

# Thirtieth Anniversary of the Asia-Pacific Regional Research and Training Centre for Integrated Fish Farming<sup>1</sup>

Continuing international training efforts for the Last 28 Years

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<sup>1</sup>The Asia-Pacific Regional Research and Training Centre for Integrated Fish Farming is now known as the Freshwater Fisheries Research Centre (FFRC) of the Chinese Academy of Fishery Sciences and the Regional Lead Centre, China of inter-governmental NACA.



*Group photo of participants and training staff of the 1981 Training Course on Integrated Fish Farming*

The Asia-Pacific Regional Research and Training Centre for Integrated Fish Farming was established 30 years ago by the Chinese government and with technical assistance from FAO/UNDP. The centre is located in Wuxi, near Lake Taihu, a historical site for aquaculture development where freshwater aquaculture practices started some 2 500-3 000 years ago. The establishment of the centre was a response of the Chinese government to the suggestion of FAO/UNDP to set up an institution in China for developing TCDC (technical cooperation among developing countries) activities in the area of aquaculture. The centre started operations in 1981 and was designated as the Regional

Lead Centre, China (RLCC) by the Network of Aquaculture Centres in Asia-Pacific (NACA) in the same year. In 1984, the centre merged with another Chinese national fisheries institute, the Scientific Experimental Base for Fisheries Enhancement in Lake Taihu and formed the Freshwater Fisheries Research Centre (FFRC) in 1984. With expanded resources and capacity, the FFRC is now one of the major national comprehensive fisheries research, development and educational institutions under the Chinese Academy of Fishery Sciences.

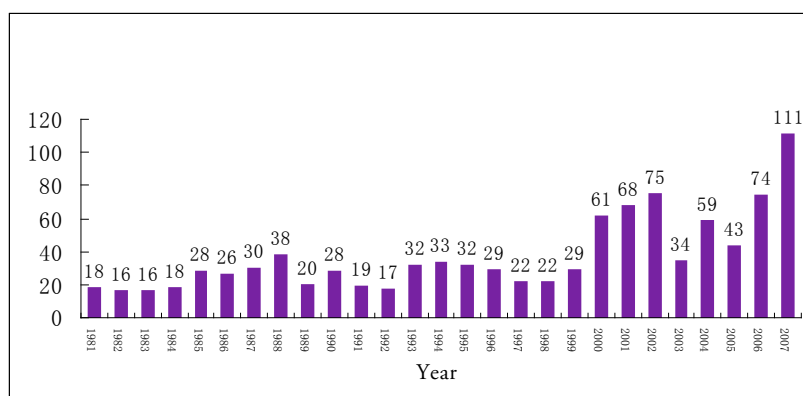
RLCC started its international training activities in 1981 when it organized the 1<sup>st</sup> four-month

TCDC technical training course on integrated fish farming for the Asia-Pacific region and other developing countries in other regions. The first training course was delivered with technical assistance from NACA and funding support from FAO, UNDP, the Asian Development Bank (ADB), the International Development Research Centre of Canada (IDRC) and the Chinese government. The training course was participated by 18 participants from 9 countries (Bangladesh, Belau, Fiji, Malaysia, Myanmar, Nepal, Philippines, Sri Lanka and Thailand). The TCDC technical training course on integrated fish farming sponsored by multi-international donors lasted until 1991. During the period,

255 participants from 37 countries received comprehensive training on theories and practical techniques involved in integrated fish farming, a characteristic resource use for efficient and environment-friendly aquaculture system.

The regular international training course organized by RLCC became an integral component of the human resource development for developing countries sponsored by the foreign aid programme of the Chinese government since 1992 when most international donors discontinued their funding support for the training course. Since then, the international training activities have significantly expanded with increasing funding support from the Chinese government. In order to meet the growing demand from Africa for technical and managerial personnel in aquaculture, RLCC started to organize technical training courses especially for African countries since 2000 in addition to the training course for Asia-Pacific and South America. Since 1992, RLCC has organized 23 technical training courses on integrated fish farming, aquaculture and aquaculture health management for developing countries with core funding support from the Chinese government. Six hundred and twenty four participants from 71 countries received 2-3 month training at RLCC. In addition, RLCC organized 4 short-term training course/workshop on “Sustainable development and management of inland open water fisheries” and “Integrated paddy-fish culture” for the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC), the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) and other Asian countries with full funding support from the Chinese government. To-date, 118 participants from more than 20 countries participated. The international training activities at RLCC have continued without interruption for

