



NDF WORKSHOP
WG 9 – Aquatic Invertebrates
CASE STUDY 2 SUMMARY
Tridacnidae
Country – **Palau**
Original language – English

PALAU CASE STUDY - TRIDACNIDAE

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Seven species of giant clams occur in the Republic of Palau. These are: *Tridacna crocea* (lower risk – least concern); *T. derasa* (vulnerable); *T. gigas* (vulnerable); *T. maxima* (lower risk - conservation dependent); *T. squamosa* (lower risk - conservation dependent); *Hippopus hippopus* (lower risk - conservation dependent); and *H. porcellanus* (lower risk - conservation dependent).

The meat of all species is used on Palau for food and may also be sold locally to hotels and restaurants; the shells are used for arts and crafts. There are no management measures in place (such as close seasons or catch limits) to regulate harvests outside conservation areas, even though this is the principal threat to the species, and there is no formal management plan. However, there are 23 designated conservation areas within which harvesting of clams is prohibited. Palau's approach to ensuring that international trade takes place without detriment to wild populations, and to enhance sustainability of domestic consumption, has been through the development and implementation of an aquaculture programme. Palau began a clam hatchery operation in 1985 focusing initially on *T. derasa*, subsequently expanding to include *T. maxima*, *T. crocea* and *H. hippopus*. Broodstock clams are collected from the wild, stimulated to spawn in land-based tanks and then returned to designated areas in the sea for monitoring and future re-use as spawners. Once clams have settled in the land-based tanks, these are reared for c.3 months (2.5cm size) when they are returned to the sea to be raised in protective cages. Since 2005, young clams have been disseminated to the community where 40 clam farms have been established; the aim of the programme being to reduce pressures on wild populations and to enhance food security and enhance living standards. Over 2 million clams have been disseminated in this way at no charge to recipients, however, it is a condition that 10% of donated clams are set-aside to spawn naturally to re-stock local areas. Clams have been produced in this way to F2 generation. Monitoring of clam farms and their stock inventories is undertaken regularly.

Palau seeks to achieve non-detriment by restricting exports to F2 clams produced by the aquaculture techniques described above, which also support wild populations by reducing harvesting pressure and by providing a source of animals for re-stocking. The IUCN approach to non-detriment findings has not been used and its application is not clear; the approach to non-detriment findings relevant to Palau's current practice requires further elaboration in the workshop.