

Title: **Is Aquaculture Production Growing in Latin America and the Caribbean?**

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Abstract: Fisheries constitute a major productive sector in Latin America and the Caribbean. This sector generates income, provides employment, and makes a significant contribution to food security and the generation of foreign exchange. With most fishery resources fully exploited or depleted, opportunities for fishery development lie primarily in restoring depleted stocks or in developing the aquaculture sector. Increases in aquaculture production have been important economically in Latin America and the Caribbean in recent years. However, little research has been focused on aquaculture production in the region. To address this issue, we examined rates of growth of aquaculture production for all marine species (fish, crustaceans, and mollusks) and countries (33) in the region. Our results contradict the optimistic view of aquaculture as a significant food supplier in the mid and long term, as we found a declining trend in the rate of growth, both in volume and value, in recent years in all countries studied.