



Food and Agriculture
Organization of the
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General Fisheries
Commission for
the Mediterranean

MSP for sustainable aquaculture in the Mediterranean and Black Sea region

Linda Fourdain, GFCM Secretariat

Online workshop of the MED-MSP-CoP

24 April 2026

Snapshot of aquaculture in the Med and BS



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Aquaculture production has grown steadily since 2013, and the sector emerges as an important driver of food security, employment and economic development in the region

SOMFI 2025

<https://www.fao.org/gfcm/publications/somfi/state-of-the-mediterranean-and-black-sea-fisheries-2025>



Total production

 Production volume
2 970 000 tonnes

58% Freshwater
36% Marine water
6% Brackish water



 Revenue
USD 9.3 billion

Marine and brackish water aquaculture

 Revenue
USD 5.2 billion

63% increase
Since 2013

 Jobs
113 000
directly employed

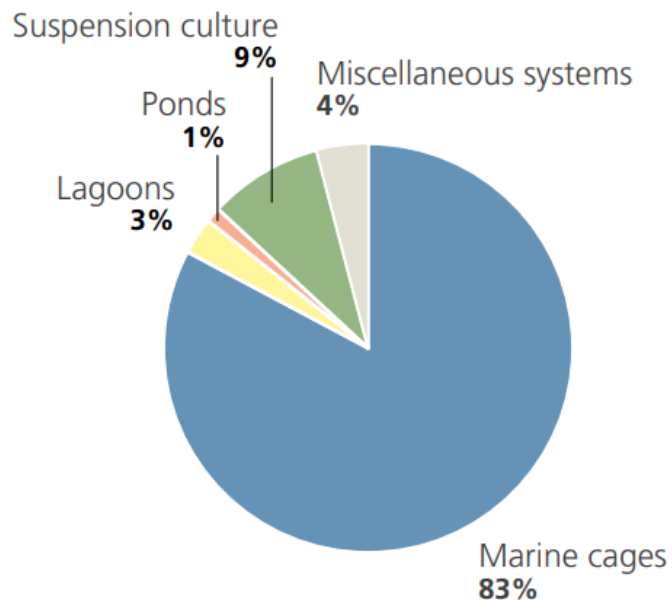
17% of jobs held by women

 Production volume
940 000 tonnes

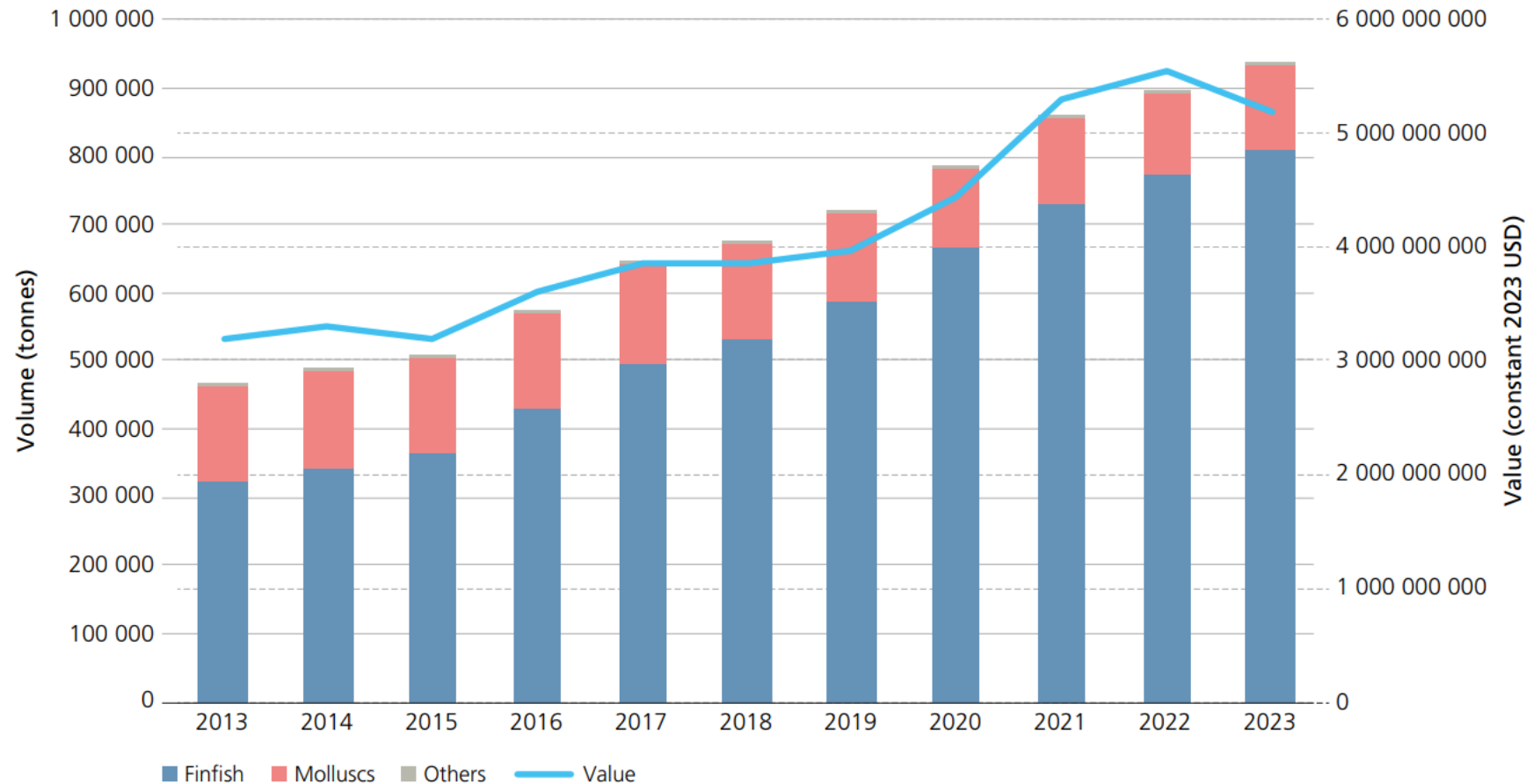
100% increase
Since 2013



Relative contributions of production methods to marine and brackish water aquaculture production in the Mediterranean and the Black Sea, 2023



Total annual volume and revenue of aquaculture production

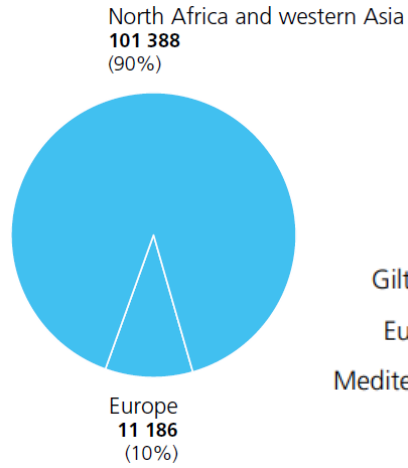


Note: "Others" refers to algae and crustacean species.

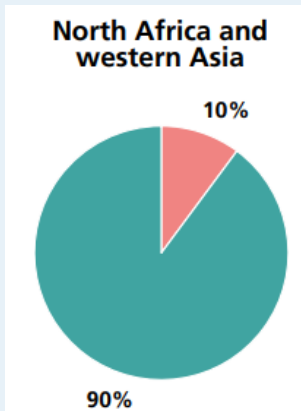
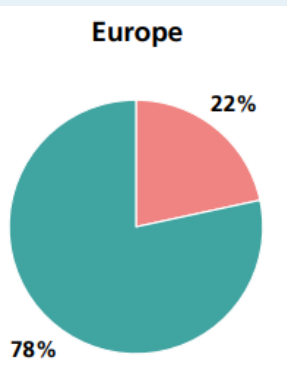
Aquaculture methods and species



