

WA26T KEYNOTE SPEAKER AND ABSTRACT



BIOGRAPHY

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Member of the African Fisheries Reform Mechanism Advisory Council.

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Peter Britz is an aquaculture and fisheries specialist and has made extensive contributions to aquaculture research and development, governance, policy and sector planning in Africa. He played a key role in the development of the South African abalone farming industry and restoration of abalone fisheries by means of stock enhancement. He was awarded the International Abalone Society medal for 'Outstanding Contributions to Research'. Other research interests include aquaculture and fishery governance and policy, value chain development and the human dimension of development. He provides regular advice on aquaculture and fisheries sector development and policy to industry, government, and development agencies. His recent roles include: - leading fisheries and aquaculture policy research for the African Union through the Rhodes University African Union Centre of Excellence in Fisheries and Aquaculture, serving as the Senior Technical Advisor to the FAO FISH4ACP catfish value chain programme in Nigeria, and program manager of the WAS Africa Chapter AFRAQ conferences.

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Why African Aquaculture Development Needs to Shift from a Technology Transfer Focus to a Value Chain Development Approach

The aquaculture sector in Africa is transitioning into a modern industry, growing from largely small-scale, low-input/low-output production systems, to intensive commercial operations based on nutritionally complete feeds within a globalized value chain. This transformation is essential for increasing production volumes to meet the increasing demand for fish in Africa, creating economic opportunity and building a globally competitive aquaculture industry in Africa. The development approach for the African aquaculture sector has traditionally focused on technology transfer and the training of small farmers; but has tended to overlook the human development needs of the participants as value chain actors. This oversight has led to many poor outcomes because the uptake and application of aquaculture technology into profitable enterprises has tended to be low. A contributing factor is that strongly pre-framed aquaculture development programmes which advocate the introduction of technologies such as 'in-pond raceways', 'integrated multi-trophic aquaculture' and 'climate-smart aquaculture', often fail to 'meet the farmers where they are at', and to systematically address their context, capacity needs and aspirations;- foremost of which is to be empowered to build competitive and profitable farming enterprises. These experiences point to the need for a 'human development' approach which defines aquaculture development primarily in

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terms of the expanded human capabilities required for farmers to realize their aspirations and opportunities within the value chain. Central to achieving this is an adult education approach which equips farmers with modern, data-led production and business management skills. This should be complemented by strategies that build value chain institutions and services (e.g. access to credit) that make the farmers more competitive. Aquaculture value chain strengthening strategies and their outcomes should thus be grounded in appropriate human development and institutional strengthening strategies.

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