

Planning and management for sustainable coastal aquaculture development

FAO has published the above guideline document produced by GESAMP's Expert Group on Environmental Impacts of Coastal Aquaculture. The report is based on a review of literature and experience relating to the integration of aquaculture into coastal area management.

Aquaculture has great potential for the production of food, alleviation of poverty and generation of wealth for people living in coastal areas, many of who are among the poorest in the world. Aquaculture production is growing at more than 10% per year, and this growth is expected to continue. Unfortunately, problems have sometimes been associated with its development. These include: unsuccessful development, where the potential for development is not realised, especially among the poorer sectors of society; the vulnerability of aquaculture to poor water quality and aquatic pollution; and disease, social and environmental impacts.

These problems can only be addressed through better planning and management of the sector - by government, in collaboration with

producer associations or industry organisations. Crucial elements in a more planned approach include:

- improvements in siting, design, technology, and management at the farm level;
- better location and spatial distribution of the sector as a whole;
- better water supply for the sector as a whole;
- better fish health management including disease and stock control at individual farm and sector levels;
- improved communication and information exchange;
- improved access to markets and trade opportunities;
- more equitable distribution of the benefits derived from coastal aquaculture development.

The GESAMP expert group concluded that in most cases, enhanced sectoral approaches (i.e. where the plan specifically takes account of other interests and sectors) or locally focused ICM (e.g. relating to an estuary or lagoon system), are likely to be the most effective approaches to dealing with these problems. More comprehensive ICM should remain a long term objective or ideal.

Guidelines and Tools

Part 1 of these guidelines, designed for policy makers and general planners, presents the basic principles and procedures for using these more integrated planning approaches. It also provides a brief overview of the tools available to facilitate these procedures. Part 2, designed for coastal management and aquaculture development specialists, provides in-depth review of the tools and their application. The document is relevant to both developed and developing countries.

The report has been published by FAO as GESAMP (IMO/FAO/UNESCO-IOC/WMO/WHO/IAEA/UN/UNEP Joint Group of Experts on the Scientific Aspects of Marine Environmental Protection), 2001. Planning and management for sustainable coastal aquaculture development. Rep.Stud.GESAMP, (68): 90 p.

The electronic (PDF) version of this report can be accessed at: <ftp://ftp.fao.org/fi/document/gesamp/Y1818e00.pdf>

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