Jobs
113 000
Directly employed

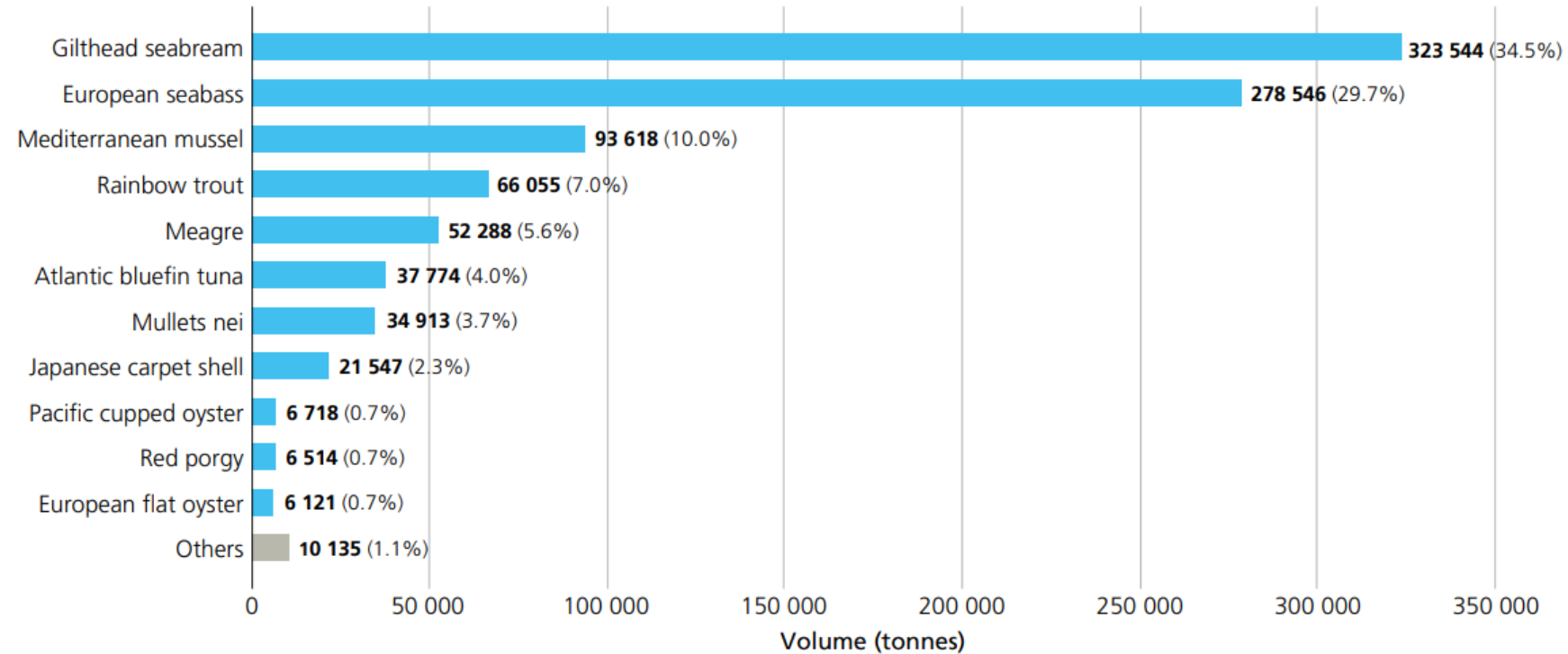


Gender-disaggregated aquaculture employment by region



Women Men

Annual aquaculture production by main species reared



Note: Percentages indicate the relative contributions of the main species reared to total marine and brackish aquaculture production in the Mediterranean and the Black Sea in 2023.

Aquaculture management in the Med and BS



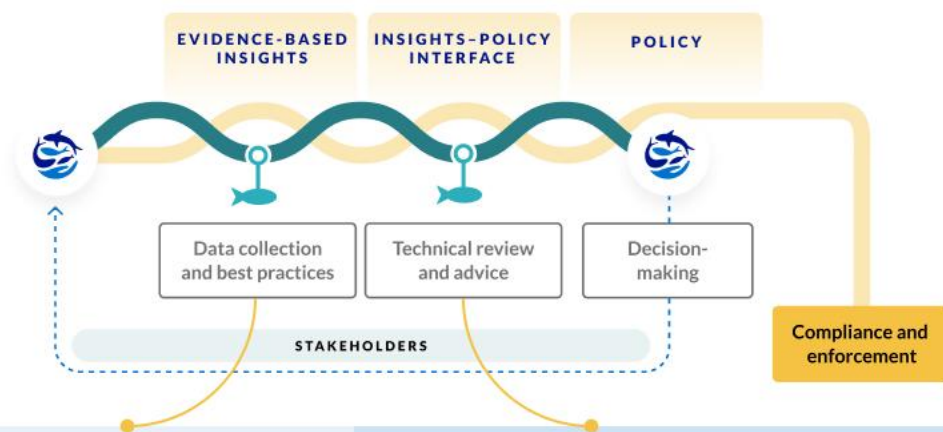
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Aquaculture is the fastest-growing component of Mediterranean and Black Sea aquatic foods. It requires national and regional measures to fulfill its potential, while ensuring environmental sustainability.

