

PROFET POLICY

A European Platform for the Communication of European RTD results to Stakeholders in Fisheries and Aquaculture

The Challenge

The modernisation of fisheries, including aquaculture-based production systems, has become a key element within the sustainable management of Europe's natural resources, an approach that is required because some exploited stocks are at historically low levels in European waters. To recover such stocks and to promote sustainable fisheries, the need for improved scientific advice on the medium- and long-term effects of different management tools has been clearly identified. New management methods are needed to recognize and resolve deficiencies through the improved understanding of key biological processes and parameters, fleet behaviour and socio-economic implications.

For the aquaculture sector, some aspects of the profession have also become important concerns due to interactions with the environment and quality and health aspects. At the moment, innovative European research continues to develop, while Fish Health legislation and environmental laws (including the Water Framework Directive) inevitably have direct and indirect effects on European aquaculture, coastal and inland. Not only are the fisheries and aquaculture sectors aware that modernisation is needed, but also that society at large is raising important questions that concern the acceptability of the activities of both sectors – for example, over-fishing and discards for fisheries, while by-products, waste discharge and fish welfare are key subjects for aquaculture.

Although representative organisations and their members regularly discuss such issues, it is not always clear that the details of policy and the mechanisms of decision-making are fully understood by professional stakeholders. Conversely, policy-makers need to be fully informed of the effects of policy on the professional sectors addressed.

Moreover, to succeed in modernising the fisheries and aquaculture sectors, the creation of new skills and the development and communication of these is necessary, requiring investment and promotion at all levels. Exposure of research results to the professionals, the policy-makers and other stakeholders will provide the stimulus for technology and knowledge transfer.

Project Objective

'PROFET POLICY' provided an opportunity for interested stakeholders to become better informed on European policies that affect their sector. Moreover, the project aimed to provide the Commission with clear recommendations for scientific support to such policies.

'PROFET POLICY' has achieved this by building a platform for the communication and dissemination of the results of EU-funded research projects, in fisheries and aquaculture, of the 5th and 6th Framework Research Programmes.

EATiP Thematic Area of Relevance

TA1: Product Quality, Consumer Safety and Health

TA2: Technology and Systems

TA3: Managing the Biological Lifecycle

TA4: Sustainable Feed Production

TA5: Integration with the Environment

TA6: Knowledge Management

TA7: Aquatic Animal Health and Welfare

TA8: Socio-Economics and Management

Key Words

Policy, sustainability, communication, dissemination, fisheries, aquaculture, RTD, European projects, technical leaflets, workshops, network, stakeholders, platform

Project Information

Contract number:
22771

Contract type:
Specific Support Action

Action line:
POLICIES-1.3 The modernisation and sustainability of fisheries policies

Duration:
39 months (01/11/2005 – 31/10/2008)

Coordinator:
Mr. Courtney Hough – Federation of European Aquaculture Producers
Rue de Paris 9, 4020 - Belgium

Tel:
+32 4 338 2995

E-mail:
courtney@feap.info

Project website:
<http://www.profetpolicy.info/>



Key Points

- To source and summarise, in simple language, research results in fisheries and aquaculture from the 5th and 6th Framework Programmes, focusing on relevance to policy.
- To improve the flow of information of research results funded by the Fifth and Sixth Framework Programmes to stakeholders, focusing on relevance to policy application and development – using web-based information supply, compendia and workshops.
- To provide dedicated forums for the exchange of views of National and European policy makers and stakeholders through the organisation of trans-national workshops covering the sectors of fisheries and aquaculture, incorporating the dissemination of research results.
- To identify research needs to support policy definition within the sectors, and as a support to the Common Fisheries Policy.

Output Highlights

- Modern communication tools have been used to facilitate the flow of information of the FP 5 and FP 6 projects, focusing on policy-relevant results, to a wide-range of stakeholders, using primarily a web-based structure for the publication of Technical Leaflets (TLs). TLs have also been produced to update stakeholders on European policy and legislative developments.
- Complementary workshops have been organised on a thematic and regional basis, covering fisheries and aquaculture, focusing on promoting an exchange of views between aquaculture producers, fishers, scientists, National and European policy-makers and other stakeholders. Core elements of the workshops have been the presentation of the status and discussion of the RTD needs of each sector so as to recommend clear guidelines and topics for future European Union Research Programmes. Member Organisations of the representative European Associations have been closely involved in the organisation of the workshops. As a result needs and requirements of both sectors have been clearly identified and recommendations for future EU RTD actions in fisheries and aquaculture have been provided to the EC.
- The 'PROFET POLICY' workshops also provided a platform for the presentation of ongoing FP6 projects under the area of scientific support to policy, as well as established fisheries and aquaculture organisations and networks that have direct relevance to the individual workshop theme, using posters or presentation stands, thus providing valuable exposure to these projects to research and policy-oriented stakeholders.
- Within the workshops, the development of new cooperative projects, between the professional and scientific stakeholders has been encouraged. Summaries of the project's Technical Leaflets have been provided to Workshop participants and are publicly available; regular compendia of the Technical Leaflets have been compiled and individual and complete Workshop proceedings have been made available for wide dissemination.

Next Steps – Suggested Actions/Follow On



RTD

- Profet Policy highlighted the benefits of dissemination of appropriate RTD project results to targeted regional groupings, where the opportunities for presentation and debate on the RTD achieved are possible. In addition, increasing the awareness of both the professionals and RTD players on how different European policies are evolving highlighted the specific benefits of cooperative research efforts. Increased understanding of the scientific content of the projects was made by the summary technical leaflets which provided a concrete overview of the research achieved in the specific thematic areas identified. The follow-up to this was realised by 2 identifiable efforts. The first was the constitution of the European Aquaculture Technology and Innovation Platform, whose goals and intentions were presented during PROFET POLICY, and which groups industry and RTD players within a formal structure. The second was AQUAINNOVA, a EU project that looks to improve governance within the sector, improving the priorities for RTD proposals and the integration of results within the professional sectors. This project includes the continuation of providing a framework for dissemination of RTD project results and for the optimisation of knowledge transfer mechanisms.

Related Publications/Projects

PROFET - AQUAFLOW - AQUAINNOVA