

Letter of recommendations from International Carp Conference, regarding the reform of CFP and EFF Kazimierz Dolny (Poland), 15-16 September 2011

The future and the budget of the common fisheries policy (CFP) in the EU after 2014 is currently being discussed. Important decisions are scheduled to be taken this year. The discussion on the future of the CFP and the European Fisheries Fund (EFF), the financial tool for development of the sector, is almost entirely held on topics related to marine aquaculture in net cages or very intensive recirculation aquaculture systems.

Traditional pond aquaculture, which has proven its sustainability over a very long period of time, is not being adequately considered in the reform of the CFP and the EFF. Therefore we would like to highlight the specificities of traditional aquaculture, in order to enable decision makers to consider this aquaculture sector adequately in the reform.

Traditional carp farms are built at the areas with soil quality lower than demanded for agriculture. This creates wider possibility for human agricultural activity.

In order to distinguish traditional pond aquaculture from other forms of aquaculture in relation to the CFP we would like to point out some major differences:

Traditional pond aquaculture:

- does maintain by managing inland water bodies a diverse and indigenous fish stock
- does provide local consumers with high quality, fresh, and locally/regional fish through direct sales
- does support fish stock conservation projects with adequate fish for re-stocking,
- does help to maintain and manage local biodiversity by providing and managing habitats for many endangered and protected animals and plants.
- does contribute to water management in particular watershed

The diverse services and achievements of traditional pond aquaculture must get better attention in the reform of the CFP.

Traditional pond aquaculture can benefit the European population by provision of a reliable source of high quality, healthy and local/regional food.

Traditional pond aquaculture areas with their large ponds and lakes are focal centres for biodiversity in Central and Eastern Europe. This type of aquaculture is a key factor to maintain and develop these habitats through their sustainable work practice. Nevertheless constraints from environmental legislation does cause an important economic burden on traditional pond aquaculture. This burden can restrict economic viability

of such enterprises. The excellent environmental status of pond habitats can be lost by the disappearance of traditional fish farming businesses. Therefore control measures for currently protected species like cormorants, otters herons or beavers, causing immense economic damages to traditional land based aquaculture, are inevitable and urgent.

Traditional pond aquaculture does provide an important service to the public by carefully managing the water resource. Ponds and lakes do provide water retention, utilisation of nutrients and improvements for the local climate and landscape.

Traditional pond aquaculture businesses do need direct support for maintaining their operation. These aquaculture farms do provide an important service to the local community.

The future EFF must consider and be adapted to the special needs of traditional land based aquaculture. We ask for a special section addressing this aquaculture sector. The following points have to be considered:

- It is an EU objective to support medium, small and micro enterprises. This should be reflected by adapting the administrative burden for the application, payments and controls of EFF support aids to the administrative capabilities of such businesses.
- The traditional pond aquaculture entrepreneur must be adequately rewarded for the sustainable, regional services he does provide for the local community.
- Financial compensation for damages caused by animals must be considered.
- The traditional pond aquaculture regions are frequently located in underdeveloped rural areas. Therefore such regions must continue to be considered as "Fisheries - dependent areas". Financial support should be linked together with other aspects like eco-tourism in order to maintain and support the sustainable fisheries management practices in those areas. This would also provide these underdeveloped fisheries areas with new economic perspectives.
- To provide proper representation of pond aquaculture sector (e.g. Pond Aquaculture Advisory Committee).