Ref. Ares(2022)1154574 - 16/02/2022

AQUA EXCEL 3.0
AQUAculture infrastructures for EXCELlence in European fish research 3.0

Deliverable 6.1 (M14)

Title

Existing and emerging technologies available for welfare indicators monitoring

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WP 6
Deliverable 6.1
Lead Beneficiary: JU
Call identifier: Biological and Medical Sciences - Advanced Communities: Research infrastructures in aquaculture
Topic: INFRAIA-01-2018-2019
Grant Agreement No: 871108
Dissemination level: PU
Date: 12.2021

This project has received funding from the European Union's Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme under grant agreement No. 871108 (AQUAEXCEL3.0). This output reflects only the author's view and the European Commission cannot be held responsible for any use that may be made of the information contained therein.

Contents

1. Objective

The main objective of this deliverable is to make an overview of existing and emerging technologies available for monitoring fish welfare in tanks and sea cages. The overview serves as a sorted list of technologies suitable for experimental work planned in WP6 of the project.

2. Background

Fish welfare is a well-established term that resonates in the last years in the research but mainly in fish production. Related to the monitoring technologies, which is the focus of thi deliverable, we can use feeling-based welfare definition in which welfare links to the emotional (or emotion-like) states of the animal under review. Good welfare under these definitions typically requires a reduction in negative experiences (such as stress or fear) and an assurance of positive experiences (such as the presence of counterparts for members of social species). Good fish welfare is the key to sustainable fish production. AQUAEXCEL3.0 is a project with a focus on the improvement of aquaculture infrastructures improvement and the harmonization of the procedures through joint research activities. Therefore, WP6 deals with the harmonization of fish welfare indicators, monitoring of the indicators, and improvement of welfare by enrichment principles. Task 6.1. is defining welfare indicators and operational welfare indicators together with the recommended limits for several species. These indicators can serve as a measure of fish welfare only if they are easily measurable and interpretable by researchers and fish farm operators. Several technologies for welfare measures were developed and described in the literature, but still, there is no routinely used technology. Task 6.2 aims to test selected promising welfare monitoring technologies for different species and different infrastructures to demonstrate generality and usability under real conditions. To be able to choose the best technology, we need to have an overview of existing and emerging technologies suitable for welfare monitoring. This document provides the list of available technologies divided into several groups (based on the type of information produced by the measurement device) suitable for monitoring at least some welfare indicators. The list excludes the basic technologies routinely used at the infrastructures for water quality monitoring (pH, temperature, etc.).

3. Technologies

The technologies were selected based on the literature search (keywords: fish; welfare; monitoring; technologies) and the questionnaire of the project filled by 11 infrastructures. In total, 22 research papers were used to make the list of technologies. There are several possibilities for how to group welfare monitoring technologies. First, we divided the technologies based on the type of information produced by the measuring device: water measurement, echo sounders, tags, video cameras, frames, and manual data collection. The second criteria is the availability of the determined indicator: online/offline. Online estimated welfare indicators can be used to make immediate action for welfare improvement. Offline estimated welfare indicators can be used for welfare documentation during the fish cultivation period only. In this review, we mainly focused on non-invasive technologies providing the data online. The reason is to be able to minimize fish stress caused by invasive technologies and the possibility of immediate action to improve fish welfare.

3.1. Water measurement

Water quality is strongly correlated to fish welfare even if it is an indirect indicator. Almost all infrastructures have the technology for online measuring basic water quality parameters (pH, oxygen, temperature. This technology provides information about immediate changes in water quality parameters and can be used for welfare monitoring. General recommendations for water quality parameters exist for the fish species, and the infrastructure keeps the parameters at defined levels. The technology for water quality measurement usually consists of the probes installed in the tank/cage measuring the data at a fixed point. Several advanced measurement devices exist to measure water quality during fish transfer and manipulation (https://sednatech.io/sensor-globe-english/ or using wireless technology for real-time data collection (http://www.waterlinked.com/cagesense?hsLang=en).

Figure 1. Commercially available sensory and wireless network for data collections. Left – Globe sensor (https://www.sensorglobe.no/). Right – CageSense network of sensors (http://www.waterlinked.com/cagesense?hsLang=en)

