

Title: **How Can Aquaculture Contribute to the Poor? Evidence From Brackish-Water Extensive Polyculture in the Philippines**

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Abstract: Aquaculture is one of the most dynamic food-producing subsectors worldwide. In the Philippines, shrimp monoculture started in the 1980s, only to collapse less than a decade later due to disease. More recently, extensive polyculture of fish, shrimp and mud crabs has developed. The objective of this paper is to analyze the contribution of this system of brackish-water extensive polyculture to the alleviation of poverty. Often excluded from aquaculture due to high investment costs and the absence of markets for land, credit and labor, the poor are seldom able to benefit from the potential benefits of aquaculture (in terms of employment and incomes, access to food, etc.). Based on extensive empirical data gathered in the Pampanga coastal area (Central Luzon), this article highlights the economic benefits that brackish-water extensive polyculture brings to the poor by focusing on both those who are part of the aquaculture system (small farmers, pond caretakers) and on those who work at its margins (local communities surrounded by fish ponds). In a context of growing attention devoted to sustainable development on the part of the food industry, this article ultimately asks whether the peculiar production system developed in the Pampanga Coastal area and the very specific values that it retains could be channeled all the way to enlightened consumers in the North through certification and labeling schemes.