

Global Programme “Sustainable Aquatic Food” in Malawi (SAF Malawi)

Small-scale producers of sustainable aquatic food have successfully contributed to the transformation of food systems in Malawi

The challenge

Fish is a popular food and the most important source of animal protein in Malawi. However, the country’s future supply of fish products is uncertain due to diminishing fish stocks in water bodies such as Lake Malawi. This has affected the availability of affordable fish in rural areas, a situation exacerbated by increased population growth, which has also increased the demand for fish. In addition to the extreme poverty suffered by the people, the shortage of fish also contributes to malnutrition, which greatly affects rural populations, especially children.

Sustainable aquaculture production offers a way to provide the population with high-quality food and counteract malnutrition. However, the expansion of fish production by smallholder farmers faces significant hurdles, such as lack of essential production inputs, technical expertise and climatic shocks, which hinder their ability to operate aquaculture systems that are both environmentally friendly and economically viable. This limits the potential for increased production and deprives communities of valuable income, employment opportunities, and the consumption of affordable, nutritious fish products.

The **Global Programme Sustainable Aquatic Food** contributes to a positive change in aquatic food systems, while conserving marine ecosystems. Respecting planetary boundaries leads to sustainable production. Building technical and economic capacities, strengthening small-scale producers and fisheries organisations, and the support of equitable policies are core targets.



Project name	Global Programme “Sustainable Aquatic Food” in Malawi (SAF Malawi)
Commissioned by	German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ)
Implementing partners	Action for Sustainable Development (ASUD), KAWJO Foundation, Agriculture Enterprise Limited (AEL), Climate Friendly Food and Fuels (CFFF), Innovative Fish Farmer Network Trust (IFFNT)
Project region	Nkhatabay, Mzimba, Rumphu, Kasungu, Ntchisi, Mchinji, Dowa, Salima, Lilongwe, Dedza, Zomba, Chiradzulu, Phalombe, Thyolo, Mulanje, Blantyre, Mwanza, Neno
Political partner	Ministry of Trade and Industry (MoTI)
Duration	03/2024 – 02/2028
Budget	Up to EUR 3,488 million

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS

The programme contributes to achieving these sustainable development goals:



Our approach

SAF Malawi aims to utilize the potential of sustainable aquatic food to transform agriculture and food systems in Malawi. This will be done by:

1. **Strengthening the capacity of small-scale producers** to address the knowledge and skills gap in aquaculture and business management.





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2. **Promoting knowledge sharing of existing aquaculture innovations and approaches** using regional and international knowledge exchange platforms.
3. **Supporting the establishment of productive cooperations** to facilitate business linkages between producers / processors and the private sector.
4. **Enhancing the capacity of women-led organisations in the fish value chain** to enable them to contribute to national and regional policy platforms.
5. **Supporting the development of sustainable cage aquaculture in Malawi** by improving the framework conditions for regulating cage aquaculture operations.

Results in figures

Until February 2028, SAF Malawi aims to achieve the following:

- **5,500 agricultural enterprises**, 30 % of which are managed by **women**, have increased their **production** by an average of **30 %**.
- **2 digital platforms** have made solutions for the promotion of sustainable aquaculture widely available.
- **2 cooperations** along the value chain have been established, one of them between producers / processors and the private sector.
- **Association of Women Fish Processors (AwFishNet) and Traders Network** has made two contributions to regional policy formats.
- **Guidelines for sustainable cage aquaculture** are developed.

The benefits

Training in climate-smart aquaculture practices will build resilience and support the adaptation of small-scale producers to climatic shocks that affect their farming operations. Further to this, farmers will be equipped with knowledge in financial literacy, entrepreneurship and business management, which will enhance their ability to view farming as a business. Above all, these interventions will position small-scale farmers to sustainably produce more fish and contribute to improved food and nutrition security in Malawi.

Where we work



This geographical map is for informational purposes only and does not constitute recognition of international boundaries or regions; GIZ makes no claims concerning the validity, accuracy or completeness of the maps nor assumes any liability resulting from the use of the information therein.

Success factors

SAF Malawi leverages the political will of the government to support the initiative to increase fish production as several interventions have been launched, including the mega farms initiative, which has aquaculture as a component. This assures that the implementation of the project receives the necessary support from implementing partners. Further to this, the project also utilizes the different technologies and capacity built by the predecessor project, the Aquaculture Value Chain Project (AVCP), hence laying a foundation for the smooth implementation of this project. SAF Malawi also sees numerous opportunities to achieve its intended purpose through synergies with other projects, such as the GIZ Global Project Promotion of Agricultural Finance for Agri-Based Enterprises in Rural Areas (GP AgFin), as capital is a catalyst for agricultural development, yet it remains a challenge for small-scale farmers to access.

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