



TECHNICAL GUIDELINES ON AQUACULTURE CERTIFICATION

DIRECTIVES TECHNIQUES RELATIVES À LA CERTIFICATION EN AQUACULTURE

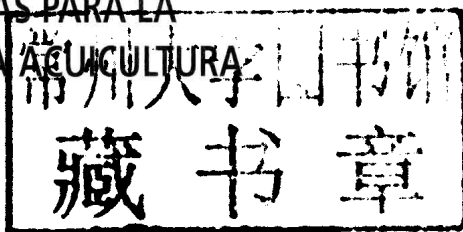
DIRECTRICES TÉCNICAS PARA LA CERTIFICACIÓN EN LA ACUICULTURA



TECHNICAL GUIDELINES ON AQUACULTURE CERTIFICATION

DIRECTIVES TECHNIQUES RELATIVES À LA CERTIFICATION EN AQUACULTURE

DIRECTRICES TÉCNICAS PARA LA CERTIFICACIÓN EN LA ACUICULTURA



The designations employed and the presentation of material in this information product do not imply the expression of any opinion whatsoever on the part of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) concerning the legal or development status of any country, territory, city or area or of its authorities, or concerning the delimitation of its frontiers or boundaries. The mention of specific companies or products of manufacturers, whether or not these have been patented, does not imply that these have been endorsed or recommended by FAO in preference to others of a similar nature that are not mentioned.

Les appellations employées dans ce produit d'information et la présentation des données qui y figurent n'impliquent de la part de l'Organisation des Nations Unies pour l'alimentation et l'agriculture (FAO) aucune prise de position quant au statut juridique ou au stade de développement des pays, territoires, villes ou zones ou de leurs autorités, ni quant au tracé de leurs frontières ou limites. La mention de sociétés déterminées ou de produits de fabricants, qu'ils soient ou non brevetés, n'entraîne, de la part de la FAO, aucune approbation ou recommandation desdits produits de préférence à d'autres de nature analogue qui ne sont pas cités.

Las denominaciones empleadas en este producto informativo y la forma en que aparecen presentados los datos que contiene no implican, de parte de la Organización de las Naciones Unidas para la Alimentación y la Agricultura (FAO), juicio alguno sobre la condición jurídica o nivel de desarrollo de países, territorios, ciudades o zonas, o de sus autoridades, ni respecto de la delimitación de sus fronteras o límites. La mención de empresas o productos de fabricantes en particular, estén o no patentados, no implica que la FAO los apruebe o recomiende de preferencia a otros de naturaleza similar que no se mencionan.

ISBN 978-92-5-006912-8

All rights reserved. Reproduction and dissemination of material in this information product for educational or other non-commercial purposes are authorized without any prior written permission from the copyright holders provided the source is fully acknowledged. Reproduction of material in this information product for resale or other commercial purposes is prohibited without written permission of the copyright holders. Applications for such permission should be addressed to: Chief, Electronic Publishing Policy and Support Branch, Communication Division, FAO, Viale delle Terme di Caracalla, 00153 Rome, Italy or by e-mail to: copyright@fao.org

Tous droits réservés. Les informations contenues dans ce produit d'information peuvent être reproduites ou diffusées à des fins éducatives et non commerciales sans autorisation préalable du détenteur des droits d'auteur à condition que la source des informations soit clairement indiquée. Ces informations ne peuvent toutefois pas être reproduites pour la revente ou d'autres fins commerciales sans l'autorisation écrite du détenteur des droits d'auteur. Les demandes d'autorisation devront être adressées au Chef de la Sous-division des politiques et de l'appui en matière de publications électroniques, Division de la communication, FAO, Viale delle Terme di Caracalla, 00153 Rome, Italie ou, par courrier électronique, à copyright@fao.org

