

FAO leads efforts to strengthen global aquaculture

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FAO has revealed its objective to achieve the further intensification and expansion of aquaculture sustainably, in a way that satisfies global demand for aquatic food and distributes benefits equitably, with care regarding social responsibility, pollution and other considerations.

Innovative technologies that can increase productivity and reduce waste, as well as enhance inclusion of small-scale operators in the sector, are widely available but need to be applied, particularly outside of Asia, and targeted in areas where aquaculture production has the greatest potential for growth. Moreover, aquaculture practices on average produce fewer greenhouse gas emissions than other forms of animal production.

Asia accounts for more than 90 percent of global aquatic animal production. 126 million tonnes of live weight aquaculture production, including aquatic animals and algae, were produced in 2021, about half of which were farmed finfish. There was an estimated farmgate value of \$296.5 billion for the output. In contrary, Americas, Europe and Africa combined account for 8.2 percent. Currently, more than 700 species are cultured around the world, but just 12 species account for about half of global production.

FAO emphasizes the sector now needs an updated set of governing principles that ensure it expands and intensifies, embracing modern technologies, while being environmentally and socially responsible, economically viable, and meeting the needs of present and future generations in a sustainable manner. This is outlined in a [set of articles](#) published by leading

experts in the field, arising from the latest Global Conference on Aquaculture Millennium +20 held in Shanghai, organized by the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) and partners as part of a decadal series of such conferences.

The publication of the eight thematic review articles as a special issue of the Journal of the World Aquaculture Society coincides with the holding of 12th session of the Sub-Committee on Aquaculture of FAO's Committee on Fisheries, the inter-governmental forum that guides the FAO in formulating aquaculture and fisheries policy advice. The eight articles discuss critical themes for aquaculture, including production methods, social issues and planetary health, nutrition, genetic resources, biosecurity, governance, and inclusive market access.

A new Draft Voluntary Guidelines for Sustainable Aquaculture (GSA), and the publication of these thematic reviews provides useful context for these discussions and more broadly to [FAO's vision for a Blue Transformation](#).