

**REPORT OF
THE SECOND ASEAN-SEAFDEC FISHERIES CONSULTATIVE
GROUP (FCG) MEETING
The Legend Hotel, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia
20 March 2000**

OPENING

1. The Second Meeting of the ASEAN-SEAFDEC Fisheries Consultative Group (FCG) was held at the Legend Hotel in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia on 20 March 2000.
2. The Meeting was attended by Dr. Vu Van Trieu, representing the Chairman of the ASEAN Sectoral Working Group on Fisheries (ASEAN-WGFi), and WGFi representatives for Brunei Darussalam, Cambodia, Malaysia, Myanmar, the Philippines, Singapore and Thailand. Dr. Ir. Azmi Mat Akhir, representing the ASEAN Secretariat, also attended the Meeting.
3. The Meeting was also attended by the SEAFDEC Secretary-General, Mr. Panu Tavarutmaneegul, the Deputy Secretary-General Mr. Shogo Sugiura as the representative of the Training Department Chief, and the Chiefs of Marine Fisheries Research Department (MFRD), Aquaculture Department (AQD), and Marine Fishery Resources Development and Management Department (MFRDMD) along with their senior officers. Also attending the Meeting were representatives of the SEAFDEC Council, who are the current Chairman of the SEAFDEC Council of Directors, Mr. Minoru Morimoto of Japan, and the SEAFDEC Alternate Council Director for Malaysia, Mr. Hashim Ahmad, representing Dato' Mohd. Mazlan Bin Jusoh, the SEAFDEC Council Director for Malaysia. The list of participants appears as Annex 1.
4. The Meeting was co-chaired by the representative of the ASEAN WGFi Chairman and the SEAFDEC Secretary-General.
5. The SEAFDEC Secretary-General welcomed the participants to the Meeting. He noted the strong support given by SEAFDEC to the FCG as shown by the participation of the SEAFDEC Council Director for Japan, who is also the current Chairman of the SEAFDEC Council, as very important to strengthening the working relations between ASEAN and SEAFDEC.
6. On behalf of the WGFi Chairman, Dr. Trieu welcomed the participants to the Meeting. He informed the Meeting that the WGFi Chairman apologized for not being able to attend the FCG Meeting due to prior important engagement. He expressed the hope that closer collaboration between ASEAN and SEAFDEC can be forged through the FCG mechanism.
7. The Chairman of the SEAFDEC Council, Mr. Minoru Morimoto thanked the Secretary-General of SEAFDEC for the invitation to attend the Second FCG Meeting, and to the Government of Malaysia for hosting the Meeting. He noted the significance of the programs endorsed for implementation under the FCG mechanism at its First Meeting, as well as the additional programs proposed for implementation, which will be discussed at this Meeting. He acknowledged that the efforts of FCG will lead to closer collaboration between ASEAN and SEAFDEC.
8. The SEAFDEC Alternate Council Director for Malaysia welcomed the participants of the Meeting to Kuala Lumpur. He was optimistic that the Meeting will come up with strategies that will be beneficial to the region. He noted that with more challenges being faced in fisheries,

there is a need to do more work together and share whatever resources available in order to attain more progress for fisheries development in the region.

ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA

9. In the discussion on the Provisional Agenda, it was agreed that an additional item on “Any Other Matters” be added to the Agenda. This would provide for discussion on other relevant fisheries issues and a brief report on the status of fisheries in Cambodia. After the discussion, the Agenda was adopted as amended, and appears as Annex 2.

AGENDA I

REVIEW OF THE PROGRESS IN THE FCG PROGRAM OF COLLABORATION BETWEEN ASEAN AND SEAFDEC SINCE ITS FIRST MEETING

1.1 Upgrading of Traditional Fish Processing Industries in Southeast Asia

10. The SEAFDEC Program Advisor, at the request of the Secretary-General, reviewed the progress of the three FCG projects. The Upgrading of Traditional Fish Processing Industries in Southeast Asia has been implemented by MFRD in collaboration with Singapore, the ASEAN Lead Country. For the project initial activity, it aims to upgrade the fermented fish products industry in ASEAN through improved processing technology and introduction of quality management systems. In 1999, MFRD undertook to gather information on the status of the fermented fish processing industry in the ASEAN region. The information will be used to develop a program to upgrade, develop and transfer processing technology on fermented fish products, and introduce quality management systems like HACCP to the fermented fish products industry. In implementing this project, MFRD worked closely with the ASEAN Network of Fisheries Post-harvest Technology Centers, of which MFRD and Singapore are coordinators. In January 1999, a questionnaire on diskette was sent to ASEAN Country Coordinators for information on the types of traditional fish product and four countries have responded to date. In September 1999, MFRD has again sent repeated request to the remaining countries. To assist MFRD in the fermented fish products program, MFRD has requested for the services of a short-term Japanese expert for FY2000.