Todos los derechos reservados. Se autoriza la reproducción y difusión de material contenido en este producto informativo para fines educativos u otros fines no comerciales sin previa autorización escrita de los titulares de los derechos de autor, siempre que se especifique claramente la fuente. Se prohíbe la reproducción del material contenido en este producto informativo para reventa u otros fines comerciales sin previa autorización escrita de los titulares de los derechos de autor. Las peticiones para obtener tal autorización deberán dirigirse al Jefe de la Subdivisión de Políticas y Apoyo en Materia de Publicación Electrónica de la División de Comunicación de la FAO, Viale delle Terme di Caracalla, 00153 Roma, Italia, o por correo electrónico a copyright@fao.org

PREPARATION OF THIS DOCUMENT

The Technical Guidelines on Aquaculture Certification have been developed by FAO upon the request of its Members attending the 3rd Session of the Committee on Fisheries (COFI) Sub-Committee on Aquaculture, held in India from 4–8 September 2006, through a thorough consultative process with major stakeholders from governments, industry and civil society. The guidelines were approved by the 29th Session of COFI, held in Rome from 31 January to 4 February 2011. The guidelines provide advice on developing, organizing and implementing credible aquaculture certification schemes, which are viewed as potential market-based tools for minimizing negative impacts and increasing societal and consumer benefits and confidence in the process of aquaculture production and marketing.

PRÉPARATION DE CE DOCUMENT

Les Directives techniques relatives à la certification en aquaculture ont été établies par la FAO à la demande de ses membres présents à la 3^{ème} session du Sous-Comité de l'aquaculture du Comité des pêches (COFI), qui s'est tenue en Inde du 4 au 8 Septembre 2006. Un processus approfondi de consultation a été mis en place avec les principaux intervenants des gouvernements, de l'industrie et de la société civile. Les lignes directrices ont été approuvées par la 29^{ème} session du Comité des pêches, tenue à Rome du 31 Janvier au 4 Février 2011. Ces directives fournissent des conseils pour le développement, l'organisation, et la mise en place de systèmes crédibles de certification pour l'aquaculture qui sont considérées comme des outils potentiels de marché pour minimiser les impacts négatifs, accroître les bénéfices au niveau sociétal et celui des consommateurs et renforcer la confiance dans les productions aquacoles et dans la commercialisation de ces produits.

PREPARACIÓN DE ESTE DOCUMENTO

Las Directrices técnicas para la certificación en la acuicultura han sido desarrolladas por la FAO a petición de sus miembros que participaron en la 3ª Sesión del Comité de Pesquerías (COFI) Sub-Comité sobre Acuicultura, que tuvo lugar en La India el 4-8 de Septiembre 2006, a través de un proceso consultivo global con las partes interesadas como gobiernos, industria y sociedad civil. Las Directrices Técnicas fueron aprobadas por la 29ª Sesión de COFI que tuvo lugar en Roma del 31 de Enero al 4 de Febrero de 2011, y proporcionan asesoramiento sobre desarrollo, organización y aplicación de sistemas creíbles de certificación de acuicultura que se presentan como herramientas potenciales basadas en la mercado para minimizar los impactos negativos e incrementar los beneficios sociales y del consumidor, y la confianza en el proceso de producción y marketing de la acuicultura.

FAO.

Technical Guidelines on Aquaculture Certification.

Directives techniques relatives à la certification en aquaculture.

Directrices técnicas para la certificación en la acuicultura.

Rome/Roma, FAO. 2011. 122 pp.

ABSTRACT

Global production from aquaculture is growing substantially and provides increasingly significant volumes of fish and other aquatic food for human consumption, a trend that is projected to continue. Although aquaculture growth has potential to meet the growing need for aquatic foods and to contribute to food security, poverty reduction and, more broadly, to achieving sustainable development and the Millennium Development Goals, it is increasingly recognized that improved management of the sector is necessary to achieve this potential. The application of certification in aquaculture is now viewed as a potential market-based tool for minimizing potential negative impacts and increasing societal and consumer benefits and confidence in the process of aquaculture production and marketing. These guidelines provide guidance for the development, organization and implementation of credible aquaculture certification schemes.

