



IDH Aquaculture program in Thailand

Thailand is the fourth largest global exporter of fish and fish products. In recent years Thailand's exports have declined as their farmed shrimp sector has faced challenges. Two major problems are disease issues and illegal labor practices at vessels where fish are caught that end up as feed in the farmed shrimp value chain. To solve these issues, IDH pilots an aquascope approach in Thailand and aims to gain supply chain oversight through the Seafood Taskforce.

Since 2010 IDH is orchestrating change towards responsible aquaculture. We co-founded the ASC together with WWF and accelerated ASC certification. We upgraded 630.000 MT, an equivalent of 250 Olympic swimming pools, of shrimp, tilapia and pangasius production towards sustainability.

IDH, The Sustainable Trade Initiative

IDH brings together businesses, companies, governments and NGOs to combine their interests and power in sustainable production and trade of tropical commodities. We co-finance new approaches to sustainable production and trade, and when successful organize new financial arrangements that mix public and private investments to scale them. By working together with companies, we ensure that new models are economically viable and replicable. We make sure there is sufficient demand for sustainable products.

We are endorsed and (financially) supported by numerous European governments and global institutions. Our head office is in the Netherlands. The goal of the [IDH Aquaculture Program](#) is to **develop** and **mainstream** responsible aquaculture that feed people and has social benefits and low environmental impact. We focus on the top 2 challenges in the sector: diseases and feed related issues.

Diseases result in loss of income, waste of inputs, water pollution and irresponsible practices like the excessive use of antibiotics. Diseases hamper producers to think long term, as disease occurrence threatens their long-term business. As a result, investors are reluctant to make long term (sustainable) investments.

Feed is most often the biggest cost in aquaculture production, but it is often used inefficiently. Feed often consists of marine ingredients such as fish oil and fish meal, which may be caught through illegal, unreported and unregulated practices (such as overfishing or illegitimate labor practices on vessels).

Aquascapes

Building on experiences with our [landscape](#) and [commodity](#) programs we are developing **aquascapes**. A geographical area where aquaculture farmers are connected through proximity, jurisdiction or by using the same water.



In these aquaculture areas, we improve production by strengthening **partnerships** as to develop joint strategies that tackle diseases and feed-related issues. We organize cooperation between (e.g.) producers, input suppliers, service providers and local governments and in the supply chain with traders, brands and retailers. We support **innovation** by promoting the use of technology and data to increase sector efficiency, traceability and transparency.

By strengthening **partnerships** and **innovation** we can reduce production risks, hence attracting **investments**. Together with financial institutions we can share risks and increase the profitability of an aquascape.

At the same time we encourage **market recognition** of better aquaculture areas, leading to [Verified Sourcing Areas](#) which enable buyers to effortlessly source sustainable products.

Track record in Thailand

From 2014 to 2015 IDH collaborated with **Project Issara**, a public-private sector platform and alliance to tackle human trafficking in Southeast Asia. The project aimed to elucidate the Thai seafood supply chain and possible trafficking risks, as well as identified solutions to these risks. In this project, we learned how retailer and importer supply chains in the seafood industry worked. This knowledge resulted in the private sector taking immediate action to address risks and improve identified issues.

In 2015 and 2016 IDH partnered with the **Sustainable Fisheries Partnership** to support shrimp farmers in Thailand to implement better management practices with a special focus on disease management.

The goal of the project was to give farmers that have stopped producing shrimp due to disease outbreak, the knowledge and confidence to get back into production.

We learned that there was a high willingness of the Thai farmers to participate in group management. As diseases move beyond the level of the farm, collaboration among neighboring farmers is essential and

increasing better management practices at the farm level alone is not enough.

Current program in Thailand

Our work in Thailand is centered around 1) ensuring that the marine resources that end up in aquaculture feed are sustainable; and 2) that the feed is not wasted at the farm level because of diseases and bad feed practices. To deliver on these challenges IDH collaborates with the Seafood Taskforce and with the Sustainable Shrimp Partnership in the Shrimp Health Resources Improvement Project (SHRImp).

IDH is a member of the **Seafood Taskforce**, a private-sector led initiative that aims to gain supply-chain oversight of the Thai seafood sector, and beyond. The aim is to tackle illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing as well as illegal labor practices.

IDH is also partnering with the **Sustainable Fisheries Partnership** and others in the Shrimp Health Resources Improvement Project (SHRImp). This project aims to create, develop and implement an early warning system on diseases at an area level. Farmers provide data to a platform, which is analyzed by an aquatic epidemiologist, who identifies risks to productivity or health management issues. Farmers receive real-time feedback on the data they provide. The project is currently being implemented in Surat Thani, Thailand.

More Info?

Please contact the Director for Aquaculture, Flavio Corsin
Corsin@ldhtrade.org
www.idhsustainabletrade.com/sectors/aquaculture/

Partners

Private

Seafood Taskforce
Seafresh Group
Beaver Street
Rubicon Resources
The Fishin' Company
Thai Union
Lyons Seafood
Sunnyvale Seafood
Tha Thong Shrimp Farmers Cooperative

Public

the Department of Fisheries of the Royal Government of Thailand

Other

University of Stirling
EURASTIP project
Project Issara
Sustainable Fisheries Partnership
Walmart Foundation