

# Grouper Culture Techniques from Selected Countries in the Asia–Pacific Region



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# Executive Summary

Asia is the dominant aquaculture region in the world today. Between November 2008 and April 2009 the Fellow visited government operated and privately owned commercial aquaculture facilities in Indonesia, Thailand and Palau to study the recent advances in grouper culture techniques with specific focus on the coral trout *Plectropomus leopardus*. As result of the international experience the Fellow found that:

- Many grouper species are now commercially produced in South East Asia (Indonesia & Thailand) and Micronesia (Palau)
- The coral trout *Plectropomus leopardus* is a favoured species because of its high commercial value and relatively fast growth rate
- The coral trout *Plectropomus leopardus* was grown in net pens in estuarine situations with tidal salinity fluctuations
- Coral trout larvae were stocked at relatively low densities in hatcheries visited by the Fellow
- Traditional techniques of diet enhancement are still utilised such as the addition of garlic and turmeric
- Artemia are heavily used as nauplii through to adults, some of which are frozen and fed to many post larval grouper species after day 45
- Some microalgae cultures run at three parts per million of chlorine in order to minimise ciliate infestation
- Most growers that the Fellow liaised with consider the barramundi cod *Cromileptes altivelis* to be marginal at best as a commercial species due to its very slow growth rate
- Extension and training of grouper culture techniques are provided by government institutions tasked with aquaculture development and are free to commercial growers
- The government institutions visited by the Fellow all cultured grouper 'fingerlings' and sold them to private commercial growers.

Since returning from the Pratt Foundation/ISS Institute Overseas Fellowship trip, Oliver acquired an international travel bursary with the Fisheries Research Development Corporation. In November 2009 he will travel to Malaysia, Indonesia, Thailand and Vietnam. The Fellow will present a paper and chair a conference and visit aquaculture training facilities within the region. He will further explore at a deeper level the training aspects of the grouper species and will investigate how to transfer these frameworks within the Australian context.