



IDH Aquaculture program in Vietnam

Vietnam is a top player in global aquaculture. The country is the largest producer and exporter of pangasius, and it ranks in the top 5 of the largest shrimp exporters in the world. The total aquaculture production in 2018 was 4.15 million tons. More than 1.6 million people are employed full time in the sector. The industry is however facing problems with diseases and related to that, unsustainable use of antibiotics. To help the country overcome these challenges, IDH pilots an aquascope approach in Vietnam.

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 basin.



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 aquascope.

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 Vietnam

IDH previously focused on certification for implementing more responsible practices at the farm level. This resulted in (e.g.) 25% ASC certification of Vietnam farmed pangasius within 1.5 years. The implementation of sustainability standards in pangasius and shrimp mitigated negative environmental impact and maximized social benefits.

However, less than 5% of global aquaculture production is currently certified. Unlike upgrading farmers through certification, efficiency issues (less disease risks, better FCR, improved survival rate) might not be solvable at the farm level but require a comprehensive and collaborative jurisdictional approach.

Current Program in Vietnam

Recognizing the importance of public private collaboration to address issues in aquaculture development, the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development (MARD) has established the **PPP Fish** including relevant government agencies, NGOs and the private sector. IDH co-chairs PPP Fish with the Vietnam Directorate of Fisheries (D-Fish) and the Vietnam Association for Seafood Exporters and Producers (VASEP).

In 2018, the PPP Fish agreed to **promote sustainable aquaculture through strengthening public private collaboration in the Mekong delta**. The Mekong River Delta of Vietnam accounts for 70% of the total Vietnamese aquaculture production. However, due to climate change, unsustainable farming practices, poor planning, inadequate disease control and limited coordination between the private and public sectors, aquaculture production is faced with high risks of disease outbreaks.

The project currently focusses on two target areas: Soc Trang for shrimp and Dong Thap for pangasius. The project aims to:

- Strengthen public and private sector collaboration for environmental and disease management;
- Improve the quality and the productivity of aquaculture production;
- Strengthen the traceability system of aquaculture products.

This is achieved by establishing a single database where public and private partners supply data to. That data is analyzed by experts on diseases and environmental impact, who provide recommendations.

IDH also partners with the **Seafood Taskforce**, a private-sector led initiative that aims to gain supply-chain oversight of the Thai seafood sector. IDH supports the expansion of this initiative to Vietnam as to create a level playing field and to eliminate potential illegal, unreported and unregulated fisheries from the aquaculture supply chain.

IDH is one of six founders of **Vietnamese Sustainable Shrimp Alliance (VSSA)** which aims to improve the quality and value of Vietnamese shrimp production towards social and environmental sustainability.

IDH will develop a **Verified Sourcing Area** in Vietnam to accelerate the production and market uptake of sustainable commodities. We support companies to verify the sustainability of an entire area, so it may no longer be necessary to verify each producer, mill, or commodity individually.

IDH is collaborating with **Minh Phu** to conduct a **Service Delivery Model** in shrimp farming. The idea is that Minh Phu's services are strengthened while benefitting smallholders. If successful, this will be scaled up with other members of VSSA.

With these efforts, we believe that the Vietnamese aquaculture sector can reach its potential of becoming the supplier of sustainable seafood for a growing world population

Partners

Private

Vietnam Association of Seafood Exporters and Producers (VASEP)
Vietnam fisheries Society (VINAFIS)
ICAFIS
Minh Phu Seafood Corporation
Camimex
My Thanh Shrimp Association in Soc Trang
Vinh Thuan Company Limited
Utxi Aquatic Products Processing Corporation
Soc Trang Seafood Joint Stock Company
Vinh Hoan Corporation
IDI Company
Viet Phu Company
Seafood Taskforce
Private Sector Development Research Board (Board IV)

Public

Vietnam Directorate of Fisheries (D-Fish)
Department of Animal Health
Provincial Department of Agriculture and Rural Development of Soc Trang
Provincial Department of Agriculture and Rural Development of Dong Thap
Ca Mau People Committee

Other

World Wild Fund for Nature Vietnam
Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ)
Blue You Consulting
Seafood Watch/Monterey Bay Aquarium

More Info?

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