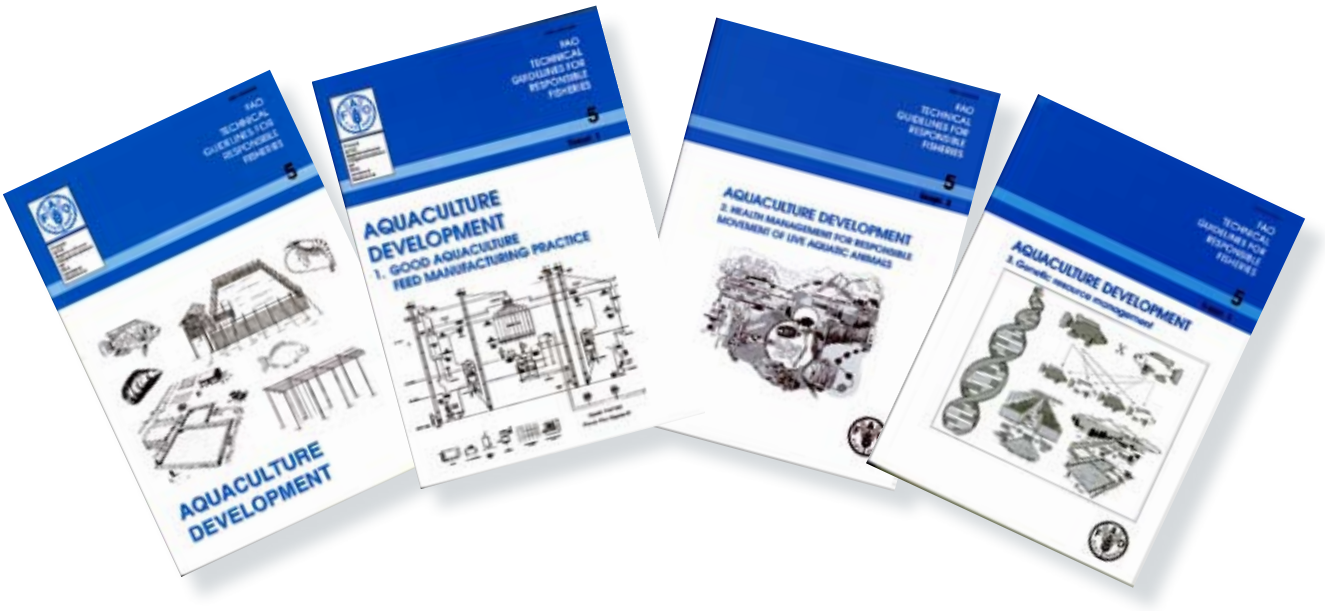
Currently, 3 technical guidelines serving as supplements to FAO's Technical Guidelines for Responsible Fisheries No. 5 have been published. These are: 5.1 – Good Aquaculture Feed Manufacturing Practice; 5.2 – Health Management for Responsible Movement of Live Aquatic Animals; and 5.3 – Genetic Resource Management. Three guidelines are presently in preparation, namely: Use of Wild Fish/Fishery Resources for Capture-based Aquaculture, Ecosystem Approach to Aquaculture and Use of Wild Fish and Other Aquatic Species as Feed in Aquaculture.

CCRF Technical Guidelines No. 5 Suppl. 1 on Good Aquaculture Feed Manufacturing Practice[3] cover issues such as site location and design of manufacturing facilities; selection and purchasing of raw ingredients, including ingredient quality control; receiving ingredients; storage and handling of ingredients and finished goods; feed ingredient processing; feed formulation and manufacturing; packaging and labelling; warehousing and shipping; sampling methods and analysis; recalling defective or mislabelled product; plant cleanliness and worker safety; housekeeping; plant maintenance and repair; personnel; and documentation. The development of the guidelines took into consideration the outputs of the FAO Expert Consultation on Animal Feeding and Food Safety held in Rome, Italy from 10 to 14 March 1997 and an international collaborative effort with information drawn from Asia, Europe, North America, South America and Africa.

