

FAO Expert Workshop on Regional Aquaculture Review in Central and Eastern Europe

The FAO Inland Water Resources and Aquaculture Service, and the Research Institute for Fisheries, Aquaculture and Irrigation (HAKI), Szarvas, Hungary, as coordination institution of the Network of Aquaculture Centers in Central and Eastern Europe (NACEE) and the Pedigree Fish Breeding Centre – Moscow Branch of the Federal Center of Fish Genetics and Selection, jointly organized the FAO Expert Workshop on the Regional Aquaculture Review in Central and Eastern Europe (CEE). The meeting took place in Astrakhan, Russian Federation, 5-7 September 2005, in conjunction with the Second Meeting of the NACEE Directors, 8-9 September 2005. Both meetings were hosted by BIOS, the Research and Production Center for Sturgeon Breeding who proved to be an excellent host of these events.

The meetings were attended by 50 participants of 16 countries, representatives of research institutes, universities and governments of CEE. Representatives of international organisations such as: European Aquaculture Society (EAS), Network of Aquaculture Centers in Asia-Pacific (NACA) and Eurofish have been invited to attend the meetings and make presentations.

Thirteen country review studies have been presented and discussed. The country reviews have been analysed, summarised and synthesized into a Regional Aquaculture Review. As part of FAO's ongoing global aquaculture review process, this and other regional aquaculture reviews in Africa, Asia, the Americas and Western Europe, will be presented at the FAO-COFI Sub-Committee on Aquaculture to be held in September 2006 in India. A series of common issues, constraints and trends have been identified for CEE during the presentations and the discussions that followed such as: predominance of carp production, low production levels, inefficient farm management and marketing, lack of qualified staff, financial and legal problems. Four major thematic areas were identified and analysed, in the field of: policy framework, legislation and institutional systems; farming systems, species and technologies; processing and marketing (consumers' demand, labelling, certification) and social aspects (food supply, employment, income generation).

Among findings, conclusions and recommendations of the meeting were: the significance of the aquaculture development in CEE has to be recognised and emphasised; governments and other policy makers should be informed about the characteristics, opportunities and need of developing a sustainable aquaculture; aquaculture producers should acknowledge the consumer demands and be aware of the increased market competition with other market commodities; NACEE can play an important role in facilitating the information exchange in aquaculture within the region.

The workshop report will be published in English and Russian and will be made available to governments, and to the Global Aquaculture Review. FAO is currently working on a database of National Aquaculture Sector and Legislation Overviews, to be made available on FAO's aquaculture gateway (<http://www.fao.org/figis/servlet/static?dom=root&xml=aquaculture/index.xml>)

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