RÉSUMÉ

La production aquacole mondiale augmente de manière importante et fournit un volume significatif croissant de poissons et de produits aquatiques pour la consommation humaine, tendance qui devrait se prolonger. Bien que la croissance de l'activité aquacole pourrait permettre de répondre à une demande croissante en produits aquatiques et pourrait participer à la sécurité alimentaire, à la réduction de la pauvreté, et d'une manière générale, permettre un développement responsable et atteindre les objectifs du Millénaire pour le développement, il est de plus en plus reconnu qu'il est nécessaire d'améliorer les pratiques utilisées dans ce secteur pour atteindre ce potentiel. La certification en aquaculture est maintenant perçue comme un outil envisageable, basé sur les marchés, pour minimiser les possibles impacts négatifs et augmenter d'une part les avantages pour la société et les consommateurs et d'autre part la confiance dans les systèmes de productions aquacoles et de commercialisation. Les présentes directives fournissent des conseils pour le développement, l'organisation, et la mise en place de systèmes crédibles de certification pour l'aquaculture.

RESUMEN

La producción global de la acuicultura está creciendo considerablemente y suministra de manera creciente volúmenes significativos de pescado y otros alimentos acuáticos para consumo humano, una tendencia que se proyecta en ascenso continuo. Si bien el crecimiento de la acuicultura tiene el potencial para satisfacer la creciente necesidad de alimentos acuáticos y para contribuir a la seguridad alimentaria, la reducción de la pobreza y más ampliamente para alcanzar el desarrollo sostenible y los Objetivos de Desarrollo del Milenio, se reconoce cada vez más que es necesario un mejor manejo del sector para alcanzar dicho potencial. La aplicación de la certificación en la acuicultura se ve ahora como una herramienta basada en el mercado y con un gran potencial para minimizar los virtuales impactos negativos, aumentar los beneficios sociales y del consumidor, así como la confianza en el proceso productivo y de comercialización de la acuicultura. Estas directrices proveen orientación para el desarrollo, organización e implementación de sistemas confiables de certificación de la acuicultura.

CONTENTS	Page
TECHNICAL GUIDELINES ON AQUACULTURE CERTIFICATION	1
BACKGROUND	1
SCOPE	2
TERMS AND DEFINITIONS	3
APPLICATION	6
PRINCIPLES	7
MINIMUM SUBSTANTIVE CRITERIA	9
Animal health and welfare	9
Food safety	11
Environmental integrity	13
Socio-economic aspects	15
INSTITUTIONAL AND PROCEDURAL REQUIREMENTS	16
Governance	16
Standard setting	17
Accreditation	22
Certification	28
SPECIAL CONSIDERATIONS FOR IMPLEMENTATION	36
 TABLE DES MATIÈRES	 Page
DIRECTIVES TECHNIQUES RELATIVES À LA CERTIFICATION EN AQUACULTURE	39
CONTEXTE	39
DOMAINE D'APPLICATION	40
TERMES ET DÉFINITIONS	41
APPLICATION	45
PRINCIPES	46
CRITÈRES MINIMUMS REQUIS	48
Santé animale et bien-être animal	48
Sécurité sanitaire des aliments	50
Protection de l'environnement	52
Aspects socioéconomiques	55
EXIGENCES INSTITUTIONNELLES ET PROCÉDURALES	55
Gouvernance	56

Normalisation	57
Homologation	62
Certification	69
CONSIDÉRATIONS PARTICULIÈRES RELATIVES À LA MISE EN ŒUVRE	78

ÍNDICE	Página
DIRECTRICES TÉCNICAS PARA LA CERTIFICACIÓN EN LA ACUICULTURA	81
ANTECEDENTES	81
ALCANCE	82
TÉRMINOS Y DEFINICIONES	83
APLICACIÓN	87
PRINCIPIOS	88
CRITERIOS SUSTANTIVOS MÍNIMOS	90
Salud y bienestar animal	90
Inocuidad alimentaria	92
Integridad ambiental	95
Aspectos socioeconómicos	97
REQUISITOS INSTITUCIONALES Y DE PROCEDIMIENTO	98
Gobernanza	98
Establecimiento de normas	99
Acreditación	104
Certificación	111
CONSIDERACIONES ESPECIALES RELACIONADAS CON LA IMPLEMENTACIÓN	121

