Factors affecting the development of rainbow trout fish aquaculture in Mathira West District, Central Province-Kenya

Abstract:

This study focused on the general development of aquaculture as a fish farming system. Studies on aquaculture have dwelt on its growth (Allen, 1984, Hopkins, 1995, Bardach et al, 1972, Bardach, 1976, Brown, 1983, Karim et al, 2006). They subsume the potential for economic development and a bridge to poverty alleviation in marginalized and disadvantages communities. Rainbow trout aquaculture is a lucrative venture with figures in the year 2001 showing it to be the second most expensive fish in the country after Nile perch (Lates niloticus) in both fresh and marine water fishes of the country, 1 Metric ton fetching approximately Ksh. 225,000 (Ministry of Fisheries Development, 2003). Despite this, information available on rainbow trout aquaculture in Kenya is limited. This negatively impacts investment in this area which has a very high potential of improving the livelihoods of the rural people in areas where trout fish aquaculture is feasible. Therefore, the purpose of this study was to fill this gap in knowledge by examining the factors affecting the development of aquaculture. Descriptive survey design, utilizing both qualitative and quantitative approaches was used. Several persons were interviewed comprehensively to find out the effect of rainbow trout aquaculture in their community. The study was located in Mathira West District focussing on a target population of 339 persons. This area of study had been selected because the researcher is familiar with the geographical settings and could access the respondents with ease. The research instruments used were questionnaires, designed to gather objective data and interviews. Once collected, the data was analyzed through qualitative and quantitative methods. The study recommends that fish-farmers have the potential to improve on aquaculture despite the limiting factors of finances. All stakeholders should play a leading role in aquaculture development.