

Transforming aquaculture research and industry for management of seafood security relevance of nurturing a unique innovative ecosystem

Abstract

Seafood security through aquaculture is a topic of strategic national importance for many countries, including Malaysia. With production from fisheries unable to meet the demand, aquaculture is set to play an increasing role in seafood supply. Aquaculture started booming in the 1990s, just when the capture fisheries showed distinct signs of stagnation. The rapid growth of aquaculture and the rising demand have created challenges which researchers and the seafood industry must address through collective action to enable this sector to grow at the rate needed for a sustainable food future. Malaysia has identified aquaculture as a key economic area under its new economic model and developed mechanisms to achieve the targets. This requires knowledgebased developments and cultivating links between the academia and the farming sector in an environment that seeks solutions through innovation. It makes a great difference when institutions of higher education decide to spearhead interdisciplinary, multidisciplinary and transdisciplinary research that has ingredients for nurturing an innovation ecosystem. This provides a platform for a link-up with the aquaculture industry and the traditional fishfarming community. The blending of modern and traditional knowledge and diversification of approaches with new perspectives focused on solutions will probably yield positive outcomes from a policy that supports new pathways for achieving seafood security for socio-economic welfare.