Aquaculture Certification: A Programme for implementing the recommendation of the Committee on Fisheries Sub-Committee on Aquaculture

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Introduction

Global production from aquaculture has grown substantially, contributing increasingly significant quantities to the world's supply of fish for human consumption. This increasing trend is projected to continue in forthcoming decades. It is envisioned that the sector will contribute more effectively to food security, poverty reduction and economic development by producing - with minimum impact on the environment and maximum benefit to society - 83 million tonnes of aquatic food by 2030, an increase of 37.5 million tonnes over the 2004 level[1].

Aquaculture has an important role to play in global efforts to eliminate hunger and malnutrition through supplying fish and other aquatic products rich in protein, essential fatty acids, vitamins and minerals. Aquaculture can also make significant contributions to poverty reduction by improving incomes, providing employment opportunities and increasing returns on resource use. With appropriate management, the sector appears ready to meet the demand gap for aquatic food (fish) for the coming decades, a consequence of the increasing global population and stagnant capture fishery production. The main challenge for policy makers and development agents is to create an "enabling environment" to support the expansion needed to meet this potential. This enabling environment is multi-faceted and requires significant political will, policy support and investment. The failure to provide this environment may result in the inability for the fisheries sector to provide the supply of aquatic food required to even maintain current levels of consumption.

The increasing recognition by governments to implement aquaculture programs based on sound policies, the growth in population and increasing purchasing power of people, the opening of new markets facilitated by trade liberalization, and the technological advances bring greater opportunities for further development of the sector. On the other hand, the stagnating level of capture fisheries, the need to further strengthen capacities of institutions and other stakeholders, the increasing consumer demand for diversified, safe and quality aquatic products, the scarcity of land and water resources, and the need to support small-scale farmers pose major challenges to the sector.

Aquaculture Certification

Driven by concerns that some forms of aquaculture (mainly shrimp and salmon) are environmentally unsustainable, socially inequitable, and that products are not safe for consumers, over the years there have been attempts to respond to the consequent public perceptions and market requirements. Food safety standards have been elevated and international trade regulations tightened. Policy and regulations governing environmental sustainability have been put in place in many countries, requiring aquaculture producers to comply with more stringent environmental mitigation and protection measures. In some countries these changes were initiated by the aquaculture sector itself, usually within the more organized private industry sector to ensure its sustainability and protect operations from poorly managed activities. The private sector has made significant advances in the management of its activities and there are many examples of improved management of farming systems that have reduced environmental impacts and improved efficiency, including profitability, in all regions.

[1] State of World Aquaculture:2006. *Fisheries Technical Paper No. 500.* Rome FAO. 2006 134p.

Owing to the need for responding to these environmental and consumer concerns on aquaculture production and in order to secure better market access, there is increasing interest in certification of aquaculture production systems, practices, processes and products from aquaculture. For example, recent legislation in both Europe and the US require mandatory certification to identify whether aquatic products are produced from aquaculture or wild caught. These markets increasingly recognize that some form of certification is a way of assuring buyers, retailers, and consumers that fishery products are safe to consume and originate from aquaculture farms or capture fisheries adopting responsible management practices. Certification has been introduced to capture fisheries for some time. Guidelines for eco-labelling of capture fishery products have been developed by FAO in 2005[2] and efforts are being made to develop eco-labelling guidelines for inland fisheries[3]. There is a need for harmonization of fish quality and safety standards within aquaculture, implying increased development and wider use of internationally agreed, scientifically-based standards is necessary.

The principles of achieving harmonization of standards and equivalency in food control systems and the use of scientifically-based standards are embodied in two binding agreements of the World Trade Organization (WTO): the Agreement on the application of sanitary and phytosanitary (SPS) measures and the Agreement on technical barriers to trade (TBT). The SPS agreement confirms the right of WTO member countries to apply measures necessary to protect human, animal and plant life and health. The objective of the TBT Agreement is to prevent the use of national or regional technical requirements, or standards in general, as unjustified technical barriers to trade. The agreement covers standards relating to all types of products including industrial products and quality requirements for foods (except requirements related to SPS measures).

An important aspect of certification is food quality and safety. FAO's normative work in food safety and quality is focused on food standards linked to the *Codex Alimentarius* and developed in close collaboration with the World Health Organization (WHO), and related capacity-building. *Codex Alimentarius* includes standards for all principal foods (whether processed, semi-processed or raw) for distribution to the consumer, with provisions related to food hygiene, food additives, pesticide residues, contaminants, labelling, presentation, methods of analysis and sampling. The Codex Secretariat, housed in the FAO Food and Nutrition Division (ESN), has primary responsibility for normative work on food safety.

