

**GLOBAL AQUACULTURE ADVANCEMENT
PARTNERSHIP (GAAP) PROGRAMME**

Introduction

Hunger and malnutrition are the most devastating problems worldwide and are inextricably linked with poverty. In 2010-12, almost 870 million people were chronically undernourished. The challenges governments and international development communities need to address, given a global population that is projected to reach 9 billion in 2050, much of it in developing countries prone to hunger, is to ensure adequate food and nutritional security for all. It is widely acknowledged that aquaculture has the capacity – if supported and developed in a regulated and environmentally and socially responsible and sensitive manner – to contribute positively towards eradication of hunger, food insecurity and malnutrition. However, the challenges of reducing poverty and the magnitude and diversity of the aquaculture sector issues around the world are simply too big for any single government or organization to tackle alone. Addressing the challenges thus requires making use of the world's best knowledge and capacities, and financial resources, which do not reside in any one institution. The international development community therefore attaches great importance to working together in partnership with all relevant governmental, non-governmental, private sector and other stakeholders at global, regional and national levels in support of shared development goals.

This partnership approach is in line with the Busan Partnership for Effective Development Co-operation (The Fourth High Level Forum on Aid Effectiveness in Busan, Republic of Korea, in 2011), the recent UN-sponsored unique partnership initiatives, such as the UN Partnership Facility, and the FAO's revised Strategic Framework, which stress on establishing innovative and smarter partnerships that would lead to better development outcomes. Accordingly, in response to the findings of several recent participatory global and regional reviews of the aquaculture sector, including the recommendation of a global fund for aquaculture made by the Hon. President of Sri Lanka at the Asia Regional Ministerial Meeting on Aquaculture for Food Security, Poverty Alleviation and Nutrition, in July 2011, in Sri Lanka and approved by the 30th Session of Committee on Fisheries (COFI), FAO has conceptualized the Global Aquaculture Advancement Partnership (GAAP) Programme.

Aquaculture and its contribution to food for the world

According to FAO estimates, to feed the world in 2050, agricultural output, originating from crops, livestock and fisheries, including aquaculture, must increase by over 60 percent. Meeting this target is a formidable challenge for the international community considering that an alarming number of people, mostly in developing countries, still suffer from hunger and poverty. Hence, finding opportunities to alleviate poverty and increase food security through agriculture, fisheries and aquaculture is vital and timely. Foods derived from aquatic resources have a significant role to play across the food supply and value chain, linking ecosystems, economic development and human wellbeing. Producing, processing and distributing the current global supply of 128 million tonnes of food fish provide direct and indirect employment to over 50 million people worldwide, and create livelihood for over 200 million more. Fish contributes about 16 percent to the world's animal protein intake, and is the main source of animal protein along with essential micronutrients and fatty acids for three billion people.

Fish is a very important part of a healthy diet. It is an excellent source of protein, but what makes fish a really unique food is its role in providing essential fatty acids and micronutrients (vitamins, minerals). Consumption of fish and especially oily fish is essential since long-chain omega-3 fatty acids help optimal development of the brain and neural

system. Therefore, consumption of fish is particularly important during pregnancy and the first two years of life (“the 1000 -day window of opportunity”).

Since the contribution of capture fisheries to global food fish supplies has leveled off, the supply gap in food fish has been bridged by the growth in aquaculture production. Aquaculture now shares 47 percent of the global food fish supply, a 13 percent increase over the past decade. It continues to be the fastest growing food production sector in the world at nearly 6.5 percent a year. However, trends reveal a gradually decreasing growth rate that could, by 2030, dip to around 4.0 percent. The increased population and expanding economies will exert a strong pressure on the world’s aquatic ecosystems. Since people tend to consume more fish as their incomes grow, per capita fish consumption in many countries is expected to increase. Recent estimates indicate that an additional supply of nearly 50 million tonnes of fish will be required to feed the growing and increasingly affluent world population by 2030. To meet this demand aquaculture would have to grow 5.6 percent annually.

