



Outcomes of Advisory Group on Health



The Asian Regional Advisory Group on Aquatic Animal Health. The group is composed of experts from both government and the private sector and is Chaired by Dr Supranee Chinabut, Thailand (third from right). Vice-Chair is Dr Eva Bernoth, Australia (centre). Also introducing NACA's new health specialist: Dr C.V. Mohan is third from left and Dr Franck Berthe from who coordinated the programme on secondment from IFREMER for three months is fourth from right. The establishment of the group is one of the major recommendations of the FAO/NACA Regional Programme on Aquatic Animal Health Management.

The first meeting of the Asia Regional Advisory Group on Aquatic Animal Health (AGM-1) was held at the NACA Headquarters, Bangkok, Thailand on 6th-8th November 2002. This high level advisory group, comprised of health experts from governments and the private sector, was constituted by NACA to advise Asian governments on aquatic animal health matters in Asia, and more specifically the implementation of the Asia Regional Technical Guidelines on Health Management and the Responsible Movement of Live Aquatic Animals. The first meeting was very productive, and provided a number of important recommendations on aquatic animal disease control in Asia. A summary of the recommendations follows.

1. The recent suspected outbreak of koi herpes virus (KHV) that has spread rapidly through Koi and common carp in Indonesia has re-emphasized the need for effective surveillance programmes of serious aquatic animal disease, and also the need for implementation of the 'Asia Regional Technical Guidelines on Health Management for the Responsible Movement of Live Aquatic Animals'.

2. The continued occurrence of VNN (viral nervous necrosis) in marine groupers and red spot disease in grass carp was also highlighted during discussions and is a serious concern for the region.
3. Within the region, mollusc diseases are under estimated and too little attention is given to these species and associated diseases. However, cases such as controversial cause of mass mortality outbreaks of pearl oysters, *Pinctada fucata*, underline the importance of addressing mollusc diseases issues in the region.
4. Recent reports record Taura Syndrome Virus (TSV) spreading in the region, related to the continuous introduction of *P. vannamei*, and highlight concern over possible new pathogens that may be passed on to *P. monodon* and other Asian shrimp species. This is a major development of serious concern. The advisory group recommended a study on TSV and *P. vannamei* introduction to Asia and it is expected this study will be implemented next year, with possible technical support from FAO. The occurrence of TSV, while generally

accepted as being increasingly widespread, is not being officially reported. There is therefore clearly a need to strengthen surveillance and reporting. The group urged any new outbreaks to be rapidly reported to OIE and NACA.

5. Given these elements and in the light of recent changes to the OIE list of 'notifiable' and 'other significant' diseases of aquatic animals, the current Quarterly Aquatic Animal Disease (QAAD) list will be revised for reporting during 2003.
6. Viral haemorrhagic septicaemia and MSX disease (*Haplosporidium nelsoni*) have both been reported in the region and need to be moved to the QAAD section "Diseases prevalent in some parts of the region".
7. Although there is as yet no definitive aetiological diagnosis, "Koi mass mortality" and "Akoya oyster disease" will be listed to assist in the collation of data. A short summary of the key epidemiological features of the incident, containing background for concern, case definitions, outbreak investigation, and diagnostic test options, will be circulated.
8. Epitheliocystis, the mollusc pathogen *Marteilioides chungmuensis* and Grouper iridoviral diseases are of concern in the region and proposed for listing to assist in the collection of occurrence data.
9. The new QAAD form for 2003 will be provided with AG meeting report that will be circulated soon.
10. The group agreed that although there have been considerable improvements in the quality of disease reporting in Asia, the quality of the QAAD should be further improved and suggested approaches to assist in achieving this goal.

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Congratulations and welcome

Thailand

In this issue, we congratulate on their new appointments and welcome to the NACA family three old friends of the organization: Dr Sitdhi Boonyaratpalin, who assumed the post of Director General of the Department of Fisheries of Thailand on 28 October 2002; Dr Jarantada Kanasut who has been appointed Deputy Director General for Fisheries; and Dr S. Ayyappan, Deputy Director General (Fisheries) of the Indian Council of Agricultural Research. Dr Jarantada will be in charge of NACA affairs in the Thai Department of Fisheries while Dr Ayyappan also becomes the Governing Council member

for India, succeeded long-standing representative Dr. K. Gopakumar.