In several countries, aquaculture producers are introducing environmental certification of aquaculture products, either individually or in a coordinated manner, in order to credibly demonstrate that their production practices are non-polluting, non-disease transmitting and/or non-ecologically threatening[4,5]. Some countries are attempting to introduce state-mediated certification procedures to certify that aquaculture products are safe to consume and farmed in accordance with certain environmental standards[6]. Most of the work done on improved management has been on salmon and shrimp, mainly due to their high commodity value, cost absorption capacity and the importance attached as the most internationally traded products.

[2] FAO. Guidelines for Ecolabelling of Fish and Fishery Products from Marine Capture Fisheries. Rome., FAO. 2005. 90p.
[3] Expert Consultation - Guidelines on Ecolabelling of Fish and Fishery Products from Inland Fisheries
Rome, Italy. 23 May 2006- 26 May 2006
[4] ABCC. 2004. "Código de conduta para desenvolvimento sustentável e responsável da carcinicultura brasileira". ABCC - Association of shrimp growers of Brazil.
[5] The state of world aquaculture 2006. FAO Fisheries Technical Paper. No. 500. Rome, FAO. 2006. 134p
[6] FAO: TCP/CHI/3002 Certification of the compliance of the environmental regulations by the aquaculture industry in Chile.

International Principles on Responsible Shrimp Farming

Shrimp farming has been one of the fastest growing aquaculture sectors in Asia and Latin America, and recently Africa, but also one of the most controversial. Rapid expansion of shrimp farming has generated substantial income for many developing countries, as well as developed countries, but has been accompanied by rising concerns over environmental and social impacts of development. Major issues raised include the ecological consequences of conversion of natural ecosystems, particularly mangroves, for construction of shrimp ponds, the effects such as salination of groundwater and agricultural land, use of fish meal in shrimp diets, pollution of coastal waters due to pond effluents, biodiversity issues arising from collection of wild brood and seed, and social conflicts in some coastal areas. The sustainability of shrimp aquaculture has been questioned by some in view of self-pollution in shrimp growing areas, combined with the introduction of pathogens, leading to major shrimp disease outbreaks, and significant economic losses in producing countries.

Due to the strong global interest in shrimp farming and the issues that have arisen from its development, a Consortium Program involving the World Bank, the Network of Aquaculture Centres in Asia-Pacific (NACA), the World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF), and the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) was initiated in 1999 to analyze and share experiences on the environmental and social impacts, and management of sustainable shrimp farming. The development of the work program for the Consortium benefited from recommendations of the FAO Bangkok Technical Consultation on Policies for Sustainable Shrimp Culture (FAO, 1998), a World Bank review on Shrimp Farming and the Environment (World Bank, 1998) and an April 1999 meeting on shrimp aquaculture management practices hosted by NACA and WWF in Bangkok, Thailand. The FAO Expert Consultation on Good Management Practices and Good Legal and Institutional Arrangements for Sustainable Shrimp Culture held in Brisbane, Australia in December 2000[7] provided further guidance to the Consortium process.

The FAO Committee on Fisheries Sub-Committee on Aquaculture in its second session held in Trondheim, Norway in 2003 agreed that a set of "core" management principles should be developed to support sustainable development of aquaculture, with a priority to shrimp farming requiring improved management[8]. The Consortium was requested to undertake this responsibility. During this meeting the Global Programme of Action for the Protection of the Marine Environment from Land-based Activities of the United Nations Environmental Programme (UNEP/GPA) expressed its interest to join this initiative and subsequently the Consortium formalized the partnership through signing a collaborative agreement with UNEP/GPA. This recommendation and partnership provided the basis for development of an internationally accepted set of principles for wide adoption.

The *International Principles for Responsible Shrimp Farming*[9] were widely distributed for comment and inputs and made available for public comment through the internet since early

[7] FAO/Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry Australia. Report of the FAO/Government of Australia Expert Consultation on Good Management Practices and Good Legal and Institutional Arrangements for Sustainable Shrimp Culture. Brisbane, Australia, 4-7 December 2000. *FAO Fisheries Report*. No. 659. Rome, FAO. 2001. 77p.
[8] Committee on Fisheries. Report of the second session of the Sub-Committee on Aquaculture. Trondheim, Norway, 7-11 August 2003. *FAO Fisheries Report*. No. 716. Rome, FAO. 2003. 91p.
[9] FAO/NACA/UNEP/WB/WWF. 2006. International Principles for Reponsible Shrimp Farming. NACA Bangkok, Thailand. 20p.