Aquaculture came to be globally recognized as an important economic sector with the Technical Consultation on Aquaculture in Kyoto in 1976, primed for the new millennium with the Bangkok Declaration and Strategy of 2000, and infused with greater vigor by the renewed affirmation of its importance at the Global Conference on Aquaculture in Phuket in 2010, and the political commitment made at the Asia Regional Ministerial Meeting on Aquaculture for Food Security, Nutrition and Economic Development in 2011. It is also widely acknowledged that aquaculture has the capacity to contribute towards achievement of several of the international-level development goals, such as the 2000 Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), especially those related to poverty reduction and food and nutrition security, environmental protection and biodiversity, the 2002 World Summit on Sustainable Development goals, the 2009 World Food Summit goals and the 2009 Copenhagen Climate Change Meeting goals.

Despite having achieved good progress in terms of expansion, intensification and diversification, global aquaculture has not grown evenly around the world. The Asia-Pacific region continues to dominate the aquaculture sector, with China alone contributing 62.3 percent of global production. The sector needs to pay particular attention to the countries and regions where future fish demand will be significant, yet the sector is relatively under developed in terms of human and technical resources. There are also marked intraregional and inter-regional and country variations in a number of areas, such as production level, species composition, farming systems and producer profile. Those variations accordingly have also given rise to a set of key issues and challenges that need to be proactively addressed in order to achieve the aquaculture sector’s goal of sustainable and equitable development. A number of global reviews have noted the significance of access to vital resources (land, water, feed, seed and energy) and technology; enhancement of capacities and institutional development in the areas of policies, strategies, plans and legislations; access to financial resources, especially to small farmers; climate change impacts; food safety and bio security risks as major aquaculture development constraining factors.

Importance of partnerships and global initiatives

The importance of promoting effective global partnerships in the context of attaining internationally-agreed development goals cannot be overemphasized. Indeed it is embedded in the Millennium Development Goal (MDG) 8, which aims to develop a global partnership for development. With the recent global economic slowdown, reinforced by the food and fuel crises, and the future challenges of climate change impact and globalization of food production, there is an ever-growing need to develop innovative and smarter global partnerships strategies through which the quality and quantity of development assistance must be continuously increased.

The Fourth High Level Forum on Aid Effectiveness in Busan, Republic of Korea, in 2011 (Busan Partnership for effective Development Co-operation), stressed the importance of establishing smarter partnerships that would lead to better development outcomes. Accordingly, a new, inclusive and representative Global Partnership for Effective Development was established to support and ensure accountability for the implementation of commitments made in Busan, particularly in the context of a post -2015 development agenda, or the deadline for achievement of the MDGs. This Global Partnership works with a range of development bodies and processes to avoid duplication of resources, and complements existing efforts that impact on effective development co-operation¹.

Recognizing the significance of innovative partnerships in addressing the overarching challenges of sustainable development, the United Nations has been spearheading a number of global initiatives, such as the UN Office for Partnerships, which promotes new collaborations and alliances in furtherance of the MDGs², the UN Global Compact, which is a platform for the UN to engage with global business community³, and the Global Partnerships Forum, which is also a unique platform that brings together leaders from the public and private sectors to address global challenges through mutually beneficial partnerships⁴. Speaking at an event on April 24, 2013, entitled “Partnering for Innovative Solutions for Sustainable Development”, Ban Ki-moon, UN Secretary-General, stressed that “addressing global challenges requires a collective and concerted effort, involving all actors. Through partnerships and alliances, and by pooling comparative advantages, we increase our chances of success”⁵.

At that event, which was to boost efforts towards reaching the MDGs by the target deadline and to promote thinking on the post-2015 sustainable development agenda, the UN Secretary-General also announced that he would propose the creation of a new UN Partnership Facility “to capture the full potential for partnership.” “The Facility would help us deliver at scale – globally and at country level– across the range of UN mandates, goals and values.” Further, “the Facility would strategically and systematically fill in any gaps, as well as build and strengthen partnership services.”

As the largest autonomous agency within the UN, mandated to eradicate hunger, raise levels of nutrition, improve agricultural productivity, better the lives of rural populations and contribute to the growth of the world economy, FAO fully endorses the UN’s partnership approach in carrying out its activities. FAO sees broader, improved partnerships as essential in achieving its objectives, especially in the light of its new emphasis on decentralization.

