



AQUAGRIS

Environmental management reform for sustainable farming, fisheries and aquaculture

The Challenge

The safety of our food is no longer something we can take for granted. Historically little thought was given to how food was grown and processed. The holistic approach to farming, considering plant, animal, soil and water interaction, is a relatively new concept. Extensive use of pesticides, fertilizers and significant energy inputs to maximize production brought with them considerable waste production and a variety of related environmental problems.

Over the last few decades, consumers' awareness for food production systems that are more environmentally sustainable and compatible with the demands of the earth's eco-system has increased. Knowing that we are what we eat has made us more sensitive to our natural environment, both in terms of what we put in and what we take out.

To make this system more acceptable, twenty-six organisations from fifteen different Countries united their efforts, in the context of the AQUAGRIS Coordination Action, in order to reform environmental management for improved sustainability in the farming, fisheries and aquaculture (FFA) industries. In this project, "aquaculture" referred to the commercial culture of aquatic animals and plants.

Project Objective

The AQUAGRIS network aim was to increase understanding and awareness of problem areas that are faced by today's FFA industries.

Key Points

- Achieve environmental management reform and improvement.
- Develop solutions with minimal impact on biodiversity and the environment.
- Publish a "State of the Art Review" which collects tools and methods of current or future use for the achievement of mitigation measures.
- Present solutions to reduce waste.
- Promote exchange of knowledge, experience and ideas to sustain informed decision making for environmentally sustainable practices.



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EATiP Thematic Area of Relevance

TA1: Product Quality, Consumer Safety and Health

TA2: Technology and Systems

TA3: Managing the Biological Lifecycle

TA4: Sustainable Feed Production

TA5: Integration with the Environment

TA6: Knowledge Management

TA7: Aquatic Animal Health and Welfare

TA8: Socio-Economics and Management

Key Words

Sustainability, fisheries, aquaculture, farming, management

Project Information

Contract number:

36298

Contract type:

Coordination action

Action line:

FOOD-2005-T5.4.6.2 Management of waste from farms and fisheries

Duration:

42 months (1/1/2007 - 30/06/2010)

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Output Highlights

Discussion platform

A platform of seminars, workshops, and discussion between leading experts in the field were the basis of the AquaAgris project. These iterative processes provided the formation of a coherent strategy for future research, avoiding duplication of effort and fragmentation of resources. In addition, all stakeholders were encouraged to meet and exchange ideas via a custom made web site.

AquaAgris Database on Current Research Activities in FFA Industries

A database on current research activities in the FFA industries in Europe and INCO Countries has been established. This database provides the most important information about running projects, relevant publications and keyplayers in the FFA industries.

State-of-art and literature review

A full scientific literature search of current technologies and methodologies for environmental management in FFA has been provided.

Map of European and Indian Research Centres of Activity

This database contains information on current research and contact information (including research laboratories and private companies). http://www.aquagris.org/docs/deliverables/deliverable_22.pdf

AquaAgris Patent Search Database

First Patent Research exclusively dedicated to Farming, Agriculture, Fisheries and Aquaculture. Easy research system by category. Patents could be searched using keywords listed on their patent title.

Mapping standards

In order to incorporate existing or new technological advances into current management systems, standards, policies and regulation on environmental management in FFA, industries must be harmonised. The first step to producing compatible, sustainable, unified systems involved the mapping of the current situation concerning the status of national and international standards, codes of practice, policies and regulation. In this way, the main barriers preventing the development, implementation and use of measures to decrease the impact of the FFA industries have been identified. This effort yielded new standards and codes of practice removing bottlenecks and promoting best practice.

New strategies

AquaAgriS developed new strategies for environmental management in order to produce sustainable systems. Such systems were designed to imitate natural systems to maximise existing soil nutrient and water cycles, energy flows and soil organisms. The ultimate goal was to coordinate processes so waste from one process or system is reused in another. This information can be used to form guidelines on how to achieve environmental best management practice in a cost-effective way.

The Full Report:

For a description of the research project, visit <http://www.aquagris.org/>

Next Steps – Suggested Actions/Follow On



Environment

AQUAGRIS has been without doubt a big step forward in the coordination of information on environmental management for improved sustainability in the FFA industries. However, this area needs more effort in the future since many specific problems still need sustainable solutions.