Aquaculture advisory process



Aquaculture Demonstration Centres



Technical Advisory Groups



Regional guidelines and guiding principles

Environmental monitoring

Responsible investment

Challenges

Climate change

Environmental interactions

Animal health and welfare

Governance and regulatory frameworks

Social acceptability and public perception

Target 3 Aquaculture: A sustainable and resilient sector growing to its full potential

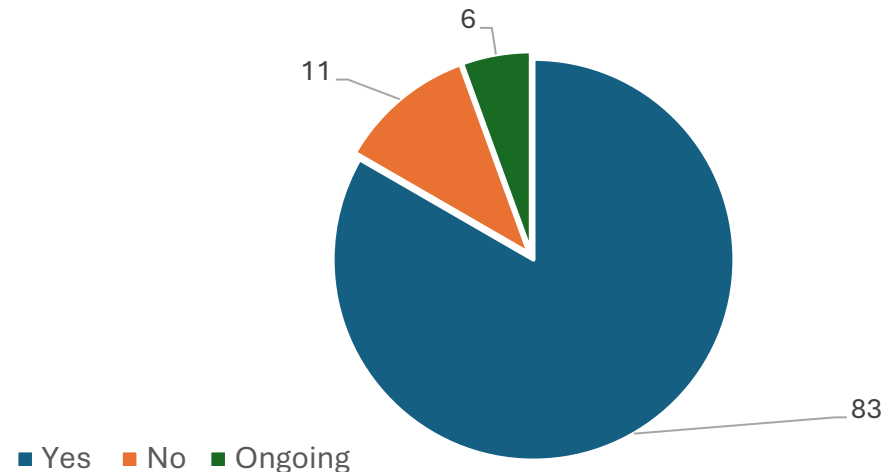
GFCM 2030 STRATEGY

FOR SUSTAINABLE FISHERIES
AND AQUACULTURE IN
THE MEDITERRANEAN
AND THE BLACK SEA

Output 2: Promoting practices in support of a sustainable aquaculture industry

- Improve the footprint of the aquaculture industry through applied research and capacity building, focussing on responsible practices and state-of-the-art techniques.
- Continue to promote allocated zones for aquaculture within marine spatial planning tools, through increased technical assistance.
- Promote environmentally friendly blue farming systems in Mediterranean lagoons in order to protect their valuable ecosystems and cultural heritage.

Aquaculture integrated in MSP or similar



Allocated zones for aquaculture (AZA)



Resolution GFCM/36/2012/1

Areas resulting from a zoning process of physical planning in which there is **no negative interferences** with other activities or users and where **environmental** conditions allow the development of the activity. Even if these areas are declared of **priority use** for aquaculture, other activities can be implemented within AZA. It involves the **coordination** among different authorities and is based on a **participatory approach**



ECONOMIC
Local economic development



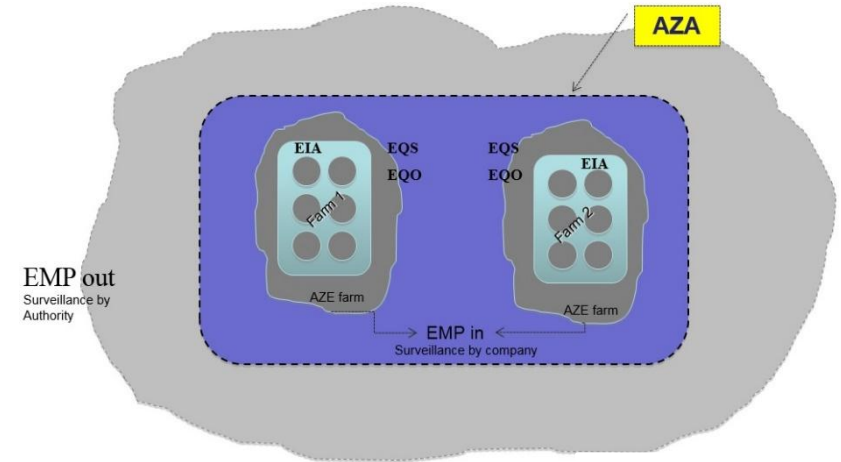
ENVIRONMENT
Reduced impacts on the environment



