

8. WHAT ARE THE ASFA INFORMATION PRODUCTS AND SERVICES?

The **Aquatic Sciences and Fisheries Abstracts (ASFA) Bibliographic Database** is the principal **information product** produced through the cooperative efforts of the international network of **ASFA Partners** (<http://www.fao.org/fishery/asfa/3/en>) and a commercial **ASFA Publishing Partner, ProQuest** (http://www.proquest.co.uk/en-UK/products/brands/pl_csa.shtml).

The ASFA database contains more than 1.3 million bibliographic references (or records) to the world's aquatic science literature accessioned since 1971 (for some journals and/or subject areas the coverage precedes 1971).

The ASFA Database is made available to the ASFA Partners, free of charge, for use as a source of data in local, national or regional information services. It is also made available to the general public via commercial subscription from the ASFA Publisher, ProQuest and from a few other commercial providers. Note, there is also an FAO initiative (see FAQ-9) to provide the ASFA Information products (free of charge) to Low Income Food Deficit Countries (LIFDC).

The ASFA Database is available in the following media and formats:

1. ASFA Printed Abstracts Journals (from 1971)

- **ASFA-1, Biological Sciences and Living Resources** - Covers all aspects of marine, freshwater, and brackish water organisms and environments including: information on biology and ecology of aquatic organisms, exploitation of living resources (fisheries), and related legal, policy, and socio-economic issues. (Monthly: 22,000 references/year).
- **ASFA-2, Ocean Technology, Policy and Non-Living Resources** - Covers physical and chemical oceanography and limnology, marine geophysics, and geochemistry, marine technology, ocean policy and non-living marine resources. (Bimonthly: 9,600 references/year).
- **ASFA-3, Aquatic Pollution and Environmental Quality** - Covers marine, brackish and freshwater pollution and environmental quality. (Bimonthly: 6,600 references/year).

The ASFA printed journals are distributed in limited quantities (as entitlements) to the ASFA Partners. They are also made available to the public on a [subscription](#) basis from the Publishing ASFA Partner, ([ProQuest](#)).

2. ASFA Computer-searchable media and formats (coverage from 1971)

- **ASFA database on CD-ROM/DVD published by ProQuest** - The ASFA Database on CD-ROM and DVD is published quarterly, and in limited quantities for special purposes (e.g. as entitlements to the ASFA Partners). It is not generally available to the public.
- **Databases for local tape load** - Monthly updates to the ASFA Database are distributed on magnetic tape to a number of the ASFA Partners in ISO 2709 format. The tapes are also made available to the public on a subscription basis from the Publishing ASFA Partner ([ProQuest](#)). The database tapes can be loaded on mainframes, mini-computers, UNIX systems, VAX systems and microcomputers using a magnetic tape reader or an IBM cartridge reader.

(FAQ note is by Richard Pepe (richard.pepe@fao.org), updated January 2009)