Frequently asked questions

Q: *When/why should cage culture be considered?*
A: Cage culture is an alternative to building containments for fish aquaculture (ponds, tanks, etc.). Pre-existing water bodies such as dams, lakes, estuaries or the sea are used for cage culture. This means that no capital is required for additional building containment (such as plumbing or filtration) other than the cages themselves.

Q: *What species of fish are suitable for cage culture?*
A: Species that grow well on artificial manmade diets are some of the best candidates for cage culture. This is because many of the health and growth requirements of the fish have been experimentally determined and the feed formulation can be optimized for variable conditions. An example is trout, which can receive their entire nutritional requirements from a high-protein pelletized diet. Fish at the bottom of the food chain (such as detritivores, zooplankton- or phytoplankton-feeders) will be more expensive and slower-growing species to raise in cages, and are therefore not good candidates.

Q: *Can ornamental fish be reared in cages?*
A: Yes, very successfully. Simple netting 'hapas' are widely used in the Far East to separate numerous species raised in nutrient-rich ponds for ornamental fish, and this reduces the number of expensive containments required to separate the many species often raised by ornamental fish farms.

Q: *What are the disadvantages of cages?*
A: The set-up costs can be high initially; these include the costs of building large robust cages that can withstand rough weather. Cage culture can be prone to damage and there is a risk of escape of the entire stock should the cage break or be damaged by predators or thieves.