

**EC Prep Monthly report on Trade Issues in  
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## **Vietnam's Inland Areas Develop Aquaculture**

[Vietnam, inland aquaculture, northern provinces, rice-fish]

According to Vietnam's Ministry of Fisheries, the total surface area suitable for aquaculture in the northern provinces of Lai Chau, Hoa Binh, Yen Bai, Thai Nguyen, Tuyen Quang and Phu Tho is 131,000 ha, which stands at 21% of the total surface area. These regions are expected to produce 50,000 tons of aquatic produce this year. Of this area, 82,000 ha are comprised of lakes and rivers, 22,100 ha are smaller ponds and streams, with the remainder being composed of rice paddy. The Ministry added that the region possesses significant aquaculture resources with some 100 varieties of fish of which 17 are of commercial interest, adding, "Since rice paddies have been given over to growing fish, the local living standards have been greatly improved."

However, the region is encountering difficulties in developing its aquaculture potential as production does not yet meet demand and the quality of fry is often substandard. In fact, provinces like Bac Kan and Cao Ba do not possess any broodstock at all. Solutions that have been suggested, including improved broodstock and hatchery facilities and encouraging local people to participate in this.

(Source: Asia Pulse Pte Limited, March 21, 2005)

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## **Phase Out Antibiotic Use, Urges India**

[India, antibiotics, seafood quality]

A three-day international symposium urged the Indian fishing community to adopt zero-level antibiotic use to sustain aquaculture production and maintain exports. The symposium concerned "Improved Sustainability of Fish Production Systems and Appropriate Technologies for Utilization." Based on the deliberations of 140 scientific contributions, the symposium recommended the use of probiotics and chemicals in aquaculture which must be brought under a strict evaluation and regulatory regime. Simultaneously, research to map the vast microbial resources of India must be speeded up, as microbial products can help control disease problems in aquaculture.

(Source: Kasturi & Sons Ltd (KSL), March 21, 2005)

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## **Live Fish Market Opened in the Philippines**

[Philippines, live fish, market, ornamental]

The Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources (BFAR) has just opened the first live fish market in the Philippines, called *Buhay-Isdaan* (live fish market). It is hoped that the market will serve as a meeting place for fish farmers and consumers where prices will be lower due to the absence of middlemen.

The market is divided into three parts: one for live freshwater fish, one for live marine fish each with 30 compartments, and an area for trading in the center. Each compartment measures 2 x 1.2 meters and can hold 25 kilos of fish. The market is targeting small-scale fish farmers who previously had difficulty marketing their product, which will include bangus, lapu-lapu, seabass, freshwater shrimp (ulang), oysters and other edible fish, as well as ornamental and aquarium fish. BFAR also plans to offer free training on the culture of different species.

Ornamental fish will make up a crucial component of the market, as there is a potential market for aquarium fish in the United States and Europe, which have banned aquarium fish from other Asian countries because of disease. Currently the Philippines exports marine aquarium fish, but imports freshwater varieties. BFAR would like to encourage the production of freshwater ornamentals in the Philippines as it is stated to be easy and a ready market exists domestically. BFAR has encouraged entrepreneurs to go into aquarium fish production and is offering technical assistance to interested parties that want to take advantage of rising demand.

(Source: Philippine Daily Inquirer, February 21, 25, 2005)

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### **Eco-labelling to Support Sustainable Fisheries**

[FAO, labeling, sustainable fisheries]

The FAO Committee on Fisheries (COFI) recently adopted a set of voluntary guidelines regarding the eco-labelling of fish products during its meeting of 8-11 March in Rome, Italy. The eco-labelling guidelines were drafted in 2003 and 2004 by a number of experts and governments during a series of FAO Expert and Technical Consultations. An eco-label is a marker that a fisheries product has been produced in a sustainable manner, informing consumers and promoting sustainable production methods. The guidelines are aimed at providing governments and organizations with assistance in achieving this. The meeting drew on the ten-year-old FAO Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries to draw up the minimum requirements and criteria for assessing a product. The move comes following a growth of eco-labelling activities in the food industry and the need to set standards to give them credibility. By producing the guidelines, FAO hopes to counter this in the fisheries products industry by setting the standard early.

The FAO acknowledged problems that developing countries might face in achieving this and meeting the standard. Hence the guidelines call for technical and financial support to help them. However, as pointed out some of the world's better managed fisheries are found in the developing world and eco-labelling may offer them better market access.

