

**REPORT OF  
THE 3<sup>rd</sup> MEETING OF THE ASEAN-SEAFDEC FISHERIES  
CONSULTATIVE GROUP (FCG)  
Singapore on 12 March 2001**

**I. INTRODUCTION**

1. The Third Meeting of the ASEAN-SEAFDEC Fisheries Consultative Group (FCG) was held in Singapore on 12 March 2001.

2. The Meeting was attended by representatives of the ASEAN and SEAFDEC Member Countries (except Indonesia and Lao PDR), ASEAN Secretariat and SEAFDEC. The list of participants appears as Annex 1.

**II. OPENING OF THE MEETING**

3. The Meeting was co-chaired by the ASEAN Chairman, Dato' Hashim Ahmad and the SEAFDEC Secretary-General, Mr. Panu Tavarutmaneegul.

4. The ASEAN Co-chairman welcomed the participants to the Meeting. He expressed his thankfulness and gratitude to Singapore for hosting this Meeting. He stressed the importance of close collaboration between ASEAN and SEAFDEC which can be forged through the FCG mechanism. He then declared the Meeting open.

**III. ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA**

5. The Agenda, which appears as Annex 2 was adopted.

**IV. REVIEW OF THE PROGRESS AND PROPOSED FUTURE PROGRAM OF ACTIVITIES UNDER FCG MECHANISM**

**1) *Upgrading of Traditional Fish Processing Industries in Southeast Asia***

6. MFRD, as the SEAFDEC Lead Department, presented the progress and proposed future activities of the program which appears as Annex 3.

7. In the discussion, the Meeting commented that in the past focus on development of fishery post-harvest was given only to export products. The program was therefore viewed as of importance to the ASEAN Member Countries in upgrading traditional products as a means to provide high nutritional products for local consumption. The Meeting suggested that hygiene and quality aspects in addition to the food safety of traditional fermented, dried and comminuted fish products should also be given focus to further develop traditional fish products in the region.

8. Vietnam informed the Meeting that import arrangement to obtain fishery post-harvest and processing equipment under Management of Sustainable Coastal Fisheries (MSCF) program as proposed by MFRD was finally concluded and expressed his wish to coordinate with the Department in the promotion of post-harvest technology particularly traditional fish products in Vietnam.

9. In order to further promote the fishery post-harvest technology at national level of ASEAN Member Countries, the Meeting requested MFRD to compile and disseminate the

information of the technology to facilitate promotion of this sector to wider industries in the region.

10. With respect to the ASEAN-Australia Development Cooperation Program on Quality Assurance and Safety of Fish and Fishery Products, Processing and Packaging as informed by the ASEAN Secretariat, the Meeting suggested that a partnership program between the two programs could be sought by ASEAN Secretariat to fully utilize the existing information and expertise for the benefits to the ASEAN Member Countries.

## **2) *Promotion of Mangrove – Friendly Aquaculture in Southeast Asia***

11. AQD, as the SEAFDEC Lead Department presented the progress and proposed future activities of the program which appears as Annex 4.

12. Vietnam informed the Meeting of the successful outcomes of the program in north Vietnam and further requested AQD to look into possibility to implement the program in the south of Vietnam. In addition, Cambodia and Myanmar also requested AQD to look into possibility to expand the program activities to their countries.

13. Thailand pointed out current problems in shrimp culture as the industries are expanding to land area and this may cause effects to the environment and requested AQD to look into this issue. He also suggested AQD to look into closed system for shrimp culture and fish health management which have increasingly become a regional interest.

## **3) *Conservation and Management of Sea Turtles in Southeast Asian Countries***

14. MFRDMD, as the SEAFDEC Lead Department supplemented by TD presented the progress and proposed future activities of the program which appears as Annex 5.

15. With respect to the international movement on the conservation of sea turtle, the Meeting suggested that ASEAN and SEAFDEC Member Countries should carefully monitor the progress and jointly develop a regional stand in order to develop careful steps towards the conservation and management of sea turtle in the region.

## **4) *Regionalization of the Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries***

16. The Secretariat, as the SEAFDEC Lead Department, presented the progress and proposed activities of the program which appears as Annex 6.

