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STATEMENT RE GIANT CLAM MARICULTURE

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STATEMENT RE GIANT CLAM MARICULTURE

The Project Coordinators and Leaders of ACIAR Project No. 8332 (The culture of giant clams (<u>Tridacna</u> spp.) for food and restocking of tropical reefs) met at Naigani Island, Fiji, from July 29th to August 2nd. This meeting was held to review the progress of remearch over the first 12 months of the project, to prepare a 12 month report to ACIAR and plan research for the next year.

The review of research showed that substantial progress has been made in knowledge of giant clam reproduction, larval and juvenile development, and in mariculture techniques. The project is proceeding according to schedule.

This schedule includes the development of a pilot hatchery by ICLARM on a representative equatorial island; the pilot hatchery to commence production of giant clams by 1987. The collaborating institutions of the ACIAR funded project are collaborating with ICLARM, as part of the International Giant Clam Mariculture Project, so that the pilot hatchery will draw on their research results. On the basis of the current progress in research, we affirm that it is appropriate to commence a pilot hatchery operation in 1987. We note that ICLARM is currently negotiating with the government of Solomon Islands for a site for this pilot hatchery, near Honiara, with preparatory work to commence in 1986. These negotiations are near finalisation.

The site in the Solomon Islands has been selected because

- of :
- 1. the present distribution of giant clams in the region;
- the availability of <u>Tridacna gigas</u>, which is known to have superior growth rates.
- 3. the availability of brood stocks in large enough numbers to ensure genetic diversity;
- 4. the availability of sites having suitable environmental parameters in terms of water quality, land, socioeconomic environment, infrastructure & communications within and without the region.

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We are also aware of several studies or proposed studies of the marketing of giant clams, product development and socio-economic aspects of giant clam mariculture. ۲... مو

We see the development of commercial hatcheries for giant clams as the next step from the development of a successful pilot hatchery, providing that other aspects e.g. marketing are favourable.

We support the concept of an international conference about 1988, to synthesise and propogate to all interested bodies the research developments in giant clam mariculture. In the meantime, project members will make their research results available through publications.

We are aware of much interest in the potential of giant clam mariculture by governments and private companies. However, we consider that attempts to develop commercial hatcheries are premature, because of the current inadequate state of knowledge of giant clams and of markets for giant clam products. It would be most unfortunate if a number of commercial giant clam forms were attempted at this time and failed. There would be disillusionment and loss of interest in giant clam mariculture before it had been properly tested.