**Figure 1.** Number of participants who attended the training course at RLCC during the period 1981-2007



**Table 1.** Countries which participated in international training courses and workshops at RLCC

Angola	Ethiopia	Marshall Is.	Senegal
Armenia	Fiji	Mauritius	Seychelles
Australia	Ghana	Mexico	Sierra Leone
Bangladesh	Guinea	Mongolia	South Africa
Belau	Guyana	Morocco	Sri Lanka
Bhutan	Haiti	Mozambique	Sudan
Botswana	Hong Kong SAR	Myanmar	Suriname
Brazil	Hungary	Namibia	Tanzania
Brunei	India	Nepal	Thailand
Cambodia	Indonesia	Netherland	Tunisia
Cameroon	Iran	Nigeria	Turkey
Chile	Iraq	Oman	Uganda
Colombia	Italy	Pakistan	Uruguay
Congo	Kenya	Panama	Uzbekistan
Cote d'Ivoire	Korea	Papua New Guine	Venezuela
Cuba	Lao PDR	Peru	Viet Nam
Czech	Liberia	Philippines	Western Samoa
Djibouti	Libya	Romania	Yemen
DPR Korea	Madagascar	Rwanda	Zambia
Ecuador	Malaysia	Saudi Arabic	Zimbabwe
Egypt			

the last 28 years. Altogether, 997 participants from 81 countries and different regions of the world received training at RLCC during the period 1981-2007 (see Figure 1). In 2008, a 2-month technical training course on aquaculture (April 25-June 23) and a 15-day (September 15-29) workshop on fisheries development and management for senior African fisheries officers are scheduled with full funding support from the Chinese government.

RLCC is one of the very few institutions which have offered long-term technical training course on aquaculture and fisheries for nearly three decades without interruption and with such broad coverage in the world. Such training activities have significantly promoted aquaculture development across the globe and are highly appreciated by participating governments and relevant international organizations. Many practical aquaculture techniques and systems were successfully transferred and applied in many countries through these courses. For instance, the Chinese induced fish



*Friendship tree planting by guests from international organizations (Mr F. Henderson, former FIRI Chief; Mr Chen Foo Yen, NACA Coordinator, Dr Pillay, FAO/UNDP ADCP Programme Chief)*



*Participants doing practical exercise on induced breeding of carps*

breeding technology has been extensively adopted by the RLCC trainees in many countries in Asia-Pacific and Africa, which has significantly improved seed supply for aquaculture, particularly, carps. A very good example is that of Mr. Mohammed Shahab Uddin who became the first person who succeeded in induced breeding of black carp in Bangladesh soon after attending the 4-month training course on integrated fish farming at RLCC in 1987. The traditional integrated fish farming system and techniques have been introduced and practiced in many developing countries. Many RLCC trainees are presently holding key positions in their national fisheries management agencies as well as research, human resource development and extension institutions.

While contributing to the world aquaculture development through continuing international training activities, RLCC dispatched its technical professionals to over a dozen countries in Asia, Africa and South America providing technical assistance to aquaculture projects, aquaculture facility establishment and aquaculture education and training.

With increasing support from the Chinese government, the physical capacity and professional team of RLCC for research, development and human resource development have been strengthened significantly in recent years. It is now the largest inland fisheries institution in China. As one of the NACA Regional Lead Centres, RLCC will continue its endeavor to contribute to world aquaculture development by carrying out more extensive international training activities and technical cooperation and exchange with different countries around the world.

### Recently held and upcoming meetings on aquaculture organized and co-organized by The Fisheries and Aquaculture Department (continued from page 19)

- RECOFI Regional Technical Workshop on Aquatic Animal Health, 6-10 April 2008, Jeddah, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia
- FAO Regional Workshop on Establishing an Aquatic Animal Biosecurity Framework for South Africa, 22-25 April 2008, Lilongwe, Malawi
- TCPF/MAS/3101 Workshop on Risk Assessment in Aquaculture Production, 7-9 May 2008, Majuro, Marshall Island
- West Balkan States Regional Workshop on Aquatic Animal Health and Project Terminal Workshop TCP/BiH/3101, 19-23 May 2008, Sarajevo, Bosnia and Herzegovina
- EIFAC Symposium on Interactions between Social, Economic and Ecological Objectives of Inland Commercial and Recreational Fisheries and Aquaculture, 20-23 May 2008, Antalya, Turkey
- COFI Sub-Committee on Fish Trade, 11th Session, Bremen, Germany, 2-6 June 2008
- COFI Sub-Committee on Aquaculture, 4th Session, Puerto Varas, Chile, 2-5 October 2008
- 5th Session of the Network of Aquaculture Centres in Central and Eastern Europe, 15-18 October, Lviv, Ukraine