



## World Aquaculture 2026 TANZANIA/AFRAQ26 2-4 December 2026, Dar Es Salaam

### SPECIAL SESSION

## FROM POTENTIAL TO TRANSFORMATION:

*Shaping the Next Decade of African Aquaculture*



**Session Chair:** Prof. Maryam EL BAKALI, WAS Regional Director-North Africa and President of the RAISEAqua foundation

**Venue:** Julius Nyerere International Convention Centre (JNICC)

**Date and Duration:** 3,5 hours

**Target audience:** Development partners and practitioners, aquaculture education institutions, training service providers, public sector representatives, policy makers, industry and aquaculture stakeholders.

### **Session Concept**

African aquaculture is at a moment when we need to look beyond where we are today and ask where we want to be in the next ten years. The continent has the resources, the people, the markets and the knowledge to build a much stronger aquaculture sector. Across Africa, there are already inspiring examples of farmers, scientists, entrepreneurs, investors and institutions creating new opportunities. But we also know that the sector continues to face important constraints, particularly the cost and availability of feed, access

to investment, climate and resource pressures, limited adoption of innovation, and the gap between research and what can be successfully implemented at farm and business level. At the same time, the aquaculture sector is changing rapidly. Digital technologies, artificial intelligence, new feed ingredients, alternative production systems and new business models are creating opportunities that were not available a decade ago.

**So, what should African aquaculture look like in 2035, and what do we need to change today to get there?**

The session will bring together perspectives from across North, East, West, Central and Southern Africa, creating a conversation that goes beyond regional boundaries and individual disciplines. It will bring together producers, researchers, industry leaders, investors, policymakers, entrepreneurs, development partners, women leaders and young professionals to exchange experiences, challenge ideas and consider what African aquaculture should look like over the next decade.

The discussion will focus on some of the choices that will shape the next decade. What will the farm of the future look like? Which technologies and innovations will genuinely make a difference to African producers? How will alternative production systems such as Integrated Multi-Trophic Aquaculture (IMTA) and aquaponics, and new business models reshape the sector? And, perhaps most importantly, which of these innovations are genuinely scalable in Africa, and what will it take to move from promising ideas and pilot projects to solutions that farmers and businesses can adopt?

The conversation will also look at the new aquaculture economy-investment, entrepreneurship, markets, value creation and partnerships between the public and private sectors.

Human capability development will be an important part of the discussion. Africa's aquaculture sector cannot transform through technology and investment alone. The sector needs people with the skills, knowledge and entrepreneurial capacity to adopt new technologies, manage modern production systems, develop competitive businesses and respond to a rapidly changing industry. With a

growing number of young people entering the workforce, preparing the next generation to be competitive in modern aquaculture, including digital technologies and new production approaches, will be an important part of Africa's blue economy development. The session will therefore explore what needs to change in education, training, skills development and knowledge transfer to ensure that Africa has the human capacity needed to build the aquaculture sector of the future.

And no discussion about the future of African aquaculture would be complete without asking who will lead it. Women are already playing important roles across farming, research, entrepreneurship, investment, technology and sector development. The session will provide an opportunity for women leaders to share their experiences, perspectives and lessons learned, and to discuss what needs to change to create greater opportunities for women to lead businesses, research, innovation and sector development. Young professionals will also be invited to share their perspectives on the future of the sector and the opportunities they see for the next generation of African aquaculture leaders.

The outcomes will be captured in a short post-event article bringing together the key messages and perspectives shared by the invited speakers, the main points raised by participants and the recommendations emerging from the discussion. The article will acknowledge the sponsors and the contributing speakers and their respective contributions. Subject to WAS editorial approval, it will be proposed for publication on the World Aquaculture Society website, giving the discussion a life beyond World Aquaculture Tanzania 2026 and sharing its conclusions with the wider African and international aquaculture community.

**World Aquaculture 2026 Tanzania/AFRAQ26, 2-4 December 2026, Dar Es Salaam**  
**Under the theme “Aquaculture Driving Blue Transformation**

**Session format:** The session will feature a keynote perspective, thematic presentations and short experience-sharing contributions, followed by an interactive panel discussion. The session will bring together voices from across Africa and different parts of the aquaculture sector to share experiences, lessons learned and practical perspectives on what it will take to transform African aquaculture over the next decade..

| TIME         | SESSION                                                                                                    |
|--------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 09:00–09:10  | WELCOME & OPENING SESSION                                                                                  |
| 09:10–09:50  | Keynote : AFRICAN AQUACULTURE TODAY AND TOWARD 2035: FROM POTENTIAL TO TRANSFORMATION                      |
| 09:50–10:10  | Speaker 1: THE FARM OF THE FUTURE: INNOVATION, TECHNOLOGY AND NEW PRODUCTION SYSTEMS                       |
| 10:10-10-30  | Speaker 2: BUILDING THE NEW AQUACULTURE ECONOMY: INVESTMENT, MARKETS & PARTNERSHIPS                        |
| 10:30–10:45  | TEA BREAK                                                                                                  |
| 10:45–11:05  | Speaker 3: BUILDING THE HUMAN CAPACITY FOR AFRICAN AQUACULTURE 2035: SKILLS, YOUTH & WOMEN                 |
| 11:05–11:30  | 5-minute experience-sharing: WOMEN, YOUTH, ENTREPRENEURS, INDUSTRY, RESEARCHERS                            |
| 11:30–12:30  | Interactive panel : FROM POTENTIAL TO TRANSFORMATION, WHAT WILL IT TAKE TO BUILD AFRICAN AQUACULTURE 2035? |
| 12:30 –12:40 | CLOSING                                                                                                    |

To learn more, and for further information, please contact:

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*World Aquaculture Tanzania 2026 (WA26T), which is the 5th Annual International Conference and Exposition of World Aquaculture Society and African Chapter of the World Aquaculture Society (AFRAQ2026) is being hosted by the Government of the Republic of Tanzania. The event will take place in Dar es Salaam, TANZANIA, from December 1-4, 2026, at the Julius Nyerere International Convention Centre (JNICC) - a world class conference and exhibition facility in Tanzania. Since 2022, the WAS has successfully hosted the Annual Aquaculture Africa Conferences (AFRAQs) in Egypt (2022), Zambia (2023), Tunisia (2024) and recently Aquaculture Safari, Uganda (2025). AFRAQs typically attract a diverse group of participants from nearly 100 countries - ranging from aquaculture professionals, producers, researchers, policymakers, industry representatives, development partners, students and various other stakeholders. Nearly 2000 participants are expected at WA26T. The event will feature prominent plenary speakers, cutting-edge research presentations, an exhibition showcasing innovations in the aquaculture sector and much more. Attendees will have the opportunity to network, share knowledge, and collaborate on addressing key challenges and opportunities facing both African landscape and the global aquaculture industry. More information available on <https://was.org/meeting/code/AFRAQ26>.*

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