One of the most interesting technologies in the area of water parameters measurement is cortisol measurement. Measurement of cortisol is considered a standard approach to assessing the effect of stress on fish. For example, measurement of plasma cortisol indicates well acute stress but does not necessarily reflect a state of chronic stress (Aerts et al., 2015). However, it has been used successfully by a number of scientists, from physiologists (Auperin et al., 1997) to behavioral ecology (Colson et al., 2015b), in a controlled environment as well as in the wild (Geffroy et al., 2017, Love et al., 2013) to assess the level of stress in fish. The relationship between stress and neurogenesis (Sadoul et al., 2018), growth (Sadoul & Vijayan, 2016), and sex determination or gender reassignment (Olivotto & Geffroy, 2017) are also well described and are subject to the role of cortisol in fish physiology and behavior. It is possible to measure cortisol directly in the water, but the usage is minimal. Cortisol extraction from tank water has been previously explored (Ruane et al., 2003, Ellis et al., 2007, Zuberi et al., 2014, Lower et al., 2005) . The advantage of cortisol in water measurement is that it is a completely non-invasive approach which makes the method useful in practice. It could be complicated to use the method in RAS systems where we face the issue of cortisol accumulation. The time of cortisol extraction and the costs are much higher than for other invasive methods. To measure individual fish cortisol release, sampled fish should be individually housed for the most precise measurements, and individual housing can be a stressful experience in itself. The usage of cortisol measurement in sea cages is not documented. More information about cortisol measurement is provided by Sadoul & Geffroy (2019).

The studies using the technology:

- Aerts, J., Metz, J. R., Ampe, B., Decostere, A., Flik, G., & Saeger, S. D. (2015). Scales tell a story on the stress history of fish. PLOS ONE, 10, e0123411. https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0123411
- Auperin, B., Baroiller, J. F., Ricordel, M. J., Fostier, A., & Prunet, P. (1997). Effect of confinement stress on circulating levels of growth hormone and two prolactins in freshwater-adapted tilapia (Oreochromis niloticus). General and Comparative Endocrinology, 108, 35–44. https://doi.org/10.1006/gcen.1997.6938.
- Colson, V., Valotaire, C., Geffroy, B., & Kiilerich, P. (2015b). Egg cortisol exposure enhances fearfulness in larvae and juvenile rainbow trout. Ethology, 121, 1191–1201.
- Ellis T, James JD, Sundh H, Fridell F, Sundell K, Scott AP. Non-invasive measurement of cortisol and melatonin in tanks stocked with seawater Atlantic salmon. Aquaculture. 2007;272(1–4):698-706. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.aquaculture.2007.07.219
- Geffroy, B., Sadoul, B., & Ellenberg, U. (2017). Physiological and behavioral consequences of human visitation. In D. T. Blumstein, B. Geffroy, D. S. M. Samia, & E. Bessa (Eds.), Ecotourism's promise and peril: a biological evaluation (pp. 9–27). Cham, Switzerland: Springer International Publishing. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-58331-0_2.
- Love, O. P., McGowan, P. O., & Sheriff, M. J. (2013). Maternal adversity and ecological stressors in natural populations: The role of stress axis programming in individuals, with implications for populations and communities. Functional Ecology, 27, 81–92. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1365-2435.2012.02040.x.
- Lower N, Moore A, Scott AP, Ellis T, James JD, Russell IC. A non-invasive method to assess the impact of electronic tag insertion on stress levels in fishes. J Fish Biol. 2005;67(5):1202-1212. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1095-8649.2005.00815.x
- Sadoul, B., Alfonso, S., Bessa, E., Bouchareb, A., Blondeau-Bidet, E., Clair, P.,Geffroy, B. (2018). Enhanced brain expression of genes related to cell proliferation and neural differentiation is associated with cortisol receptor expression in fishes. General and Comparative Endocrinology, 267, 76–81. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ygcen.2018.06.001.

- Sadoul, B, Geffroy, B. Measuring cortisol, the major stress hormone in fishes. J Fish Biol. 2019; 94: 540– 555. https://doi.org/10.1111/jfb.13904
- Sadoul, B., Vijayan, M.M., 2016. 5 - Stress and Growth, in: Schreck, L.T., Anthony P. Farrell and Colin J. Brauner Carl B. (Ed.), Fish physiology, biology of stress in fish (pp. 167–205). London, England: Academic Press.
- Olivotto, I., & Geffroy, B. (2017). Clownfish. In Marine ornamental species aquaculture (pp. 177–199). Hoboken, New Jersey: Wiley-Blackwell. https://doi.org/10.1002/9781119169147.ch12.
- Ruane NM, Komen H. Measuring cortisol in the water as an indicator of stress caused by increased loading density in common carp (Cyprinus carpio). Aquaculture. 2003;218(1–4):685-693. https://doi.org/10.1016/S0044-8486(02)00422-2
- Zuberi A, Brown C, Ali S. Effect of confinement on water-borne and whole body cortisol in wild and captive-reared rainbowfish (Melanoteania duboulayi). Int J Agric Biol. 2014;16(1):183-188.

SUMMARY:

Online/offline: more often online

Welfare indicators: water quality, cortisol level

Advantages: technically simple and robust, direct measurement of cortisol

Disadvantages: indirect measurement of fish welfare, difficult to study the welfare of individuals, cortisol – low sensitivity, and specific measurement conditions

Price: 30 – 2000Euro (depending on the number of water parameters and data transmission)

3.2. Tags

Tags (biosensors) are miniature sensors implanted to fish or attached to fish so that they can measure physiological parameters, acceleration, or depth. These devices can store measured data in the internal memory or transfer them online to a computer (acoustic tags).

