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All to Valencia Aquaculture Europe 2025



Aquaculture Europe has become the one meeting point for the whole European aquaculture sector for many years now, and this is especially the case for this event in Valencia with its inspiring theme for us all “**Aquaculture for everyone**”. No doubt that aquaculture is a key provider of healthy and sustainable seafood worldwide. In Europe, Spain is exemplary on how it has developed a variety of marine and freshwater productions, integrated in their environment, and recognized by society. Yes, aquaculture is for everyone, and everyone has to acknowledge its importance and the multiple services it provides!

Thus, the European Aquaculture Society warmly invites the entire aquaculture community—scientists, industry leaders, policy makers, producers, educators, and students—to Aquaculture Europe 2025, here in Valencia, Spain. From cutting-edge technologies to sustainable practices, Aquaculture Europe 2025 will be a vibrant platform to share knowledge, forge partnerships, and explore how aquaculture can meet global food, climate, and societal challenges.

What will you get in Valencia?

- A top-tier scientific program covering all aspects of aquaculture research and innovation, with 40 Scientific sessions covering all disciplines, systems, species – this is more and more exciting from year to year, sometimes even difficult to choose which session attend! We have received more than 840 abstracts, which will be showcased through e-posters and more than 500 oral presentations
- Inspiring plenary sessions by key experts - Carlos Duarte on regenerative aquaculture, Elisabetta Giuffra on leveraging the value of functional genome annotations and Joan Riera on seafood consumption.
- An Industry forum, an Innovation forum, an FAO workshop on its “Guidelines for Sustainable Aquaculture” and a stimulating panel/roundtable organised by the Network for Women in Aquaculture.
- A fantastic international trade show where you will see the latest innovations available on the market
- Field visits to key aquaculture sites and research facilities
- Unique networking opportunities—from expert panels to wonderful tapas evenings!

As always, Aquaculture Europe is not just a conference—it’s the meeting point for the entire European and international aquaculture family. Whether you’re looking to present research, discover solutions, or shape the future of our blue food systems, AE2025 is where it all comes together. We welcome 2500 attendees from all over the world, including you!

This would not have been possible without be the involvement of the Next Generation Marine Science programme, ThinkInAzul, the Steering committee chaired by Jaume Perez-Sanchez (CSIC), the program co-chairs Diego Mendiola (Caviar Pirinea) and Martin Føre (SINTEF), and the local organizing Committee. They all put in tremendous efforts to make this conference a success, together with the EAS Home Office and our long-standing partners Mario Stael and John Cooksey.

A big thanks also for the support of our local partners, national and regional governments, our Gold Sponsor Skretting, our Silver Sponsors Biorigin, Dibaq, HIPRA, INVE and miXscience, Session Sponsor CTN and our media partners, with a special mention for MisPeces who do such excellent coverage of all our events.

The week will be too short, but so good!

Marc Vandeputte
EAS President

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ABSTRACTS

FROM POND TO PAGE: TEACHING SUSTAINABLE AQUACULTURE THROUGH THE BioAqua COMIC

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Introduction

Aquaculture is vital for global food security, especially in developing regions where fish is a key protein source. The sector's rapid growth supports millions of livelihoods but is vulnerable to disease outbreaks that threaten aquatic health, ecological safety, and sustainability. Overuse of antibiotics to control diseases raises concerns about antimicrobial resistance and drug residues in the food chain. While ecological aquaculture offers solutions, scaling it without losing productivity is difficult, making innovative, sustainable disease management essential. The COST Action BioAqua tackles this by creating child-friendly educational materials on fish welfare and One Health to inspire future generations toward sustainable aquaculture.

Material and Methods

The BioAqua comic designed science communication, entitled “Fish Superpowers!”, has been crafted to disseminate the state-of-the-art technologies used for sustainable aquaculture to young children at school (non-specialist audiences). It features several chapters explaining the main topics related to aquaculture, food safety, and sustainability. The protagonists of the comic are the three fish heroes in vibrant colours [1], comic style—Finley, Bubbles, and Stella—with George the Farmer and Dr. Clara, the veterinarian. The BioAqua comic introduces complex concepts, *viz.*, risk assessment, antibiotic alternatives, and the One Health approach [2] in a straightforward, relatable narrative, through the story of three lively fish and their vet, Dr Clara [3]. As teaching science and literacy together can be challenging, the comic uses fictional characters and stories as tools to spark curiosity and promote equal learning opportunities. This approach follows the principles of Universal Design for Learning and supports lifelong development of pedagogical skills [3]. The colour combinations of green–red, green–brown, blue–purple, green–blue, light green–yellow, blue–grey, green–grey, and green–black were avoided, keeping in mind the individuals with colour-blindness (protanopia, deuteranopia, and tritanopia). High contrast was used in hue, saturation, and brightness; textures or patterns were added to visuals. The comic uses the Open Dyslexic font to make reading easier for children with dyslexia. However, studies suggest it may not always lead to a significant improvement in reading speed or accuracy.[4]. Storytelling choices were driven by the need to balance emotion and interactivity [5]: Finley reflects the readers' curiosity [6], Bubbles expresses caution (mirroring natural scepticism), and Stella represents excitement and optimism. These emotional anchors allow children to connect with the story through different entry points [5]. If a storyteller teaches children, they are encouraged to ask “guess what happens next” at the end of each chapter, enabling prediction and critical thinking [3].

(Continued on next page)

Results

The comic provides multiple educational sources: Science education (fun introduction to microbiology, nutrition, and environmental science), Health education (lessons on why food safety and hygiene matter), Civic and ecological education (understanding sustainability, shared responsibility, and the One Health concept). The comic presents six chapters: Chapter 1: The Mystery of the Tired Fins: Our fish heroes start feeling sluggish and confused, prompting a visit from Dr. Clara to find out what is wrong. → This opening chapter introduces the idea that good nutrition is central to keeping fish healthy and thriving. Chapter 2: A Visit from Dr. Clara: Dr. Clara introduces a new “super feed”, enriched with safe biomolecular ingredients → Reflects innovation in fish nutrition and science communication. Chapter 3: Testing the Super Feed: The fish eat the feed and experience positive effects: more energy, shinier scales, clearer thinking → Demonstrates measurable benefits of safe, bio-based interventions. Chapter 4: One Health: The fish discover that keeping them healthy also protects the people who eat them and the water they live in → Highlights BioAqua’s integrative approach to health. Chapter 5: Aquaculture Matters: George explains aquaculture’s role in global food production. The fish feel proud of their role → Encourages understanding of aquaculture as a sustainable food system. Chapter 6: A Cleaner Future: The fish reflect on the importance of sustainable farming practices and clean water → Emphasises eco-friendly aquaculture aligned with EU Green Deal goals.

The link to download the comic is the following: <http://hdl.handle.net/10197/28717>.

Conclusions

This educational comic communication serves to promote awareness about aquaculture and essential aspects associated with this critical practice by combining humour, an emotional approach, as well as vibrant visuals. The comic highlights the importance of nutritious, safe feed in maintaining fish health and environmental protection. It encourages young readers to see the connections between personal choices, animal well-being, and global sustainability in a fun and accessible manner. Moreover, the use of relatable characters and storytelling helps demystify complex scientific concepts, making them more approachable and memorable for children. The inclusive design considerations, such as colour-blind friendly palettes and dyslexia-supportive fonts, demonstrate a commitment to accessibility, ensuring the material can reach diverse learners with varying needs.

Acknowledgments

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