



Food and Agriculture
Organization of the
United Nations

AQUATIC SCIENCES AND FISHERIES ABSTRACTS



Aquatic Sciences and Fisheries Abstracts (ASFA) is a global and long-standing network whose partners work collectively to advance equitable sharing of aquatic science, fisheries and aquaculture knowledge.

With the support of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), ASFA has developed its products and services, from its beginnings in 1971 as a printed abstracting and indexing journal, to a multilingual and multi-platform information system relevant to the digital age and accessible to all.

ASFA's network of global partners enjoy a range of benefits, foremost of which is the ability to promote their research outputs and receive complimentary access to the ASFA database, published by ProQuest. Additionally, partners can: access training, networking and professional development opportunities; are invited to contribute to specialised projects and collections; and are invited to participate in the ASFA Steering Committee.



ASFA's vision and mission

Vision: Aquatic science, fisheries and aquaculture information is accessible to all.

Mission: To organize, promote and share information relating to aquatic sciences, fisheries and aquaculture, paying particular attention to hard-to-reach research, the needs of low and middle income countries and global societal objectives.

ASFA objectives are to address the following work areas at international and country levels:



Ensuring the equal and findable, accessible, interoperable and reusable (FAIR) sharing of information related to aquatic environments and resources;



Identifying and addressing knowledge gaps through the provision of specialised collections and information services, with particular attention to societal objectives;



Providing a forum to share best practice and experiences in knowledge management in relevant areas; and



Promoting the value of libraries and information centres.

Introducing the ASFA Information System

To achieve equitable access to research related to aquatic environments, resources and organisms, ASFA has developed a multi-platform information system:

OpenASFA Interface

Available on the FAO Fisheries and Aquaculture website, the OpenASFA interface allows for the free searching of all OpenASFA records.



The application used by partners to create, store and publish their records. Partners can choose to create bibliographic (metadata only) records or deposit the full text of resources.

ASFA Thesaurus

A controlled vocabulary of over 5 700 concepts available in up to 40 languages. The Thesaurus is maintained by ASFA partners who contribute their subject and language skills.

ASFA Database

Published by ProQuest and available at cost to subscribers, the ASFA database contains over four million records. In return for their contributions to the ASFA database, partners receive complimentary access.

ASFA Governance

ASFA Steering Committee

decides upon and oversees the priorities, general objectives, plans and proposals for ASFA activities. The Steering Committee meets annually to agree these decisions and is led by a Chair and Vice-Chair. Each ASFA partner nominates one representative to serve as a member of the Steering Committee.

FAO facilitates ASFA by providing administrative and secretariat support to the partnership and supporting activities which advance the mission and objectives of ASFA. FAO provides the means for the necessary functioning of ASFA, which includes maintaining OpenASFA, growing the partnership and welcoming new partners and administering the ASFA Trust Fund.

ProQuest is the ASFA publishing partner and provides financial support for ASFA's activities based on subscription sales of the ASFA database. FAO and ProQuest support has enabled ASFA to develop its information system and meet the information needs of its partners, focusing on low and middle income countries.

How to join ASFA

ASFA is open to a broad range of entities, including governments, United Nations (UN) bodies, research institutes, civil society organisations and academia. The only requirement of partners is that they contribute records to the ASFA database, meaning a prospective partner needs to have sufficient time to dedicate to this task.

Once an entity is ready to join ASFA, a request should be sent to FAO with confirmation that they shall adhere to the vision, mission, objectives and guiding principles of ASFA, as well as the Operating Mechanisms (Annex I) and the Bangkok Statement (Annex III). Participation of non-State entities is subject to the requirements laid down in the FAO policies and guidelines for collaboration with the academia and the civil society.



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