

Summary

The activities of the project commenced from February, 1984 in the Trincomalee Bay and continued successfully until August 1985. Most of the activities of the project have been suspended due to unavoidable circumstances and similar studies have been started along the North-West, West and South coastal regions.

The settlement of oyster and mussel spat in the Trincomalee Bay was considerable. Their growth and the location of experimental sites reveal that this bay is ideal for a commercial culture of mussels and oysters. The settlement of oyster spat was very poor along the Western and Southern coasts and a considerable amount of mussel spat has been recorded from the Tangalle harbour and the Tangalle reef. Introduced brown mussel spat to the Puttalam lagoon are growing well with a satisfactory growth rate. The oyster species found in the Tangalle harbour and Mirissa harbour were growing slowly whereas the species found in the Kalaoya estuary were growing faster.

The barnacles were the most abundant fouling organisms in the Trincomalee Bay as well as other experimental sites along the South and West coasts.

Introduction:

Phase I of the Mollusc Culture Project in Sri Lanka started in February, 1984 with the introduction of two rafts at Thambalagama Bay and Clappenburg Bay. Monitoring work was carried out monthly during the first three months as the officers had to travel from Colombo. Once the personnel were transferred to Trincomalee, monitoring work was intensified and was done fortnightly.

Experimental oyster culture and mussel culture were practiced in the Trincomalee Bay using rafts, racks, sticks and

stakes. The settlement of oyster and mussel spat in this area was studied until August, 1985 and their growth was also studied. Due to unavoidable circumstances these monitoring work has been discontinued and similar studies were started along the North-Western, Western and Southern coasts since then. However, some experimental sites of the Trincomalee Bay were visited once a month until April, 1986. to gather necessary information on the settlement of spat. The monitoring work along the West coast was performed by visiting culturing sites from Colombo until December, 1986 and the project staff has been stationed at the Regional Research Station of NARA in Kalpitiya since then to intensify the activities in this area.

preliminary work in connection with this project had started at the Thambalagama Bay at the end of 1982 and two rafts that were introduced at this site were monitored from the end of 1982 until May, 1983. Therefore, actual work on this project commenced in February, 1984 after the return of officers of the project who underwent training at the Dalhousie University, Halifax. However, the pioneer research on oyster culture in Sri Lanka was started in the Puttalam lagoon at the end of 1982 where as the mussel culture started in the Thambalagama Bay also at the end of 1982.