Dr Sitdhi finished his bachelors degree in fisheries in Kasetsart University, and his masters (biological science) and doctoral (inland fisheries) degrees in Auburn University in Alabama, USA. He had been the Director of the National Institute of Coastal Aquaculture located in southern Thailand, and, prior to his appointment to the top post in DOF, was deputy permanent undersecretary for agriculture at the Ministry of Agriculture and Cooperatives.



Dr Jarantada, Deputy Director General of DoF

Dr Jarantada has a bachelors degree in fisheries from Kasetsart University, masters degree in fisheries from the University of Michigan, and doctoral degree in zoology from the University of Alberta in Canada. He joined the fisheries department as a fisheries biologist in 1971, was appointed planning section head of the department, then director of the National Aquaculture Genetics Research Institute before moving on to head the Museum and Aquarium Division also as Director, and then as Senior Fisheries Expert (in genetics) before his present appointment as Deputy Director General.

India

Dr S Ayyappan also has bachelors, masters and doctorate degrees in fisheries sciences. Before his present appointment, he was Director of the Central Institute of Fisheries Education, a deemed university, located in Mumbai and before that, as Director of the NACA Regional Lead

Centre in India - the Central Institute of Freshwater Aquaculture in Bhubaneswar. He has a Scientist rank (his last ranking was as Principal Scientist) in the ICAR system, and has done much research in fisheries from the applied but problem oriented studies (i.e. quantification of bioenergetic pathways in fishpond ecosystem and standardization measures) to the very practical and small-scale rural aquaculture-oriented studies and technology development work (such as integrated fish farming adaptation in various agro-ecological zones in India). Dr Ayyappan has introduced novel schemes to stimulate and improve competencies among scientific, administrative, technological, and educational and extension workers.



Dr S. Ayyappan



Dr Sitdhi Boonyaratpalin, Director General of DoF

New FAO Regional Representative for Asia and the Pacific

One further welcome is in order: Dr He Changchui has been appointed as the FAO RAPA representative. A national of China, Dr He Changchui holds a Ph.D in geoinformatics applications. He has held several senior positions in the Government of China and participated in several key national research projects covering agricultural land use mapping, forest surveys and coastal development planning while a research scientist in the Chinese Academy of Sciences. He joined FAO in April 1998 as the Chief of the Environment and Natural Resources Service Sustainable Development Department in Rome following nearly ten years at the UN's Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific in Bangkok as Chief Technical Advisor and Section Chief for the Environment and Natural Resources Division.

Wishes for productive years ahead...

NACA also welcomes and congratulates Khun Niwes Ruangpanit, new SEAFDEC Secretary General who assumed his post on 1 March 2003. Khun Niwes was Director for Coastal Fisheries Research and Development of Thailand. We bid goodbye and best wishes to Khun Panu Tavarutmaneegul, former SEAFDEC Secretary General, who has gone back to Thai DOF as a Fisheries Specialist.

We also bid farewell to and wish more productive and happy years ahead to Dr K. Gopakumar, a quiet but extremely efficient scientist and administrator, who was the Governing Council member for India from 1998 to 2002; to Mr Wu Chaolin, of the Department for International Cooperation of the Agriculture Ministry who served in the Council also from 1998 to 2002, and to Mr A.M Jayasekara who was formerly Director of Fisheries and then Director General for the Aquaculture Development Authority of Sri Lanka. Jaya - a graduate of the Senior Aquaculture Programme of NACA - was in the Council as well as Technical Advisory Committee starting 1992.

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Chinese Regional Lead Centre provides training in Rice-Fish farming under China-ASEAN Agriculture Cooperation

The NACA Regional Lead Centre in China, the Freshwater Fisheries Research Centre, organized a two-week training course on rice-cum-fish culture on 9 – 24 September 2002. The training course, attended by twenty-nine fisheries / aquaculture personnel from Cambodia, Lao and Myanmar, was part of the activities of the on-going China-ASEAN Technical Cooperation in Agriculture.

The training course was the first ever offered by RLCC that specially targeted ASEAN countries. The training course was fully financed by Chinese government with the fund allocated for the China-ASEAN Agriculture Cooperation Programme.

