

Dear Reader:

For this special issue of Orinoquia, we selected papers that were presented at the XX Conference on Aquaculture of the University of the Llanos, an event that is held in the university every year without fail, and this year's celebrates the 20th anniversary of the founding of the Institute of Aquaculture of the Llanos. This event has served as a bridge between researchers and people dedicated to the raising of aquatic organisms both in the Llanos and in other regions of Colombia, and, also, in other Latin American republics. Being able to gather together, on many occasions, researchers, students, producers, marketers, planners, and state officials thinking on the common good of such productive activity.

On this occasion, the event took place simultaneously with the VI Colombian Congress of Aquaculture, a bi-annual meeting that, after being held in other Colombian cities, returned this year to the Llanos. In our countries, the raising of fish, shrimp, and other aquatic organisms, is contributing to offset the diminishing of the fishing industry's natural supply of the continent, already decimated by over exploitation, environmental factors, and habitat degradation, among other causes, without failing to mention the possible impact of global climate change on the availability -for excess or shortage- of water, both for production and for human consumption. Aquaculture has benefited by some government policies and norms, but still falls short of being a strategic social activity, able to take root as Acui-Culture, looking at it (Water + Culture) as the culture of water and the proper use of aquatic resources that transcends the usual productive uses, giving way to forms of sustainable use of natural resources that foresee the effects of the production systems on the environment and that involve local communities, rural families, and medium and large producers in the responsible management of aquatic resources. These selected papers contribute to recognize the importance of deepening, scientifically and pedagogically, in the care of both the vital element and the aquatic organisms, especially those native to our watersheds.

The more than 100 presentations developed in 18 sections, eleven lectures, a forum, plus an additional program of meetings between producers, academics, alumni, and students that projected thinking in jointly strengthening Latin American regional aquaculture, conducted during three days -8, 9 and 10 October 2014- were very useful.

The selected papers in this publication were subject to further review by specialists to meet the editorial requirements of Orinoquia. We thank the authors for their interest and persistence in revising them.

Pedro René Eslava Mocha - Editor