GOVERNANCE
Better dialogue and coordination



SOCIAL
Enhanced food security and social acceptability



AZE: Allowable Zone of Effects
EQO: Environmental Quality Objectives
EMP: Environmental Monitoring Programme
EQS: Environmental Quality Standards
EIA: Environmental Impact Assessment

Cross-border + Cross-sector
Management approach



AZA represents a valuable tool enabling to frame aquaculture activities into MSP

Workshops and trainings

A virtual seminar on aquaculture and marine spatial planning (MSP)

Online courses on the use of GIS in the establishment of AZA

Module 1: Spatial information and representation

Module 2: Planning for sustainable aquaculture development

Course on the use of GIS during the international symposium on fisheries and aquatic sciences (SOFAS 22 and 23)

Joint GFCM/RECOFI workshop on allocated zones for aquaculture

Advanced Specialised Course on Sustainable Development of Coastal Communities at the Tricase branch of CIHEAM-Bari

+ 300
participants



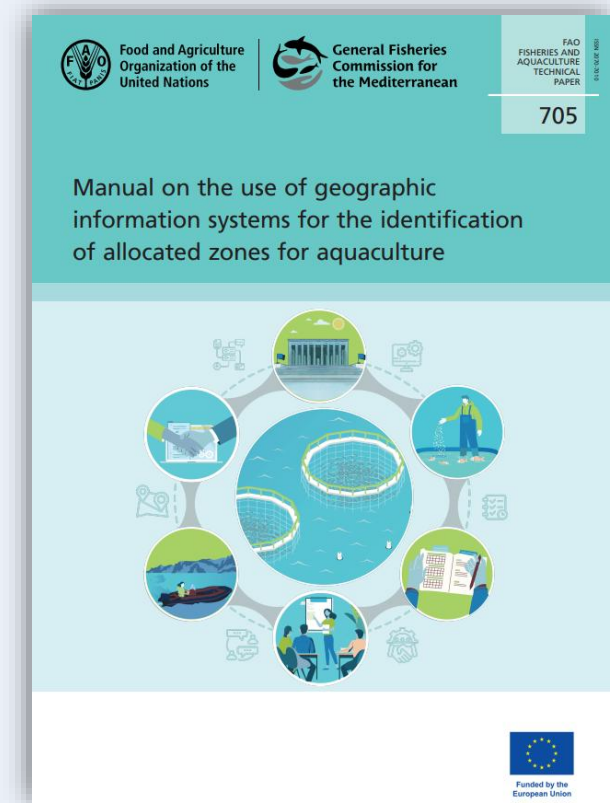
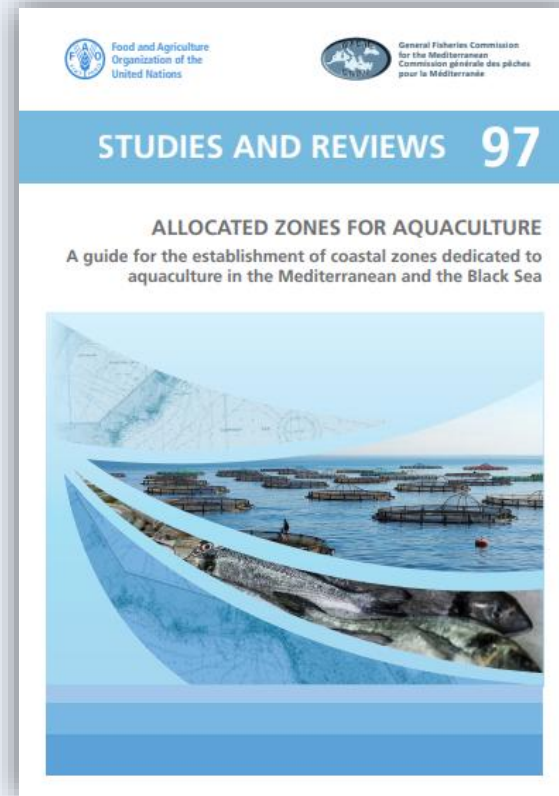
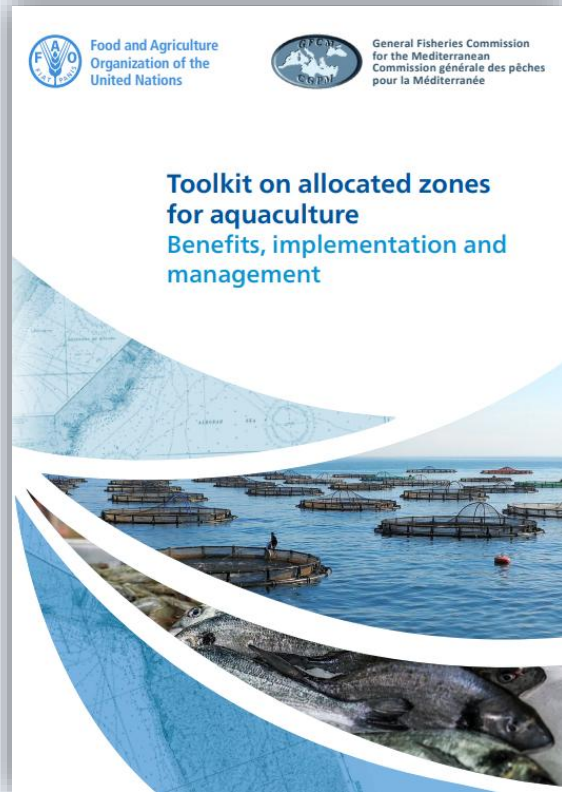
Technical assistance and capacity-building on AZA



