The Southeast Asian Fisheries Development Center (SEAFDEC) is an autonomous intergovernmental body established as a regional treaty organization in December 1967 to promote fisheries development in the region through research, training and information services. Its Member Countries include Brunei Darussalam, Cambodia, Indonesia, Japan, Lao PDR, Malaysia, Myanmar, Philippines, Singapore, Thailand, and Vietnam.

The Aquaculture Department (AQD), one of SEAFDEC’s four departments, is mandated to implement programs in research, technology verification and demonstration, and training and information dissemination in order to promote responsible aquaculture in Southeast Asia.

For further information

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The Igang Marine Station (IMS) of SEAFDEC Aquaculture Department (SEAFDEC/AQD) is located in the southwest coast of Guimaras Island in central Philippines. IMS is composed of four islets and clusters of floating fish cages interconnected by pontoon foot bridges. The station maintains captive broodstock of various commercially important species to provide eggs for research and production runs.

History and mandate

The station was established in 1974 primarily for studies on the breeding of tiger shrimp (*Penaeus monodon*) in pens. The major breakthroughs of SEAFDEC/AQD were accomplished in IMS, including the completion of the life cycle of tiger shrimp in captivity in 1975 and milkfish (*Chanos chanos*) in 1983. The natural spawning of captive breeders in cages was first observed and recorded at the station in 1979.

New nursery and grow-out technologies have been developed and verified for high-value species such as grouper (*Epinephelus* spp.), sea bass (*Lates calcarifer*), snapper (*Lutjanus argentimaculatus*), and pompano (*Trachinotus blochii*) to cater to the needs of fish farmers. Research being conducted at the station uses soy products as alternatives to fish meal in practical feeds for milkfish grown in floating net cages.

The station also has abalone (*Haliotis asinina*) and sandfish (*Holothuria scabra*) for studies to improve their culture in cages. Current work on abalone focuses on the growth performance of hybrid and broodstock propagation for hatchery use. While for sandfish, its potential for polyculture with selected marine fish is being studied.

The water of IMS is also home to a small giant clam garden. Nearly 200 giant clams were released around the station in 2006 for stock enhancement.

Facilities

To support research and training activities, the station has an office, staff quarters, and fully-furnished guest houses for visitors.

IMS is host to a mariculture park demonstration and training facility that serve as a model of sustainable mariculture technology for marginal fishers. The mariculture park also caters to entrepreneurs who are interested in investing in aquaculture.

Activities

Studies on the area’s carrying capacity have been conducted. Likewise, water and sediment quality monitoring is done regularly. Moreover, the physicochemical parameters of water beneath the cages are also being measured and monitored to ensure that the station’s activities do not pollute the environment. Mass production of *Kappaphycus* spp. plantlets is also being conducted in the station.

The recent studies conducted at the station focus on the integrated multi-trophic aquaculture (IMTA). IMTA refers to the farming of different aquatic species together, allowing the waste of one to be recycled as feed for another species.