TECHNICAL GUIDELINES ON AQUACULTURE CERTIFICATION

BACKGROUND

1. Global production from aquaculture is growing substantially and provides increasingly significant volumes of fish and other aquatic food for human consumption, a trend that is projected to continue. Although aquaculture growth has potential to meet the growing need for aquatic foods and to contribute to food security, poverty reduction and, more broadly, to achieving sustainable development and the Millennium Development Goals, it is increasingly recognized that improved management of the sector is necessary to achieve this potential.

2. Aquaculture is a highly diverse production sector comprising many different systems, sites, facilities, practices, processes and products, conducted under a wide range of political, social, economic and environmental conditions.

3. Efforts to promote aquaculture development should recognize the special concerns and interests of resource-poor small-scale aquaculture farmers, and encourage corporate social responsibility in engaging small-scale farmers and other small-scale stakeholders in market chains. Certification schemes should not create obstacles to trade or exclude small-scale farmer aquaculture products from market chains.

4. Aquaculture production and trade have increased, but concerns have emerged regarding possible negative impacts on the environment, communities and consumers. Solutions to many of these issues have been identified and addressed. The application of certification in aquaculture is now viewed as a potential market-based tool for minimizing potential negative impacts and increasing societal and consumer benefits and confidence in the process of aquaculture production and marketing.

5. Although aquatic animal health and food safety issues of aquaculture have been subjected to certification and international compliance for many years, aspects of animal welfare, environmental issues and socio-economic aspects have not been subjected to compliance or certification.

SCOPE

6. These guidelines provide guidance for the development, organization and implementation of credible aquaculture certification schemes.

7. The guidelines consider a range of issues which should be considered relevant for the certification in aquaculture, including: a) animal health and welfare; b) food safety; c) environmental integrity and d) socio-economic aspects associated with aquaculture.

8. Sustainable development of aquaculture depends on three factors, social, economic and environmental sustainability, all of which have to be addressed proportionally.

9. There is an extensive national and international legal framework in place for various aspects of aquaculture and its value chain, covering such issues as aquatic animal disease control, food safety and conservation of biodiversity. Legislation is particularly strong for processing, export and import of aquatic products. Recognized competent authorities are normally empowered to verify compliance with mandatory national and international legislation. Other issues such as environmental sustainability and socio-economic aspects may not be covered in such a binding manner and open the opportunity for voluntary certification as a means to demonstrate that a particular aquaculture system is managed responsibly.

10. Credible aquaculture certification schemes consist of three main components: (i) standards; (ii) accreditation; and (iii) certification. The guidelines therefore cover:

- standard setting processes required to develop and review certification standards;
- accreditation systems needed to provide formal recognition to a qualified body to carry out certification;
- certification bodies required to verify compliance with certification standards.

11. Developing and implementing a certification scheme may be undertaken by any entity qualified to do so in accordance with the requirements of these guidelines. Such an entity can include, *inter alia*, a government, an intergovernmental organization, a non-governmental organization, private sector group (e.g. a producer or trade association),

a civil society arrangements, or consortium comprising some or all of these different stakeholder groups, as direct users of the guidelines. The guidelines provide information on the institutional and organizational arrangements for aquaculture certification, including governance requirements, particularly to ensure that conflicts of interest are avoided.

TERMS AND DEFINITIONS

12. For the purpose of these international guidelines on aquaculture certification, the following terms and definitions apply. These terms and definitions come from or were derived from existing recognized material (e.g. FAO¹, ISO², Codex Alimentarius³, OIE⁴, FAO Ecolabelling Guidelines, FAO Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries [CCRF] and many others), and stakeholder inputs received during the process of developing the guidelines.