These devices can collect a large amount of systematic and detailed data. However, the use can have short-term or long-term effects on the animal (Macaulay et al. 2021). In addition, placing the sensor can be a highly stressful procedure because it involves trapping, manipulation, anesthesia, and surgery. Marked fish usually have a higher mortality rate than unmarked fish (Macaulay et al. 2021).

The first group of tags is the biosensors monitoring the physiological parameters of the fish. Biosensors take advantage of molecular elements of biological processes such as enzymes and antibodies to identify target substances. When biocatalysts react with a target substance, they can serve as discriminating elements that can cause minor changes in parameters such as current, resistance, and heat due to the generation and consumption of chemical substances (Fig. 1). Biosensors can measure specific target substances easily and rapidly by detecting these small changes using signal conversion elements such as electrodes and optical devices, which transform the changes into electric signals. The overview of different biosensors is available in Endo & Wu (2019).

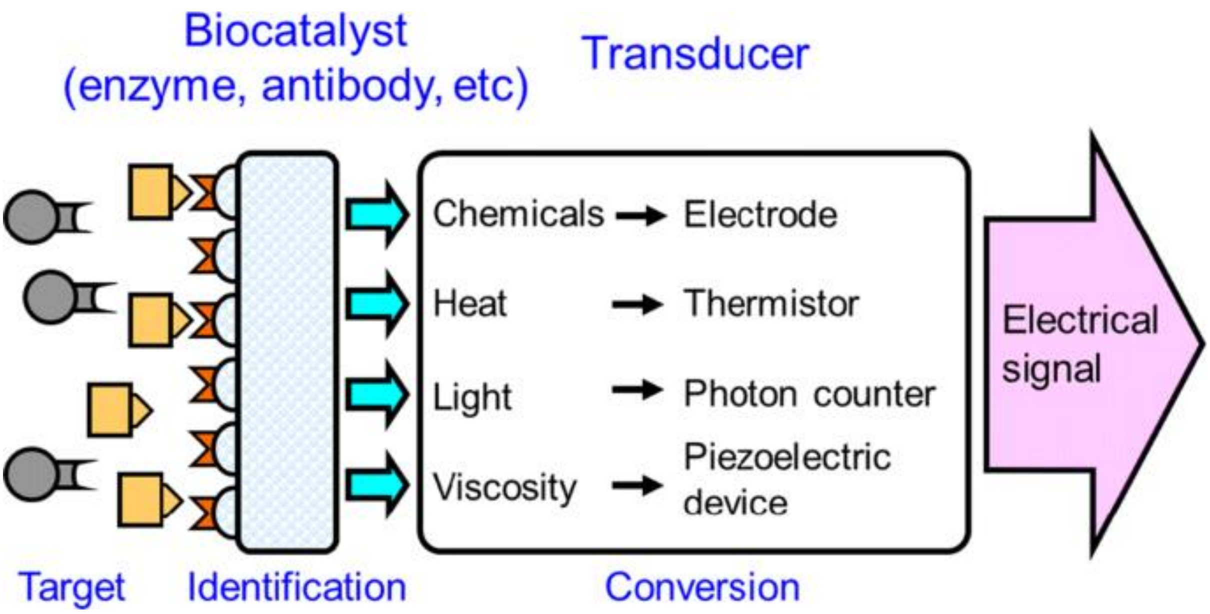

Figure 2. The principle of biosensor (https://link.springer.com/article/10.1007/s12562-019-01318-y)

One of the most relevant biosensors for fish welfare monitoring is the sensor to measure the level of glucose in the blood, which typically rises in response to a stressful event and can remain for more than one day (Jentoft et al., 2005). Wu et al. (2015) created an implantable biosensor for measurement that can transmit data in real-time. A 1.5 x 1.5 x 0.6 cm biosensor (3 g without battery) is implanted in the interstitial glass of the eyeball because the glucose levels at this site are highly correlated with blood glucose. However, the sensor can only operate for 160 minutes in continuous monitoring mode. The value correlates sufficiently with the blood glucose level measured. The glucose biosensor can be attached to the fish body with the electrode implanted into the fish's eye (Fig. 3).

