



Integration of broodstock replenishment with community-based management to restore trochus fisheries: A new ACIAR-funded project for Australia and the Pacific

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Introduction

The Australian Centre for International Agricultural Research (ACIAR) has agreed to fund a new trochus research project to establish and enhance trochus fisheries in Australia, Vanuatu and Samoa. The project (ACIAR project FIS/2001/085) is based on the successful outcomes of the previous trochus project, and involves broodstock replenishment and community-based management to restore trochus fisheries in selected communities in the three countries involved. The three-year project commenced in July 2002 and is due for completion in June 2005. This article provides a brief overview of the project, its objectives and projected outcomes.

The project is managed by the Kimberley Aquaculture Aboriginal Corporation (KAAC) as the Commissioned Organisation, and Dr Chan L. Lee as the Project Coordinator. The country coordinators for Vanuatu and Samoa are Moses Amos and Dan Sua, respectively. The scientists responsible for running the research nodes in Australia, Samoa and Vanuatu are Justin Bellanger, Robert Jimmy and Ms Malwine Lober, respectively.

This is the first ACIAR project where a community-based Australian indigenous organisation, KAAC, has been appointed the Commissioned Organisation. It is a big step for ACIAR and a bigger step for KAAC to be involved in the management of an international project. The experience gained will be invaluable to both ACIAR and KAAC, and to the Pacific partners.

Project objectives

The project's aim is to use broodstock seeding, in tandem with community-based management strategies, in partner countries to facilitate the establishment of effective breeding populations of trochus on depleted reefs in Australia, Samoa and Vanuatu. The ultimate goal is to: provide a simple

framework that allows responsible agencies to implement a nationally coordinated and strategic stock management plan for establishing sustainable trochus fisheries through broodstock reseed-ing; apply customary marine tenure (CMT) and/or the establishment of marine protected areas (MPAs).

The project involves three broad development and research activities and associated means of achievement.

1. The development of a framework for community consultation and participation in the project.
 - Hold meetings in respective partner countries to consult and negotiate with selected communities about reefs to be involved in the broodstock enhancement work, and the development of community-based CMT schemes in the project areas.
 - Establish marine protected areas (MPAs), where appropriate, after full consultation with the communities.
 - Appoint community coordinators to oversee the activities of the CMT and MPAs.
2. Stock enhancement on selected reefs.
 - Conduct well planned experiments, with adequate monitoring and sufficient scientific rigor to ensure the outcomes of the enhancement process are conclusively documented.
 - Provide opportunities for capacity building among participating national staff and communities involved in the activities.
3. Disseminate the results of the project nationally in partner countries and regionally.
 - Enhance the capacity of agency staff and communities to continue and extend the seeding programme.
 - Encourage and assist the development and/or further refinement of sustainable management practices for the trochus fish-

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ery and discuss the need for the establishment of permanent MPAs in selected reefs where enhancement is successful.

- Ensure linkages to SPC's Regional Aquaculture Project.

In this and the next bulletin, researchers from Australia, Samoa and Vanuatu will provide more articles and news on the progress of the project.

Expected outcomes

The success of the project will result in the application of country-specific CMT and/or the establishment of MPAs for ensuring sustainable trochus fisheries in Pacific Island nations. It will allow the application of broodstock seeding to go hand-in-hand with community-based management and to bring about enhancement and/or establishment of sustainable trochus fisheries in all partner countries.



Figure 1. Consultation with elders, traditional owners and members of the Bardi Aborigines Association Council, One Arm Point, Kimberley, Australia



Figure 2. First annual general meeting held in the Department of Fisheries, Port Vila, Vanuatu – June 2003 (L to R: C. Lee, R. Jimmy, A. Solofa, M. Lober, M. Amos, C. Clements, K. Pakoa, T. Taleo and J. Bellanger)



Figure 3. Project staff visiting the trochus and giant clam hatchery in the Department of Fisheries, Port Vila, Vanuatu. (L to R: M. Amos, T. Taleo, J. Bellanger, A. Solofa, M. Lober and C. Clements)