

*Fi Titi = baby fish in Comoros language

EDITO :

Dear members,

After a few months of delay here is the fourth edition of Fi Titi... a number of field trips did not allow us to publish it previously, and we apologize for that!

The process of larval collection is now more and more extended/developped as a real alternative to marine environment overexploitation. This is particularly true in developing countries in which population generally acts as if resources were unlimited!

In the Philippines, an important World Bank program named MAMTI (Marine Aquarium Market Transformation Initiative) is currently running. One of its main target is to create Marine Protected Areas (M.P.A). A component of this project under the direction of the NGO "REEF CHECK", is to restock some MPAs lately protected to boost the fish stock, which will hopefully give the MPAs a precious increase(helpful boost) in fish biomass.

Restocking is made with juveniles, resulting from the post-larvae collection; this technology avoids any introduction of (sub-)species resulting from aquaculture, or larvae taken from another area. A similar project has been initiated in Fiji (South Pacific). This program called the CRISP (Coral Reef Initiative South Pacific) is financed by the French Development's Agency and is implemented by French laboratories (CNRS-EPHE).

It is with much enthusiasm that our team takes an active part in these two programs, the technology of the CARE having proven reliable!

The founding members

BLUE:

It is always very challenging to try restoring degraded marine environment areas. Several field assessments in coral reef areas in the Philippines have been showing that this country is under the threat of overfishing. Few species reach adult size and some fish families have almost disappeared... but the 3 months pre study we conducted enabled us to see that the post-larvae continued to arrive in these areas. In other words, we were surprised by the diversity of the species we collected (70 species in 2 months), however, most of them were represented in low numbers! But it is important to keep hope and act quickly to give these people sustainable livelihoods and also marine environment.

Here is a not common story which should give others people ideas.. I met on an island in the South of the Province of Bohol, Central Visayas (the Philippines) a whale and dolphin fisherman. In fact, this man, after many years of fishing the whales, saw the stock depleting and realized that he could still provide livelihood for his family as well as conserve the whales and dolphins by becoming a tour guide rather than a fisherman. This story took place in 1996. Today, Leo Sumalpong is the President of the Pamilacan Island Dolphin and Whale Watching Organization and he is very proud to have changed his life into encouraging conservation and eco-tourism. If you go on Pamilacan Island, in the South of Bohol, ask to meet him, you will learn many things and have fun talking with the man who turned from hunter to protector of the cetaceans in southern Bohol!

Gilles.L.

GREEN :

We already know that some species are overfished from the FAO data which calculates that a 100 Million tons of sea products are fished per year. This data is only founded on the annual captures of the fisheries. When the catch remains stable the balance between the renewal of the species and the activity of fishing is supposedly reached....

So we are not surprised to learn in a scientific note (IRD N°229 - ex ORSTOM -, August 2005) that this method of evaluation is erroneous. Indeed, the fall of fishing stocks is preceded by a stable plate of production which cannot be anticipated nowadays because of the constant “technology creep” inherent in today's fishing fleet, as well as the increased difficulty of fish populations to renew their stock (because of the destabilization of the ecosystems). Therefore it is expected that these overestimated species stock will collapse in a short term period.

At the same time, Brussels fined France for the non-respect of the fishing catch quotas: more than 20 million euros and 56 additional M! has to be given every six-month period when the quotas remain non respected.

But no-one hears the cries of MOANA initiative, that we have the potential to offer a solution for some of these fisheries. The Moana Initiative is not a solution for demersal species overfishing, but it can be part of an integrated program for both the development of innovating aquaculture and the restocking of depleted areas.

Sven-Michel.L

Data FAO : <<http://www.fao.org/fi/statist/FISOFT/FISHPLUS.asp>>

IRD revue: <<http://www.ird.fr/fr/actualites/fiches/2005/fiche229.htm>>

WHITE:

UNESCO, throughout the M.A.B program (Man And Biosphere), agreed to cofinance via its Ecological Sciences division, the edition of a methodological guide published by MOANA Initiative, dealing with marine “eco-employment” that post-larvae collection can generate.

The next Fi titi will give details on this!

Gilles is now, part of the ACOR board of directors (French O.N.G dealing with coral reefs conservation).

Special welcome to our new members: Philippe Cecchi (Hydrobiologist manager at I.R.D – Burkina Faso), Bernard Leveaux (Philips Manager- Division lighting- in Asia), Stuart Green (program manager for MAMTI in the Philippines),

A new article written by Charles Delbeek, one of our honourable members (Waikiki Aquarium in Hawaii), will be published in the American review "MARINE FISH & REEF" before the end of the year on larval valorisation.

Surprise !

Unexpected picture:

When nature is in touch with human! (photo S. Green).