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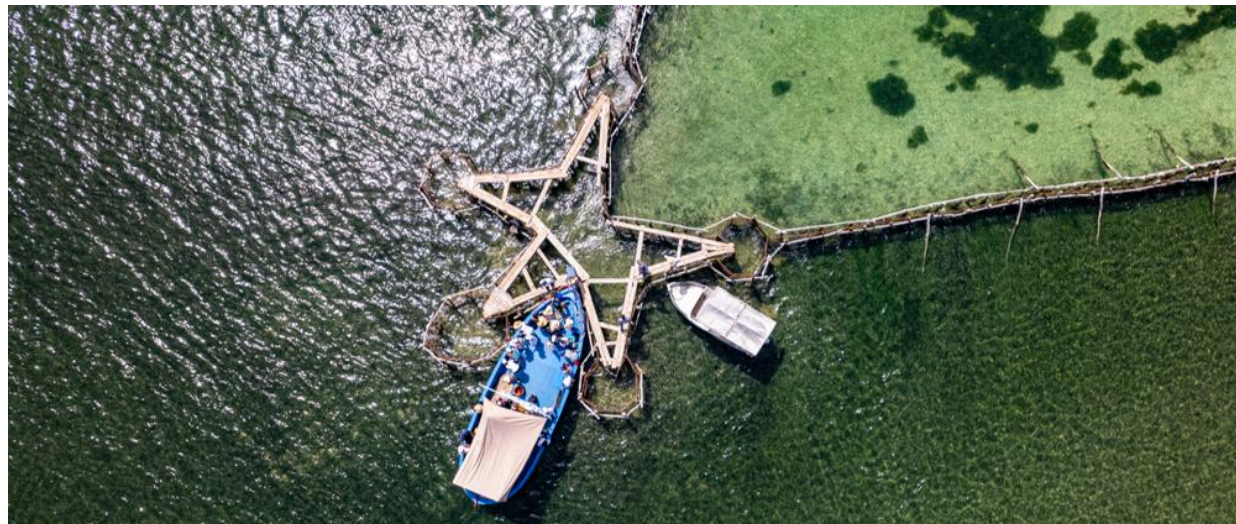


