

# Challenges for aquaculture development in eastern Africa

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Aquaculture has enormously expanded over the past few decades worldwide with high diversification of culture systems, species, and degrees of intensification. Despite a number of remarkable developments in sub-Saharan Africa, overall its pace of aquaculture development has been slower than on other continents. Several African countries, including in East Africa, have important freshwater and marine resources, yet present aquaculture activities are often traditional, extensive, and operate below capacity. As main bottlenecks often the lack of appropriate 'seed' and 'feed' are mentioned; i.e. resp. the production of sufficient numbers of good quality fish/shellfish larvae for stocking, and the availability of affordable high quality feeds for grow-out. Various macro- and micro-economic, social and cultural factors can be held responsible for the present status of African aquaculture.

However, fast population growth and uncertain yields from traditional agriculture and terrestrial husbandry, aggravated by climatic changes, currently press governments to explore diversification of food resources. This growing public awareness is illustrated by the increasing number and the more coherent character of initiatives (deployed by policy makers, research entities and donor organizations) to give aquaculture production a more prominent position among other food producing sectors as one of the tools for community development within the framework of national poverty reduction plans.