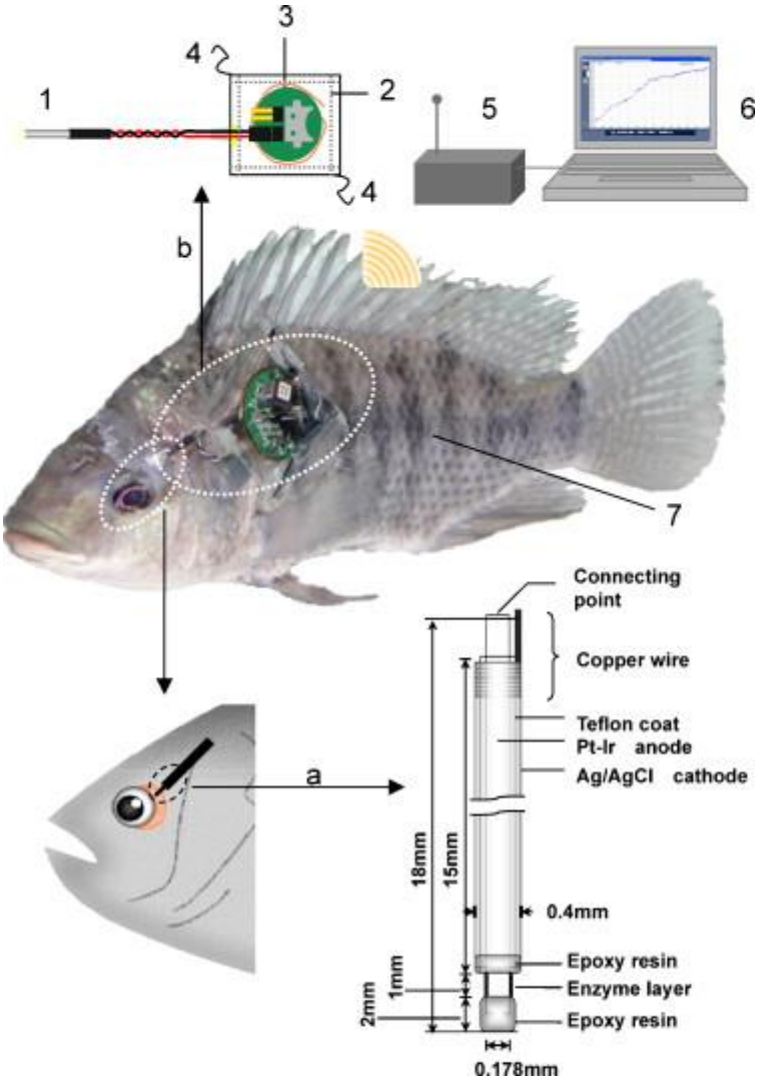

Figure 3. Wireless enzyme sensor system for real time monitoring of blood glucose concentrations in fish (https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0956566308004764?via%3Dihub)

Another quantitative stress marker that can be measured using biosensors is the heart rate and its variability. Examples of such biosensors are DST milli-HRT biogeners or STAR-ODDI. These sensors have been tested in several studies on rainbow trout and Atlantic salmon (Brown et al., 2011, Føre et al., 2021). In these studies, the tags were implanted in the abdominal cavity, in close proximity to the pericardium. Biosensors were used for heart rate measurement for several weeks.

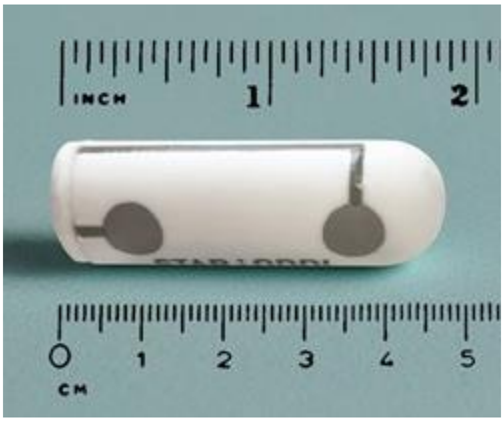

Figure 4. STAR ODDI data logger for heart rate, activity and temperature measurement (https://www.star-oddi.com/products/archival-tags/animal-heart-rate-activity-logger)

AEFishBIT (Martos-Sitcha et al., 2019) is an example of a biosensor that can be attached externally to the body of a fish without further implantation (only for selected species). The sensor is attached to the fish operculum with a clip and allows the measurement of acceleration in three axes. Two axes of the accelerometer (x, y) monitor locomotor activity through fish, and the third axis of accelerometer (z) monitors respiratory activity due to the location on the operculum.

The disadvantage of data loggers is an offline regime of data measurement which reduces their usability. The solution to this limitation is acoustic telemetry (Føre et al., 2018), which connects biosensors with a transmitter for data transmission. The receivers are generally immersed near or inside the tank/cage to capture and interpret the received signals into usable data, which is then stored or processed. There are problems with the implementation of a successful telemetry system, such as range limitation. Currently, the maximum range between acoustic sensors and their receivers is approximately 1 km. A new wireless system using Low Power Wide Area Networks (LPWAN) technology to overcome this limitation has recently been developed for use in suspended sea cages (Hassan et al., 2019). LPWANs are commonly used in Internet of Things technology. In this context, LPWAN nodes are added to the acoustic receivers to transmit the received signals to a single gateway. It is then transferred to a personal computer, which serves as a server and user interface. This technology allows access to data in real-time from several sea cages.

