

Regional cooperation in addressing international fisheries related issues



Dr. Siri Ekmaharaj (left) and the Special Advisor, Dr. Yasuhisa Kato (right) chairing the sessions on international issues

Under the world of “globalization”, achieving sustainable development of fisheries has become more complex and challenging. A number of international instruments have been promoted to encourage the fisheries sector in improving their management and taking responsible and sustainable resource utilization. Among others, greater attention has been paid to market and trade measures for fish and fishery products to ensure the rights and safety of consumers. In order to address the concern and seriousness of the fisheries sector in ASEAN region; where supplies of fish and fishery products come from tropical and multi-species fisheries,

the representatives from the ASEAN-SEAFDEC Member Countries once again gathered at the Regional Technical Consultation on International Fisheries Related Issues 2008 held from 12 to 14 February 2008 in Chiang Mai, Thailand.

The Consultation is regularly convened by SEAFDEC Secretariat with the support of the Japanese Trust Fund under the program on Assistance of Capacity Building in the Region to Address International Trade Related Issues. This year the Consultation was convened to: 1) review and discuss the identified important international fisheries related issues relevant to the region; 2) formulate policy recommendations and propose coordinated/common positions on each respective issue among the Member Countries; and 3) identify follow-up actions by ASEAN and SEAFDEC Member Countries, ASEAN Secretariat as well as SEAFDEC Secretariat and Departments on the respective issues.

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The RTC on International Fisheries-related Issues 2008

ASEAN Roadmap boosted under the ASSP



The ASEAN Roadmap workshop

The Regional Workshop on Implementing the ASEAN Roadmap for Integration of the Fisheries Sector was organized from 16 to 18 January 2008 under the ASEAN-SEAFDEC Strategic Partnership (ASSP) framework in collaboration with FAO and the Network of Aquaculture Centres in Asia-Pacific (NACA), with funding support from the SEAFDEC-Sida collaborative project. The Workshop aimed to review the progress and status in the implementation of the Roadmap; and develop an ASEAN common framework supporting mechanism and follow-up actions to facilitate future coordination and implementation of the Roadmap.

Attended by 62 participants from 10 ASEAN Member Countries, the ASEAN Secretariat, FAO, NACA, SEAFDEC, and the Department of Fisheries Thailand, the Workshop concluded the general recommendations for future implementation of the Roadmap, and the specific recommendations on each measure. In addition, three fisheries commodities would be focused on: 1) frozen shrimp, 2) frozen fish, and 3) fish sauce to expedite the implementation.



EDITORIAL

Entering the 5th decade of its establishment, SEAFDEC has now been moving towards several initiatives to ensure sustainable utilization of fishery resources. With support from the Member Countries, establishment of regional advisory committee for fisheries management under SEAFDEC umbrella has been an on-going discussion, while under the ASEAN framework, the proposal for establishment of the ASEAN Regional Fisheries Management Mechanism (RFMM) has been initiated by the Department of Fisheries Thailand for submission to the ASWGFi in 2008. The other initiative which also has close linkages to fisheries management of the region is the development of RPOA-IUU (covering the South China Sea, Sulu-Sulawesi Seas (Celebes Sea) and the Arafura-Timor Seas); and SEAFDEC has continued to involve in the RPOA activities in order to provide technical contribution in combating IUU and ensuring responsible fishing practices of the region.

During this quarter, SEAFDEC also organized an RTC for Member Countries to discuss the issues, and develop the executive summary on the international fisheries issues for submission to the SEAFDEC Council Meeting in April 2008. Small-scale fisheries is one of the highlighted topics, and in response to the request made at the RTC, SEAFDEC is planning to organize a consultation at the end of April to develop common direction among countries in the region in promotion of the small scale fisheries as the sector is considered crucial, and clear direction is required to ensure sustainable development. ✦

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TD holds exhibition on the National Children's Day

On 12 January 2008, on the occasion of the Children's Day of Thailand, TD in collaboration with the Fish Market Organization, exhibited information on SEAFDEC activities relevant to responsible fishing and sea turtle conservation. The exhibition took place at the Agriculture Museum, Pathumtani Province, Thailand with more than 3,500 visitors.

