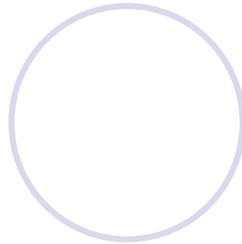




Aquaculture certification perspectives from FEAP

Javier Ojeda
FEAP-APROMAR

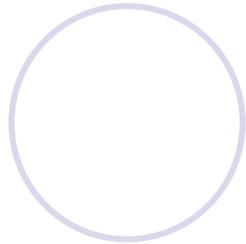
Expert Workshop on Guidelines for Aquaculture Certification
FAO/NACA/DoF Thailand. 27th March 2007. Arnoma Hotel, Bangkok.



Background

1. Eco-labels in the EU

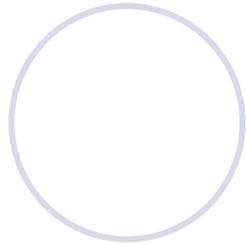
- The EU has an eco-labelling scheme that covers some 20 industrial product groups
- The industrial and forestry sectors possess a large variety of certification and eco-labelling schemes
- However, they do not apply to food products, drinks and medicines.



Background

2. Reformed Common Fisheries Policy

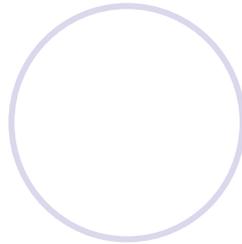
- To ensure the exploitation of living aquatic resources in a way that provides for sustainable economic, environmental and social conditions
- It encompasses aquaculture
- Eco-labelling is seen as a possible way of integrating environmental concerns into the fisheries sector.



3. **Communication of the Commission**

COM(2005)275 final: **“Launching a debate on a Community approach towards eco-labelling schemes for fisheries products”**

- In 1997 the EC first addressed the need to discuss non-discriminatory, voluntary eco-certification schemes for fisheries
- Only for capture fisheries, not for aquaculture
- Most Member States agreed that the EU should establish a common line, but views differed on how to implement it.



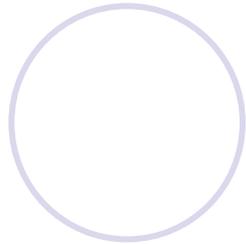
Background

3. Communication of the Commission

COM(2005)275 final: **“Launching a debate on a Community approach towards eco-labelling schemes for fisheries products”**

It proposes that an eco-labelling policy should:

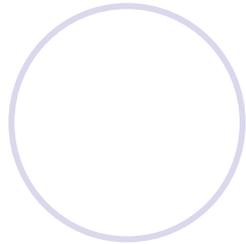
- Stimulate consumer awareness in view of the environmental dimension of fishing and thereby
- Encourage environmental responsibility of both managers and fishermen by making them more conscious of the environmental impact of fisheries.



3. **Communication of the Commission**

COM(2005)275 final: **“Launching a debate on a Community approach towards eco-labelling schemes for fisheries products”**

- The EC considers that the responsibility to protect natural resources through regulation should remain with the public authorities and that, whilst eco-labels can operate in support of sustainable fisheries, they should not replace governmental conservation policy.



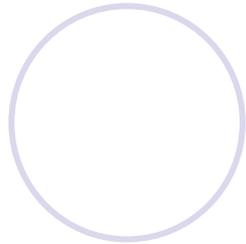
Background

3. **Communication of the Commission**

COM(2005)275 final: **“Launching a debate on a Community approach towards eco-labelling schemes for fisheries products”**

Aims of this eco-labelling scheme:

1. Achieve sustainable fisheries and an adequate protection of the ecosystems
2. Harmonized approach to eco-labelling schemes throughout the Community
3. Transparent and objective information for consumers.



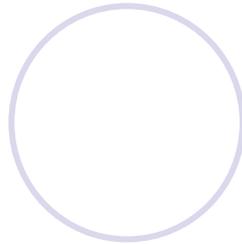
Background

3. **Communication of the Commission**

COM(2005)275 final: **“Launching a debate on a Community approach towards eco-labelling schemes for fisheries products”**

Aims of this eco-labelling scheme:

4. Fair competition – referring to misuse of labels
5. Open access (to schemes) – to all levels of the profession
6. Development and trade – addressing the concerns of developing countries.