Accreditation

Procedure by which a competent authority consistent with applicable law gives formal recognition that a qualified body or person is competent to carry out specific tasks.

(Modified from ISO/IEC Guide 2:1996, 12.11)

Accreditation body

Body that conducts and administers an accreditation system and grants accreditation.

(ISO Guide 2, 17.2)

Accreditation system

System that has its own rules of procedure and management for carrying out accreditation. Accreditation of certification bodies is normally awarded following successful assessment and is followed by appropriate surveillance.

(ISO Guide 2, para. 17.1)

¹ Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations.

² International Organization for Standardization.

³ Codex Alimentarius Commission.

⁴ World Organisation for Animal Health.

Aquaculture

The farming of aquatic organisms involving intervention in the rearing process to enhance production and the individual or corporate ownership of the stock being cultivated.

(Modified from the FAO Glossary of Aquaculture – www.fao.org/fi/glossary/aquaculture/)

Audit

A systematic and functionally independent examination to determine whether activities and related results comply with planned objectives.

(Codex Alimentarius, Principles for Food Import and Export Certification and Inspection, CAC/GL 20)

Certification

Procedure by which certification body or entity gives written or equivalent assurance that a product, process or service conforms to specified requirements. Certification may be, as appropriate, based on a range of audit activities that may include continuous audit in the production chain.

(Modified from ISO Guide 2, 15.1.2; Principles for Food Import and Export Certification and Inspection, CAC/GL 20; Ecolabelling Guidelines)

Certification body or entity

Competent and recognized body, governmental or non-governmental, that conducts certification and audit activities. A certification body may oversee certification activities carried out on its behalf by other bodies.

(Based on ISO Guide 2, 15.2)

Certification scheme

The processes, systems, procedures and activities related to standard setting, accreditation and implementation of certification.

(Adapted from the Report of the First Expert Workshop on Aquaculture Certification held in Bangkok, Thailand, March 2007)

Chain of custody

The set of measures that verify that a certified product originates from a certified aquaculture production chain, and is not mixed with non-certified products. Chain of custody verification measures should cover the tracking/traceability of the product all along the production, processing, distribution and marketing chain, the tracking of documentation, and the quantity concerned.

(From FAO Fisheries Ecolabelling Guidelines)

Conformity assessment

Any activity concerned with determining directly or indirectly that relevant requirements are fulfilled.

(Modified from ISO Guide 2, 12.2)

Group certification

Certification for a group of small-scale aquaculture farmers or aquaculture farmer cooperative who has key characteristics in common in term of nature of production, proximity of farm location, common marketing as a group. The group has an Internal Control System to ensure compliance with the standards by all members of the group.

Small-scale aquaculture

Aquaculture farms with small production volume, and/or relatively small surface area, mainly without permanent labour, and typically lacking technical and financial capacity to support individual certification.

(Adapted from the Report of the First Expert Workshop on Aquaculture Certification held in Bangkok, Thailand, March 2007)

Standard

An approved document that provides for common and repeated use, rules, guidelines or characteristics for products or related processes and production methods, with which compliance is not mandatory under international trade rules. It may also include or deal exclusively with terminology, symbols, packaging, marking or labelling requirements as they apply to a product, process or production method. A public sector standard is prepared by the international standardization community, and is always approved by an officially recognized body. A private sector standard is prepared by a private body and is not in all cases approved by an officially recognized body.

(Based on TBT agreement, Annex 1, para. 2)

Standard setting body, organization or entity

Organization or entity that has recognized activities in standard setting.

(Based on ISO Guide 2, para. 4.3)

Third party

Person or body that is recognized as being independent of the parties involved, as concerns the issue in question, and involves no conflict of interest.

(ISO/IEC Guide 2:1996; Ecolabelling Guidelines)

Traceability

The ability to follow the movement of a product of aquaculture, or inputs such as feed and seed, through specified stage(s) of production, processing and distribution.

