



SHRIMP MEDIA MONITORING 10-24 March 2003

"A Synthesis of Shrimp News From the International Media and Internet"

This newsletter includes news on shrimp farming, and related issues of trade, environment and development, obtained from NACA and STREAM media monitoring program. This media monitoring program tracks some of the major news items on aquaculture and aquatic resources management, with an emphasis on issues relevant to the Asia-Pacific region. The news items are not edited for subject matter, except some items may be shortened for inclusion. The source of the news item is provided. For those interested in the media-monitoring program, please check out information sources at www.streaminitiative.org

If any comments and/or contributions please let us know at e-mail: shrimp@enaca.org

Disease-Resistant Shrimp on the Way

Within the next five years, Thailand should have bred a new species of shrimp that is more resistant to bacterial and viral diseases, thanks to the development of local biotechnology. The National Centre for Genetic Engineering and Biotechnology (Biotec) will today sign an agreement with three leading universities - Chulalongkorn, Mahidol and Prince of Songkhla - to map the shrimp gene.

Biotec director Morakot Tantichareon said the Shrimp Expression Sequence Tag Project would provide marine biotechnologists with a greater insight into the genetic structure of marine life, and eventually give a boost to the economy.

She said the first phase of the project would focus on genes that have the ability to boost the animal's immune system, since shrimp farms are vulnerable to viruses and bacterial infection.

Another research team, who will develop a stronger species of shrimp through selective breeding, will use the results of the project. The entire project should be completed within five years, she said. Biotec will finance the Bt60-million program

Though the project aims to study the genetic structure of shrimp, it is a different from the rice genome project, which Biotec completed last year. Morakot said they would not try to decode the whole shrimp genome, as with the rice project, but sequence only the expressed genes. To decode the whole shrimp genome would cost billions of baht.

(Source: The Nation 14 March 2003)

MPEDA Plans 'Safe Shrimp' Project in Andamans

The Marine Products Export Development Authority (MPEDA) plans to set up a shrimp domestication project in the Andaman and Nicobar Islands.

Mr Jose Cyriac, Chairman, MPEDA, told Business Line that MPEDA has identified a site 20 km from Port Blair for the proposed project to cultivate specific pathogen free (SPF) shrimp brooders or parent shrimps. Dr Andrew Kuljis of Aquatic Farms, Hawaii who is an expert on genetic shrimp breeding will be acting as consultant in setting up the project. "We wish to create a highly bio-secure environment, where we can produce the next generation of shrimps. At present we depend on wild brooder stock but

given the rising instances of disease in shrimps we wanted a project where we can produce the next generation of shrimps in a controlled disease free environment," Mr Cyriac said.

With the increase in production through increased stocking capacity, which is quite often beyond the carrying capacity, diseases have crept in. The most common disease encountered in shrimp aquaculture is the white spot syndrome virus (WSSV) and the Moudon Baculo virus.

The site of the project has been chosen so as to avoid any possibility of contamination.

"The borders along our coasts have been affected due to heavy concentration of farming near the sea what with fish excreta etc being dumped into the sea. Hence our decision to set up a highly secure base station in the Andamans where there is no possibility of diseased animals being dumped into the sea. We expect the shrimp brooders in and around Andamans to be free from pathogens," the MPEDA chief explained.

Thereafter, over a period of time, various parameters of improving genetic quality of the brooders like perfecting the feed conversion ratio (FCR) etc. would be brought into play.

"Shrimp has so far not been easy to domesticate as we cannot control the environment in the pond or in the farm where they breed. In other words we have not been able to create the ideal environment for the perfect brooders. The base in Andaman will provide us with brooder stock for black tiger. It will also reduce our dependence on wild catch, take care of the disease problem and reduce price volatility," Mr Cyriac said. The regulator is also considering whether or not the first generation or F1 and second generation or F2 stock would be grown to adult size at the base camp or whether multiplier centers would be set up on the mainland for the purpose.

