**ROLE OF SUSTAINABLE FISHERIES AND AQUACULTURE FOR FOOD SECURITY AND NUTRITION**

**MAJOR COMMENTS ON HLPE REPORT**

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The High Level Panel of Experts (HLPE) has done an excellent job in presenting key issues related to the role of sustainable fisheries and aquaculture for food security and nutrition. All the identified issues are important and relevant, and should be studied by the Project Team. However, to make it easier for the Project Team to prepare the study and policy recommendation, I would like to make two suggestions:

1. It may be useful and desirable to separate issues related to aquaculture development from issues related to fishery development because the two groups of issues, in some cases, can be completely different because the former deals with privately owned resources while the latter deals with open resources accessible to most people, although it is also recoginized that in other cases, fisheries and aquaculture share common issues.
2. The issues should be ranked in terms of (a) their importance in achieving food security and nutrition, (b) their roles in global, regional and national levels, and (c) their importance in relation to aquaculture or fisheries development.

Table 1 is an attempt to classify the key issues for the role of fisheries and aquaculture in food security and nutrition on the basis of the above classification.

**Table 1. Classification of the key issues for the role of Fisheries and Aquaculture for food security and nutrition**

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| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Key Issues** | **Importance to Food Security and Nutrition**  **1= very low,**  **10= very high** | **Roles in Global, Regional and National levels** | **Importance in Aquaculture and Fisheries development** |
| 1.FAO “Code of Conduct” for responsible fisheries and aquaculture | 9 | National, regional and global | Fisheries and aquaculture |
| 2.Integrity of the resource base | 8 | National and regional | Fisheries and aquauclture |
| 3.Key socioeconomic issues affecting sustainability and development of fisheries and aquaculture | 10 | National | Fisheries and aquaculture |
| 4.Securing small-scale fisheries/artisanal fisheries in their fundamental rights | 7 | National and regional | Fisheries |
| 5.Gender specific needs and rights of women | 8 | National | Fisheries and aquaculture |
| 6.Improvements in institutional capacities for the success of management and governance of sustainable fisheries and aquaculture | 8 | National | Fisheries and aquaculture |
| 7. Promotion of sustainable aquaculture | 9 | National, regional and global | Aquaculture |
| 8. Policies for fair and improved trading | 8 | Regional and global | Fisheries and aquauculture |
| 9.Promotion of fish value chain development | 6 | National | Fisheries |
| 10. Policies and technology for waste minimization | 5 | National | Fisheries |
| 11.Policy options for transparency in aquatic resources management | 4 | National, regional and global | Fisheries |
| 12. Insurance in the fishery sector | 4 | National | Fisheries and aquaculture |
| 13.Investment in fisheries research and development | 8 | National | Fisheries and Aquaculture |

Specific comments on key issues are given below.

On issue no. 2 (integrity of the resource base), we need to develop not only policies to support an ecosystem approach to minimize waste generation, but also policies to manage mulitiple uses of water for aquaculture, irrigation (for agriculture), domestic water supply, power generation, and industries. These two types of policies must be supportive to each other to ensure that dwindling water resources in many countries could be used optimally without producing pollution in downstream areas.

On issue no. 4 (securing small-scale fisheries/artisanal fisheries), given the problem of overfishing in many coastal areas in developing countries and the widespread poverty among small-scale fishers, I would like to suggest that we should develop policies that would encourage small-scale fishers to become fish farmers, particularly in countries where the potential for aquaculture development is very large, as in Indonesia, Philippines and Bangladesh. In this way, we can reduce the pressure on marine and coastal resources to achieve sustainable development of fisheries and aquaculture.

On issue no. 7 (promotion of sustainable aquaculture), disease outbreaks have affected not only Atlantic salmon in Chile, oysters in Europe, and shrimp farming in Asia and Mozambique, but also seaweed farming in Indonesia. Widespread seaweed diseases in Buton Island in Southeast Sulawesi, for example, has devastated production and income of many small-scale fish farmers in this area. As a result, most of them have decided to go back in earning income from capture fisheries because they have lost interest in growing seaweed and they lack alternative employment opportunities. Thus, we need to review the latest development of aquaculture in all the countries where aquaculture is an important sector, and then formulate policy options for the sustainable development of aquaculture to ensure its maximum contribution to food security and nutrition.

On issue no. 10 (investment in fisheries research and development), it is well recognized that investment in fisheries and aquaculture research will bring high returns to the economy. Investment in research is not only required at the national level but also at the international level. Unfortunately, many developing countries have generally accorded low priority on the importance of fisheries and aquaculture research and development by providing small budget and for not providing adequate facilities for the scientists to carry out research and publish their findings. As a way out, we need to consider strengthening the World Fish Center (formerly known as ICLARM) because this center can play a major role in the formulation of policies which need to be carried out in this sector.

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