

An overview of the institutions and education programs of higher learning in aquaculture development in Kenya

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The development of a sustainable aquaculture industry, like that of any other industry, is largely dependent on the principals of good management practices, themselves a culmination of purposeful training, both formal and informal. Education institutions and other training institutions thus have a crucial role in the development of a sustainable aquaculture industry in Kenya, since the 'production' of good managers is a result of the education programmes, particularly of the higher learning institutions, and modes of implementation. In the Kenyan context, aquaculture training can be said to be at its infancy, making it a high priority development target, on account of the just-emerging challenges brought about by the massive expansion of the aquaculture sector after the Economic Stimulus Project (ESP).

Aquaculture training in Kenya is offered at the informal level through on-farm attachment, whereby knowledge is gained through hands-on practice, and formally in training colleges and universities following particular programmes developed for that purpose. The KWS training college based in Naivasha has for a long time been the main source of manpower that oversees the field extension programmes for the aquaculture sector. Currently, several universities, notably Moi University, Nairobi University, and Maseno University have degree programmes in fisheries and aquaculture, with a few other universities running programmes on general aquatic sciences with some aquaculture inputs. However, these courses as currently structured do not meet the market requirements necessary for sustainable aquaculture development in Kenya. There is a need to initiate market-driven educational programmes that involve industry players which are the end users of the products of the institutions of higher learning. This paper reviews the current status of aquaculture training in Kenya and outlines possible ways to actualize the training of aquaculture practitioners and managers for sustainable aquaculture in Kenya.