"Once the brooders are developed they would then be sold to hatchery owners who will have the assurance that he is getting pathogen free brooders. The hatchery owners in turn could culture it on a large scale and even sell brooder stock to its clients," he said.

According to Mr. Cyriac the preliminary round of discussions on the project is yet to be concluded. "The finer detailing such as the consultation fee, project cost etc are still being worked out," he added.

While the project would be the first-ever attempt towards shrimp domestication, it is expected to eventually become a profitable self-sustaining venture.

"The initial investments would be borne by the Government but thereafter, once the technology is perfected we expect it to become a commercially viable project," Mr Cyriac said. The project is to be implemented through the Rajiv Gandhi Centre for Aquaculture.

(Source: Financial Times Information 14 March 2003)

Indonesia Denies US Allegation on Shrimp Dumping Price

The Indonesian government denied an allegation by the United States that it exports shrimps on dumping prices, an official has said.

Sumpeno Putro, director general of marketing under the Ministry of Maritime and Fishery, was quoted Monday by Economic Daily Bisnis Indonesia as saying that the allegation was groundless. His statement came after the US government, at the request of eight states grouping in the Southern Shrimp Alliance, asked Indonesia along with some other countries to cut shrimp exports for alleged dumping prices. Besides Indonesia, Sumpeno said, the US government has filed dumping protests against Thailand, India, China, Vietnam, Bangladesh, Ecuador, Mexico, Brazil, Venezuela and Guyana. If imposed, the US government would charge 100,000 US dollars per container of shrimps from those countries to restrict the imports, which Sumpeno said would drive up shrimp prices in the United States.

(Source: Xinhua News Agency, 17 March 2003)

Rising Shrimp Prices Eat Into Profits of Vietnamese Farmers

Rising shrimp fry prices in central and southern provinces and the scarcity of parent shrimps have put local breeders on edge. Breeders said the price of shrimp fry is inching up every day in central provinces.

One young shrimp sold for less than VND40 at the beginning of February, but the price had soared to VND55 by the end of the month, a three-fold increase on last year's price. Larval shrimp (younger and smaller than shrimp fry) sell for VND50 each, but industry observers said they expect the price to increase to VND70 by the end of this month.

Observers said the price boom for larval shrimp is due to the increasing scarcity of wild parent shrimp.

According to Khanh Hoa Province's Fisheries Department, the annual catch of wild shrimp has dropped from 1,000-1,200 tons during the 1990s to less than 500 tons. Observers predict the price of parent shrimp in Khanh Hoa will soon reach VND12-15 million each, twice last year's price. Breeders also blame cold weather for the price hike.

"The weather was cold this year, causing parent shrimp to lay small eggs," Nguyen Van Thi, the owner of a shrimp fry farm in Cam Ranh town, said. Statistics released by 20 southern provinces show each is only able to produce 20-30% of its shrimp fry demand, forcing them to import the remainder from other provinces.

These provinces have to import more than 14,000 million shrimp fry every year, with Ca Mau Province topping the list at 6,000 million shrimp fry. There are 3,885 farmers producing shrimp fry across the country, with most located in the central coastal provinces. More than 70% of the nation's shrimp farms are in the Cuu Long (Mekong) Delta provinces, so the costs of transporting fry from the centre to the south adds to the price.

The price rise is also caused by high demand for shrimp fry during the main breeding season, which normally falls at the beginning of every year. The scarcity of parent shrimp has prompted farmers to buy inferior animals, which they say increases the risk of offspring contracting diseases soon after birth.

The Ministry of Fisheries has devised a shrimp fry development strategy to overcome these problems, however, it is yet to be approved by the Government. Under the strategy, the ministry would closely control the quality of shrimp fry at farms across the country. Local breeders would be shown techniques to clean breeding ponds, treat discharged water and other measures to reduce disease.

The ministry would also register shrimp fry producers nationwide to stop fly-by-night operations selling low quality shrimp. Work is underway to build a shrimp fry breeding zone in Cam Ranh town, which will be able to provide 10 billion larval shrimp when completed.