¹ <http://www.effectivecooperation.org/about.html>

² <http://www.un.org/partnerships/index.html>

³ <http://www.unglobalcompact.org/>

⁴ <http://www.partnerships.org/>

⁵ <http://www.un.org/apps/news/story.asp?NewsID=44740&Cr=mdg&Cr1=#.UaFMFujxIcB>

Reiterating FAO's position on partnerships, the Director-General mentioned at the April 26, 2013 Governing Council meeting, which approved FAO's new partnership strategies with the private sector and civil society, that "We have repeated many times that it is possible to end hunger only if we work together. These strategies show that we are committed to working with partnerships"⁶.

In FAO's new Strategic Framework for the next decade, which includes its Vision, three Global Goals and five Strategic Objectives, facilitating "partnerships for food and nutrition security, agriculture and rural development between governments, development partners, civil society and the private sector" is one of the seven core functions (Box 1).

The magnitude and diversity of the aquaculture sector issues and challenges call for a concerted global partnerships effort by the relevant partners to effectively and efficiently channel their technical and financial resources to support prioritized global, regional and national initiatives. Accordingly, the Global Aquaculture Advancement Partnership (GAAP) Programme has been conceptualized as a platform that will contribute towards attainment of the sector's sustainable development goal.

Potential areas of engagement with partners

The expectation of the GAAP programme is to involve a wide range of potential partners including (i) United Nations agencies; (ii) inter-governmental and international financing institutions; (iii) international and national research organizations and academia; (iv) private-sector/civil society/NGOs; and (v) governmental and other relevant networks. For ease of the GAAP programme implementation, there would be five broad potential areas of engagement and participation in aquaculture development by partners:

(a) **Development and technical projects:** Partners would collaborate on aquaculture advancement (development and technical assistance) initiatives locally, regionally and globally.

(b) **Policy dialogue:** The dialogues would be on various global and regional issues related to aquaculture development. FAO could guide such dialogues involving Member States, development partners and other stakeholders, thus increasing ownership, accountability and sustainability of policy adoption and implementation.

(c) **Norms and standard setting:** Partners would collaborate on development, negotiations and implementation of international codes of conduct, safety and quality standards for aquaculture products, and on global conventions and regulatory frameworks in areas related to FAO's mandate on aquaculture development.

(d) **Advocacy and communication:** Partners would jointly raise public awareness and build strong support and political will in the fight against poverty and food insecurity through aquaculture development. Partners will benefit from each other's extensive experience, networks and outreach.

(e) **Knowledge management and dissemination:** Partnerships would more efficiently manage, promote and facilitate the flow of impartial information and global knowledge on aquaculture issues and make it accessible to all stakeholders. FAO encourages and supports the sharing and dissemination of partners' information through global and regional networks.

⁶<http://www.fao.org/news/story/en/item/175233/icode/>

Box 1. New Strategic Objectives of FAO

Vision: “A world free from hunger and malnutrition where food and agriculture contribute to improving the living standards of all, especially the poorest, in an economically, socially and environmentally sustainable manner”.

Three Global Goals

1. Eradication of hunger, food insecurity and malnutrition, progressively ensuring a world in which people at all times have sufficient safe and nutritious food that meets their dietary needs and food preferences for an active and healthy life.
2. Elimination of poverty and the driving forward of economic and social progress for all, with increased food production, enhanced rural development and sustainable livelihoods.
3. Sustainable management and utilization of natural resources, including land, water, air, climate and genetic resources for the benefit of present and future generations.

Five Strategic Objectives

1. Contribute to the eradication of hunger, food insecurity and malnutrition
2. Increase and improve provision of goods and services from agriculture, forestry and fisheries in a sustainable manner
3. Reduce rural poverty
4. Enable more inclusive and efficient agricultural and food systems at local, national and international levels
5. Increase the resilience of livelihoods to threats and crises

An objective on technical quality, knowledge and services, and two cross-cutting themes on gender and governance, are integral to the achievement of the Strategic Objectives.

Furthermore, in line with the methodology of managing for results, a sixth Objective will cover the provision of technical quality, knowledge and services for the work of the Organization, encompassing core normative work.

Core Functions

1. Facilitate and support countries in the development and implementation of international agreements, codes of conduct, technical standards and other international instruments through global governance mechanisms and policy dialogue;
2. Advise and support countries on their active and informed participation in the development of those global and regional international instruments and on developing the policies and institutional capacities necessary for their implementation at national and regional level;
3. Assemble, analyze, monitor and improve access to data and information in areas related to FAO’s mandate, including global and regional trends and perspectives and associated responses by governments and other stakeholders (e.g. policies, legislation and actions);
4. Facilitate, promote and support better governance and policy dialogue at global, regional and country levels;
5. Advise and support capacity development at country and regional level, to prepare, implement, monitor and evaluate evidence-based policies, investments and programmes;
6. Facilitate partnerships for food and nutrition security, agriculture and rural development between governments, development partners, civil society and the private sector;
7. Advocacy and communication at national, regional and global levels in the areas of FAO’s mandate.

