

A Human Rights-based Approach in Aquaculture for Sustainable Development

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Human Rights-based Approach in Aquaculture

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 - The Trend
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 - Issues
 - Way Forward

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The Facts (Source: SOFIA 2022)

- 112.6 mn tonnes of production in aquaculture
- In most of the traditional aquaculture countries, around 75-80% of aquaculture are small-scale, integrated and household aquaculture.
- 20 mn people are employed in aquaculture (93.5% is in Asia.)
- Lot of workers are part-time and fall under the unspecified category and thereby unaccounted in national statistics.
- 21% of workers in fisheries and aquaculture are women (~12 mn) and about 19% are in aquaculture

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The Trend (Source: SOFIA 2022)

- Overall increase in aquaculture (1990-2020) 609 %
- The major producers will still be the Asian countries namely China, India, Indonesia, Bangladesh, Viet Nam -- 88% of total aquaculture production by 2030
- More often than not, a few “staple” species dominate culture systems as shown below

System	% of top 5 species in total production
Finfish in inland aquaculture	47 (5 species ranging in and around 9-10%)
Finfish in marine and coastal aquaculture	57 (33% by <i>Salmo salar</i>)
Crustaceans	89.6 (52% by <i>P vannamei</i>)
Molluscs	76 (31% by <i>Crassostrea spp.</i>)

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The Trend (Source: SOFIA 2022; Green Peace 2019)..... continued

- Increasing trend in culture of fastgrowing, fed species. –
 - increased dependence on fish meal and fish oil (offtake of total Fish meal and fishoil produced by aquaculture increased from 10% to 86 % and ~18% to 73% from 1980 to 2020)
- There is an increased focus on aquaculture development throughout the traditional aquaculture nations as well as new players as the sector to go to especially with respect to employment, food security etc,
- Aquaculture is seeing both vertical and horizontal intensification

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The Impacts

Impacts of Aquaculture on environment

- Land use changes – agriculture to aquaculture; coastal spaces into
- Water Mining
- Farm Effluents
- Loss of biodiversity – due to altered environment and ecology, eradication of indigenous species to favour growth of cultured species – leading to change in food culture

Impacts of Aquaculture on Property Regimes

- Common property resources-- inaccessible to common purposes;
- Leasing policy becoming competitive than protective edging out the small players;
- Change in ownerships-->loss of land-->owners converted to landless labourers;
- namesake ownership since operational rights goes to the wealthy class;
- People earlier gainfully employed are rendered jobless – even leading to change in their status in the community

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Issues

- **Lack of proper policies and legislations in place** – leading to Illegal, Unregulated and unaccounted farms
- **Lack of monitoring** –flouting of environmental and social safeguards even in registered legal farms
- **Employment statistics** remains a gross under estimate – when this is absent any focus on human-rights based issues is difficult. This emphasise the need for more field-based studies that would beef up the demand for aquaculture development based on a human-rights based framework
- **Aquaculture sector is production oriented**

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Way Forward

- promote small-scale aquaculture, wherever possible
- Condemn the proliferation of large-scale intensive aquaculture
- Ensure proper policies and legislations to protect the interest of the local communities.
- Encourage enhanced monitoring and control to avoid indiscriminate intensification of aquaculture that leads to environmental externalities
- Encourage indigenous species for culture as well as a multitrophic approach rather than a single species approach
- Ensure that proper statistics of aquaculture workers are arrived at.