(Source: Asia Pulse Pte Limited 18 March 2003)

Malaysia Claims No Evidence of Antibiotics in its Aquaculture Operations

The Fisheries Department has yet to obtain proof relating to cases of excess antibiotics and heavy metal in the aquaculture activity in the country. Agriculture Ministry Parliamentary Secretary Datuk Abu Bakar Taib said if there were cases of excess antibiotics and metal, the matter would be referred to the Health Ministry for further action under the Food Act 1983.

'The products would be stopped from being marketed as it is a health hazard,' he said in answering a question from Abdul Fatah Harun (PAS-Rantau Panjang) at Dewan Rakyat here today. Abu Bakar said the ministry constantly monitored all aquaculture activities through the Fisheries Department. He said spot checks were conducted from time to time in suspected areas. The Fisheries Department also set up the Malaysian Aquaculture Farm Certification Scheme as a move to ensure the fisheries product were of the stipulated safety level. He said through the scheme, sanitation certificates would be issued to owners or companies whose products were guaranteed to be of high quality and where the antibiotic content could be monitored to be safe. Abu Bakar said the Fisheries Department also set up a lab to analyze antibiotics to identify the metal content level in fish, prawn and cockles.

'The Fisheries Quality Control Lab is located in Subang. The lab analyses would be in accordance with sanitary and phytosanitary conditions. The lab would work with other accredited private labs to conduct antibiotic analyses on fish and prawn sample,' he said.

(Source: TransData Corporation, 20 March 2003)

Shrimp Expected to Net US\$1 Bln in Exports for Vietnam in 2003

Shrimp aquaculture will provide a boost for Vietnam's fisheries sector this year with an export value of more than US\$1 billion expected, Deputy Minister of Fisheries Nguyen Viet Thang said. The sector has allocated 955,000 ha of land for aquaculture, a 13.3% rise on the 2001 figure, said Thang, who is also the head of the aquaculture development department of the Ministry of Fisheries.

Due to an expansion in aquaculture acreage, the output of bred shrimp rose from 60,000 tons in 1999 to 160,000 tons last year. This year's output is expected to be 193,000 tons. The fisheries sector's development plan for this year is focused on rising the quality of bred shrimps and promoting shrimp farming. Shrimp farming is on the increase in central coastal provinces, helping to improve living conditions for farmers in these sandy areas.

Shrimp farms in central coastal provinces, such as Da Nang, Quang Nam, Quang Ngai, Binh Dinh, Phu Yen, Quang Binh and Ha Tinh make up a mere 3.4% (or 2,559 ha) of the country's total shrimp

farming acreage. Yet, their yearly output is a remarkable at 21,000 tons with an average yield of 10-12 tons per ha.

The rise of shrimp farming in sandy areas started in central coastal Ninh Thuan province in 2001, with 120 ha yielding 800 tons. Other types of shrimp farming are also showing promise, such as intensive shrimp farming with an annual yield of 250-300 kg per ha.

Last year, the fisheries sector recorded a seafood output of 2.4 million tons, including 976,000 tons of aqua-products. This had an export value of US\$2.02 billion, 70% of which came from aqua-products. In particular, frozen shrimp and "tra" and "basa" catfish fillets brought the country US\$979 million, and US\$135 million, respectively.

This year, the sector plans to produce 2.49 million tons of seafood, including 1.09 million tons of aqua-products, which will have a predicted, an export value of US\$2.2-2.3 billion.

The country's seafood export revenues reached US \$434.5 million in the first quarter of this year, a year-on-year increase of 41.14% the Fisheries Ministry has reported. Its aquatic products earned US\$183 million from the U.S. market, which is followed by Japan (US \$79 million), China and Hong Kong (US\$51.5 million), and the European Union (US\$22.6 million). To the three-month export value, frozen shrimp contributed US\$173.5 million; frozen fish, US\$99 million; and cuttle fish and octopus, US\$24.5 million.