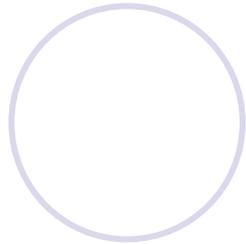


Background

3. Communication of the Commission

COM(2005)275 final: **“Launching a debate on a Community approach towards eco-labelling schemes for fisheries products”**

- Option 1: Non- action
- Option 2: Creating a single Community eco-labelling scheme for fish and fishery products
- Option 3: Establishing minimum requirements for voluntary eco-labelling schemes.

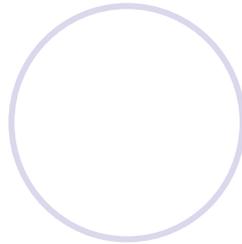


Background

3. Communication of the Commission

COM(2005)275 final: “**Launching a debate on a Community approach towards eco-labelling schemes for fisheries products**”

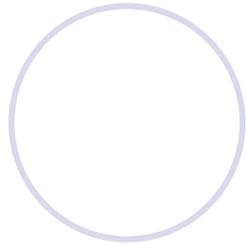
- Option 1: Non- action
- Option 2: Creating a single Community eco-labelling scheme for fish and fishery products
- **Option 3: Establishing minimum requirements for voluntary eco-labelling schemes.**



Background

4. **Opinion of the European Economic and Social Committee on the Eco-labelling of fisheries products** (NAT/286) on COM(2005)275

- Supports the option that the Commission should establish minimum requirements for voluntary eco-labelling schemes
- This Opinion includes aquaculture products with those of fisheries, without prejudice to the environmental specificities of the two activities.



Background

5. **Communication of the Commission**

COM(2002)511 final:

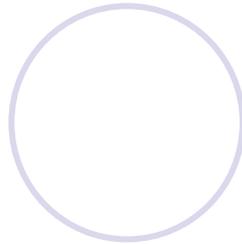
“A Strategy for the Sustainable Development of European Aquaculture”

- It sets out a structure and proposed actions for the future of the European aquaculture sector
- It makes no mention of eco-labelling, but describes both ‘organic’ and ‘environment friendly’ production technology.



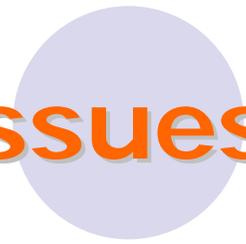
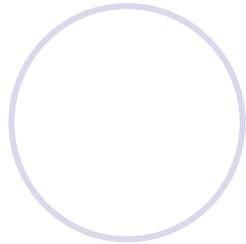
Can an 'ecological' label be conceived for aquaculture?

- For European aquaculture there are basic operational differences that render it very different from capture fisheries and thus to the core concept of needing, developing or applying an eco-label
- Aquaculture encompasses a great variety of production methods, systems and species
- The FEAP has recommended the EC that any EU-supported measure must apply common rules and certification standards throughout the EU.



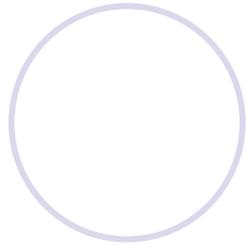
Eco-Bio-Organic?

- Eco-Bio-Organic production is a more philosophical approach that takes into consideration biodiversity, natural fertilization and a reduction in the use of chemicals and veterinary medicines
- The translations of Eco-Bio-Organic into the EU languages are totally different. Specially, the ECO term contains many dangers for confusion
- It isn't a quality scheme
- Eco-Bio-Organic aquaculture common standards are being developed by the EC.



Trade issues

- No activity can be sustainable without economic benefit. The use and misuse of labels is an important point of examination
- Any labelling or certification scheme must be compatible with WTO rules, and should not be used as a trade barrier
- At the end of the day it must be a consumers choice.



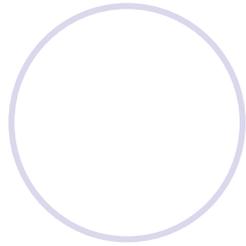
Aquaculture vs Capture Fisheries

- European aquaculture is a completely different activity than capture fisheries
- Capture fisheries and aquaculture products are sold on the same fish retail counters, and differentiation isn't always provided
- Consumer concerns about environmental impact of capture fisheries are very defined (killing dolphins or overfishing), while those of aquaculture are less severe and more diffuse
- Consumer's worries on aquaculture are more about quality and food safety.



