

ACIAR Soil and Land Evaluation Research Team

The Research Institute for Coastal Aquaculture, the University of New South Wales & Gadjah Mada University

Introduction

The ACIAR Soil and Land Evaluation Research Team (ASLERT) was established in 1998 by Dr Adi Hanafi, Dr Taufik Ahmad and Dr Jes Sammut to support ACIAR-funded research on the remediation of shrimp ponds degraded by acid sulfate soils (**ACIAR Project FIS/97/22**). The team currently coordinates **ACIAR Project FIS/2002/076** on land capability assessment for coastal aquaculture and also supports linked Gol projects and other ACIAR projects. ASLERT is currently coordinated by Dr Akhmad Mustafa (RICA) and Dr Jes Sammut (UNSW). The team also has members from the Faculty of Geography, Gadjah Mada University, led by Dr Projo Danoedoro, to strengthen its spatial information activities.

ASLERT's main activities include:

- Development of soil remediation strategies for acid sulfate soils
- Experimental work on physical and chemical processes in pond soils
- Development of alternative, low impact farming systems such as juvenile shrimp production, seaweed culture and polyculture
- Soil characterisation and mapping
- Specific and general purpose mapping
- Land capability assessment
- Development of site selection criteria
- Soil classification in aquaculture production areas
- Hydrological assessment
- Socioeconomic impact assessment
- Technical training of other scientists and extension officers
- Production of extension materials
- Postgraduate student support for local and visiting overseas students



ASLERT is currently developing aquaculture classification schemes, improved site selection criteria and land suitability maps for land and sea-based aquaculture. The team also regularly samples soils in the main aquaculture areas of South Sulawesi, Lampung and Kalimantan. ASLERT's technical training program includes the delivery of technical training workshops to farmers, government agencies and consultants. In 2005, ASLERT expanded its activities to Aceh under **ACIAR Project FIS/2005/009** to provide technical and research support to the re-development of the aquaculture industry. ASLERT's pond management and soil remediation strategies are being applied to ponds severely degraded by the 2004 Indian Ocean Tsunami.

More information on ASLERT's research programs, including extension materials, can be found at:

<http://www.bees.unsw.edu.au/school/staff/sammut/acehsummary.html>

<http://www.bees.unsw.edu.au/school/staff/sammut/aciarsummary.html>



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ASLERT MEMBERS



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Physical Geographer



Dr Akhmad Mustafa
Project Leader
Soil Scientist



Dr Projo Danoedoro
Geographical Scientist
(GIS & Remote Sensing)



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Marine Scientist



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Laboratory/Field Technician



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