1.2 Promotion of Mangrove-Friendly Aquaculture in Southeast Asia

11. For the Promotion of Mangrove-friendly Aquaculture in Southeast Asia, which has been implemented by AQD with Thailand as the ASEAN Lead Country, the FCG was informed that its five-year plan is not limited to shrimp but also cover the culture of all other organisms that could affect mangroves. In January 1999, AQD held a workshop in Iloilo, Philippines, which was attended by 120 participants from SEAFDEC and ASEAN Member Countries. In April 1999, an on-site training was offered in Hai Phong, Vietnam, involving 20 trainees from Vietnam, and 5 trainees from Cambodia under the ASEAN-Canada Centre.

12. Upon the recommendation of the 22nd SEAFDEC Program Committee Meeting, the program was revised to give focus on the effects of shrimp culture on mangroves.

1.3 Conservation and Management of Sea Turtles in Southeast Asian Countries

13. The Conservation and Management of Sea Turtles in Southeast Asian Countries Project has been implemented by MFRDMD with Malaysia as the ASEAN Lead Country. It aims to collect information from national programs for publication and presentation at international

fora. In July 1999, MFRDMD organized a workshop in Kuala Terengganu that attracted 47 participants from ASEAN countries. Over and above the 12-point recommendation made by the participants, each participating country formulated and shared with MFRDMD their national 5-year program (2001-2005) for the conservation and management of sea turtles. Based on these national programs, MFRDMD is submitting its proposal to the FCG at this Meeting. The information and the recommendations made by the workshop have been uploaded for dissemination onto the SEAFDEC Home Page.

14. In a complementary development related to turtle conservation and management, the SEAFDEC Training Department (TD) carried out a series of sea trials to test five types of imported and locally assembled Turtle Excluding Devices (TEDs). Tested were five imported TEDs (Anthony Weedless, Super Shooter, Bent Pipe, Georgia Jumper, and Mexican), and two locally assemble gears (Thai-KU and TTFD). Against the set criteria, the TTFD emerged as the best TED for its efficiency in turtle exclusion, retention of shrimp and fish by-catch, least fuel consumption, and ease in storage and transportation. Despite these advantages, the TTFD was found less efficient where garbage and stingray were prevalent.

1.4 Regionalization of the Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries

15. This project was first proposed to the First FCG Meeting in 1999 for inclusion in the ASEAN-SEAFDEC collaborative mechanism. The Program of Regionalization of the Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries (RCCRF) has been implemented by SEAFDEC since 1998. For fishing operations, the guidelines was published in December 1999. In August 1999, AQD had also agreed with the Network of Aquaculture Centres in Asia-Pacific (NACA) to start collaboration for the Regionalization of the Code, Article 9 on Aquaculture Development in 2000.

16. Concerning the Article on Fisheries Management, TD and MFRDMD initiated a discussion on standard format and regionalization process in January 2000. The two SEAFDEC Departments resolved that, due to the difference in nature, the separation of coastal/small-scale fisheries from industrial fisheries could give a better treatment to these two fisheries management regimes.

17. The recent discussion between the SEAFDEC Secretariat and MFRD resulted in an understanding that MFRD would undertake activities on Article 11 of the FAO Code on Fisheries Post-harvest Practices and Trade at a later date. This deferment would allow MFRD to benefit from the experiences gained from the other Articles being handled by its sister Departments.

1.5 Regional Fish Disease Project

18. This Project was proposed by the Government of Japan at the 31st Meeting of the SEAFDEC Council in March 1999 under the Japanese Trust Fund. The project was also proposed to be placed under the FCG. The project proposal on the Development of fish diseases diagnostical inspection methodologies for artificially-bred seeds would be formulated after the arrival of the Japanese expert to AQD in mid-March 2000.

1.6 Development of the Monitoring System of the Aquatic Environment for Substances Contained in the Fish Bodies

19. The Project on the Development of the Monitoring System of the Aquatic Environment for Substances Contained in the Fish Bodies has encountered some implementation

difficulties. Although a sum of fund has been set aside for its activities, the Project will be held in abeyance for the time being.

1.7 Improvement of Fishery Statistics in the Region

20. Improvement of Fishery Statistics in the Region was also proposed by Japan to the 31st Meeting of the SEAFDEC Council in 1999 as another FCG project. Fishery Statistics has been a strong SEAFDEC program since 1976 and the Secretariat is proposing a Plan of Action for the consideration of the SEAFDEC Council.