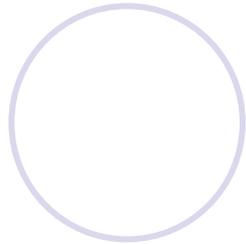
FEAP & Sustainability

- CONSENSUS. EU-supported project, that aims to define individual sustainability measurable indicators and protocols, with a detailed plan of consultation and dialogue with the professional sector and other stakeholders
- GUIDELINES FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT OF AQUACULTURE IN THE MEDITERRANEAN: IUCN-FEAP: recommendations for responsible and sustainable aquaculture, giving support to decision makers, aquaculture producers and stakeholders in the Mediterranean region.



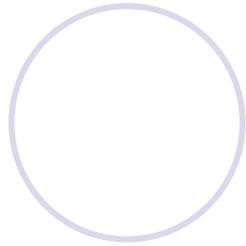
17 Conclusions & Recommendations

1. The use of ECO as a prefix to any action appears to contain many dangers for confusion and also legal conflicts
2. There is clear potential for consumers, legislators and producers to confuse the 'merits' of:
 - a. Eco-labelling
 - b. Organic aquaculture
 - c. Quality schemes and brands
 - d. Sustainable aquaculture



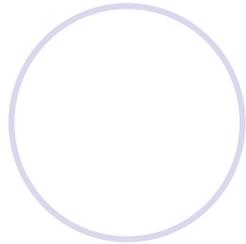
17 Conclusions & Recommendations

3. Consumers get very easily confused with the profusion of labels
4. There is a danger that eco-labels will entice consumers away from products sold on the retail counter which do not carry a label, even though they might be of equal or superior quality
5. Capture fisheries environmental labels should not use the word ECO as a prefix. It would be more appropriate to define the label as “sustainably fished”.



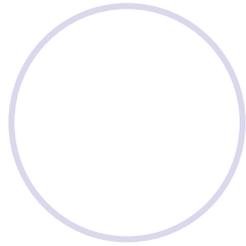
17 Conclusions & Recommendations

6. Consumers are only interested in labels that address their concerns.
7. European consumer want to be assured of:
 - a. Food quality
 - b. Food safety
 - c. Environmental impact
8. Eco-labels must no intend to substitute the legal requirements for the correct identification of the fish species or production method.



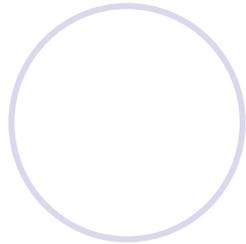
17 Conclusions & Recommendations

9. Certification requirements must be more stringent than legal obligations. EU consumers will not understand a certification scheme that delivers less than the established legal obligations
10. Certification without promotion achieves non value. Who will finance promotion?
11. The definition of any label must be the subject of display and clear communication about what it means exactly.



17 Conclusions & Recommendations

12. But aquacultured fish are many times sold on fish counters without packaging. Where can the logos be placed?
13. A worldwide minimum common eco-label has the risk of being be too 'light' to be of any interest to European consumers.
14. Perhaps what we need in aquaculture are just good BMP and providing education and information to the consumers.



17 Conclusions & Recommendations

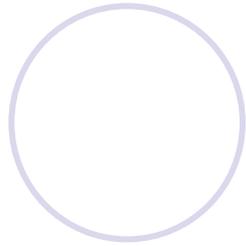
15. ECO standards for aquaculture can be partially linked to existing auditable/certifiable standards – such as EMAS or ISO 14001.
16. Results of the CONSENSUS and FEAP-IUCN projects could provide valuable indicators for application within such a scheme.
17. Sustainability should be the guiding principle of an 'ecolabel' for aquaculture.



Certification projects

- Organic production of marine finfish in Andalucía (Spain).
- Quality scheme for Seabass, Seabream and Turbot in Spain: 'Crianza del Mar'





Conclusions & Recommendations

Thank you for your attention.