(Source: Asia Pulse Pte. Limited 24 March 2003)

Bangladesh Shrimp Fry Collection Going on Unchecked Defying Ban

Shrimp fry collection is going on unabated in the Sundarbans forest despite the ban imposed by the Government about one and a half years ago to check their gradual depletion in the water bodies. Forest officials maintain that they could not enforce the ban in the forest belt because of, what they term, "political pressure" from the local Members of Parliament and others in the local power structure.

More than one lakh people are involved in shrimp fry collection inside the world's largest mangrove forest throughout the whole year. Shrimp fry are in great demand for their culture in the "ghers" (enclosures) in the southwest coastal zone of the country. According to an estimate by the Forest Department, about 25 crore shrimp fry are collected from inside the forest area on average each year. In addition, over 17,000 metric tons of white fish are caught from the Sundarbans annually, and about 30,000 fishermen are engaged in this occupation.

Two types of shrimp fry, known locally as Bagda and Galda, are caught from the rivers and canals in and around the Sundarbans throughout the year. About 450 rivers, canals, creeks and estuaries criss-cross the 6017 square kilometer Sundarbans, of which nearly 1874 square km is water area. The water bodies in and around the forest are well known as ideal nurseries and breeding grounds for all kinds of aquatic life.

The gradual depletion of fishery resources inside the forest has been attributed to the huge collection of shrimp fry, use of some fine mesh nets for catching fish and fishing in the breeding season. Studies have shown that more than 315 fry of other species of fish are destroyed for every Bagda or Galda fry collected. Small fish fry, which are caught along with Bagda or Galda fry, are usually discarded on the riverbank. Various types of fine mesh nets locally known as Pata jaal, tana jaal, and thela jaal are put to use to collect shrimp fry. According to Forest Department sources, collateral damage is also caused to the Sundarbans by the huge number of shrimp fry collectors and fishermen. More than 90 per cent

of the boats entering the forest for fishing are the small ones, which require anchor posts to secure the boats. The Forest Department permits boat owners one set of anchor posts per trip on payment of royalty, but the fishermen usually collect more than the permitted quantity and in the process, they also deplete the wood resources of the mangrove forest.

The Divisional Forest Officer (Fisheries) of Aquatic Resources Division (ARD) of the Sundarbans, M Emdadul Haque, said his department was established in May, 2000 as an exceptional division of the Forest Department under the ADB-aided Sundarbans Bio-diversity Conservation Project (SBCP) for sustainable development of fishery resources within the reserved forest.

Cataloguing the present activities of ARD, the forest official claimed that they have taken steps to check the depletion of fish population by declaring 25 per cent of the water area, representing about 140,000 hectares, as fish sanctuary to make safe breeding and shelter ground for fishes. The official continued, "Fishing from May to June has been prohibited all over the Sundarbans. Fishing of Pangas has been banned for three years to improve its stock. Catching Jhatka Ilish (below 9 inches in length) is banned from November to April to allow them to grow to full size".

He claimed that his division keeps close vigil against illegal fishing in the sanctuary area, and has fined about 40 fishermen during the last six months for violating the sanctuary area. The Forest Department also claims that they are conducting awareness campaign among the fry collectors, fishermen and other users of the Sundarbans by holding seminars and workshops, distributing handbills and posters conveying the objectives of the ARD.

(Source: The Independent, 24 March 2003)

Brazil Expected to Produce 90,000 tons Vannamei Shrimp This Year

The production of marine shrimp in Brazil boomed 140% in between 2000 and 2002, according to the Brazilian association of shrimp farmers (Associacao Brasileira dos Criadores de Camarao). In 2000, Brazil produced 25,000 m tons of farmed shrimp *L. vannamei*, reaching 60,000 m tons in 2002 and forecasting 90,000 for 2003. Brazil holds the 1st position amongst the producers and exports 80% of its production mainly to the US and Europe, what generated US\$155mil in 2002. The Northeast region is responsible for 96,5% of the Brazilian production and the main producer is the Rio Grande do Norte state with 30%.

(Source: South American Business Information 26 March 2003)

Prepared by NACA for the Consortium on [Shrimp Farming and the Environment](#).