Figure 5. Thelma Biotel acoustic tags (https://www.thelmabiotel.com/transmitter/)

The studies using the technology:

- Brown RS, Eppard MB, Murchie KJ, Nielsen JL, Cooke SJ. An introduction to the practical and ethical perspectives on the need to advance and standardize the intracoelomic surgical implantation of electronic tags in fish. Rev Fish Biol Fish. 2011;21(1):1-9. https://doi.org/10.1007/s11160-010-9183-5
- Endo, H., Wu, H. Biosensors for the assessment of fish health: a review. Fish Sci 85, 641–654 (2019). https://doi.org/10.1007/s12562-019-01318-y
- Føre M, Svendsen E, Alfredsen JA, et al. Using acoustic telemetry to monitor the effects of crowding and delousing procedures on farmed Atlantic salmon (Salmo salar). Aquaculture. 2017;2018(495):757-765. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.aquaculture.2018.06

- Føre, M., Svendsen, E., Økland, F. et al. Heart rate and swimming activity as indicators of post-surgical recovery time of Atlantic salmon (Salmo salar). Anim Biotelemetry 9, 3 (2021). https://doi.org/10.1186/s40317-020-00226-8
- Hassan W, Føre M, Ulvund JB, Alfredsen JA. Internet of fish: Integration of acoustic telemetry with LPWAN for efficient real-time monitoring of fish in marine farms. Comput Electron Agric. 2019;163:104850. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.compag.2019.06.005
- Jentoft S, Aastveit AH, Torjesen PA, Andersen Ø. Effects of stress on growth, cortisol and glucose levels in non-domesticated Eurasian perch (Perca fluviatilis) and domesticated rainbow trout (Oncorhynchus mykiss). Comp Biochem Physiol A Mol Integr Physiol. 2005;141(3):353-358.
- Macaulay G, Warren-Myers F, Barrett LT, Oppedal F, Føre M, Dempster T. Tag use to monitor fish behaviour in aquaculture: a review of benefits, problems and solutions. Rev Aquac. 2021;13:1565-1582.
- Martos-Sitcha JA, Sosa J, Ramos VD, Bravo FJ, Carmona DC, Gomes HL, Calduch GJÀ, Cabruja E, Vega A, Ferrer MÁ, Lozano M, Montiel NJA, Afonso JM, Pérez SJ. Ultra-Low Power Sensor Devices for Monitoring Physical Activity and Respiratory Frequency in Farmed Fish. Frontiers in Physiology. 2019. DOI=10.3389/fphys.2019.00667
- Wu H, Aoki A, Arimoto T, et al. Fish stress become visible: a new attempt to use biosensor for real-time monitoring fish stress. Biosens Bioelectron. 2015;67:503-510.

SUMMARY:

Online/offline: data loggers – offline, acoustic tags -online

Data: depth, temperature, salinity, conductivity, acceleration (movement/respiratory activity), heart rate, glucose

Welfare indicators: glucose level, heart rate, swimming activity, respiratory activity

Advantages: independent of the water conditions, direct measurement of fish activity/physiological parameters

Disadvantages: invasive, high price, only a few individuals are usually monitored, the limited size of the fish based on the tag size, the measurements are not usually taken continuously but in batches to save battery life, the fish must be caught to retrieve the tag

Price: 300 – 1500EUR (depending on the type and number of measurement parameters), acoustic tags need to use transceiver (8000EUR)

3.3. Echosounder

The echosounders are the technology that is completely non-invasive and enables the possibility of online (real-time) data measurement. The modern echosounder device needs a personal computer (PC) to analyze and visualize data; therefore, it comes with the software. The installed software in the PC can display the received signal graphically as an echogram. The echosounder mainly consists of four components: transducer, transmitter, receiver, and display unit. The transmitter generates an electrical pulse that is transformed to sound waves by the transducer and propagate through the water. The reflected signal from the targets in water are sampled by the transducer again, changed back to an electrical signal, and echograms are generated. However, because of its accuracy and non-invasive nature, acoustic echo-sounding is a popular choice for fish count estimation (Sthapit et al., 2020). In a typical echosounder, the transmitter emits a ping (acoustic signal), and the received echo signals from targets are analyzed. The academic as well as commercial use of acoustics for estimating fish abundance have been widespread (Lubis et al., 2017, Conti et al., 2006). Although fish have been the main focus, squids and other marine organisms have also been investigated. Modern echosounder implements echo integration to analyze fish and their behavior (Røttingen 2020). Even though the echo integration method has been extensively employed in the open ocean, however, when the method is employed in the farming cages, it offers new challenges (Sthapit et al., 2019). Firstly, the fish are closer to a transducer, therefore, classical Time Varying Gain (TVG) correction could be inappropriate. Secondly, the reverberation of the acoustical signal from the boundaries of the cage needs to be considered. Another problem that needs to be addressed is removing the cage signal from the received echo. Similarly, the stability of the transducer is another issue as the signal quality highly depends on its orientation. The fish position (depth) and distribution over the cage is usually the main parameter of investigation, which is useful for fish welfare monitoring. Behaviour-related welfare indicators are strongly dependent on the fish species, and it is difficult to define the baseline of "normal" fish behavior to detect the abnormalities.