2005[10]. The 10th Governing Council of NACA at its 17th meeting in February 2006 reviewed and endorsed the *International Principles* which were presented to the Sub-Committee during its third session held in New Delhi, India, in September 2006. The purpose of these *International Principles* is to provide principles for management of shrimp aquaculture that provide guidance in implementation of the FAO Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries in the shrimp aquaculture sector.

The *International Principles* consider the technical, environmental, social and economic issues associated with shrimp farming and provide a basis for industry and government management to improve the overall sustainability of shrimp farming at national, regional and global levels. Each principle contains a justification, and some suggested specific criteria to support their implementation. The criteria may be used by States and the private sector for development of more specific Codes of Practice or management practices for shrimp farming adapted to local farming conditions, and social, economic and environmental contexts. These codes and management practices could also be used to develop standards. A certification system to assess compliance to the standards and to certify compliant farms may also be developed by the public sector or by other appropriate stakeholders or partners.

The *International Principles* provide the basis for stakeholders to collaborate for a more sustainable development of shrimp farming. For governments, they provide a basis for policy, administration and legal frameworks that can be renewed (or formulated where there are none), adjusted, funded and implemented to address the specific characteristics and needs of the sector in order to protect and enhance the industry, the environment, other resource users and consumers. Typically, existing legislation and guidelines have been modified from those developed for other industries and may need improvement to address all the key aspects of aquaculture management. Strengthening of institutional arrangements, capacity and partnerships is also important to ensure the cooperation and coordination of all relevant institutions with jurisdiction over natural resources, animal and public health.

There are eight principles. They deal with (i) siting of farms, (ii) design and construction of farms, (iii) minimizing the impact of water use; (iv) responsible use of broodstock and postlarvae, (v) efficient use of feeds and feed management, (vi) good health management, (vii) ensuring food safety and the quality of shrimp products, and (viii) social responsibility. The Sub-Committee on Aquaculture during its third session recognized the increasing requirements for producing aquatic products that are produced according to economically viable and environmentally sustainable practices and that take into account social considerations. It congratulated FAO and the members of the Consortium on Shrimp Farming and the Environment for the development of the *International Principles* and agreed that these would serve as a basis for further global consensus building on norms for shrimp aquaculture and act as guidance in the elaboration and harmonization of standards among producer countries.

Better management practices (BMPs)

The term BMP has been used in several ways. It can refer to the best-known way to undertake any activity at a given time. In this sense, it probably refers to the practice or practices of only one or a very few producers. Better management practices can also be used to define a few, often different, practices that increase efficiency and productivity and/or reduce or mitigate

[10] http://www.enaca.org/modules/tinyd2/index.php?id=1

impacts. Better practices are often required by government or others to encourage a minimum acceptable level of performance (and eliminate bad practices) with regard to a specific activity. In this sense, the term is used in opposition to unacceptable practices.

BMPs in the aquaculture context have been used to outline norms for responsible farming of aquatic animals and plants. In aquaculture, better management practices have been developed largely for shrimp and salmon aquaculture, although some efforts are being made to develop BMPs for other aquatic commodities such as tilapias, catfish, molluscs, eels, etc, and marine fish farming. In shrimp aquaculture, the experience of the Consortium shows that well designed BMPs can support producers to (a) increase efficiency and productivity by reducing the risk of shrimp health problems, (b) reduce or mitigate the impacts of farming on the environment, (c) improve food safety and quality of shrimp farm product, and (d) improve the social benefits from shrimp farming and its social acceptability and sustainability.

BMPs can be country specific, or developed for a particular location, taking account of local farming systems, social and economic context, markets and environments. BMPs are often voluntary practices, but can also be used as basis for local regulations, or even certification programmes. It was suggested that these could also provide the basis for the voluntary and market-driven certification schemes. A critical aspect of the introduction of BMPs has been the role of farmer groups, or other organizations, and the effective linkage between the public sector and such organizations. The FAO Aquaculture Sub-Committee strongly encouraged further emphasis on the establishment and development of farmer organizations to improve management of the aquaculture sector and empower producers to participate in decision making and self regulation.