Rice-fish farming has been identified as one of the sustainable aquaculture systems important to the food security and rural livelihood in the region, including several ASEAN countries. The training course covered various aspects of rice-fish farming. Apart from classroom lectures and seminars, the participants were given the opportunity to gain field experience on the design, construction and renovation of paddy Chinese rice-fish farming system. Visits to rice-fish farmers exposed the participants to different models of rice-fish farming popularly practiced in China.



Participants in the integrated farming training course - hard at digging ditches

Development of Second Phase of APARIS

The Asia-Pacific Association of Agricultural Research Institutions (APAARI) convened an Information and Communications Technology Expert Consultation on the Development of the Second Phase of the Asia-Pacific Agricultural Research Information System (APARIS) in Bangkok, 24-25 October 2002.

The meeting explored the way forward for APARIS, other agricultural research information systems and the development of partnerships with international organizations such as FAO, GFAR, CABI, ISNAR and NACA.

APAARI's mission is to promote the development of National Agricultural Research Systems in the Asia-Pacific region through inter-regional and inter-institutional cooperation. The overall objective of the Association is to foster the development of agricultural research in the region through:

- Promotion of the exchange of scientific and technical know-how and information in agriculture;
- Encouraging the establishment of appropriate co-operative research and training programmes in accordance with identified regional, bilateral or national needs and priorities;
- Assisting in strengthening research organizational and management capabilities of member institutions; and
- Strengthening cross-linkages between national, regional and international research centres and organizations, including universities, through involvement in jointly planned research and training programmes.

More information on APAARI can be obtained from <http://www.isnar.cgiar.org/hosted/apaari/index.htm>



Participants in the ICT Expert Consultation on the Development of the Second Phase of APARIS

Building the leading source of global information on aquaculture

CAB International have announced the development of a new Aquaculture Compendium. The Compendium is a versatile reference and problem-solving resource that brings together a wide range of encyclopedic and multimedia tools to present a continually updated scientific overview. The compendium will take two years to develop and will involve the contribution of the worlds' experts in Aquaculture and Aquatic Resource Management. It will be available on CD-ROM or via the Internet.

The Compendium is intended to help users understand aquaculture in its broader context. Addressing issues of livelihoods, natural resources and environment, biodiversity, trade, food production and safety and poverty alleviation. It will also help people:

- Find information about finfish, crustaceans, molluscs and other commonly cultured aquatic species;
- Determine solutions for identifying, solving and preventing health problems in different production systems, including detailed coverage of pests and diseases;

- Identify trends in aquaculture worldwide;
- Recognize good practice through examination of detailed case studies from around the world; and
- Promote the sustainable development of aquatic resources.

The compendium will be developed and funded through a consortium of donor agencies, technical bodies and private sector corporations including the University of Stirling and the Asian Institute of Technology. It will be the fourth produced by CABI in its award-winning series, which has covered Crop Protection, Forestry, and Animal Health and Production.

CABI has invited expressions of interest from organizations and individuals wishing to contribute data/expertise and/or funding towards the development of the Compendium. Negotiations are also underway to build partnerships with FishBase, the FAO and others.

More information on the Aquaculture Compendium is available from www.cabicompendium.org.

AFS/Fish Health Section 5th Symposium on Diseases in Asian Aquaculture

212 scientists from 32 countries attended the 5th Symposium on Diseases in Asian Aquaculture, which was held at Surfers Paradise, Queensland Australia from 24-28 November 2002.

NACA its congratulations to the Fish Health Section/Asian Fisheries Society Executive Committee (1999-2002), DAA5 Local Organizing Committee (CSIRO, NSW Fisheries, University of Queensland, AusVet, Queensland Department of Primary Industries and Ozacom), Scientific Program Committee, sponsors (CSIRO, QDPI, Biosecurity Australia, AFFA, NSW Fisheries, Intervet, INVE, University of Queensland, WAS Asia-Pacific Chapter, ACIAR and the Australian Prawn Farmer's Association).