The echo sounder is not limited just to the open water. The small echo sounders used by fishermen could be used in the limited space of fish tanks. There is no scientific study using sonar in a fish tank, but some experiments were already done (https://youtu.be/Wggk1y5erlU).

The echo sounders could also be used to estimate the number of fish and the biomass in sea cages. The first successful experiments were done in the project PerformFISH (https://thefishsite.com/articles/using-echo-sound-to-estimate-biomass-in-aquaculture) or by Sthapit (Sthapit 2020).

The studies using the technology:

- Conti S.G., Roux P., Fauvel C., Maurer B.D., Demer D.A. Acoustical monitoring of fish density, behavior, and growth rate in a tank. Aquaculture. 2006;251:314–323.
- Lubis M.Z., Manik H.M. Acoustic systems (split beam echo sounder) to determine abundance of fish in marine fisheries. J. Geosci. Eng. Environ. Technol. 2017;2:76–83. doi: 10.24273/jgeet.2017.2.1.38.
- Røttingen I. On the Relation between Echo Intensity and Fish Density. [(accessed on 26 October 2020)]; Available online: https://imr.brage.unit.no/imr-xmlui/bitstream/handle/11250/114400/sh_vol16_09(2)_1976.pdf?sequence=1.
- Sthapit P., Teekaraman Y., MinSeok K., Kim K. Algorithm to Estimation Fish Population using Echosounder in Fish Farming Net; Proceedings of the 2019 International Conference on Information and Communication Technology Convergence (ICTC); Jeju Island, Korea. 16–18 October 2019; pp. 587–590.
- Sthapit, P.; Kim, M.; Kang, D.; Kim, K. Development of Scientific Fishery Biomass Estimator: System Design and Prototyping. *Sensors* 2020, *20*, 6095. https://doi.org/10.3390/s20216095

SUMMARY

Online/offline: online/offline

Welfare indicators: fish swimming activity, grouping, position preference in sea cage, maybe fish biomass

Advantages: a global view of fish activity in sea cage, independent of the light conditions

Disadvantages: low resolution in comparison with camera system, impossible to track individuals, usually 2D information, synchronization of more echo sounders, complicated use in fish tank, limited to behavioural observations

Price: 100Euro – 3000Euro (depending on the resolution, number of sonar beams, and number of frequencies)

3.4. Video monitoring

Video monitoring is more and more used in aquaculture, which is caused by the decreasing price of video cameras, increasing quality of video records, and improvement of the methods of video processing. Many sea cages are equipped with feeding cameras, and the researchers try to find a way to automatize the video processing of fish behavior to extract information about fish swimming, growth, and fish appearance. All three parameters can be used for welfare estimation because it corresponds to the welfare indicators like behavior patterns (abnormal behavior), fish deformation or injuries, and abnormalities in fish growth. Different camera systems using different spectra were used in the research studies. The camera in the near-infrared spectrum was used to analyze behavior (Pautsina et al., 2015), fish biomass in a tank (Saberioon et al., 2018), and feeding behavior (Zhou et al., 2018). The camera in the visible spectrum is usually used for fish behavior monitoring in the sea cages (Pinkiewicz et al., 2011) and aquarium (Chunley et al., 2016). The 3D cameras and stereo vision principle are usually used for 3D fish position monitoring in tanks (Saberioon et al., 2016) and fish biomass estimation in sea cages (Muñoz et al., 2018). The video camera can be used for a variety of fish monitoring: fish swimming monitoring in 2D or 3D space, feeding behavior analysis, fish size measurement (see Fig. 6), but it requires a specific method for video data processing.

