

BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS*

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* See: www.fao.org/fi/fishcode.htm=>Components=>Research support



Photo by M.O. Ibeun

Further information:

Aquatic Commons

Jean.Collins@fao.org

Eric.Reynolds@fao.org

FishCode Programme

FishCode@fao.org

<http://www.fao.org/fi/FishCode.htm>

FishCode, FAO's Programme of Global Partnerships for Responsible Fisheries, is a multidonor Trust Fund umbrella facility to promote implementation of the Code of Conduct and its related instruments

Donor partner contributions are invited through the FishCode Trust

Fisheries and Aquaculture Department
Food and Agriculture Organization
of the United Nations
Viale delle Terme di Caracalla
00153, Rome, Italy
www.fao.org

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FAO FishCode AQUATIC COMMONS

Improving information for responsible fisheries and aquaculture



Photo by S. Sugiyama

AQUATIC COMMONS:
<http://aquacomm.fcla.edu>

AVANO:
<http://www.ifremer.fr/avano/>



AQUATIC COMMONS – THE ISSUES

- Valuable traditional knowledge, local scientific information and government reports exist throughout the developing world, but are unavailable to most users.
- It is estimated that 80% of scientific knowledge is not documented, but resides in the “heads and files” of scientists and other experts.
- Local scientists, resource managers and other stakeholders have limited means to express their findings, ideas and other knowledge, or to disseminate their information.
- Information technology (IT) advances are making a tremendous amount of information in many digital formats more widely available.
- These advances could sharpen the “digital divide” if efforts are not made to include specific mechanisms to ensure coverage of local and traditional knowledge.
- Such an inclusion would empower local scientists, resource managers and others.
- The “**Aquatic Commons**” can provide part of the solution.



Photo by M.O. Ibeun

PROMOTING THE AQUATIC COMMONS – FISHCODE

FishCode was established by FAO as a programme of global partnerships to promote application of the 1995 Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries and related international fisheries instruments.

The Aquatic Commons (AC) Project is one of several Programme initiatives to improve information in support of Code of Conduct implementation.

The AC Project aims to:

- improve access to fisheries and aquaculture management information;
- ensure equal participation by developing countries in global information mainstreaming;
- share knowledge and lessons learned;
- empower managers and resource users to publish their findings;
- link major databases such as Aquatic Sciences and Fisheries Abstracts (ASFA) and Aquatic Biology, Aquaculture and Fisheries Resources (ABAFR) to full text resources;
- provide free and open access to information for all;
- enable the use and validation of research results and avoid costly and wasteful duplication of effort;
- ensure the preservation of information and its availability for future generations.

The AC Project further seeks to overcome the constraints that:

- limit the ability of stakeholders at local level to obtain the information they need; and
- hinder officials and stakeholders in making informed decisions about options and approaches to implement the Code.



AQUATIC COMMONS – THE BASICS

The Aquatic Commons repository was established by the International Association of Aquatic and Marine Science Libraries and Information Centers (IAMS LIC) in 2006. It is intended to facilitate the exchange of scientific research related to the marine/aquatic environments by providing a searchable, Web-accessible repository for digital documents. Initially, it will seek to build content based on born digital and legacy documents in PDF format that have been produced under the auspices of IAMS LIC member organizations or partnered agencies. It is specifically mandated to offer repository services where local, stable IT support is lacking. Future development will explore the serving of additional formats and alphabets. The Aquatic Commons is intended to complement institutional repositories and to collaborate with related subject repositories particularly in developing countries, such as the OceanDocs program of the Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission.

A long-term goal will be to assist in providing access to legacy collections that have never been easily accessible to researchers and to provide access to the “grey literature” produced as the technical series of smaller research units in universities and governmental and non-governmental agencies.

The repository runs on the EPrints open access software created at the University of Southampton and is managed by contract with the Florida Center for Library Automation, Gainesville, Florida. The repository is managed for IAMS LIC by an Aquatic Commons Board appointed by the IAMS LIC Executive Board.

Further information:

<http://www.iamslic.org/index.php?section=147>