

Vanuatu Fisheries Department opens freshwater aquaculture centre



Hideaki Kuroki and Sompert Rena discuss larvae density (image: Tim Pickering, SPC)

The Tagabe Fisheries Freshwater Aquaculture Centre was officially opened in February this year by Hideaki Kuroki, Second Secretary of Embassy of Japan in Fiji. The centre, which was created by remodelling an existing building and turning it into a prawn and tilapia hatchery, was built with funding from the Grassroots Human Security project of Japan.

Designed and supervised by the department's Principal Fisheries Biologist, Sompert Rena, the hatchery provides Vanuatu with national capacity to hold broodstock for spawning and to rear tilapia fish and freshwater prawns for distribution to pond farmers.



Macrobrachium lar broodstock kept in a cement tank for spawning (image : Tim Pickering, SPC)

The aquaculture centre is near the international airport in Port Vila, and is supplied by a borehole water source from underground. Earthen ponds hold broodstock fish and prawns, and cement tanks are available for spawning and for nursery of fry. The hatchery building contains cement tanks with water heaters for growing prawns through their larval phases until ready for pond stocking.

The aquaculture centre represents a major leap forward in the Vanuatu government's capacity to provide services in support of a newly emerging fresh water aquaculture sector in the country, and is the fulfilment of a long-cherished dream for the Fisheries Department staff who will operate the centre.

For more information:

Sompert Rena
Principal Fisheries Biologist,
Vanuatu Fisheries Department
sgereva@gmail.com