Figure 6. Example of automatic fish detection using a bottom-up video camera. The algorithm is for tuna detection is trained from manually labeled data (left), and the fish biomass and behavior are estimated from automatically detected individuals (right). https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0168169916309395?via%3Dihub#f0005

The main difference between tags, echo sounders, and video cameras is the need for additional complicated data processing of the video records from the camera. The cameras are also limited to monitoring in the clear water during the daylight period. Artificial light as near-infrared light can be used to extend the monitoring to the night period of a day, but some fish species are sensitive to infra-red spectra. The image processing methods can detect individual fish to estimate the trajectory of individuals or determine the fish shape or process the behavior pattern of the whole fish school. Modern image processing methods based on deep neural networks can detect individual fish and estimate fish breathing (Valenzuela et al., 2021) or fish mouth opening which is correlated with the fish welfare state. These studies are just experimental trials and are under development. Tags or sonar can be used in the same way for different species and different conditions. The flexible solutions based on the video cameras are usually designed for specific conditions and specific fish species and, therefore, are difficult to apply to other species and conditions. The main reason is the specificity of the data image processing methods.
There are few commercial systems using video cameras for biomass estimation and sea lice detection reporting welfare monitoring. For example, VAKI AQUACULTURE SYSTEMS LTD. offers Falcon camera system (https://www.aquafalcon.com/) for automatized sea lice detection.

The use of video cameras can be combined with the use of other devices. For example, Key et al. (2019) introduced the advantage of combination of sonar and optical camera for fish monitoring. They combined both data using neural network to monitor fish activity during the day and night period, see Fig. 7.

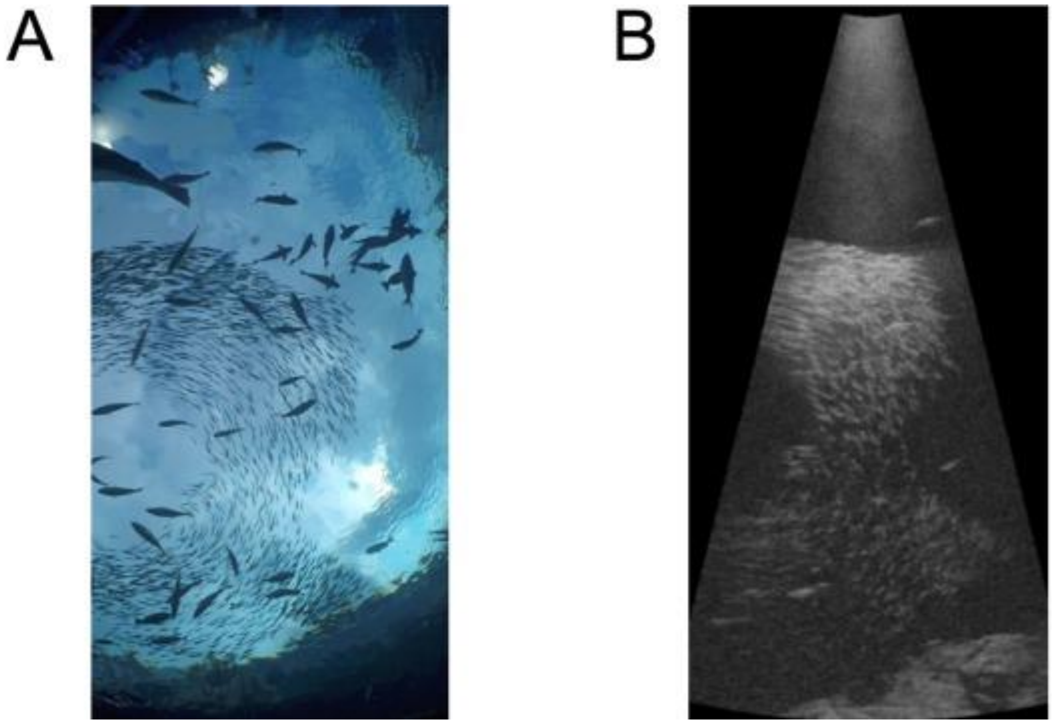

Figure 7. Combination of optical camera (A) and high-resolution sonar (B). https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0144860919300640?via%3Dihub

The studies using the technology:

- Chunlei X., Tae-Soo Ch., Yuedan L., Jing Ch., JangMyung L. Posture tracking of multiple individual fish for behavioral monitoring with visual sensors, Ecological Informatics, Volume 36, 2016, Pages 190-198, ISSN 1574-9541, https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ecoinf.2016.07.004.
- Kei T, Kento S, Katsunori M, Koji T. Integration of sonar and optical camera images using deep neural network for fish monitoring. Aquacultural Engineering, Volume 86, 2019, 102000, ISSN 144-8609, https://doi.org/10.1016/j.aquaeng.2019.102000.
- Muñoz-Benavent P, Andreu-García G, Valiente-González JM, Atienza-Vanacloig V, Puig-Pons V, Espinosa V. Enhanced fish bending model for automatic tuna sizing using computer