CCRF Technical Guidelines No. 5 Suppl. 2 on Health Management for Responsible Movement of Live Aquatic Animals[4] supports responsible fisheries management (Article 7), aquaculture development (Article 9), international trade (Article 11) and fisheries research (Article 12). The objective of these guidelines is to assist countries in reducing the risk of introduction and spread of serious transboundary aquatic animal diseases (TAADs) (both international and domestic

Box 2

1 Fishing Operations (1996)
  1.1 Vessel Monitoring System (1998)
2 Precautionary Approach to Capture Fisheries and Species Introductions (1996)
3 Integration of Fisheries into Coastal Area Management (1996)
4 Fisheries Management (1997)
  4.1 Conservation and Management of Sharks (2001)
  4.2 The Ecosystem Approach to Fisheries (2003)
5 Aquaculture Development (1997)
  5.1 Good Aquaculture Feed Manufacturing Practices (2001)
  5.2 Health Management for Responsible Movement of Live Aquatic Animals (2007)
  5.3 Genetic Resource Management (2008)
6 Inland Fisheries (1997)
  6.1 Rehabilitation of Inland Waters for Fisheries (2008)
7 Responsible Fish Utilization (1998)
8 Indicators for Sustainable Development of Marine Capture Fisheries (1999)
9 Implementation of the Plan of Action to Prevent, Deter and Eliminate Illegal, unreported and Unregulated Fishing (2002)



movements) through aquatic animal health programmes, national strategies on aquatic animal health and biosecurity and the application of precautionary approach. The national strategies consist of the following elements: policy, legislation and enforcement; risk analysis; pathogen lists; information systems; health certification; quarantine; disease surveillance, monitoring and reporting; zoning; emergency preparedness; research; institutional structure; human resources development; and regional and international cooperation. The guidelines also include guidance for farm-level health management and biosecurity programmes covering cluster management, better management practices, compliance with national legislation, certification, on-farm disease prevention, surveillance and reporting of disease outbreaks, emergency preparedness and information sharing and farmer education. The development of the guidelines took into consideration the outputs of the FAO Expert Workshop for the Preparation of the Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries Technical Guidelines on Health Management for Responsible Movement of Live Aquatic Organisms to Reduce the Risk of Spread of Infectious Aquatic Animal Diseases, held from 1 to 4 November 2005 in Dambulla, Sri Lanka. More detailed technical guidance in support of CCRF Technical Guidelines No. 5, Suppl. 2 have also been published[5].

CCRF Technical Guidelines No. 5 Suppl. 3 on Genetic Resource Management[6] provide guidance on broodstock management and domestication, genetic improvement programmes, dissemination programmes for genetically improved fish, economic considerations in genetic improvement programmes, risk assessment and monitoring, culture-based fisheries, conservation of fish genetic resources, gene banks, a precautionary approach and public relations. Twelve experts in the field of genetic resource management contributed to the individual chapters of the guidelines. The guidelines recognized that effective management of genetic resources, risk assessment and monitoring can help promote responsible aquaculture by increasing production output and efficiency and help minimise adverse impacts on the encvironment. The guidelines also emphasized the need to communicate the benefits of the responsible application of genetic principles to aquaculture to consumers, policy-makers, scientists and others interested in responsible fisheries and aquaculture.

[1] FAO. 1995. Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries. Rome, FAO. 41p
[2] FAO. 1997. Aquaculture development. FAO Technical Guidelines for Responsible Fisheries. No. 5. Rome, FAO. 40p..
[3] FAO. 2001. Aquaculture development. 1. Good aquaculture feed manufacturing practice. FAO Technical Guidelines for Responsible Fisheries. No. 5, Suppl. 1. Rome, FAO. 47p.
[4] FAO. 20007. Aquaculture development. 2. Health management for responsible movement of live aquatic animals. FAO Technical Guidelines for Responsible Fisheries. No. 5, Suppl. 2. Rome, FAO. 31p.
[5] Arthur, J.R., Bondad-Reantaso, M.G. & Subasinghe, R.P. 2008. Procedures for the quarantine of live aquatic animals: a manual. FAO Fisheries Technical Paper. No. 502. Rome, FAO. 74p.
[6] FAO. 2008. Aquaculture development. 5. Genetic resource management. FAO Technical Guidelines for Responsible Fisheries. No. 5, Suppl. 3. Rome, FAO. 125p.