

Aquaculture development in Tanzania: status, trends and perspectives

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The development of aquaculture in Tanzania has taken two major phases. The pre-independence phase, beginning from 1949 to 1961, in which the colonial government stocked rivers with trout in the Northern and Southern highlands to promote sport fishery for recreation. On the other hand, Tanganyika natives continued with *acanja* types of extensive fish farming in rivers and minor lakes and reservoirs for food security and prestige. In the mid-1950s, declining stocks of the native tilapias in Lake Victoria; *Oreochromis esculentus* (L.) and *O. variabilis* (L.), prompted massive stocking of the two species in fish ponds and impoundments as a measure for enhancing live gene conservation and food security. The second phase takes account of all post-independence endeavors in aquaculture development.

This paper is an attempt to briefly delve into the past to set the stage for our understanding of the stanza-based aquaculture development in Tanzania comprising spontaneous risings and fallings. We argue here that the current (1980s to date) rising is a private-sector led and deriving from a former private sector foundation that focuses on sustenance of profit margins among other benefits. In this light the paper takes stock of Tanzania's mariculture and freshwater aquaculture development in terms of their status, trends and perspectives. We give success stories and turn challenges into opportunities as we chart the way forward. We conclude that for aquaculture to be sustainable it must prove it is worthy as *a business*: economically viable, socially compatible, culturally acceptable and environmentally sound.