During the same day, TD also organized another exhibition at the Pomprachunlajomklao Navy Dockyard in Samut Prakarn, Thailand in collaboration with the Thai Navy Dockyard. The exhibition had over 2,500 visitors. Models of fishing gear, e.g. long line and trawl installed with the Juvenile and Trash Excluder Device (JTED) were displayed. ✦



Students visiting the TD booth during the Children's Day

SEAFDEC takes part in Fisheries Science Education Workshop

From 17 to 19 March 2008, representatives from SEAFDEC participated in the International Workshop on Educational Cooperation in Fisheries Science in Asia organized at the Faculty of Fisheries Sciences, Hokkaido University in Hokkaido, Japan. The workshop aimed to explore challenges for national higher education systems in fisheries sciences in Asia in a global environment; update the status of higher fisheries education in the region; and discuss ways and means to improve the education system in the region. Aside from SEAFDEC, the Workshop was participated in by resource persons and participants from universities, research institutes and regional/international organizations in Asia.

During the workshop, Ms. Pouchamarn Wongsanga, the Information Program Coordinator of SEAFDEC, addressed

the importance of fisheries in Southeast Asia, and the cross-cutting challenges which have threatened the sustainability of the sector, including those resulting from international emerging fisheries issues. She also reiterated the important policies and initiatives related to fisheries issued at global and regional levels; and the requirement for human resources development in response to such initiatives. In the ASEAN region, Strategy for Human Resources Development in Fisheries has been developed in 2004; while at the global level FAO also developed a Strategic Framework for Human Capacity Development in Fisheries in 2004. In her conclusion, she stressed that capacity development in fisheries is envisaged to be the important part of development cooperation; and that the existing SEAFDEC activities could be used to enhance the human capacity development where appropriate. ✦

ASEAN Foundation visits SEAFDEC Secretariat

Dr. Filemon A. Uriarte, Jr., Executive Director and Ms. Renelle Ivy Adan, Programme Coordinator of the ASEAN Foundation visited SEAFDEC Secretariat on 4 March 2008 to strengthen the close collaboration between ASEAN Foundation and SEAFDEC particularly in promoting and building awareness on sustainable fisheries development including efforts to reduce technical disparities within the ASEAN region. In this regards, the contract of the new project supported by ASEAN Foundation on 'Human Resource Development on Poverty Alleviation and Food Security by Fisheries Interventions in the ASEAN Region' was also signed by Dr. Uriarte and Dr. Siri Ekmaharaj, SEAFDEC Secretary-General. The project will be implemented by SEAFDEC Secretariat and the Departments with the objectives of alleviating poverty through fisheries intervention by giving HRD trainings to central and local government officers as well as people who are directly involved with fisheries communities.

The project areas cover co-management, responsible fishing practices, backyard fishery post-harvest and processing, rural aquaculture and inland fisheries development, which will be conducted for a two-year period.

In addition, the support from the ASEAN Foundation to the activities under the on-going project on "Promotion of One Village, One Fisheries Products (FOVOP) System to Improve the Livelihood" was also confirmed.



The signing of project contract

Regional Cooperation in Addressing International Fisheries Related Issues

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After the 3-day deliberation, ASEAN-SEAFDEC Member Countries agreed with the conclusion and recommendation on regional direction towards priority issues for 2008 that are envisaged to have potential impacts on fisheries in the ASEAN region. The issues include Legally-binding Instrument on Port State Measures, Traceability, Certification and Labelling, Small-scale Fisheries Issues, Fisheries Subsidies, Endangered Aquatic Species under CITES, Climate Change and Fisheries, and Welfare of Fishing Crew and Fishing Labour. The outcomes of this Consultation will be used as essential substance to further develop a Draft Executive Report on International Fisheries Related Issues 2007-2008 which will be submitted to the authorities of SEAFDEC and ASEAN for their support. This would also serve as a guide for the ASEAN-SEAFDEC Member Countries in voicing regional interests at international fora.