4-5 December 2024



Panel 4: Building resilient aquaculture in the face of a changing climate

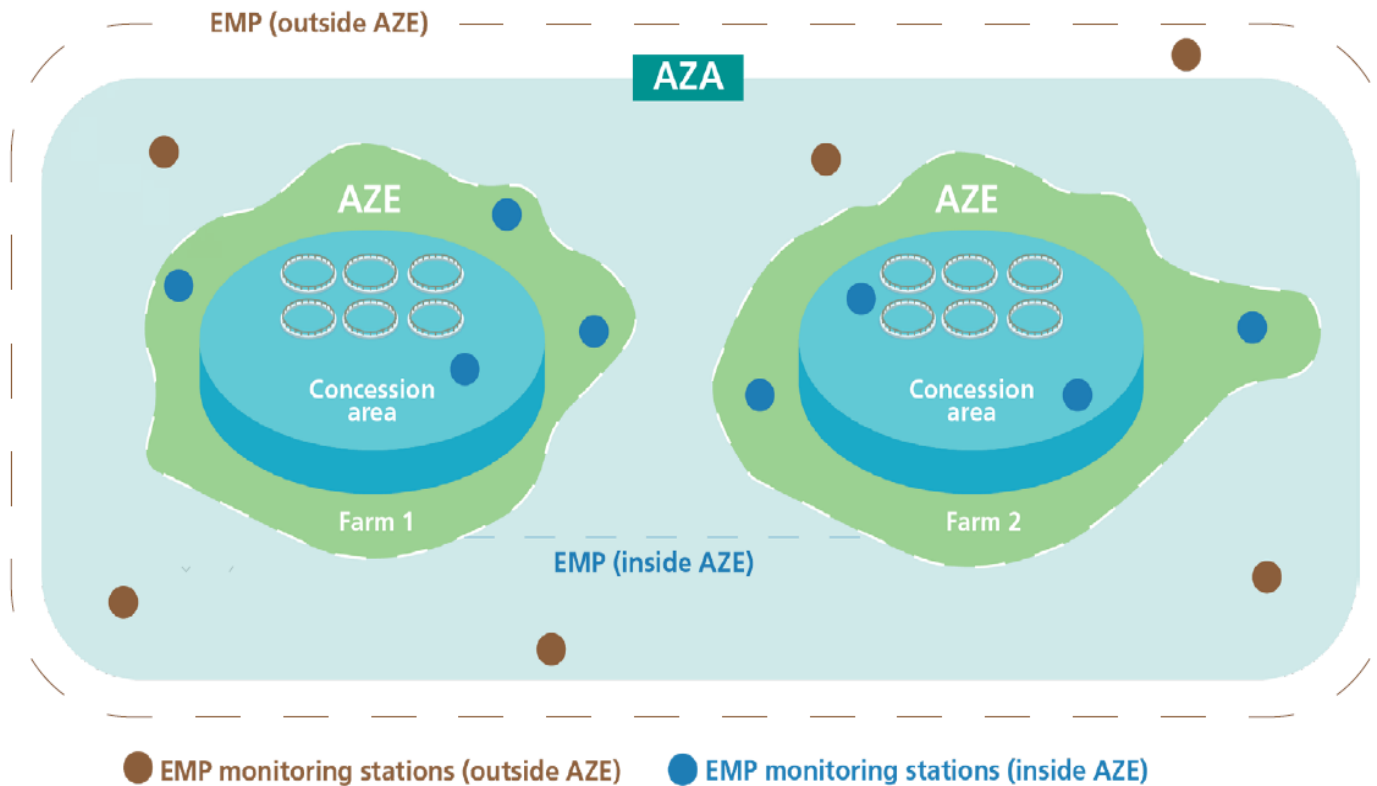
Aquaculture must proactively address challenges, such as temperature increase, extreme weather events, habitats degradation and disease outbreaks driven by climate change.



The use of innovative technologies, climate-resilient species and **MSP**, including **AZAs**, are essential strategies to mitigate climate-related risks and enhance aquaculture resilience in the region.

Priorities for the region

- Better and harmonised spatial data
- Stronger regional cooperation and exchange of good practices
- More stakeholder participation from the beginning of the process
- Simpler and more coherent regulatory frameworks
- Stronger links between AZA/MSP, climate change adaptation and environmental monitoring



Thank you for your attention

Linda Fourdain, GFCM Secretariat

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