

Marie Lesueur, Pierre Eyrolles, Hervé Le Bris 18 June 2020

Defining a Framework for IMTA development: Action Plans for the Atlantic Area



One phase of Integrate project was to define a framework for IMTA development by propose an action plan for Atlantic Area. The objective of this work was to study the IMTA sector in order to draw up an overview and propose recommendations to create favourable context for its development.

Methodology: from data collection to action plan

The first step was to identify the existing IMTA sites in each country of the AA.

A survey was conducted using interviews with the producers, administrations, technical institutes, research centres and others stakeholders.

We collected also data and materials during workshops, roundtables organised during the project.

All collected information was completed by literature and regulatory.



Regulatory environment

Workshop, roundtables...

Interviews



Methodology: from data collection to action plan

Based on those results, a diagnosis of the sector was conducted - SWOT matrix analyses at a national level for each of the themes: Technical, Social, Environmental, Economic and Regulatory. This diagnosis was used as a basis for drawing up recommendations. These recommendations have been the subject of consultation by multiple stakeholders in the aquaculture sector and therefore intend to report their concerns and expectations regarding the development of IMTA.







LONG DELAYS OF LICINCING (EXPERIMENTATION OR PRODUCTION)



ACCESS TO SPACE AT SEA OR LAND and COMPETITION WITH OTHER ACTIVITIES



The first one is the difficulty to obtain production sites, even if at the European level, there is no major obstacle to establishing a multi-species production system. One reason is a very complex and time-consuming licensing process. It took several months or even years to obtain a license. The second one is the difficulty to access space at land but also at sea due to competition with others activities.



LONG DELAYS OF LICINCING (EXPERIMENTATION OR PRODUCTION)



ACCESS TO SPACE AT SEA OR LAND and COMPETITION WITH OTHER ACTIVITIES



Recommendations

⁰¹ Change/improve licensing procedures

Although it is true that applications to diversify are now better taken into account and dealt with quickly, it remains urgent to facilitate experiments or diversification in concessions. A faster response from the competent authority is also essential, so that the project sponsors can understand the reasons for refusal and improve their application file.



LONG DELAYS OF LICINCING (EXPERIMENTATION OR PRODUCTION)



ACCESS TO SPACE AT SEA OR LAND and **COMPETITION WITH OTHER ACTIVITIES**



Recommendations

01

Change/improve licensing procedures

Synthesise 02 documents and texts

marine

planning

Obtaining site licenses to produce several species is particularly delicate. Although no regulation currently prohibits the cultivation of several species in the same area, the combination of regulations specific to each species can significantly restrict the geographical possibilities of installation.



LONG DELAYS OF LICINCING (EXPERIMENTATION OR PRODUCTION)



ACCESS TO SPACE AT SEA OR LAND and COMPETITION WITH OTHER ACTIVITIES



Recommendations

- 01 Chai
 - **Change/improve licensing procedures**
- OSYNTHESISE Mari documents and texts
 - marine planning
- Standardise environmental surveys to homogenise licensing

Proposing an environmental impact study template could help streamline licensing processes. However, small project sponsors also want more homogeneous environmental studies so they can consolidate their application file and be able to deal with legal appeals or challenges.



Support IMTA projects / Give IMTA visibility

DIFFICULT SOCIAL ACCEPTABILITY



Social acceptability and territorial development is another difficulty mentioned by stakeholders. Some projects have been restricted or even stopped following legal proceedings related to environmental issues. Aquaculture suffers from poor social acceptance.

DIFFICULT SOCIAL ACCEPTABILITY

Support IMTA projects / Give IMTA visibility



Recommendations

Set up participatory tools to integrate 01 IMTA projects in local area development plans

The idea is to rely on a participatory tool that brings together all local stakeholders. Many of them do not feel sufficiently involved in the decision-making process for the development of certain sectors. This is particularly true for aquaculture, which has many interactions with the environment and other marine activities.

Support IMTA projects / Give IMTA visibility

DIFFICULT SOCIAL ACCEPTABILITY



Recommendations

- Set up participatory tools to integrate
 IMTA projects in local area
 development plans
- O2 Communicate on IMTA ecosystem services

IMTA and aquaculture more generally can contribute to the development of local areas, both in the maritime domain and on land. It is part of the economic activity of many localities and helps maintain, structure and develop a web of services for the local population. Communication focused on ecosystem services would raise awareness about the importance of these activities for rural coastal areas.

Support IMTA projects / Give IMTA visibility

DIFFICULT SOCIAL ACCEPTABILITY



Recommendations

- Set up participatory tools to integrate
 IMTA projects in local area
 development plans
- O2 Communicate on IMTA ecosystem services
- Communicate about IMTA principles and aquaculture practices

Two target groups have been identified for this recommendation: on the one hand, the industry including producers, financers and decision-makers, and on the other hand, the public and consumers. The initial objective is to highlight these practices and give them visibility. As regards consumers and the broader public, it is important to provide simple, credible information abcuit these systems to reassure them about product quality.



A GAP BETWEEN IMTA MODELS AND CURRENT AQUACULTURE PRACTICES



A LACK OF KNOWLEDGE, EG. QUESTIONS ABOUT THE ENVIRONMENTAL BENEFITS



The lack of knowledge about how IMTA systems function makes it impossible to propose robust and economically viable models. We noticed a gap between IMTA models and current aquaculture practices. New IMTA systems still need to be designed for the industry to adopt these practices. A lack of knowledge is identified. There are currently few reliable IMTA models with provenentiate proventions remain unresolved.