vision. Comput Electron Agric. 2018 ;150:52-61. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.compag.2018.04.005
- Pautsina A, Císař P, Štys D, Terjesen BF, Espmark ÅMO. Infrared reflection system for indoor 3D tracking of fish. Aquac Eng. 2015;69:7-17. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.aquaeng.2015.09.002
- Pinkiewicz TH, Purser GJ, Williams RN. A computer vision system to analyse the swimming behaviour of farmed fish in commercial aquaculture facilities: a case study using cage-held Atlantic salmon. Aquac Eng. 2011 ;45(1):20-27. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.aquaeng.2011.05.002
- Saberioon MM, Cisar P. Automated multiple fish tracking in three-dimension using a structured light sensor. Comput Electron Agric. 2016;121:215-221. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.compag.2015.12.014
- Saberioon M, Císař P. Automated within tank fish mass estimation using infrared reflection system. Comput Electron Agric. 2018;150:484-492. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.compag.2018.05.025
- Valenzuela A, Sibuet N, Hornero G, Casas O. Non-Contact Video-Based Assessment of the Respiratory Function Using a RGB-D Camera. *Sensors*. 2021; 21(16):5605. https://doi.org/10.3390/s21165605
- Zhou C, Xu D, Lin K, Sun C, Yang X. Intelligent feeding control methods in aquaculture with an emphasis on fish: a review. Rev Aquac. 2018;10(4):975-993. https://doi.org/10.1111/raq.12218

SUMMARY:

Online/offline: online

Welfare indicators: swimming activity, feeding, fish growth, fish deformation, fish injury

Advantages: high-quality data, individual monitoring, several types of parameters can be determined from a video signal

Disadvantages: water clarity, high demanding data processing, difficult to generalize the solution for more species and conditions

Price: 10 – 2000 EUR

3.5. Measuring frames

Measuring frame is a commercial solution specialized for fish biomass estimation only. The link between biomass and welfare is through the influence of fish growth by the stress.Several producers (VAKI AQUACULTURE SYSTEMS LTD.) offer the frames operating 24/7 online to estimate the biomass of the fish swimming through the frame. Difford (Difford et al., 2020) validated that the frames can precisely estimate the fish biomass in the sea cage. Biomass estimation can be used as a welfare indicator to monitor fish growth online.

The studies using the technology:

- Difford GF, Boison SA, Khaw HL, Gjerde B. Validating non-invasive growth measurements on individual Atlantic salmon in sea cages using diode frames. Computers and Electronics in Agriculture, Volume 173, 2020, 105411, ISSN 0168-1699, https://doi.org/10.1016/j.compag.2020.105411.

SUMMARY

Online/offline: online

Welfare indicators: biomass

Advantages: robust commercially available solution

Disadvantages: biomass estimation only, fish must swim through the frame

3.6. Applications

The alternative solution to the automatic systems of welfare monitoring is the support of user measurement/observation from the daily fish maintenance. The mobile application Fishwell (https://www.kyst.no/article/en-app-gjoer-velferdsovervaakningen-av-forsoeksfisk-mer-presis/) was developed to record operators observations of welfare indicators based on gill lid status, eyes, fins, etc. The user provides the score of the observation together with the image (taken by mobile phone), and the system is used as evidence of the fish welfare. The combination of human data collection followed by machine data processing is a promising direction of fish welfare monitoring. This solution is limited to the tanks only.

SUMMARY

Online/offline: online

Welfare indicators: any human can score

Advantages: a simple approach

Disadvantages: based on human observation

4. Conclusion

The overview of the technologies available for welfare indicators measurement was extracted from the literature review and the questionnaires delivered by project partners. The main six categories of measurement devices (principles) were described together with the links to the existing studies and a summary of the advantages/disadvantages of the technologies. The most promising technologies for operational welfare indicators measurement are the non-invasive technologies providing online data and information about fish swimming or appearance. There are several emerging video processing methods that could bring new possibilities of physiological fish parameters remotely by the video camera, but they are not commercially available now.

5. Glossary/Definitions

AQUAEXCEL3.0: AQUAculture Infrastructures for EXCELlence in European Fish Research

Document Information

EU Project	No 871108	Acronym	AQUAEXCEL3.0
Full Title	AQUAculture infrastructures for EXCELlence in European fish research 3.0		
Project website	www.aquaexcel.eu		

Deliverable	N°	6.1	Title	TNA Application Package including online application & review system
Work Package	N°	6	Title	Existing and emerging technologies available for welfare indicators monitoring
Work Package Leader	Åsa Maria Espmark			
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Lead Beneficiary	UoS, Partner Number
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Due date of deliverable	31.12.2021
Submission date	20.12.2021
Dissemination level	PU[1]
Type of deliverable	R

[1]Dissemination level (DELETE ACCORDINGLY): **PU:** Public, **CO:** Confidential, only for members of the consortium (including the Commission Services), set out in Model Grant Agreement, **CL:** Classified, information as referred to in Commission Decision 2001/844/EC

Version log			
Issue Date	Revision N°	Author	Change
20.12.2021	01	Petr Cisar	first version by WP leader; internal revision