

# ...The Aquaculture Data Base...

The Aquaculture Data Base (ADB) began in 1973 as a project from the Virginia Institute of Marine Science (VIMS) to satisfy the need for a centralized source in the U.S.A. to make aquaculture information readily available to the public.

The earlier name of the database, National Aquaculture Information System, reflects its original role: it is still the only such database in America—in the world, in fact—at the present time.

ADB is primarily bibliographic, that is providing access to aquaculture literature. The database is a collection of documents, including practical manuals, short articles of interest, technical and scientific reports, books and journal articles. A unique feature is that unpublished reports are also included.

The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) initially funded the Aquaculture Data Base, and funds from NOAA's National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) continue to support development and maintenance of the database. In 1980, ADB became a part of the Lockheed DIALOG system of computer searchable databases.

## The Users

The ADB collection is not confined to American literature and users now span the globe. Figures on its online usage are unobtainable. However, searches are also available on request through NOAA. During 1981, there were 135 requests for a total of 1,532 database articles. The requests came not only from within the U.S.A., but also from Africa, Argentina, Australia, Brazil, Canada, Chile, Columbia, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Germany, Guam, Hong Kong, Indonesia, Israel, Japan, Kuwait, Mexico, the Netherlands, Panama, Saudi Arabia, Scotland and Switzerland.

## Sources

Material comes to the inputting center at VIMS in a variety of ways. Some domestic and overseas organizations (ICLARM included) submit aquaculture-related documents directly. Also scanned on a regular basis are some 65 aquaculture-oriented journals. A number of theses and

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The author in her VIMS office. Small filing cabinets behind house microfiche copies of all the database articles.

dissertations are included, while VIMS aquaculture scientists, who cover many subject areas, also contribute from their personal libraries. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service provides material; translations of foreign language articles are supplied by the NMFS Language Services Branch.

Most entries are post-1970, although some earlier, fundamental literature is included. At the end of 1981, ADB contained 8,500 entries. The present growth rate of the database is 100 items per month.

## The System

When an article comes to the attention of the literature searcher, bibliographic information is recorded and the contents are described with key words from a special thesaurus; species names are also included. This information is coded and entered into a computer at VIMS. An inbuilt check system is used to detect errors. The resulting computer tapes, containing information on about 100 articles, are sent monthly to Lockheed's DIALOG offices near San Francisco to be added to the ADB file.

There are two ways to search the ADB for references to a particular subject. First, the database can be searched directly by an appropriate teletype terminal from many parts of the world. The searcher receives a printout from which can be selected articles of most use.

Second, a search can be requested through the Chief, User Services Branch, Library and Information Services Division (LISD), NOAA, 6009 Executive Boulevard, Rockville, MD 20852, U.S.A., from whom search assistance can be obtained. Search assistance can also be obtained from the librarian at VIMS.

The cost of online, or direct, searches of the database is not high and depends on the length of the search. The charge for assisted searches from VIMS is also determined by the length of the search. Most assisted searches of the database from LISD cost about \$17.00.

Because complete bibliographic information is supplied on the printout, many articles can easily be found in university or public libraries. Documents such as unpublished papers, foreign documents, or articles on very specialized aquaculture topics may not be in local libraries, but copies of all ADB articles may be requested from VIMS—a service not offered by other databases containing aquaculture information. Documents for which copying permission has been secured may be purchased on microfiche for 50¢ per document, regardless of the length of the article. Those who don't have access to microfiche readers may request ADB articles on paper. Each page copied costs 10¢.

The ADB overlaps in content with other aquatic databases to some extent. However, ADB has several unique features which distinguish it from them:

- It is concerned solely with bibliographic aquaculture information.
- It includes unpublished papers and proceedings of conferences not readily available elsewhere.
- It offers availability of the whole article, not just the abstract.

**VIMS invites contributions of published or unpublished material which adds new, relevant information to the Aquaculture Data Base. Anyone desiring more information or wishing to contribute papers or to make suggestions for addition to the database may contact the author.** **A**