

State of world aquaculture 2006



Cover photo:

Mandarin fish (*Siniperca* sp.) – Known from time immemorial in China, this fish became extremely popular in the Tang Dynasty (618–907 A.D.) and many poets eulogized about its colour and taste. However, the farming of mandarin fish did not begin until late in the twentieth century. Experimental farming began in the 1950s when wild-caught seeds were used; farmers found that it was an excellent species for culture. Since 1975, the Suzhou Municipal Farm in Jiangsu Province has managed to breed and raise them to 375 g in captivity; the farming of this species under controlled conditions has become more and more popular. Courtesy of Zhou Xiaowei.

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Preparation of this document

Status and trends analysis and reporting on aquaculture are regular activities of the FAO Fisheries Department. These are done by using official reports provided to FAO by its member countries as well as through organizing special activities for soliciting information from countries and opinion from experts. The *State of World Aquaculture 2006* is the result of a most recent such effort by the FAO Fisheries Department.

The process of preparation of this document consisted of many sequential and parallel activities as outlined in Chapter 1 – Introduction. The process was organized by the Inland Water Resources and Aquaculture Service (FIRI) of the FAO Fisheries Department. This document, not only provides a synthesis of seven regional aquaculture development trends reviews (see Chapter 1 – Introduction), but also reflects an analysis of data and the opinion of a large number of experts worldwide.

The FAO Fisheries Department plans to update this document by publishing a supplement once every two years and a full-scale review once every five years.

Abstract

Aquaculture is developing, expanding and intensifying in almost all regions of the world, except in sub-Saharan Africa. Global population demand for aquatic food products is increasing, the production from capture fisheries has levelled off, and most of the main fishing areas have reached their maximum potential. Sustaining fish supplies from capture fisheries will, therefore, not be able to meet the growing global demand for aquatic food. Aquaculture appears to have the potential to make a significant contribution to this increasing demand for aquatic food in most regions of the world; however, in order to achieve this, the sector (and aquafarmers) will face significant challenges. The key development trends indicate that the sector continues to intensify and diversify and is continuing to use new species and modifying its systems and practices. Markets, trade and consumption preferences strongly influence the growth of the sector, with clear demands for production of safe and quality products. As a consequence, increasing emphasis is placed on enhanced enforcement of regulation and better governance of the sector. It is increasingly realized that this cannot be achieved without the participation of the producers in decision-making and regulation process, which has led to efforts to empower farmers and their associations and move towards increasing self-regulation. These factors are all contributing to improve management of the sector, typically through promotion of “better management” practices of producers.

This document analyses the past trends that have led the aquaculture sector to its current status and describes its current status globally.

FAO Fisheries Department.

State of world aquaculture 2006.

FAO Fisheries Technical Paper. No. 500. Rome, FAO. 2006. 134p.

Preface

The FAO Fisheries Department is pleased to present the *State of world aquaculture 2006*.

The national and regional reviews and the resulting global synthesis, which provided the basis for this document, involved many people, including fish farmers, service providers, policy-makers, scientists, researchers and intergovernmental and non-governmental organization (IGO and NGO) workers. This rigorous and iterative review process used has shaped this document. If some key information are lacking or inadequate, it is not a shortcoming on the part of the review process, they are simply unavailable; their absence has, in fact, been pointed out in the regional reviews, as opportunities for future assessments and information development.

While FAO has the ultimate responsibility for this review and indeed directed its development, the process has been widely owned and participated in by organizations, institutions, agencies and groups with a major stake in national, regional and global aquaculture development. This broad collaborative effort is a reflection of another positive trend that recently has characterized aquaculture development: global cooperation. This trend will probably have as much impact on the direction and speed of aquaculture development as the other trends revealed by the review, and alongside with the other desirable ones, it will be fanned and sustained.

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