(Adapted from Codex)

Unit of certification

The scale or extent of the aquaculture operation(s) assessed and monitored for compliance. The unit of certification could consist of a single farm, production unit or other aquaculture facility. The certification unit could also consist of a group or cluster of farms that should be assessed and monitored collectively.

Veterinary medicinal products

Any substance or combination of substances presented for treating or preventing disease in animals or which may be administered to animals with a view to making a medical diagnosis or to restoring, correcting or modifying physiological functions in animals.

(EU Directive 2001/82/EC)

APPLICATION

13. These guidelines for voluntary certification schemes are to be interpreted and applied in their entirety in a manner consistent with national laws and regulations and, where they exist, international agreements.

14. Entities responsible for new and existing aquaculture certification schemes should undertake to assess, verify and document that these certification schemes have been developed and are being implemented in accordance with the guidelines. If there are deficiencies in the way an existing scheme was developed and/or in how it is being implemented, the entities responsible for the functions (i.e. standard setting, accreditation or certification) should act accordingly to define and implement a corrective action plan. When this is completed, the entities should verify and document that the scheme is in accordance with the guidelines. There should not be any conflict of interest among the entities involved.

15. If the entities responsible for a private aquaculture certification scheme do not provide credible assurance that the scheme has been developed and is being implemented in accordance with the guidelines, stakeholder groups (especially those being certified under the scheme)

may use these guidelines to have the scheme evaluated by a body with appropriate expertise or undertake such evaluation themselves. See chapter on Institutional and Procedural Requirements for details.

16. The evaluation would use these guidelines to assess whether a certification scheme is developed and implemented in accordance with the guidelines regarding, *inter alia*:

- whether the principles have been adhered to;
- whether the special considerations have been addressed;
- whether the objectives of the scheme and issue areas have been addressed in accordance with the appropriate minimum substantive requirements; and
- whether the standard setting, accreditation and/or certification have been developed and implemented in accordance with the institutional and procedural requirements.

PRINCIPLES

17. **Aquaculture certification schemes:**

- a. should be based on international standards or guidelines, where applicable, and must recognize the sovereign rights of States and comply with relevant local, national and international laws and regulations. They must be consistent with relevant international agreements, conventions, standards, codes of practice and guidelines.
- b. should recognize that any person or entity undertaking aquaculture activities is obliged to comply with all national laws and regulations.
- c. should be developed based on the best scientific evidence available, also taking into account traditional knowledge, provided that its validity can be objectively verified.
- d. should be developed and implemented in a transparent manner and should ensure that there is no conflict of interest among the entities that are responsible for standard setting, accreditation and certification. These entities should facilitate mutual recognition, strive to achieve harmonization and

recognize equivalence based on the requirements and criteria outlined in these guidelines.

e. should be open to scrutiny by consumers, civil society, and their respective organisations and other interested parties, while respecting legitimate concerns to preserve confidentiality.

f. should be credible and robust, be fully effective in achieving their designated objectives.

g. should promote responsible aquaculture during production as outlined in the FAO Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries, in particular Article 9, Aquaculture Development.

h. should include adequate procedures for maintaining chain of custody and traceability of certified aquaculture products and processes.

i. should establish clear accountability for all involved parties, including the owners of certification schemes, accreditation bodies and the certification bodies, in conformity with international requirements, as necessary.

j. should not discriminate against any group of farmers practising responsible aquaculture based on scale, intensity of production or technology; promote cooperation among certification bodies, farmers and traders; incorporate reliable, independent auditing and verification procedures; and should be cost-effective to ensure inclusive participation of responsible farmers.

k. should strive to encourage responsible trade, consistent with the FAO Technical Guidelines on Responsible Fish Trade, and should provide the opportunity for aquaculture products to enter international markets without obstacles to trade.

l. should ensure special considerations are provided to address the interests of resource-poor small-scale farmers, especially the financial costs and benefits of participation, without compromising food safety.

m. These aquaculture certification guidelines should recognize the special needs of farmers and governments in developing countries. These guidelines should also recognize the