1.8 Fish Trade and Environment

21. Fish Trade and Environment is another program area of SEAFDEC's interest. Although SEAFDEC has limited expertise to deal with international fish trade issues, it organized the "SEAFDEC Preparatory Meeting on Issues of International Fish Trade and Environment" in November 1999 in Bangkok just before the WTO Ministerial Conference. The Meeting was attended by SEAFDEC Council Directors, officials from ASEAN countries, and international organizations. The Meeting formulated a number of recommendations for the consideration of SEAFDEC and ASEAN member countries. The Meeting adopted the recommendation and also agreed as one of the recommended points that SEAFDEC assist FAO in its in-depth analysis to examine the fact whether fishery subsidies contribute to overfishing or overcapacity of fisheries. The SEAFDEC Secretariat has sent out a request to SEAFDEC and ASEAN countries to furnish the required information, which it will subsequently pass on to FAO.

AGENDA II PROPOSED NEW PROGRAMS FOR THE FCG

2.1 Mangrove-friendly Aquaculture

22. The Chief of AQD presented a revised program on mangrove-friendly aquaculture which focuses on the effects of shrimp culture on mangroves. It was noted that the original program considered other aquaculture species that have impact on mangroves. In the revised program, three major approaches will be adopted, namely, verification and pilot demonstration, research, and information dissemination. The activities, which will be supported by the Japanese Trust Fund, are planned from January 2000 as start of Year III until December 2002 as end of Year V.

23. On the revised program on mangrove-friendly aquaculture, which now focus on the effects of shrimp culture on mangroves, as presented by AQD, the Meeting considered the following suggestions:

1. Proceedings of the workshops conducted under the program should be also circulated to the ASEAN Member countries.
2. In order to get the participation of ASEAN, communications should be directed to the Chairman of the WGF_i with copies provided to the ASEAN Secretariat.
3. Since fish farmers seem to be moving away from the mangrove areas and that many activities are done by small-scale farmers, the program should set its focus on the small-scale farmers through training or workshops.
4. The program should establish a code of practice on mangrove-friendly aquaculture for distribution to the fish farmers, which could be patterned after the Good Shrimp Farm Management Practices developed by Thailand for ASEAN.
5. Results from the research components be disseminated to ASEAN to serve as guide for the countries in the region.

2.2 Conservation and Management of Sea Turtle in Southeast Asian Countries

24. The Chief of MFRDMD presented the additional plans for this on-going project under the FCG. As a result of the recent workshop, the project has planned two additional activities for the coming years. The first component: Sea Turtle Hatchery Management Study aims at (i) understanding the nesting ecology and incubation biology of eggs and hatchling sex ratio from natural beach and artificial environment, (ii) evaluating management of hatchling production in the study area, and (iii) formulating specific recommendation to help improve existing conservation practices. These activities will be concluded by December 2002.

25. The second component: Sea Turtle Statistics Management would also be implemented until December 2002. As recommended by the First SEAFDEC-ASEAN Regional Workshop on Sea Turtle Conservation and Management, held in July 1999, a regional network on sea turtle and a regional GIS database would be established.

26. A two-day meeting of sea turtle coordinators of the ASEAN countries will be organized to analyze the sea turtle statistics that has been collated to date.

27. On the two components of the program, namely, Sea Turtle Hatchery Management Study and Sea Turtle Statistics Management, the Meeting noted from the data available that the impact of fishing activity on sea turtle in the ASEAN region seems to be low. In view of this, the introduction of TED in the ASEAN region might not be the only solution for sea turtle conservation. Other sea turtle conservation programs could also be effective. Nevertheless, data collection on the impact of fishing operations on sea turtle population should be pursued. The results of the tagging program should also be collated in order to study the movement of turtle species.

28. The program should consider a mechanism of disseminating information through publication of materials to be released during international fora such as the CITES, WTO, or FAO meetings.

29. Malaysia as the Lead Country for the program, could provide relevant SEAFDEC/ASEAN information and documents to other ASEAN/SEAFDEC countries participating in CITES to facilitate information dissemination to a wider global audience. This could also be done through the ASEAN Expert Working Group on CITES, which would meet prior to the COP11 of CITES.

30. Since ASEAN is already indirectly represented in the CITES through the ASEAN member countries, SEAFDEC could also consider attending the CITES to provide more information on the issue and demonstrate to the rest of the world on how the Southeast Asian region is responding to the various environmental issues as well as acquire relevant information from the CITES.