NACA's former Health Specialist, Dr Melba Reantaso, attended DAA5 as an invited Keynote Speaker and member of the Scientific Program Committee. NACA extends its congratulations to Melba on her election as the Chairperson of the Executive Committee of FHS/AFS for the period 2002-2005 at the Triennial General Meeting, held in conjunction with DAA on 26 November. Other members of the Executive Committee include Dr Takashi Aoki (Japan - Vice Chair); Dr Peter Walker (Australia - Secretary/Treasurer); Dr Supraneer Chinabut (Thailand - Past Chair); Dr Mangalika Hettiarachi (Sri Lanka); Dr Albert Choi (Korea R.O.); Dr Pornlerd Chanratchakool (Thailand); Dr Indrani Karunasagar (India); Dr Chu-Fang Lo (Taiwan Province of China); Dr Agus Sunarto (Indonesia) and Dr Celia Lavilla-Pitogo (Philippines - Newsletter editor).

Two workshops were also held in conjunction with the meeting. The first workshop co-moderated by Dr Chris Baldock (Australia) and Dr Reantaso was on Epizootic Ulcerative Syndrome (EUS). Invited experts from Australia (Dr R.B. Callinan), India (Dr. I. Karunasagar, Dr

C.V. Mohan), Japan (Dr. K. Hatai), US (Dr V. Blazer) presented recent scientific findings. The workshop recognized the need for re-defining the case definition for EUS based on recent scientific evidence. As a follow-up activity, an expert consultation is being proposed to FAO to organize and fund an expert consultation to carefully assess the scientific findings and come up with recommendations for OIE, NACA, SEAFDEC and other interested organizations in the region to address this issue.

A second workshop on Mikrocell was held as an evening session on 27th November by a small group of experts from Australia, Canada, France, Japan and New Zealand organized by the OIE Reference Laboratory for Molluscan Diseases – IFREMER. This group discussed the progress of the various research on Mikrocell (Bonamia, Perkinsus, Mikrocytos, Marteilia, Haplosporidium, Marteiliodes).

As foreshadowed in the last NACA Newsletter (July-September 2002) Phase II of the FAO/NACA Asia-Pacific Molluscan Health Management Programme was held in conjunction with DAA 5, from 29 November to 5 December with 31 participants and a diverse array of internationally-recognized resource experts. Some highlights of the

recommendations resulting from Phase II include:

- Collection of reference slides/resource materials for Bonamiosis, Perkinsosis, Marteiliosis, Mikrocytosis, Marteiliodosis and Haplosporidiosis. Resource experts will provide paraffin blocks of various species above pathogens to IFREMER who will organise reproduction of slides for distribution to the participants. Queensland

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Above and below: Participants sharing their experience on mollusc disease



Phase II Workshop of the Asia-Pacific Molluscan Health Management Programme

Dr M.C. Nandeeshha receives International Foundation for Science Jubilee Award

Recently the NACA Secretariat was pleased to learn that the International Foundation for Science Jubilee Award has been conferred to Dr M.C. Nandeeshha. This Award is given for noteworthy achievements, in this case for Dr Nandeeshha's work on developing cost-effective diets for carp, using various agricultural wastes available in India.

In conferring the Award, IFS also noted the important role that Dr Nandeeshha has played in building aquaculture capacity through training both scientists and farmers. A long-time contributor to Aquaculture Asia Magazine and an active participant in many network activities, Dr Nandeeshha is well known for his

seemingly endless enthusiasm and energy and also for his genuine and tireless dedication to improving the situation of people living in rural communities throughout the region.

Dr Nandeeshha recently assumed a new position as Professor and Head of the Department of Aquaculture in the College of Fisheries, Central Agricultural University, Tripura. This is a four-year old institution established to cater to the manpower and research requirements of northeastern India. He has nearly two decades of experience in teaching, research and development throughout the region. He can be contacted at mcnraju@yahoo.com.



Dr M.C. Nandeeshha

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5th Symposium on Diseases in Asian Aquaculture

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Museum recommended to be the depository of resource materials on Molluscan pathogens in the Asia-Pacific region.

- A regional project is proposed to be developed to determine the distribution of Perkinsus in the Asian region.
- A Report of Phase II is being prepared which will consist of Country Survey Reports and a chapter on Economic Impact of Pathogens/Diseases affecting the Molluscan Production sector. Resource experts have agreed to contribute to the development of this chapter of the report. When completed this could be a potentially good ammunition for raising the profile of molluscan health.
- An internet-based Mollusc Health email list has been organized by FAO and is now operational. This is an email network of people who are interested in all aspects of molluscan

health management. The list will be used as a forum for participants to exchange news and information, raise awareness, and to discuss and critically debate issues relevant to molluscan health. There are currently 34 scientists listed. If you would like to join the list please send an email to rohana.subasinghe@fao.org.

