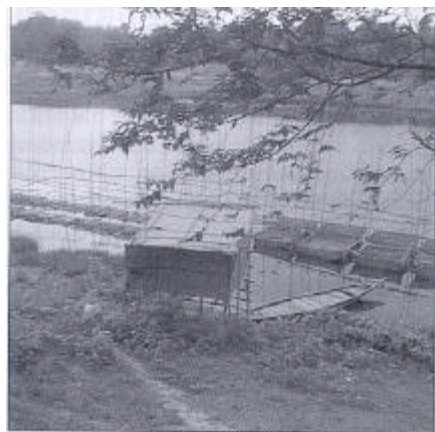


Research Support to the CARE CAGES Project in Bangladesh

A major constraint to the development of cage fish culture by poor communities is the lack of technologies appropriate to their social, institutional, resource and environmental context. A two-year, DFID funded Research Project (87100) to improve the management of small-scale cage culture was awarded to the Institute of Aquaculture (IoA) and the Asian Institute of Technology (AIT), Bangkok. AIT are collaborating with the University of Fisheries, Nha Trang, Vietnam, while IoA is working primarily with a DFID funded NGO project in Bangladesh - the CARE (Co-operative for Assistance and Relief Everywhere) - CAGES (Cage Aquaculture for Greater Economic Security) Project. Some current activities of the Vietnam component are detailed in "Poverty Alleviation and Marine Cage Culture in Vietnam" in this edition of Aquaculture News.

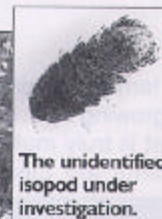
Working closely with the CARE CAGES project means that research is able to be demand led and thus directly relevant to the needs of Bangladeshi cage operators. On a recent visit to Bangladesh Ken McAndrew was shown evidence of an unidentified parasite causing severe economic loss to cage farmers in the Nabagonga River in Khulna District. The parasite was immediately



An NGO cage site in Radjapur village, Magura District. These cages contained silver barb (*Puntius gonionotus*), tilapia (*Oreochromis niloticus*), rohu (*Labeo rohita*) and grass carp (*C. idello*) all of which were effected by the isopod. Note the 1 m' and 2m' cages, which are typical of cage aquaculture in Bangladesh.



Paul Bulcock carrying out interviews with fishermen. The information gathered during such interviews formed an important component of this project.



identified as an isopod, and is currently being identified to species level by an isopod taxonomist.

An investigation of the isopod and its impact on local cage fish farmers was assessed as suitable for a M.Sc. Aquaculture student project, the research being carried out by Paul Bulcock, who has a strong interest in working in aquaculture development projects in Asia. Two goals were thus satisfied: the execution of a short, but detailed, piece of research on this constraint to the development of cage culture and an opportunity for one of our students to gain valuable experience in some of the complex issues found in tropical research and development. Paul's work included tank and cage trials, as well as interviews with cage operators and fishermen. Ken McAndrew helped coordinate the work in Bangladesh, while Professor Christina Sommerville provided parasitological expertise and advice throughout the planning, execution and writing-up of the project. It is hoped the work will be published in a peer reviewed journal, as well as in article form for interested parties who may have encountered this isopod in other geographical locations. All information from the study will also be disseminated among CARE - CAGES project beneficiaries, whom it is hoped will benefit from the findings and recommendations.

Paul Bulcock says...

The brief for this M.Sc. project was to conduct a preliminary investigation into the ecology and biology of these isopods. I leapt at the opportunity to conduct my M.Sc. research project in Bangladesh. Through a combination of tank trials, cage experiments and social surveys, a clearer picture of this species' biology and ecology emerged. Spending six weeks in Bangladesh not only gave me an interesting project, but also provided me with experience of life in another type of culture. Living and working there had its rewards, as once I had acclimatised, I enjoyed experiencing all aspects of everyday life. The people I met were all genuinely interested in "who you are" and "what you are doing" and this had the added bonus of being welcomed into everyone's homes and being presented with some seriously good meals, which I miss and thank everyone for their hospitality and support. My horizons were certainly broadened and I'd do it again, anytime, anywhere and plan to look into this type of development work in the future.

Details of the current research priorities of the Bangladesh component of 87100 will be detailed in the next issue of Aquaculture News. These include; documentation of farmer/ NGO Trials, improvements to the CARE-CAGES database, social surveys carried out on key issues, computer training for CAGES staff, transfer of technical information and the strengthening of linkages between the IoA, CARE and other projects within Bangladesh. For further details contact Ken McAndrew on kim1@stir.ac.uk