

Ruth García Gómez

Ruth García Gómez has joined the Aquaculture Management and Conservation Service (FIRA) within the Fisheries and Aquaculture Resource Use and Conservation Division (FIR) at FAO headquarters in Rome as an APO funded by the Spanish Government in January 2010.



She graduated in Veterinary Science-Animal Husbandry from the University Complutense of Madrid, Spain in 2002, with a specialisation in Aquaculture Science. In 2005 she finalized the Ph.D. courses

from the Veterinary Science Branch at the same University. She conducted her Ph.D. work as part of a research team at the “Complutense Institute of Epidemiology Surveillance”, which is one of the most prominent centres dealing with aquatic animal health in the Mediterranean context. She also obtained a Master’s Degree in International Cooperation Policies and Strategies from HEGOA Institute, in 2004.

Prior to joining FAO she worked for more than 7 years in a number of countries such as Uganda, RDC, Cambodia, Morocco, Egypt, Ecuador, Colombia and France, being involved in development and research projects dealing with aquaculture and fisheries production, aquatic animal health and aquatic genetic resources. In her last position prior to joining FAO she coordinated a four-year development programme in Cambodia, which focused on the promotion and development of small-scale rural aquaculture for food security improvement. She provided direct technical assistance to the Fisheries Administration officers and collaborated in the development and implementation of the Aquaculture Sector National Action Plan, including the design of a series of Good Aquaculture Practices for the Cambodian context.

In the Aquaculture Management and Conservation Service (FIRA), she has responsibilities for the provision of technical support in normative and field activities regarding aquaculture farming systems, aquatic biodiversity sustainable use and conservation, aquatic animal health management, and aquaculture feed and nutrient resources.

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Brugère, C.; Ridler, N.; Haylor, G.; Macfadyen, G. & Hishamunda, N. Aquaculture planning: policy formulation and implementation for sustainable development. *FAO Fisheries and Aquaculture Technical Paper*. No. 542. Rome, FAO. 2010. 70p.

With the dramatic recent growth of aquaculture, the planning of its development has become increasingly important. Proper planning will stimulate and guide the evolution of the sector by providing incentives and safeguards, attracting investment and boosting development. Moreover, it will help to ensure the long-term economic, environmental and social sustainability of the sector, and its ultimate contribution to economic growth and poverty alleviation. This paper provides practical guidance to aquaculture policy-makers and implementers on policy formulation and processes. It starts by reviewing governance concepts and international policy agendas relevant to aquaculture development and proceeds by defining “policy”, “strategy” and “plan” while explaining common planning terminology. The paper proposes practical steps for improving policy formulation processes. These include: recognizing a timely opportunity for change; ensuring coordination and communication among stakeholders; adopting a participatory approach; learning lessons from elsewhere; and accepting that conflicts may arise and lead to hard choices. It highlights means for implementing aquaculture policies, notes the benefits of an ecosystem approach and proposes a range of instruments which, if implemented at various levels, will help progress towards the development goals for the sector. However, the successful implementation of aquaculture policies depends on overcoming challenges related to weak human capacity, institutions and monitoring systems and to inadequate financial resources. Therefore, the paper also suggests the means to do so. Central to successful planning in the aquaculture sector are coherence in the planning process and an emphasis on interdisciplinarity beyond sectoral remit through institutional collaboration, human capacity development and participation. It is also necessary to embed the chosen approaches and instruments in the principles of good governance. Together, these key elements will ensure the soundness and effectiveness of aquaculture development policies and the positive contribution of the sector.

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