

JOB DESCRIPTION

JOB TITLE: Aquaculture Policy Officer
REPORTS TO: Initially Head of Policy then Senior Marine Policy Officer when returned from maternity leave
DEPARTMENT: WWF Scotland
DIVISION: Programmes Division
JOB REFERENCE: tbc

JOB PURPOSE:

Undertake policy and advocacy work on aquaculture and forage fisheries at a UK level, with particular reference to sustainability issues and investigating the possibility of environmental standard for aquaculture products, emerging from the “Aquaculture Dialogues”.

This post will support the work of the WWF marine programme at both UK and international levels with its primary focus being UK aquaculture.

DIMENSIONS:

- This is a 2-year contract. full time, based in the WWF office in Dunkeld, Scotland
- There will be a policy budget allocated to this post, the precise amount of which is yet to be specified. There will be no staff management responsibility.
- The post holder will be an advocate externally with Government, business and a range of other partners or stakeholders.
- The Policy Officer will work with colleagues in Scotland, in the WWF UK marine team – in particular the North East Atlantic Marine Ecosystem (NEAME) Programme Manager, Fisheries Policy Officer and Seafood Policy Officer and colleagues in WWF International offices. The post holder will be a member of the Scotland Policy Team and the UK Marine Team, as well as working closely with the US funded European aquaculture post.

PRINCIPAL ACCOUNTABILITIES:

The postholder will:

- Act as a conduit for gathering and disseminating progress on ongoing aquaculture dialogues;
- Focus on sustainability issues of forage fisheries in relation to Aquaculture feed and investigate the use of Marine Stewardship Council (MSC) certification where appropriate;
- Influence the Scottish Government’s review of aquaculture. This is a timely opportunity to input into this process taking place in mid –late 2008, with potential benefits for the next 5-10 year period.

PURPOSE

- On production, to work with the Scottish aquaculture industry and related Government policy-makers to help reduce the industry's environmental impact, especially in relation to forage fish used for feed;
- To ensure close liaison, integration and compatibility with work currently being undertaken elsewhere in the WWF network and by the Marine Conservation Society (MCS) in the UK on aquaculture;
- On consumption, to participate in the aquaculture dialogues on species important to UK consumers, such as tropical prawns, and to identify appropriate opportunities to assess fish feed sustainability, based on best available information and the MSC certification process.
- To ensure that WWF-UK engages in the development of WWF international network strategy on aquaculture;

OUTPUTS

- Review information on current sources of fish feed in the UK and for major species consumed in the UK;
- Liaise with the MSC to review and identify barriers to certification for fish feed stocks, consider applicability of current standards in this context;
- Promote latest developments in sustainable feed production, particularly with respect to any MSC work or appropriate replacement feed sources (promoting feed manufacturers to disclose % marine protein and oils in their dietary formulations so that Aquaculture Dialogue standards can target a metric based on Fishmeal/fishoil Efficiency Ratio FFER).
- Consider market research into consumer interest in labelling/standards for aquaculture products;
- Engage with industry and MCS to minimise concerns and confusion relating to perceived competition between MCS principles and criteria for sustainable aquaculture and WWF US aquaculture standards;
- Respond to Scottish Government consultation on review of aquaculture practices

Host a seminar on the aquaculture standards as and when they are developed, focusing on salmon production and consumption of key species such as tropical shrimps.

SPECIAL FEATURES:

Aquaculture is the fastest-growing food production system in the world. It holds great promise to produce high quality and large volumes of seafood. As the industry grows, it is critical to minimize the negative impacts of aquaculture on the environment and society. We are already seeing waste products from fish farms changing the nutrient levels of local waterways and leading to eutrophication; escaped farm species interbreeding with wild populations and altering the gene pool. One-third of all wild-caught fish are transformed into fish meal and fish oil, the bulk of which is used by aquaculture

Scotland is responsible for approximately 90 per cent of all UK aquaculture production and ranks third amongst the world producers of Atlantic salmon, after Norway and Chile. It is essential that we help to minimise the environmental impact that this growing industry has in UK waters and overseas, delivering MSC certification of forage fish stocks used for feed and minimum environmental standards for aquaculture production.

PERSON SPECIFICATION

- A broad knowledge of basic aquaculture and certification issues.
- At least three year's experience of working on aquaculture or related environmental issues in either an environmental NGO, the public or private sector or a research organisation.
- Knowledge and understanding of fisheries management
- Ability to take scientific knowledge and translate it into practical policy proposals.
- Excellent presentation and communication skills are essential
- Proven ability to work as part of a team is essential.
- The commitment and drive to achieve challenging goals; a problem-solving attitude is essential.
- A knowledge of the Scottish aquaculture industry is desirable; its institutions, politics, culture and environment.
- A commitment to the mission of WWF.