A GAP BETWEEN IMTA MODELS AND CURRENT AQUACULTURE PRACTICES



Recommendations

Intensify research about interactions within the systems and with the environment

A LACK OF KNOWLEDGE, EG. QUESTIONS ABOUT THE ENVIRONMENTAL BENEFITS

Knowledge about how IMTA systems function is still too partial. Research on interactions must first and foremost help us better understand the exchanges between the different compartments of an IMTA system. This must also lead to studying their interest in terms of environmental sustainability.



A GAP BETWEEN IMTA MODELS AND CURRENT AQUACULTURE PRACTICES





A LACK OF KNOWLEDGE, EG. QUESTIONS ABOUT THE ENVIRONMENTAL BENEFITS

Recommendations

1 Intensify research about interactions within the systems and with the environment

Improve collaboration scientists and the industry

between

By industry, we mean the first players involved in developing IMTA / aquaculture. Although the sector is still in its early stages of development, some operators remain open to the idea of diversifying their production. However, they need specific support and working in collaboration with research bodies would be a good start.



A GAP BETWEEN IMTA MODELS AND CURRENT AQUACULTURE PRACTICES





A LACK OF KNOWLEDGE, EG. QUESTIONS ABOUT THE ENVIRONMENTAL BENEFITS

Recommendations

- 1 Intensify research about interactions within the systems and with the environment
- Improve collaboration between scientists and the industry
- Increase awareness and develop training courses to enhance innovation
 and develop new IMTA systems

One major challenge concerns raising awareness of the importance of diversifying production among aquaculturists. Promoting IMTA practices as part of aquaculture training courses would help to encourage experimental initiatives in training centres and by young farmers. In addition, many professionals perceive IMTA systems as being complex to control. This obstacle could be overcome by training producers so that they understand how these systems work and how to control them.



CONSEQUENT INVESTMENTS & DOUBTS ABOUT THE PROFITABILITY OF THESE SYSTEMS



DIFFICULTIES IN TERMS OF VALUATION AND VISIBILITY



Current systems are barely reaching commercial scale and there is no real evidence of economic sustainability. Labour and additional investments need to be taken into account, along with a market study additional productions. IMTA suffers from a lack of visibility and concerns are emerging about how its products might be perceived by potential consumers. People might not understand the term or, worse yet, be wary of these production practices.



CONSEQUENT INVESTMENTS & DOUBTS ABOUT THE PROFITABILITY OF THESE SYSTEMS



DIFFICULTIES IN TERMS OF VALUATION AND VISIBILITY

Recommendations

•1 Find solutions for the industry to diversify and ways to convert current aquaculture systems

Each country has its own specificities in terms of aquaculture system, and the theoretical IMTA models (fish, molluscs, algae) are not generally well suited to these realities. It seems necessary to work on the transition from existing monoculture systems to IMTA systems, rather than trying to implement generic systems that do not correspond to the specific aquaculture context of each country.



CONSEQUENT INVESTMENTS & DOUBTS ABOUT THE PROFITABILITY OF THESE SYSTEMS



DIFFICULTIES IN TERMS OF VALUATION AND VISIBILITY



Recommendations

••• Find solutions for the industry to diversify and ways to convert current aquaculture systems



The IMTA systems developed to date only partially address certain environmental issues in aquaculture. The system profitability is another key point to factor in when designing new IMTA systems. This means that a market study for the identified species is needed, as is an appropriate analysis of marketing opportunities.



CONSEQUENT INVESTMENTS & DOUBTS ABOUT THE PROFITABILITY OF THESE SYSTEMS



DIFFICULTIES IN TERMS OF VALUATION AND VISIBILITY



Recommendations

- Find solutions for the industry to diversify and ways to convert current aquaculture systems
- 92 Find new species that meet economic and environmental challenges
- Give IMTA products visibility to enable market differentiation

This means planning a dedicated marketing strategy for IMTA products. The general public's knowledge of aquaculture is quite limited. Due to its complexity, IMTA could create distrust if its development is not accompanied by professional communications activities.



Many of these recommendations are not specific to IMTA, but are general to all aquaculture production activities. This result underscores the fact that the potential environmental interest attributed to these practices does not always facilitate the development of these systems and the creation of projects.



The IMTA sector needs to go through a research and development phase in order to prove the environmental value of certain species associations. New, robust and locally-adapted (in environmental, socio-economic terms) IMTA models must be created and tested to provide reliable evidence of the economic and environmental benefits of IMTA.



Access to new production sites and interactions with other (economic, touristic or residential) activities on the coast are two major issues. Work must be carried out to facilitate access to production sites as well as diversification approaches using IMTA for existing producers. Providing support for project sponsors is also essential.



Finally, the IMTA sector suffers from a lack of visibility and is only well understood by a handful of experts. Consultation tools must be developed to better integrate projects in their local contexts. Communication about aquaculture should encourage the establishment of new aquaculture sites.



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THANK YOU TO OUR INTEGRATE PROJECT PARTNERS

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To find out more about:

INTEGRATE project website: http://integrate-imta.eu/