The reviewed Strategic Framework has guided the formulation of the Medium Term Plan 2014-17 and Programme of Work and Budget 2014-15.

Impact and Outcome

The GAAP programme is expected to contribute effectively to elimination of poverty, food insecurity and malnutrition by supporting partnership-based initiatives resulting in sustainable increase in aquaculture production. Further, the programme will allow FAO to leverage a wide range of partnerships, and comparative advantages of the various organizations and skills available globally, to achieve global development goals and impact, which it cannot do alone. The GAAP programme will promote and enhance strategic partnerships by making use of partners' technical knowledge, institutional and social development capacities and financial resources for implementing prioritized global, regional and national-level projects that would lead to increased and sustainable global aquaculture production to match the future demand for aquatic products. In addition to its contributions towards achievement of several of the international-level development goals, the GAAP programme will support the FAO's five Strategic Objectives.

Outputs

The GAAP programme has a long-term perspective (10–15 years), and expected to follow a phased approach in which the first phase will cover a five-year period during which the first batch of prioritized global, regional and national activities and/or projects should be implemented. These priority activities and/or projects (with milestones) will be identified through a preparatory diagnostic process, over a period of one year, during which key partnerships will be formed, priority development outcomes established, and time-bound, high impact activities established. Each of the projects in the first and subsequent phases will contribute to the realization of one or more outputs, which in turn will contribute to the achievement of the GAAP programme's outcome and impact, and thereby to FAO's strategic objectives and outcomes. The GAAP programme is envisioned to produce six major outputs, through implementing a series of activities and/or projects.

Output 1: Global, regional and national aquaculture policies, strategies, laws, codes and guidelines are adapted, and institutions are strengthened, to meet emerging needs and ensure sustainable production

Output 2: Environmental and biodiversity risks from and to aquaculture are minimized, and the aquaculture sector becomes a more efficient producer of animal source foods.

Output 3: Partnership approach to address aquaculture issues and promote sustainable aquaculture development is fostered and enhanced

Output 4: Global and regional trade in aquaculture, which is profitable, fair, safe and equitable, in particular which safeguards the interests of small holders, is enhanced

Output 5: Mitigation and adaptation measures to address climate change impacts, as agreed at global and regional levels, are proactively implemented

Output 6: Innovations in aquaculture production systems and financial services delivery mechanisms, including addressing small holders' needs, are promoted and enhanced

Mutual benefits of collaboration

The GAAP programme is anticipated to bring mutual benefits by creating a platform for cooperation among partners based on their comparative advantages and shared goals. A partner could be either a Participating Partner (PP - recipient of funds and/or responsible for implementation of a project under the GAAP programme), or a Resource Partner (RP - provider of funds) or both.

The partnership is projected to provide:

- increased opportunities to be heard in international policy development and standard setting processes for aquaculture, given FAO's mandate to provide access to a neutral forum for discussions with the Member States, private sector, civil society organization and other stakeholders;
- enhanced dialogue with governments and opportunity to contribute to the development of national aquaculture sector planning frameworks;
- participation in processes to establish aquaculture-related technical guidelines and codes of conduct, such as for responsible fisheries and aquaculture; and
- access to information, capacity building, technical knowledge and expertise on key aquaculture issues.

For FAO, partnerships will:

- offer opportunities to increase the delivery of its Strategic Objectives;
- provide increased advocacy and mobilization capacity;
- be an important factor in prioritization of its technical work and resource allocations, leading to cost savings and economies of scale;
- enhance its technical performance and competence to ensure that it remains the repository of cutting-edge knowledge; and
- enable it to capitalize on world class capacities, knowledge and skills and financial resources of partners, thereby ensuring that any assistance it provides to Member States and small producers is delivered in a coordinated and accountable way.

