



# Shrimp Aquaculture Dialogue

Shrimp is one of the most popular types of seafood in the world. Approximately 5 million metric tons are consumed annually. Shrimp farms help meet the demand. One-third of the shrimp we eat is produced at farms instead of caught in the wild, making shrimp aquaculture one of the fastest growing types of aquaculture.

Most shrimp aquaculture occurs in China, followed by Thailand, Indonesia, India, Vietnam, Brazil, Ecuador and Bangladesh. The majority of farmed shrimp is imported by the United States, the European Union and Japan. Market growth has generated substantial income for developing and developed countries – particularly in Asia, the Americas and East Africa – but also has raised concerns about how shrimp farming affects the environment and society.

Through the Shrimp Aquaculture Dialogue, initiated by World Wildlife Fund (WWF) in 2007, standards for responsible shrimp farming will be established. The standards will help minimize the key environmental and social impacts related to shrimp farming. The International Principles for Responsible Shrimp Farming, adopted in 2006, will be the framework for the criteria, indicators and standards for responsible shrimp farming. The criteria will aim to provide direction on how to reduce each impact and the indicators will address how to measure the extent of each impact. Standards will be quantitative performance levels that evaluate whether a principle is achieved. The public comment period for the draft principles, criteria, indicators and standards began in March 2010. Final standards are expected by the end of 2010. The final standards will be given to a new organization, the Aquaculture Stewardship Council, which will be responsible for working with independent, third-party entities to certify farms that are in compliance with the standards.

The Dialogue includes more than 400 people, among them shrimp producers, academics, and representatives from nongovernmental organizations. The Dialogue meets in three of the most important shrimp farming regions: Asia, Africa and the Americas. Global standards will be created, with exceptions noted for regional differences associated with the various types of species raised and farming practices used.



## International Principles for Responsible Shrimp Farming

- Adopted by the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) in 2006
- Created by the Shrimp Farming and Environment Consortium, which included representatives from WWF, FAO, the World Bank, Network of Aquaculture Centres of Asia-Pacific, and the United Nations Environment Program
- Developed based on discussions at 140 meetings with more than 8,000 people and the publication of 40 case studies by 120 researchers

## Voice from the Field

“We need to transform the market so that customers and retailers recognize the value of sustainability. I am confident the Shrimp Aquaculture Dialogue process will help us do so.”

Bertrand Coûteaux  
Group UNIMA

Photos. Top to bottom: Farmed shrimp – © WWF / Aaron McNevin; Mangrove forest cleared for shrimp farming for export to Japan, Vietnam – © WWF-Canon / Elizabeth Kernf; Baskets full of shrimp in the Navotas fish market, Manila, Philippines – © WWF-Canon / Jürgen Freund; Aerial view of shrimp farms developed by AQUAMEN PECHE SA, surrounded by mangrove forests, Belo sur Mer, Madagascar – © WWF-Canon / WWF Madagascar.



### Principles for Shrimp Aquaculture

1. Comply with all applicable national laws and local regulations
2. Site farms in environmentally suitable locations while conserving local biodiversity, natural habitat and ecosystem function
3. Develop and operate farms with consideration for surrounding communities
4. Operate farms with responsible labor practices
5. Manage shrimp health in a responsible manner
6. Manage broodstock origin, stock selection, and effects of stock management
7. Use resources in an environmentally efficient and responsible manner



### Main Impacts of Shrimp Aquaculture

**Farm design:** Ecologically sensitive habitat, such as mangrove forests, can be cleared to create ponds for shrimp production.

**Water use/pollution:** Salt water from shrimp farms can seep into the ground water and onto agricultural land (a process called salinization); organic waste, harsh chemicals and antibiotics from shrimp farms can pollute the water; and aquifers can be drained to supply water to shrimp farms.

**Feed management:** Wild stocks of fish can be depleted for use in formulated feeds for shrimp production.

**Broodstock:** Biodiversity issues can arise from the collection of wild brood and seed.

**Pathogens:** The introduction of pathogens can lead to major shrimp disease outbreaks and significant economic losses in producing countries.

**Socioeconomic issues:** Jobs can be eliminated when there are fewer wild-caught shrimp to harvest and/or shrimp farms are shut down due to disease outbreaks; public access to land can be restricted.

**To learn more about the Shrimp Dialogue and other Dialogues initiated by WWF go to [worldwildlife.org/aquadialogues](http://worldwildlife.org/aquadialogues)**



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