

Observations on auto stocking of black tiger shrimp into finfish cages in creeks

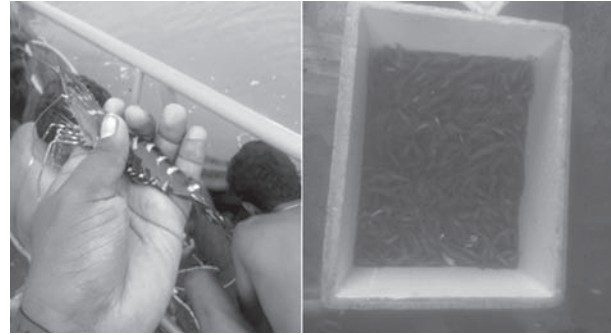
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Finfish culture in both sea and brackish water cages is gaining popularity in different states of India. The West Godavari and Krishna districts of Andhra Pradesh are bestowed with vast brackish water area formed by the Godavari and Krishna rivers. Finfish culture in cages was initiated in the brackish water creek at Kruthivennu, Krishna District, Andhra Pradesh to observe and understand the feasibility of fish culture in creeks. Two square shaped GI (Galvanised Iron) cages of 6 x 6 m size were used in this study. Cages were installed with the help of air filled barrels for floatation and



Cage culture site at Kruthivennu

anchors (iron) and palm tree for mooring. Inner and outer knotted HDPE nets with 4 - 5 mm mesh size were used to hold the fish with an average water depth of 2.5 m. The site has plenty of finfish and shellfish seeds and preliminary survey conducted revealed the availability of seeds of black tiger shrimp, white shrimp, mullet, milk fish and sea bass during different seasons. Both cages were stocked with onsite collected wild mullet fingerlings of 8 - 10 cm size at density of 20 numbers/m³. Stocked fishes were fed with floating and slow sinking artificial feed containing 32% protein. Cages were stocked with mullets in the last week of March, 2016, and after a week, nets were lifted to monitor the stocked fishes. Interestingly, seeds (post larvae) of black tiger shrimp about 25 days old, were also observed along with the stocked fishes in both the cages. Thereafter, the fishes were regularly fed and monitored. Cage nets were changed after 55 days of culture, and during this time many numbers of black tiger shrimp were observed in both the cages with an average weight ranging from 9 to 11 g. A total of 22 kg of black tiger shrimp were finally



Shrimp harvested from cages

harvested from both the cages. The above interesting observation indicates the abundant availability of shrimp seeds in the creek. Observed growth of shrimps is comparable to their growth rate in commercial shrimp culture ponds. The present observation revealed that creeks in the region have huge potential for shrimp seeds and it also implies that shrimps can be cultured successfully in cages in the creeks. This will be helpful for the rural, landless communities practising fish farming in creeks who can improve their livelihoods by culturing locally available shrimp seeds in cages.