

Statement for the Seminar on ASEAN-Japan Cooperation for Sustainable Fisheries through SEAFDEC

We, Senior Officials responsible for fisheries in ASEAN-SEAFDEC Member Countries, met in Tokyo, Japan on the occasion of “the Seminar on ASEAN-Japan Cooperation for Sustainable Fisheries through SEAFDEC” commemorating ASEAN-Japan Exchange Year 2003, on 5th December 2003,

WE HEREBY:

Reiterate our commitment to the policy in achieving sustainable fisheries to support fisheries industries in ASEAN Member Countries;

Confirmed the need for scientific and research based fisheries policies directed towards sustainable fisheries in the ASEAN region;

Expressed our grave concerns on international attempts, including the promotion of anti-fisheries campaigns without supporting scientific evidence, that have negative impacts on the economic and social well being of the people of ASEAN- SEAFDEC Member Countries;

Recognized the importance of the existing ASEAN-SEAFDEC collaborative framework and the role of Japan in the promotion of sustainable fisheries in ASEAN region;

DO HEREBY RECOMMEND:

1. Further strengthening of the role and function of SEAFDEC to support the promotion of sustainable fisheries with particular emphasis on aspects related to human resources development and strengthening of community-based fisheries management in ASEAN Member Countries;
2. Confirming the need to take further actions to implement the “Resolution and Plan of Action on Sustainable Fisheries for Food Security for the ASEAN Region (the Resolution and Plan of Action)” adopted at the ASEAN–SEAFDEC Conference on Sustainable Fisheries for Food Security in the New Millennium: “Fish for the People” in 2001, and the Regional Guidelines of the Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries in Southeast Asia;
3. Conducting a comprehensive review on the progress of the implementation of the “Resolution and Plan of Action” in the ASEAN region by SEAFDEC in consultation with the Member Countries and the ASEAN Sectoral Working Group on Fisheries (ASWGF), before the next ASEAN-SEAFDEC Fisheries Consultative Meeting (FCG);
4. Enhancing regional technical cooperation among ASEAN-SEAFDEC Member Countries by involving both government and private sectors through an appropriate framework and logistic arrangement by all possible means with a view to reduce disparities and promote solidarity among the Member Countries, of which priority should be given to the important issues affecting sustainable fisheries development including:
 - Human resource development including exchange programs for young scientists;
 - Innovative fisheries management;
 - Stock assessment and enhancement;
 - Disease diagnosis and surveillance on existing highly virulent diseases as well as new emerging diseases such as Koi Herpes Virus (KHV);
 - Food safety and quality assurance particularly on analysis and detection of chemical and antibiotic residues; and
 - Fishery socio-economics;
5. Strengthening joint ASEAN-SEAFDEC harmonized approaches and common positions on priority issues, including international trade in fish and fishery products, affecting ASEAN-SEAFDEC Member Countries;

6. Increasing the pro-active participation and involvement of ASEAN-SEAFDEC Member Countries through advance formulation of joint fisheries positions and policies to safeguard and promote the interests of ASEAN-SEAFDEC Member Countries in international fora including those of the FAO Committee on Fisheries (COFI), the World Trade Organization (WTO), the Convention on Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Flora and Fauna (CITES), Codex Alimentarius Commission, the World Aquaculture Conference (Indonesia to host the Conference in 2005 in Bali);
7. Formulating joint fisheries positions and policies in close consultation with the ASEAN Expert Group on CITES (AEG-CITES) with the leadership of the Government of Thailand in preparation for the forthcoming 13th Meeting of the Conference of Parties of CITES (COP13) to be held in Thailand in October 2004;
8. Enhancing a joint effort in promoting the importance of sustainable fisheries among a wider range of stakeholders of ASEAN-SEAFDEC Member Countries;
9. Considering and adopting **“To be the leader in sustainable tropical fisheries for the people”** as ASEAN Vision for fisheries development;

AND DO HEREBY DECIDE:

That the above recommendations be submitted to the appropriate ASEAN and SEAFDEC bodies for consideration, endorsement and follow up action.