

NOTE

Characterisation of *Vibrio* isolates recovered from the eyes of cage-cultured pompano (*Trachinotus blochii*) infested with caligid parasites (*Lepeophtheirus spinifer*)

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Abstract

Exophthalmia was documented among sea cage-cultured pompano (*Trachinotus blochii*) broodstocks with caligid parasite (*Lepeophtheirus spinifer*) infestation in the Philippines. Following sequencing, and based on the results of both diagnostic investigations and infection experiments, *V. harveyi* likely had a role in the reported exophthalmia cases, and this was initiated by *L. spinifer* infection.

An increase in the production of snubnose pompano (*Trachinotus blochii*) cultured in brackish water ponds and floating net cages in the open sea has been noted in recent years in the Philippines (Reyes et al., 2014) due to its high demand in local and international markets. The potential of pompano for aquaculture has been attributed to its ready adaptation to captive conditions in ponds and cages, acceptance of formulated feed (pellets), and its growth even at lower salinities (15-18 ppt). However, the development of the pompano industry in the Philippines and in other countries has been impeded by the occurrence of viral, bacterial and parasitic infections, perhaps owing to the intensive culture of this fish species. For

example, outbreaks of vibriosis caused by *Vibrio vulnificus* inflicted serious mortality and economic losses among cage-cultured ovate pompano (*T. ovatus*) intensively reared around the Gulf Coast of Yangjiang City, Guangdong Province, China (Li et al., 2006). Outbreaks of viral nervous necrosis and occurrence of the caligid parasite, *Lepeophtheirus spinifer*, infestation have been likewise documented during the hatchery production and grow-out culture of pompano, respectively, in the Philippines (Pakingking et al., 2011; Cruz-Lacierda et al., 2011). At the Igang Marine Station (IMS) of the Southeast Asian Fisheries Development Center, Aquaculture Department (SEAFDEC/ AQD), Guimaras island, Philippines, occurrence of ex-

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