COFI has now instructed the FAO to refine the guidelines and develop the same principles for inland fisheries. These will be presented to COFI at the next session in 2007.

(Source: FAO [www.fao.org](http://www.fao.org) March 2005)

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### **Malaysia Aims to Be Center of Ornamental Fish Production**

[Malaysia, ornamental fish, exports]

The Third Malaysian National Agriculture Policy had identified ornamental fishes as among commodities to be given priority with respect to increasing their production by 2010. Studies suggest there are 250 types of ornamental fishes, both indigenous and from other regions such as South America, which could be produced here. Sixty-four of these species are thought to possess large commercial potential. Among them are Kelisa or Arowana, Discus and Koi. The director of the Malaysian Fisheries Department Aquaculture Development Division said the ornamental fish industry would be developed by a cluster approach to expand domestic production and export markets under the Ninth Malaysia Plan (2006-10). Three areas that have already been identified are Penang, Kedah and Perlis, Selangor and Perak and Johor. The first area will concentrate on breeding discus, the second gold fish and koi, and the third arowana and other species. In 2002, Malaysian breeders produced 408 million ornamental fishes with 90% being exported.

(Source: Bernama, Malaysian National News Agency, March 7, 2005)

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### **Ho Chi Minh City Aims to Increase Ornamental Fish Production**

[Vietnam, Ho Chi Minh City, ornamental]

Breeders of ornamental fish in Vietnam's Ho Chi Minh City are planning to create large-scale cooperative village projects producing ornamental fish and bringing 180 fish breeders together in one location. It is hoped that this will help boost production and exports. The development of the village includes the construction of a 30-hectare complex to be completed on 30 April. Then each of the 180 members will be allocated 1,000 square meters of which 50% will be marked for fish breeding. Other projects will be concerned with growing orchids and bonsais. There is a lot of money in the production and exporting of ornamental fish. Vietnam currently earns only US\$ 8-9 million from ornamental fish exports while Singapore makes US\$ 300 million.

It is hoped that this project will help organize ornamental fish breeders in a village environment and form the basis of an industry in Vietnam, which will in turn become more professional and a greater earner of foreign currency.

(Source: Vietnam News Briefs, March 24, 2005)

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## **Shrimp Dispute Update**

[shrimp, US, trade dispute, tariffs]

In the latest developments in the on-going US trade dispute with several countries over the import of cheap farm produced shrimp, the countries affected by trade tariffs continue to dispute the amounts imposed by the US. Thirty-two Chinese shrimp enterprises have appealed to the US Court of International Trade against an anti-dumping ruling imposed on them by the US Department of Commerce (DoC). In their appeal, lodged on 4 March, the Chinese companies claim that the final determination of the level of tariffs was unfair. China was particularly hard hit by the tariffs as the DoC declared it would impose duties ranging from 27.89% to 82.27% on its exports to the United States.

To recap, several countries were recently found by the DoC to have exported shrimp to the US at below market prices, a tactic referred to as dumping and hence trade tariffs on imports were introduced. The whole dispute began when the Southern Shrimp Alliance brought low imported shrimp prices to the attention of the DoC, claiming that their livelihoods were under threat from cheaper overseas imports. The six affected countries have consistently argued that their farmed shrimp are much cheaper to produce than those caught at sea, as in the southern United States and revisions to the tariffs are planned. However, these are in response to the Indian Ocean tsunami and only affect Thailand and India following damage to their shrimp farms.

This announcement came as Thai shrimp producers asked the US International Trade Commission (ITC) to revoke the anti-dumping duty on Thai shrimp when it comes up for review in July, saying the local industry had been hard hit by the tsunami, especially hatcheries. Prior to the tsunami the US imposed anti-dumping duties on Thai shrimp exports at an average rate of 5.95%.

Meanwhile, in an effort to counter the import of foreign shrimp and create niche markets for their US product, fishermen in Alabama, Florida, Georgia, Louisiana, Mississippi, North Carolina, South Carolina and Texas have banded together to create the “Wild and Wonderful” campaign to educate the public about the benefits of eating locally caught shrimp.

(Source: China Daily, March 14, 2005; Sun-Sentinel (Fort Lauderdale, FL), February 24, 2005; Thai Press Reports, March 7, 18, 2005)

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