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Title: The Challenge of Transforming Aquaculture in Africa: Bridging from Theory to Practical Solutions

Short title: Transforming African Aquaculture

- ORGANIZERS: FAO, African Union (AUDA-NEPAD), ANAF, and WB
- Date: November 21, 2024
- AFRAQ Dates: November 20-22, 2024 (link: <https://www.was.org/meeting/code/AFRAQ24>)
- Duration: Full day Workshop (9:00h – 18:00h, following the conference schedule)

DRAFT Concept Note

Introduction

The global aquaculture industry is growing rapidly, contributing significantly to food security, employment, and economic development. However, challenges persist in the development of the sector, particularly in Least Developed Countries (LDCs), hindering sustainable growth. These challenges include inadequate infrastructure, limited access to inputs and credit, technical and managerial capacity constraints, limited specific regulatory frameworks and policies, weak value chain development, and climate change impacts. Addressing these challenges requires substantial human, technical and financial resources, with public and private investments playing a crucial role.

FAO, in partnership with the World Bank Group and the Aquaculture Network for Africa (ANAF) successfully organized a Special Day at WAS-AC AFRAQ-2023 in Zambia in November 2023. Building on the outcomes of that event and strengthening the partnership by joining hands with the African Union (AUDA-NEPAD) and collaborating with key regional aquaculture partners, a follow-up Special Day is being organized at AFRAQ-2024 in Tunisia to enhance understanding of relevant initiatives being developed and implemented by organizations including FAO, ANAF, AUDA-NEPAD, WB among other partners to unlock aquaculture potential in the region. The Special Day will build on the discussion and recommendations provided during the previous Special Day conducted in Zambia, and will be structured round three major themes: (1) Guidelines, frameworks and toolkits for sustainable aquaculture development and viable aquaculture investments; (2) Knowledge sharing and dissemination in the African context; and (3) Technical innovations including management of genetic resources, feed production, integrated aquaculture, among other topics.

Meeting the expectations of sustainable growth of the aquaculture sector in the region in terms of volume and quality for the domestic, regional and global markets, is a task that requires coherent planning adapted to the regional context, as well as the establishment of strategic and long-lasting collaborations between public and private sector actors.

Learning from how other regions have evolved and learned from their lessons along the path of the sector's development is also key to avoiding frustrations for producers, investors and governments. The natural resources for aquaculture production exist in the region, the workforce is clearly present, but the other pieces of the puzzle for sustainable production, such as availability of farm inputs, technology, knowledge, investment and regulatory frameworks, must also be present and adapted to the regional context.

The Special Day will inform participants about activities, projects, initiatives and analytical work undertaken by different organizations and serve as a platform to foster dialogue among participants to facilitate brainstorming and experience sharing on challenges and strategies for enhancing investments in aquaculture in Africa.

Target audience

Public sector (e.g., government officers, public organizations, among others), private sector (e.g., farmers, processors, exporters, feed companies, among others), investors, researchers, academia, development partners, and other African aquaculture stakeholders are the priority audience for this workshop; stakeholders and AFRAQ 2024 conference participants working on other sectors related directly or indirectly to aquaculture, and from other regions will also be welcome.

Objective

Highlight initiatives undertaken by organizations such as FAO, African Union, ANAF, WB, and other regional partners to promote innovation and address challenges and gaps hindering sustainable African aquaculture development in Africa. The event aims to provide a platform for brainstorming and experience sharing on feasible and viable strategies to transform these challenges into opportunities. The event will be divided into three technical sessions covering key topics in relation to governance, knowledge dissemination and sharing, and technology innovations.

Expected outputs

- Special Day Report summarizing key findings from each session and recommendations from the audience.
- List of follow-up actions on regionally relevant themes and topics to be prepared for a next session of the Special Day to be organized at the WAS-Africa Conference 2025.
- Media brief on the key take-aways from the event.

Agenda:

Time	Topic	Presenter
09:00h – 09:20h	Opening remarks Welcoming of participants	FAO, WB, African Union and other organizations.
<p>Session 1: Guiding Principles and African Priorities for Sustainable Aquaculture Development (9:20h – 12:40h). Format of the session: Presentations followed by an Open Discussion (Q&A).</p>		
09:20h – 09:50h	Guidelines for Sustainable Aquaculture (GSA): overview and call for action.	FAO
	Aquaculture seeds and feed: regional challenges and opportunities	
	Guide for Enhancing Private Investment in Aquaculture: overview and scope	
09:50h – 10:10h	Global Aquabusiness Investment Guide: overview, adoption, and dissemination.	WB
10:10h – 10:20h	Principles of Responsible Investment in Aquaculture	GFCM
10:20h – 10:35h	Coffee break	All participants
10:35h – 11:20h	OPEN DISCUSSION – Q&A SESSION	All participants Moderator: TBD
11:20h – 11:40h	Strategic plans in support of aquaculture development in Africa and implementation of the Blue Transformation Roadmap. A tool for planning and resources mobilization.	FAO
11:40h – 11:50h	Africa's framework for Aquaculture Development and investment priorities for the revised Continental African Agriculture Development Program Agenda	AUDA-NEPAD
11:50h – 12:00h	Priorities of the ANAF Strategic Plan in support of aquaculture development in Africa and alignment with the Blue Transformation Roadmap.	ANAF Representative / Secretariat
12:00h – 12:40h	OPEN DISCUSSION – Q&A SESSION For discussion: use the first session on Guiding principles with special focus on Investment + the Strategic plan to consolidate main priorities, objectives and expected results to build an aquaculture programme for Africa ready for resource mobilization	All participants Moderator: TBD
12:40h – 14.00h	Lunch Break	All participants
<p>Session 2: Partnerships, Knowledge sharing and dissemination (14:00h – 15:40h). Format of the session: Presentations followed by an Expert Panel.</p>		
14:00h – 14:10h	Lesotho Success Case Study: Customized technology and knowledge transfer.	ADVANCE AFRICA
14:10h – 14:20h	The role of Regional Aquaculture Networks and Partnerships: learning from Asia and NACA	FUTUREFISH and NACA

14:20h – 14:30h	Partnerships for knowledge sharing to promote finance and investment for aquaculture development in Africa.	AUDA-NEPAD and WAS-AC
14:30h – 14:40h	World Bank Tool for Aquabusiness Suitability Assessments: spatial planning, carrying capacity and market analysis.	WB and LONGLINE
14:40h – 14:50h	Challenges of commercializing aquaculture and the importance of training and mentorship. A good story from East Africa	ACMS and Gatsby
14:50h – 15:40h	<i>Moderated Discussion Panel Panelists: TBD</i>	<i>Beneficiaries and partners from shared examples/case studies Moderators: TBD</i>
15:40h – 16:00h	Coffee break	All participants
Session 3: Adapting aquaculture technologies to the African context (16:00h- 18.00h). Format of the session: presentations followed by working groups		
16:00h – 16:10h	Integration and Restoration in Aquaculture: Promotion of ecosystem services provision from aquaculture to attract investments in Africa.	WB
16:10h – 16:20h	Aquaculture in arid zones: what are the options for aquaculture towards feeding a growing population and generate income in vulnerable subregions?	GFCM and FAO
16:20h – 17:30h	Working Group discussion: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Prioritization of technical challenges - Finance, Investment & Partnership opportunities 	All participants Moderators: TBD
17:30h – 17:50h	<i>Presentation of key findings from Working Groups to the plenary</i>	<i>All participants. Moderators: TBD</i>
17:50h – 18:00h	Wrap up and Closing remarks	FAO, WB and other organizations