

Title Aquaculture stakeholders' perceptions, actions, and implications for its future: A comparison of the U.S.A. and Norway

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Abstract

Aquaculture has been promoted as an industry that will stimulate economic development, create employment opportunities, supply high-quality protein, and potentially enhance the stocks of the commercially/recreationally important fish species. Yet, despite considerable aquaculture expertise and technology in the U.S.A., the growth of this sector has remarkably underperformed relative to the rest of the world. The dissertation attempts to understand why aquaculture has not been so widely adopted in the U.S.A. in this dynamic aquaculture industry. It investigates the relationship between aquaculture stakeholders' perceptions and their intended actions.

The data used in this dissertation were collected via an original online survey implemented among aquaculture stakeholder leaders and experts in both the U.S.A. and Norway. The first manuscript concentrates on different U.S. aquaculture stakeholders and compares their perception differences and similarities and how perceptions influence their intended actions as to whether or not they will support aquaculture expansion in the U.S.A. over the next three years. The second manuscript focuses on U.S. aquaculture producers and processors and investigates the factors contributing to their intended actions to expand production capacity abroad. The third manuscript compares the perceptual differences of aquaculture stakeholders in the U.S.A. and Norway, and examines how their different perceptions influence their intended actions to support aquaculture development.

These findings help build a critical knowledge base about key aquaculture stakeholders' attitudes toward aquaculture, and recognize the varied perspectives of different stakeholder groups. The results have important implications for the future of the industry and for aquaculture management and planning. It provides solid evidence for aquaculture policy makers to understand how perceptions would influence aquaculture stakeholders' intended actions and how policies, practices and education could change perceptions of aquaculture stakeholders, and thereby the future of U.S. aquaculture.