17. During the discussion, the Meeting stressed the importance of the program which is considered as a guiding principle for further development of fishery related programs to ensure sustainable fisheries in the region. However, the Meeting viewed that many international instruments such as the Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries might not be easily put into implementation at national level. The Meeting suggested that popularization of the CCRF would facilitate the purpose and the Regional Guidelines currently promoted by SEAFDEC could be used as the basis for the promotion.

18. The Meeting stressed on the importance not only on the technical aspects of responsible fisheries but also involvement of fishery related authority in the implementation of the CCRF at national level. In this respect, The Meeting strongly suggested to incorporate the issue of CCRF in the outcome of the planned ASEAN-SEAFDEC Millennium Conference to be adopted by the ASEAN Ministers.

**5) *Development of Fish Diseases Diagnostic Inspection Methodologies for Artificial-bred Seeds***

19. AQD, as the SEAFDEC Lead Department presented the progress and proposed activities of the program which appears as Annex 7.

**6) *Program on Regional Fishery Statistics***

20. The Secretariat, as the SEAFDEC Lead Department presented the progress and proposed activities of the program which appears as Annex 8.

21. During the discussion, Malaysia stressed on the importance of statistics for fishery development and management. However he expressed some constraints particularly on limited statistical personnel to collect statistical data. He requested ASEAN and SEAFDEC Member Countries as well as SEAFDEC to look into ways to improve the fishery statistics to ensure the compilation of timely and reliable fishery statistical data.

22. The Meeting suggested SEAFDEC Secretariat to seek collaboration with ICLARM as they are promoting similar activities.

23. Cambodia requested the Secretariat to extend assistance to the country on marine fishery statistics, as there is a need for the country to further develop in this area. While Myanmar requested the Secretariat to assist the country in promoting standard methodologies in the collection and management of fishery statistical systems.

**7) *Program on Fish Trade and Environment***

24. The Secretariat, as the SEAFDEC Lead Department presented the progress and proposed activities of the program which appears as Annex 9.

25. The Meeting was informed that a WTO Ministerial Conference has been scheduled in November 2001 and thus there is a need for ASEAN and SEAFDEC Member Countries to discuss and prepare regional standing point to facilitate the preparation for the Conference by the responsible agencies in each ASEAN and SEAFDEC Member Countries. In this regards, the Meeting was informed of a planned Regional Technical Consultation on Fish Trade to be organized by SEAFDEC in collaboration with FAO, WTO and the Marine Stewardship Council (MSC). The Consultation will focus on issues related to eco-labeling, fishery subsidies, Sanitary and Phytosanitary (SPS) measures and Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Point (HACCP) in order to follow-up implementation of the recommendations of the 1999 Preparatory Meeting and prepare technical inputs for the ASEAN-SEAFDEC Millennium Conference.

26. With respect to the issue related to eco-labeling, the Meeting stressed that ASEAN and SEAFDEC Member Countries should carefully review and consider the standing point in dealing with the issue.

**8) *Progress of the ASEAN-SEAFDEC Conference on Sustainable Fisheries for Food Security in the New Millennium: "Fish for the People"***

27. The Secretariat, as the SEAFDEC Lead Department reported the progress of the ASEAN-SEAFDEC Conference which appears as Annex 10.

28. The Meeting was informed of the possibility of change of date of the Conference, however the matter was not discussed in length since it will be dealt during the 33<sup>rd</sup> Meeting of SEAFDEC Council.

29. Regarding the proposal to convene the Conference back to back with the AMAF Annual Meeting, it was clarified that since Indonesia will be hosting the next AMAF and the Conference will be organized in Bangkok, the proposal was not accepted. However, the Meeting was reminded that during the last AMAF Meeting held in Cambodia, the proposal to have fishery related Ministers of ASEAN countries to participate in the Conference was agreed as it is felt to be very useful for the region. Regarding the invitation to be extended to all ASEAN Ministers, Thailand informed the meeting that once the date is finalized the Thai Minister will extend official invitation at earliest possible to ensure participation of all ASEAN Ministers in the Conference.

