SPECIAL SESSION

Scaling Sustainable Aquafeeds in Africa: Bridging the Raw Material Gap

Insights from FASA* project, funded by Norway, on harnessing local ingredients and digital tools to meet the need for cost-effective, sustainable aquafeeds to grow Africa's aquaculture sector.

Conference: World Aquaculture 2026 (AFRAQ26), Dar es Salaam, December 1–4

Session Chair: Matthew Owen, Aquatic Animal Feeds & Nutrition Lead, WorldFish

Background

Aquafeed is the largest single cost in aquaculture production and the primary determinant of farm-level profitability, making feed affordability a binding constraint on sector growth, particularly for smallholder farmers. Many smallholder farmers and feed millers are the most exposed to rising costs of imported ingredients (fishmeal, soybean meal) amid growing regional demand for affordable animal protein.

The FASA project, led by WorldFish and funded by NORAD (2022–2027), has sought to addresses this through research into locally available raw materials as substitutes for conventional feed ingredients, implemented across three countries in collaboration with our partners: Nigeria (CORAF), Zambia (WorldFish), and Kenya (icipe) to validate findings across different species, systems, and ingredient profiles.

What the Session Offers

The session will present FASA's scientific work to date, including nutrient requirement studies, nutritional profiling of local raw materials, ingredient digestibility trials in tilapia, and processing methods to improve ingredient quality. It will also demonstrate the digital tools built from these findings to support feed formulation and uptake at the farm and mill level.

Following FASA's presentations on its outcomes, the session's proposed roundtable discussion will invite attendees to explore the further research and development needed to close the feed ingredient gap and make sustainable, cost-effective feeds more accessible to small-scale producers. Feed millers, farmers, industry representatives, ingredient manufacturers, government representatives and development practitioners will have the opportunity to shape the next phase of aquafeed research and partnerships needed to meet Africa's rising aquatic foods demand and to support the continent's aspirations for a thriving aquaculture sector.

Agenda Outline

Duration: 4 hours

1. **Project Insights** *(~2 hours)*

Presentations sharing challenges, approaches, and outcomes from FASA's journey across Nigeria, Zambia and Kenya, from identifying and assessing locally available feed ingredients to improving their nutritional value, digestibility and processing for scalable sustainable aquafeed solutions.

2. **Digital Tools Demonstration** *(30 minutes)*

   A focus on the digital applications being built as part of FASA and their scaling within the target countries, including a hands-on demonstration of the project's digital tools, gathering valuable feedback to ensure the tools meet the needs of millers and farmers.

3. **Roundtable Discussion** *(1 hour)*

   A discussion on the practical steps needed to support aquaculture innovation in sub-Saharan Africa, how the raw material needs for aquaculture expansion in the region might be met, and what further research and development is required.

4. **Audience Q&A and Closing** *(15 minutes)*

   Moderated audience Q&A and closing remarks from the session chair.

Why Attend

- Discover new research findings and digital tools for evidence-based, practical solutions to improve feed formulation, cost, quality and performance.
- Share farmers' and industry perspectives on the challenges and opportunities for affordable aquafeed in Africa.
- Shape future R&D priorities to address critical raw material and feed innovation gaps.
- Connect with farmers, millers, producers, researchers, agri-tech and digital entrepreneurs, government representatives and development partners working to scale African aquaculture.

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* FASA: Development and Scaling of Sustainable Feeds for Resilient Aquatic Food Systems in Sub-Saharan Africa