Key features of GAAP

The key features of the GAAP programme are; (a) Technical Cooperation among Developing Countries (TCDC), (b) South-South Cooperation, (c) Private-Public-Partnership, and (d) national implementation. Several key countries, which will be identified and agreed to become PPs and/or RPs, are envisaged to provide technical assistance to several targeted and needed countries through TCDC and South-South Cooperation modalities. A strong PPP will be developed at global, regional and national levels to improve and resource provision and trade at all levels. Improved and strengthened partnership will allow better dialogue consensus among interested parties to help ensure envisaged expansion, intensification and commercialization of aquaculture in the coming decades and thereby contribute to environmentally sustainable, socially responsible and economically viable outcomes.

Implementation modalities, phased approach, sustainability, risk management, governance

All partners will be involved in implementation. National institutions and stakeholders as well as relevant regional networks and regional offices, etc., will all play a major role in executing work. Modalities for implementation will include:

- Creating dialogue and building consensus
- Global, regional and national implementation

- Technical assistance
- South-south Cooperation and capacity development
- Development financing
- Investment

The GAAP programme recognizes that achieving increased and sustainable aquaculture development requires a long-term support, particularly in the context of feeding a global population by 2050 when agricultural output, originating from crops, livestock and fisheries, including aquaculture, must increase by over 60 percent. Accordingly, it is expected that the GAAP programme will be supported for a 15-year period.

Given its mandate and the comparative advantage as a competent development agency, FAO is positioned to host the programme and provide Secretariat to the regional and national committees, provide policy and management advice to the partners and technical and knowledge support to the recipients. The GAAP programme will be long term and will follow a phased approach, with clear and accountable milestones for delivery throughout. The first phase will cover a five-year period during which the first batch of identified global, regional and national priority activities and/or projects will be implemented.

The GAAP programme is expected to be highly sustainable as both the Resource Partners and the Participating Partners will remain committed to achieving the shared goal of increased and sustainable aquaculture development based on the principles of partnerships. The Partners' commitment will be formally cemented in the Memoranda of Understanding (MOUs) to ensure transparency and accountability. Further, the GAAP programme will enjoy broad political support from the international development community and Member States as it is also expected to contribute to the achievement of international development goals on elimination of poverty, food security and malnutrition.

The GAAP programme will adopt a risk management approach to identify and manage potential risks that could compromise FAO's and other partners' independence and impartiality. Such risks could include: conflicts of interest; undue influence on standard setting; threat to neutrality/scientific credibility, financial risks and unfair advantage to specific organizations. FAO's risk assessment process is guided by a number of instruments, such as the UN Global Compact Principles, the Guidelines on Cooperation between the United Nations and the Business Sector, FAO Strategy for Partnerships with the Private Sector and FAO Strategy for Partnerships with Civil Society Organizations. Further, as part of the GAAP programme implementation strategy, the Memorandum of Understandings between FAO and Participating Partners will have provisions for settlement of potential disputes and internal and external auditing procedures and systems to mitigate financial risks. The GAAP programme will also be monitored and evaluated to assess performance and ensure full transparency and accountability.

Aquaculture development across the world is influenced by a host of factors, such as geographic locations, natural resource endowment, climatic variations, socio-economic conditions, and institutional development capacities. As a consequence, global aquaculture has not grown evenly, reflecting marked intraregional and inter-regional and country variations. The GAAP programme has taken into consideration such factors and variations in the design of the governance framework. The framework attaches importance to a regional approach to implementing the GAAP programme, which is in line with FAO's continued thrust towards a decentralized approach. The GAAP programme's governance framework is embedded in the principles of decentralization, transparency and accountability, inclusiveness, ownership and harmonization of efforts at all levels. Further, the GAAP

programme will avoid duplication of efforts between regional and national organizations, and facilitate the establishment of links, synergies and complementarities with other global and regional initiatives.

Administrative procedures and governance mechanisms of GAAP will be based on the experience gained through implementing similar programmes by FAO. Once the concept of GAAP is agreed and approved by the partners, a GAAP Forum (expression of interest) will be created and implementation of the GAAP programme will be commenced. Signing of MOUs between FAO and Participating Partners and between FAO and Resource Partners; establishment of the global, regional and national steering committees; and establishment of the global trust fund to support projects under the GAAP programme to be executed by the participating partners are prerequisites to implementing the programme. Detailed guidelines for applying for funds and approval, disbursement of funds, reporting and accountability will be developed by FAO in the coming months.