30. 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 Member Countries of SEAFDEC and ASEAN. To collaborate with ASEAN, he suggested that the Secretariat assist the Conference host country Thailand to prepare a project proposal for the consideration by the special SOM-AMAF at its April 2001 meeting in Brunei Darussalam. This could be subsequently submitted to the AMAF for approval at the end of the year. 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.

31. With respect to the program report on the progress and proposed activities of the FCG programs, it was commented that progress of activities was comprehensively prepared. However, the Meeting requested that proposed future activity should also be given sufficient information for consideration at the Meeting.

## **V. PROPOSED NEW PROGRAM OF ACTIVITIES**

### **1) *Community-based Fisheries Management for Sustainable Development of Small-scale Fisheries in Southeast Asia***

32. Thailand presented the program proposal which appears as Annex 11. It was clarified that the proposed program is considered as a pilot project to be further promoted to other ASEAN Member Countries.

33. TD as the collaborating agency with Thailand, expressed gratitude for the interests of the ASEAN countries. The country has requested a Japanese expert, to look into detail preparation of the program.

34. The Meeting agreed on the importance of the program, Japan shared their experiences in the implementation of community-based fisheries management in the country. Japan explained the success as granting fishing-rights to the community as a whole. This has been in operation for almost 120 years. He also expressed the willingness of the Japanese government to extend the technical assistance to ASEAN Member Countries to promote the appropriate concept in the region.

35. It was requested that information relating to this program be disseminated to other ASEAN Member Countries prior to the completion of the project so that other countries can learn from the experiences of Thailand and embark on establishing similar activities.

36. The Meeting requested SEAFDEC to look into how best to disseminate information and experience on the topic to ASEAN Member Countries as the issue is of interest to most of all ASEAN Member Countries.

## **VI. OTHER MATTERS**

### **1) *Project on Promotion of Sustainable Fisheries through South-South Cooperation in ASEAN Region***

37. SEAFDEC Secretariat presented the planned project which appears as Annex 12 for consideration and comments by the Meeting to obtain views and suggestions.

38. SEAFDEC Secretariat was requested to closely coordinate with the ASEAN Foundation for the implementation of the project. The Secretariat was also requested for the prompt submission of the report on the completion of the project.

### **2) *Information on fishery related issues by Japan***

39. Japan gave information regarding two main issues 1) MHLC and 2) COFI to the Meeting which are as follows:

#### **1) Multilateral High Level Conference (MHLC) on the Conservation and Management of Highly Migratory Fish Stocks in the Western and Central Pacific.**

Japan is positively participating in the discussion of MHLC since the beginning. However, the country encountered some problems in balancing interests of the coastal nations. Therefore, Japan and Korea did not sign the Convention.

#### **3) Matters discussed during COFI meeting.**

- Research on Impacts of whale in fisheries in the Western North Pacific
- Organization for the promotion of responsible tuna fisheries as opposed to the IUU fishing
- Conservation and management of sea turtle in Southeast Asia
- CITES criteria – CITES is working on the review of species on the appendices. Japan raised its concern that this enables target species to be included in the annex more easily. In resolving this FAO is now reviewing the criteria for listing of the species in the appendices. Japan asked cooperation from ASEAN Member Countries for active participation in the FAO meeting on reviewing criteria for listing of the species. However, there was a comment on the selection of reviewing committee that are from the academic not the authority that directly involved in fisheries.

40. The Meeting suggested that ASEAN fishery related authority to keep close coordination with the trade, CITES and fisheries to ensure that the appropriate information is given to the ASEAN countries' representatives present at those forum.

## **VII. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

41. After the deliberation, the meeting endorsed the progress reports of current activities and proposed new program activities. The meeting further requested the SEAFDEC Secretariat to submit the report and consult with the Council, and Chairman of the ASEAN WGF to submit to SOM-AMAF for the endorsement.

## **VIII. CLOSING OF THE MEETING**

42. 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 Singapore for the arrangement for the Meeting, and to SEAFDEC for the services of its Secretariat. He then declared the Meeting close.