

ORL-EE&P-09**Policy Gaps to Promote “Blue Revolution” in Aquaculture Production in Nepal**

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Nepal, although a mountainous landlocked country, but due to its vast freshwater resources hold significant potential for advancing aquaculture under the "Blue Revolution" framework, a movement aimed at enhancing fish production sustainably to meet growing food demands, support nutrition and improve rural livelihoods. At present the growth of aquaculture sector is one of the fastest growing food sectors. Farmers and entrepreneurs are investing in aquaculture production. However, despite its potential, the growth of the aquaculture sector in Nepal faces several hurdles, mainly due to policy gaps and inadequate institutional support. This paper aims to analyze these gaps, focusing on the regulatory framework, research and development, market access, and financial incentives necessary for scaling up aquaculture production.

Key challenges include the lack of a cohesive national aquaculture policy, which leads to fragmented efforts across different levels of government. In addition, outdated regulations, insufficient investment in modern aquaculture technology, limited access to credit, finance, insurance, market and gaps in market infrastructure hinder the sector's growth. Furthermore, there is minimal coordination between research institutions, extension and farmers, resulting in limited technology transfer and innovation adoption.

Considering the above policy constraints, the present analysis will highlight the need for targeted policy reforms that address these gaps, such as streamlining aquaculture-related legislation, establishing supportive financial and market mechanisms, and fostering public-private partnerships at federal, provincial and municipality levels. It will also emphasize the importance of incorporating sustainable and environmentally friendly practices in policy formulation, ensuring long-term ecosystem health. By aligning policies with the goals of the Blue Revolution, Nepal can unlock the potential of its aquaculture sector, contributing to food security, employment generation, and economic development.