The Sub-Committee was informed that the majority of better management practices have focused on high value species, typically targeted for export markets. However there is a need for development of BMPs for other important species to ensure continuing sustainability of production. The carp species were specifically identified in this regard and the need for more inter and intra-regional cooperation on this matter was emphasized. The Sub-Committee recognized that there was still a considerable need for dialogue, research and farm trials related to BMPs, including linking BMPs with quantifiable results, identifying financial costs and benefits of BMP implementation and the development or adaptation of existing BMPs for new aquatic species.

BMP's are not certification systems, but it is expected that orgainzation of farmers and the introduction of BMP approaches to their farming activities would be an important tool in enabling smaller-scale producers to enter certification systems.

Recommendations by the COFI Sub-Committee on Aquaculture

The Sub-Committee on Aquaculture, while recognizing value of BMPs and certification for increasing public and consumer confidence in aquaculture production practices and products, also noted that many non-governmental certification schemes have resulted in higher costs for producers without delivering significant price benefits to small-scale producers. It was pointed out that the costs of such schemes were disadvantageous to small-scale producers, adding to the costs of market access, and recognized that there are different needs between small-scale and large-scale producers and that these differences should be adequately addressed. The Sub-Committee commented that the emergence of a wide range of certification schemes and accreditation bodies was creating confusion amongst producers and

consumers alike and stated that there was a need for more globally accepted norms for aquaculture production, which could provide more guidance and serve as a basis for improved harmonization and facilitate mutual recognition and equivalence of such certification schemes.

Within the context of the application of the CCRF, the Sub-Committee requested FAO to organise an Expert Consultation to make recommendations regarding the development of harmonised shrimp farming standards and review certification procedures for global acceptance and transparency, which will also assist in elaborating norms and reviewing the diverse options and relative benefits of these approaches. In this regard, the Sub-Committee encouraged FAO to play a lead role in facilitating the development of guidelines which could be considered when national and regional aquaculture standards are developed. Several members of the Sub-Committee as well as a number of inter-governmental organizations offered to cooperate at national, regional and international level, and requested FAO to provide a platform for such collaboration. The Sub-Committee also requested setting up of an expert group on reviewing certification of shrimp farming systems.

The Sub-Committee on Trade held in Spain 2006 also recommended work to be done related to certification and harmonization. The Sub-Committee on Trade supported future work by the FAO to widen and expand the implementation of the Hazard Analysis Critical Control Point (HACCP)-based safety and quality systems and use of risk assessment as the basis for the development of fish standards; to promote equivalence and harmonization; to monitor the border sanitary and quality controls used to regulate, restrict or prohibit trade including their economic consequences. FAO was also requested to broaden the perspective and discussion on the topic to include (i) how developed countries could support the integration of small-scale fisheries into international trade through, for example, standards setting; (ii) intermediation including financing issues; (iii) potential loss of bargaining power of small-scale fishers in getting fair prices for their products; (iv) traceability and ecolabelling; and (iv) value chain analysis.

Broad objective of the programme

With regard to the above background, the Programme for implementing the recommendation of the Committee on Fisheries Sub-Committee on Aquaculture will have the following objectives:

- Set up of an expert group (Advisory Committee) on aquaculture certification.

- Review existing certification procedures and systems and develop guidelines for aquaculture certification for global acceptance and transparency through a comprehensive participatory process.

- Develop more globally accepted norms and standards for aquaculture production, which could provide better guidance and serve as a basis for improved harmonization and facilitate mutual recognition and equivalence of aquaculture certification schemes.

- Elaborate *International Principles* on other important aquatic commodities and develop appropriate BMPs to encourage a minimum acceptable level of performance (and eliminate bad practices).

- Promote partnership in implementation of the *International Principles for Responsible Shrimp Farming* among Consortium partners, regional and national stakeholders (eg Madagascar).

Implementation Plan and Mechanism

Improved Participation and Transparency in the Process

The implementation of the programme will address the need for wider stakeholder participation in the overall process and especially during developing certification guidelines. This will be achieved by making documents and information available to all through internet and other electronic means and wide consultation and stakeholder engagement.

Secretariat

A Secretariat has been established to organize, facilitate and manage the envisaged work on aquaculture certification, including preparations for the workshops and the development of guidelines.

