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Progress of freshwater aquaculture in Fiji

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Fiji's aquaculture sector is already worth several millions of dollars and has the potential and demand to grow further. In addition, the effect of climate change for the country is believed to increase freshwater bodies; therefore, aquaculture on land in ponds is one option for climate change adaptation. Over the past two decades the total production from freshwater aquaculture has risen from 20 tons to more than 210 tons, because of two species, tilapia and freshwater prawn. The highest percentage of freshwater aquaculture production belongs to tilapia (*Oreochromis niloticus*) 393 tons (83%) followed by freshwater prawn (*Macrobrachium rosenbergii*). A gradual rise in farmer numbers from 123 to 225 has contributed to industry expansion. Consequently, tilapia and freshwater fry production has increased from 106,620 and 8,000 to over 1.1 million

recently. In Fiji, the different types of culture system practiced in earthen ponds are semi intensive (93%), extensive (6%), integrated farming and intensive farming (1%), in either monoculture or polyculture systems. At present, Fiji is yet to acquire ranking of culture species in the world as production are mostly utilized for domestic market. Recently, freshwater prawn and shrimp trials in freshwater have aroused interest from private sector. This is because of new strains been introduced by government into the country for industry expansion. Industry expansion is constrained due to low stocking density practices, lack of technical knowledge among farmers for intensive farming practices, high feed cost of locally produced feed, improper feeding management and financial difficulties.

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