2.3 Program of Regionalization of the Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries

31. The Special Advisor informed the Meeting that the Program of RCCRF involved many aspects and ASEAN countries should play an active role in this Program. It was suggested that ASEAN nominate a Lead Country to coordinate the Program with SEAFDEC. The Meeting agreed that SEAFDEC could identify important issues related to the RCCRF to be taken up through the FCG for consideration and decision/guidance by ASEAN.

2.4 Development of fish diseases diagnostical inspection methodologies for artificially-bred seeds Project

32. While the project document is still being developed upon the arrival from Japan of the Fish Disease Expert, the Meeting agreed that the project should look at fish diseases from a broader framework of aquaculture, such as fish health management and husbandry management aspects.

2.5 Development of the Monitoring System of the Aquatic Environment for Substances Contained in the Fish Bodies Project

33. The Secretariat stated that the program was rearranged with “the Digitized Atlas Preparation for ASEAN/SEAFDEC Collaborative Programs” due to some technical consideration. It can be envisaged that some of outputs from ASEAN/SEAFDEC Collaborative Programs will be digitized and included in the digitized database to be attached to the SEAFDEC Home Page. Since the activities are mainly limited to the preparation of appropriate software and inputs to be conducted at the Secretariat, it is therefore agreed that “the Development of the Monitoring System of the Aquatic Environment for Substances Contained in the Fish Bodies Program” will be withdrawn from the ASEAN/SEAFDEC Collaborative Program.

2.6 Program of Regional Fishery Statistics

34. The Policy & Program Coordinator of SEAFDEC presented the Plan of Action for improvement of Fishery Statistical System in Southeast Asia. The Plan of Action is meant for SEAFDEC and ASEAN countries to implement at the national level, and in the meantime for the regional level, SEAFDEC will be coordinating the activities.

35. Cambodia informed the Meeting that marine fishery statistics in Cambodia is currently very weak. It would be highly beneficial to Cambodia if SEAFDEC would implement its fishery statistics program that could include Cambodia.

36. After the discussion, the Meeting noted that SEAFDEC has proposed a plan of action, which will be further discussed at its 32nd Council Meeting. It also noted that SEAFDEC has prepared another activity to improved fishery statistics and is in a process of negotiating with a donor.

2.7 Program on Fish Trade and Environment

37. The Special Advisor to SEAFDEC informed the Meeting that fish trade is an important issue but SEAFDEC has limited expertise. Two activities are being proposed. One is a regional meeting to discuss SPS issues in relation to the next multilateral trade negotiation. The second is a meeting on the impact of HACCP on trade, to be organized with MFRD.

38. After the discussion, the Meeting noted that fish trade is affected by many important issues such as conservation, environment, health, etc., and should be recognized as an “umbrella” activity. It took note that SEAFDEC proposed to undertake follow-up activities at the most appropriate time. The Meeting also suggested that SEAFDEC closely monitor the development of the relevant issues in this area, leading to the new round of WTO negotiation. This will assist SEAFDEC in the formulation of its activities on fish trade.

2.8 Conference of the Millennium: Fish for the People

39. The Special Advisor to SEAFDEC informed the Meeting of the SEAFDEC's plan to organize the Conference in November 2001 in Thailand. He referred to dwindling of fish in Southeast Asia where people depend on it as the staple source of food. In light of the deterioration of fisheries resources and the ever-increasing population, food security as advocated in the 1995 Kyoto Conference is an important issue to be addressed in the planned Conference.

40. Japan voiced its support to the proposed Conference. With the relatively short lead-time, Japan expressed some concerns that it would be difficult to organize such a large gathering without a strong support of ASEAN and its member nations. Japan supported the idea that SEAFDEC plan to look for additional financial contribution to support the Conference, and not to rely on its regular annual budget. As for the level of participation, it was decided that high level officials should attend, not necessarily be limited to ministers. Japan supported the proposed SEAFDEC special five-year program in conjunction with the Millennium Conference. This program will make the conference to be a milestone on SEAFDEC's medium term commitment in Southeast Asia.

41. Singapore suggested that the Conference must identify the target participants and anticipated outputs in order to make an impact on fisheries in the region. SEAFDEC should also plan to mobilize cooperation from the member countries of SEAFDEC and ASEAN. To collaborate with ASEAN, Singapore suggested that the Secretariat assist the Conference host country Thailand to prepare a project proposal for the consideration of the special SOM-AMAF at its April 2000 meeting in Brunei Darussalam. This could be subsequently submitted to the AMAF for approval at the end of the year. Since food security is a priority issue of ASEAN, it is likely that ASEAN would support such a Conference. Thailand spoke in support of the planned Conference, and urged that action will have to be taken up as soon as possible. The Meeting also agreed that the ASEAN Fisheries Federation representing the private sector should also be included in the Conference.