Phase III is planned for 2004 in Korea RO. Activities will include Level III (immunoassays, TEM) diagnostics for molluscan diseases, inter-calibration exercise (or ring testing) and presentation of survey results for diseases of pearl oysters, edible oyster, abalone and country specific survey results.

11. A future get-together of all national coordinators (NCs), to undertake a 3-year review of the reporting system is proposed. If this is not feasible as a meeting of national coordinators of all participating countries, then participation of NCs in sub-regional meetings should be facilitated.
12. Improving communication between NCs and the Chief Veterinary Officers/OIE national delegates, improving NC access to national experts, and promoting in-country networking on disease status.
13. The OIE representation in Tokyo informed that it was important to continue and further develop cooperation in collecting of information and desirable for OIE to collaborate in other areas.
14. The need to build cooperation between veterinary and fisheries authorities was emphasized strongly. The OIE Regional Commission meeting in New Caledonia in November 2003 may provide one opportunity, but other opportunities will be sought to promote cooperation.



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Upcoming training courses

Shrimp Health Management Training Workshop 18-23 August, Thailand

This course is co-organized annually by NACA and the Aquatic Animal Health Research Institute of Thailand. The course runs for six days and includes lectures, practical, case studies, visits to farms and adequate time for discussion. The lectures are based on the information contained in the book "Health Management in Shrimp Ponds" and are illustrated with an extensive range of photographic slides. Emphasis is placed on the benefits of maintaining healthy stock and preventing disease through appropriate management of the pond. The use of chemical treatments will be covered but only as part of an integrated management system.

Topics addressed include:

- Update on shrimp culture systems;
- Pond environment;
- Pond preparation;
- Water management;
- Farm records;
- Disease;
- Larval assessments;
- Chemical treatments; and
- Current situation in Thailand.

Registration fee is US\$ 750. It covers the cost of tuition, a copy of "Health Management in Shrimp Ponds" and the workshop dinner. Participants will be responsible for the cost of hotel accommodation and subsistence during the workshop.

Key resource speakers include Dr Pornlerd Chanratchakool (AAHRI), Dr James F. Turnbull (Stirling University), Dr Chalor Limsuwan (Kasetsart University) and Mr Dan Fegan (National Centre for Genetic Engineering & Biotechnology). For further information download from www.enaca.org/training.html or contact the Training Officer, P.O. Box 1040, Kasetsart Post Office, Bangkok 10903, Thailand, facsimile: + 66 - 2 - 5611727, email: training@enaca.org.



Training Course on Grouper Hatchery Production, 1st - 21st May 2003, Bali, Indonesia

The second Regional Grouper Hatchery Production Training Course is being organized at the Gondol Research Institute for Mariculture in Bali, Indonesia, for hatchery operators, technicians and researchers involved in grouper aquaculture hatchery production, research, development and extension. The course will cater for a maximum of 12 participants.

The training course is organized and supported by the Ministry of Marine Affairs and Fisheries, Indonesia, the Network of Aquaculture Centres in Asia-Pacific (NACA), in cooperation with the Australian Centre for International Agricultural Research (ACIAR), the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC), and the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA). It is one of the activities of the Asia-Pacific Marine Finfish Aquaculture Network.

The objectives of this regional training course are to provide practical hands-on training on the following topics:

- Grouper broodstock management techniques, including handling, feeding, broodstock nutrition, control of the reproductive cycle, spawning

techniques and egg collection and incubation.

- Larval rearing, including feeding and hatchery practices.
- Grouper diseases and health management, including viruses (VNN), and common diseases of marine fish.
- Mass production of live food (phyto- and zoo-plankton)

The target grouper species for this training course will be mainly on *Cromileptes altivelis* (mouse grouper), but participants will gain experience with handling *Epinephelus fuscoguttatus* (tiger grouper) and other species. The training course will provide participants with a unique opportunity to visit private sector hatcheries and nurseries in the Gondol area, and an insight into the diverse mariculture development in Indonesia. More information is available from Mr Sih Yang Sim at NACA_grouper@enaca.org or visit www.enaca.org/grouper for a brochure.

