

Understand the impact of aquaculture on the marine environment

Aquaculture uses natural resources and interacts with the environment. In Norway the intention to use resources more efficiently is resulting in intensification of aquaculture production. There is an increased risk that such trends will increase the environmental impact.

Major environmental impacts of aquaculture include discharge of suspended solids, nutrients (eutrophication) and organic enrichment of recipient waters resulting in build-up of anoxic sediments and changes in bottom (benthic) communities.

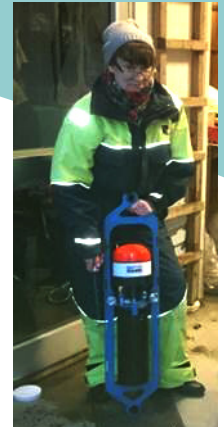


Photo courtesy of Dr. Raymond Bannister

The Institute of Marine Research in Bergen has started a long-term international project, ERA (Ecosystem Responses to Aquaculture induced stress) funded by the research council of Norway, where the main goals are to:

- Develop and modify existing physical models to establish integrative research tools to study the dispersal, deposition and impact of aquaculture effluents on marine ecosystems
- Elucidate the effects of present and future scale aquaculture production on the structure and functioning of hard, mixed and sandy bottom habitats
- Establish biotic and abiotic indicators for detecting benthic impacts of aquaculture effluents and link these to the physical modelling tools

The project will therefore combine in-situ data collection with SeaGuardII DCP instruments of current profiles, conductivity, tide and pressure, multipoint calibrated oxygen, turbidity and chlorophyll together with benthic biological data and environmental models.

The SeaGuardII DCP is a scalable, easy to use current profiler. Its flexibility makes it the perfect instrument to address all scenarios of ocean observations and monitoring.



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