Advisory Group on aquaculture certification

An "Advisory Group" has been established to provide advice and technical inputs to the envisaged programme of work on aquaculture certification. This Advisory Group will be a mixed group of various stakeholders including people with experience in certification of other non-fish commodities, as well as balanced participation from producer countries, institutions and people experienced in the different aspects of certification. The composition of the Advisory Group will be decided in consultation with key stakeholders by the Secretariat. In addition, the AG will advise on effective communication channels and mechanisms for ensuring effective stakeholder input to the certification discussions and consensus building. The members of the Consortium Programme on Shrimp Farming and Environment will also participate.

Aquaculture certification website

The Secretariat will establish a web site on aquaculture certification to provide information on certification and the work of the Secretariat and Advisory Group, and ensure transparency. The existing web sites of NACA and APFIC will be reviewed and improved as appropriate. The importance of achieving wide stakeholder participation and wide communication of the work is recognised. The revised certification site will be developed and sent for comments and approval to the AG. Special attention will be given to development of effective communication mechanisms for all relevant stakeholders, and particularly inputs from the small-scale sector and "alternative" stakeholders.

Workshops on Guidelines for Aquaculture Certification

There will be two dedicated expert workshops during 2007 to initiate the work on development of guidelines for aquaculture certification.

Bangkok Expert Workshop – March 2007

An Expert Workshop on "*Guidelines for Aquaculture Certification*", as recommended by the COFI Sub-Committee on Aquaculture is planned to be held in Bangkok, Thailand for 27-30 March 2007. The Bangkok Expert Workshop will be hosted by the Government of Thailand. It will be conducted as a joint FAO/DOF-Thailand/NACA Expert Workshop. The workshop will assist in scoping the content of the certification guidelines and laying the groundwork for the programme of work on aquaculture certification. In addition, the workshop will look at the issues specific to the Asia regional issues of certification (this will complement the regional analysis for Latin America to be done during the Brazil workshop).

See Annex I for details.

Brazil Expert Workshop – July/August 2007

A further Expert Workshop will also be held in Brazil (venue to be decided) in July 2007. This workshop will look at the Latin American regional issues in detail and also review and further develop the Bangkok Expert Workshop outcome. The Brazil Expert Workshop will also help in fine tuning and further development of draft guidelines and building further consensus on the subject.

Eighth Asian Fisheries Forum, Kochin, India – November 2007

A special session on shrimp aquaclture will be held within the 8th Asian Fisheries Forum, in partnership with NACA. The session will be used to present the draft Guidelines to a wider audience and to receive commments and build consensus. Other meetings and consultations, and partnerships, will also be organised, within the constraints of resources, to ensure wide stakeholder input and participation in the process.

Other activities

Any other oportunities (workshops, meetings, conferences) will also be considered for elaboration and consensus building of the work being done on the subject.

The Process

The process for development of the certification guidelines and the organization of the Expert Workshops will involve the following. With the advice of the Advisory Group, the Secretariat will be responsible for:

- Commissioning appropriate working papers for discussions at the workshop.
- Development of the Terms of Reference for the working papers in consultion with the Advisory Committee.
- Develop an accessible web site to upload all information on the certification workshops/guidelines. The web site will allow access to all background material, as well as working papers, TORs, and developing working papers. Initially the opoprtunities for improving the existing web site (http://www.enaca.org/certification) will be explored and if not possible then a new dedicated web site/page will be developed. The purpose, as far as possible, will be to make the process transparent, and with ample opportunity for making comments by the general public on the material and process. Multiple languages will be used where possible.

- Organisational aspects of the workshops/consultations, in coordination with host country/organisations and other interest partners.

Scope of aquaculture certification guidelines

The Bangkok Expert Workshop will start this process of development of guidelines for aquaculture certification, but further consultations will be necessary to build consensus and complete the document. A final Technical Consultation may be held to make the document "official", and/or the document should be approved at the next session of the Sub-Committee on Aquaculture.

The final scope of the guidelines will be decided during the Expert Workshops, and the open process of consultation among stakeholders to be facilitated by secretariat and Advisory Group members.

Without pre-empting further consultations, the FAO guidelines for ecolabelling of fisheries products suggest the aquaculture certification guidelines might address the following:

- Certification definitions
- Certification principles
- Statement of scope for the guidelines
- Establishment and operation of certification systems/process
- Establishment of certification standards
- Implementation of aquaculture certification, covering such issues as small-scale farmers, costs-benefits, mechanisms harmonization/equivalence of different systems, role of government and private etc., etc.
- Legal implications

The certification guidelines will be generic, but to respond to the recommendations of the FAO COFI/ASC members may also include some specific guidelines on shrimp (and possibly other key commodities), perhaps as an Annex.