42. After the discussion, it was agreed that the Secretariat and Thailand prepare a strong proposal for submission to the Special SOM-AMAF Meeting in April 2000.

AGENDA III SUGGESTED METHODS OF STRENGTHENING THE PROGRAM COORDINATION TO PROMOTE GREATER PROGRAM PLANNING CAPABILITIES AND PROGRAM IMPACT

43. Timing of the FCG meeting: one day before the SEAFDEC Council Meeting is the most appropriate arrangement.

44. Members of the FCG: On the composition of the FCG, Japan requested the interpretation of the composition of the Consultative Group, which includes "representatives of SEAFDEC Secretary-General." After the discussion, it was resolved that the composition of the FCG, which appears in Annex 12 of the 30th SEAFDEC Council Meeting should read:

"The FCG would comprise the Chairman of the ASEAN Working Group on Fisheries (ASEAN WGF), ASEAN members, the SEAFDEC Secretary-General, representatives from the SEAFDEC member countries, and SEAFDEC Departments."

45. Based on the recommendations made at the Open Forum Meeting in January 2000, expansion of members of TFRFP to include members of ASEAN countries was proposed by the Special Advisor to SEAFDEC. It was agreed that the nomination of national coordinators from ASEAN member countries to TFRFP will be proposed to ASEAN WGFi for consideration.

AGENDA IV OTHER MATTERS

46. Japan referred to two papers on “Whaling Issue” and “Marine Species Issue” and a booklet on “Estimation of total food consumption by cetaceans in the world’s oceans” that were distributed at the Meeting. The down-listing of specific whales from the CITES appendix 1 was proposed by Japan for the up-coming COP11 of CITES. At the last CITES meeting, the same down-listing proposal by Japan gained 53 votes, and Norway 57 votes to their favour at a ballot casting. The amount of votes was not sufficient for backing the Japan’s down-listing proposal to the CITES. Japan also stressed that fisheries resources should be managed and utilized on a sustainable manner based on scientific evidence. As the participants should have their professional capability with marine species issues, and whales have been a center of global attention, Japan requested responsible fishery officials who may join their national delegation to the CITES meeting to give attention to these documents.

47. The Meeting took note of the request by Japan, and agreed to convey the message to the ASEAN working group on CITES for consideration. Singapore commented that decisions made at international fora should be made on sound scientific information. This information should be generated from recognized responsible international organizations/agencies.

Status of Fisheries in Cambodia

48. Cambodia presented its fisheries profile showing the great abundance of fish in the inland waters. After the presentation, the Meeting requested that a copy of the presentation be reproduced for each participant.

Singapore Seafood Exhibition

49. The Chief of MFRD informed the Meeting of the International Seafood Exhibition that will be held in Singapore from 26 to 28 June 2000. In conjunction with this Exhibition, the ASEAN Fisheries Federation will host its annual business meeting and conference. He indicated that it is a good opportunity for SEAFDEC to highlight its activities on the issue of responsible fisheries and that Dr. Yasuhisa Kato has been invited to speak on this subject. He therefore encouraged the participation of the members of FCG, especially in relation to the proposed SEAFDEC Millennium Conference to be organized in late 2001.

Program Requests from ASEAN

50. Thailand sought clarification from SEAFDEC on the status of two proposals from ASEAN. On Shark Fisheries Management in the ASEAN region, the SEAFDEC Secretariat informed the Meeting that the matter was referred to MFRDMD which already conducted some activities on sharks as part of its regular programs. Regarding the request to incorporate community-based fisheries management into SEAFDEC program, the Secretariat reported that AQD has been implementing a project which has turned into a model; and TD has recently carried out a survey to incorporate this program element into its activities. It was agreed that SEAFDEC will respond officially to Thailand on the matter.

AGENDA V
ADOPTION OF THE REPORT OF THE MEETING

51. The Meeting adopted the Report of the Meeting on 20 March 2000.
52. In his closing remarks, the ASEAN Co-chairman expressed his appreciation to SEAFDEC, and all SEAFDEC and ASEAN participants for their time and contributions to the ASEAN-SEAFDEC collaboration under the FCG. He extended his gratitude to the host country Malaysia for the arrangement for the Meeting, and to SEAFDEC for the services of its Secretariat.
53. The SEAFDEC Co-chairman also thanked the participants for displaying their support to the inter-agency cooperation.