AQD advisees dominate research competitions

All winners in the three categories of the 3rd BIOTA Regional Biology Student Research Competition held on 20 February 2008 in Iloilo City conducted their research under the supervision or assistance of AQD scientists. BIOTA is the Biology Teachers Association of the Philippines.

First place for the college group category went to students from the



One of the winning young researcher advised by AQD's veteran researchers

University of Saint La Salle, Bacolod City who acknowledged Ms. Annie Franco and Dr. Evelyn Grace de Jesus-Ayson of AQD for assistance with the *Spirulina* culture and the conduct of crude protein analysis. Their study was entitled "Effect of waste aquaculture pondwater and treated seawater on the production of *Spirulina arthrospira platensis*".

First prize, high school, individual oral presentation category was won by Capiz National High School student. The study was on "Gel strength analysis, hardness test, and viscosity test of alginate from brown alga (*Sargassum oligocystum*) carageenan from red alga (*Kappaphycus alvarezii*) and agar from the green alga (*Gracilaria bailinae*) for the binding capacity of abalone (*Haliotis asinina*) diet". AQD's Ms. Maria Rovilla Luhan and Dr. Relicardo Coloso were the

research consultants, and Mr. Kenneth Tibubos assisted in processing the seaweeds.

Three Capiz National High School students emerged first place in the team category with their study "Immunostimulating diet additive from calamansi (*Citrus microcarpa* Bunge) rind crude extract for tiger prawns (*Penaeus monodon* Fabricius)". Their adviser is Dr. Edgar Amar of AQD.

In related development, AQD's research advisees also made a mark in the National Intel Philippine Science Fair held from 13 to 17 February 008 in Tagaytay City. Three Maasin National High School students won 1st place with their study "The effects of levamisole on the non-specific cellular immune response in tilapia, *Oreochromis niloticus*". Their adviser is also Dr. Amar.



DEPARTMENTAL ACTIVITIES

MFRDMD welcomes visitors

A group of 80 students from the Faculty of Information Management, University Technology of MARA from Kelantan visited MFRDMD on 31 January 2008. The visit aimed at observing the management of a specialized library and the outcomes of research library or research institution as MFRDMD is regarded as a specialized library for fisheries information. To date, fishery industry has become the important source of economy in Malaysia which involved approximately 89,000 fishermen, 20,000 aquaculturists and 550 processing industries. The students also observed the relationship between the needs and availability of fisheries information in Malaysia, in order to ensure the provision of relevant information and services to the public. Currently, the university is planning to promote better management of information resources to enhance the usefulness of the information for students.

On 5 March 2008, a group of 23 new intake of Fisheries Assistant (G17) also visited MFRDMD, and took part in a 2-month introduction training program at the Fisheries Training Institute in Chendering. The main objectives of their visit were to obtain better understanding on the roles and functions of departments/centers administered by the Department of Fisheries, Malaysia, particularly on their research activities.

In addition to the above, at the end of the quarter, on 31 March 2008, MFRDMD also welcomed a group of administration staff for Fisheries Research Institute (FRI) Penang for a study tour visit to MFRDMD, Marine Fish Fry Center in Tanjong Demong as well to TUMEC in Rantau Abang. Apart from being briefed on the activities, the visitors also had hands on training with the staff. As the information management and computer network has played an important role to enhance the effectiveness of information sharing and communication in the organization; it is important for the supporting staff to acquire necessary skills and knowledge in order to be able to respond to the users' needs.



Students from the Faculty of Information Management UiTM Machang Kelantan (left); the new intake of Fisheries Assistant (top); and the Administration Staff from Fisheries Research Institute (FRI) Pulau Penang (above) during their visits to MFRDMD in the first quarter of 2008

TD conducts training course for college students in Thailand



Students from the Tinsulanonda College touring the dockyard during their training course conducted by TD

On 25 February 2008, TD in collaboration with the Vocation Education Commission of Thailand successfully completed the training course on Fishing Vessel Operation for 17 students from the Tinsulanonda Fisheries College, Songkhla Province.

