



Title: An exploratory investigation of consumers' responsive behavior to aquaculture products in Italy

Scientific Track: Fisheries Governance and Promoting Aquaculture Sustainability

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Abstract

Consumer purchasing behavior towards seafood stuffs is capturing the interest of the main stakeholders of the supply chain of fishery and aquaculture, for political and economic reasons.

The ever-growing world population and fish per-capita consumption are causing an alarming pressure on natural fish stocks. Therefore, fish from aquaculture is becoming increasingly important for human consumption despite a general perception about their negative impacts on environment and, by some chance, on natural resources as well.

This study is aimed at assessing consumers' responsive behavior to aquaculture products in Italy, one of the most important markets in the European and Mediterranean panorama. From November 2017 to March 2018, 7,232 answers, from an on-line survey, have been collected and analyzed.

Key themes such awareness between fisheries and aquaculture products, place and frequency of purchase and consumption have been explored as well as perceptions and expectations towards emerging sustainable products from organic aquaculture. Socio-demographic characteristics of the sample have been assessed (geographic distribution, gender, age). Results about consumption habits revealed that Italians mostly consume seafood in the household (64.3%), secondarily in restaurants (24%), while purchase frequency is less than once a month (42.5%). Concerning attitude towards sustainable aquaculture products, although many consumers stated that they don't know enough about characteristics of organic seafood products (27.4%), their expectations are

well focused (reduced veterinary treatments, 55%; monitoring and transparency, 42%; sustainability, 31%; and natural taste, 23%). In conclusion, since most of consumers (54%) claimed to be willing to pay more for organic seafood, they seem to be ready to embrace this kind of products, as they confer them an added value of sustainability and transparency.

Short Biography

Dr. Fabrizio Capoccioni is currently working as a Postdoctoral Fellow at Council for Agricultural Research and Economics, Research Centre of “Animal production and aquaculture” (CREA). He received his PhD on Ecology and Evolution from the University of Rome “Tor Vergata” where he completed also his BSc and MSc. His publications as well as research projects in which he is involved, reflect his research interests that deals with biology and ecology of marine and freshwater fish species. In particular, his studies are aimed at investigating several species of commercial interest at population level, with the general aim to contribute to the setting up of management and conservation plans of these resources. Since 2009 He had been member of several working group of the International Council for the Exploration of the Sea (ICES). He has been designated by FAO General Fisheries Commission for the Mediterranean (GFCM) and by Ministry of agriculture and forestry as consultant expert in many national and international technical meetings. He has been designated as National correspondent for Italian Ministry of agriculture food and forestry (MIPAAF) at European Inland Fisheries Advisory Commission (EIFAAC).

Research Interest:

Fabrizio Capoccioni research interests lie in the field of fishery ecology, and more specifically in organic aquaculture, management of coastal lagoons fisheries and environment, and nutritional quality of fishes of commercial interests.

Keywords: consumer expectation, organic, fish, sustainable aquaculture, market survey

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