Working papers for the Bangkok Workshop

A number of working papers and reviews will be prepared to assist in discussions during the Bangkok Expert Workshop. No country papers will be prepared. The title/themes of working papers might include:

- **Account of existing certification systems/mechanisms/standards** (to be made available at the Expert Workshop and to put on web site)
- **Definitions on aquaculture certification** (for discussion/agreement at the meeting).
- **Analysis of existing and/or planned certification proceduers and systems**
    - What is broadly accepted as certification and what is (or should be/could be) covered under a certification scheme for aquaculture products?
    - What are the differences between the different existing schemes (organic, social, food safety, environmental/ecological, etc.?)
    - What are the cost and benefits from certification and who get these potential costs and/or benefits? This includes hidden implications relating to market access, potential technical barriers to trade (TBT) and other trade related issues.
    - How to develop a certificaction system considering all stakeholders

- Discuss if global certification, regional or commodity-based schemes or a combination are the most suitable way.
- The analysis could be based on further elaboration of the draft list and criteria circulated by WWF prior to the meeting.
- The analysis will also include an analysis of the existing certification schemes and their scope against the Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries and International Principles for Responsible Shrimp Farming

- **Views and experiences of Asian stakeholders on aquaculture certification**

  Special review of Asian stakeholders
  - What is known about certification and its implications?
  - What are the national priorities in relation to certification? (i.e. which species and which criteria should be covered by certification)
  - Where are the countries in relation to certification?
  - Which schemes are in operation and what are their strengths and weaknesses. What could be done to improve them, what are the chances for harmonization of them?
  - What are the implications of schemes and standard developed in a region being imposed on aquaculture operations within another region

  Special reviews/experiences of other stakeholders
  - Small holder certification
  - European producer views (FEAP)
  - GAA/ACC procedures and experiences
  - Proposed certification/compliance procedure by the Chilean Governemnt on sustainable salmin farming
  - EurepGAP work
  - Swiss organic certification programme
  - ISO acreditation process
  - Codex Alimentarius Commission
  - BRC
  - GFSI

- **Views and experiences of NGOs and other concerned agencies: the current knowledge**
  - IUCN-led meeting in Bangkok and outcome
  - WWF standard setting process and commodity dialogues

- **Implementation mechanisms for aquaculture certification**
  - What implementation mechanisms available?
    - eg experiences from MSC and IFOAM systems
  - Possibility of equivalency/harmonisation across certification schemes and systems and how that might work in practice (eg a federation-type approach of multiple certifiers along the lines of IFOAM or other mechanisms).

Further working papers as required would be defined by the Secretariat/Advisory Group.

Local Organizing Committee of the Bangkok Expert Workshop

A local organizing committee will be appointed for the Bangkok Expert workshop. The Programme of the workshop, participants to be invited, and technical arrangements will be made by the Scretariat with advice from the Advisory Group. A Local Organizing Committee

will be set up by the Thai DOF/RAP and will work closely with the Secretariat during preparation of the workshop.

Participation at the Bangkok Expert Workshop

Efforts will be made to ensure broad participation of experts and interest groups in the workshop. They will consist of both public and private sectors.

Funding

- FAO/RAP will provide funding for assisting the review of existing aquaculture certification systems, as part of a proposed review of fisheries and aquaculture certification.
- NACA will assist in conducting the review of Asian experiences.
- DOF Thailand will provide local assistance for conducting the Bangkok Expert Workshop.
- DOF Brazil is expected to make some contributions and local support for a workshop in Brazil.
- FAO/HQ will provide some funds and will also endervour to obtain extrabudgetary assistance from outside sources.
- Other donors/partners are being approached for facilitating participation of workshop participants and supporting other necessary activities for the workshops and guidelines development. Further partnerships will be encouraged/established based on the Bangkok Expert Workshop.

Time Line and Responsibility

- Setting up of the Secretariat — December 2006
- Establishment of Advisory Group — Janaury 2007
- Bangkok workshop — March 2007
- Brazil workshop — July/August 2007
- Kochi/India AFS meeting — November 2007
- Other consultations — ongoing (to be discussed also in Bangkok)