The four-month course, starting from 1 October 2007, comprised lectures on Ship Construction and Stability, Marine Communication, Laws and Regulations of Navigation, Navigation Technology Practices, Marine Machinery Technology and Practices, Fishing Gears Technology, and Hands-on Practice onboard the M.V. SEAFDEC, M.V. Plalung.

A study tour program was also arranged in Rayong and Chonburi Provinces from 18 to 20 February 2001. In addition, the students also had the opportunity to visit the Fishery and Marine Research Station, the Fishery Association, Fishing Port, Dockyard, etc. The course was successfully completed with the presentation of training certificates to all trainees during the closing ceremony organized on 25 February.



Students participate in the tagging of mackerel

On 25 January 2008, TD organized a fishery exhibition, focusing on fishery technologies and responsible fishing, at the Navamintrachinutid Suankurab Wittayalai Pathumtani High School, Pathumtani Province, Thailand.

Various improved fishing gear technologies including JTEDs and their benefits as channels for responsible fishing were exhibited. The process and methodologies for oceanographic surveys, including the fish and squid larval sampling conducted during the oceanographic surveys, were also presented. Moreover, mackerel tagging was also demonstrated, and the students were invited to participate in the mackerel experimental tagging. ☒



Students participating in the Tagging of Mackerel

MFRDMD organizes a briefing on Fish forecasting program

The project on the Research and Development of Fish Forecasting System in the waters off the East coast of Peninsular Malaysia was initiated in 2006 and will be continued this year. A meeting and briefing of the progress of the project were given on 7 April 2008 by Mr. Raja Bidin Raja Hassan to all agencies involved in the program. ☒



The project briefing

AQD has two new community-level projects

The New Year brings with it two new collaborators to AQD. On 22 January 2008, AQD signed a memorandum of understanding (MOU) with the Philippine Department of Agrarian Reform (DAR) to hasten the development of different Agrarian Reform Communities (ARCs) in the province of Iloilo, west central Philippines. The MOU will be in effect for 5 years, and will be supplemented by Letters of Understanding, which will document specific terms and conditions of agreed projects.

As a whole, AQD will assist DAR in providing technical assistance to ARCs; develop programs and enterprise development capabilities; and provide resource persons, trainers, technical specialists and extension workers during project development and implementation. DAR on the other hand will assist in preparing the plan for the identified area; provide data relative to program implementation, beneficiaries and area; and provide other financial, technical, social and physical infrastructure services.

The second collaborator signed on 31 January was AQD's agreement with the Provincial Government of Misamis Occidental, southern Philippines for two years. It specifies that AQD shall transfer the technologies on integrated grouper hatchery and culture and fishery resources management. AQD will also conduct a season-long training, and support the development of mariculture. Misamis Occidental, on the other hand, shall provide logistical support, initiate action from the grassroots level, allow AQD's use of its aquamarine park, and enact policies for the development of a sustainable aquaculture industry in the province.

The new collaborations are now under the umbrella of AQD's "Institutional capacity development for sustainable aquaculture" project. ICD-SA seeks to transfer appropriate technologies and fishery resources management techniques. ☒



AQD Chief Dr. JD Toledo and Governor Loreto Leo Ocampos hold up the signed agreement to extend technical assistance (top); and AQD Chief Dr. JD Toledo and DAR Regional Director Alexis Arsenal sign agreement to assist agrarian reform communities (above)

MFA-JICA JSPP21 Seafood Safety Management Course

The Seafood Safety Management Course was organized from 14 January-1 February 2008 by the Agrifood Technologies Pte Ltd (ATP) in collaboration with the Agri-Food and Veterinary Authority, with support from the Singapore Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) under the auspices of the Singapore Technical Co-operation Programme and the Japan-Singapore Partnership Programme for the 21st Century (JSPP21). MFRD was appointed as the training agency for the course; while JICA also supported a Japanese expert, Dr. Tsueno Shiba, to conduct the microbiological aspects of the course. The course was participated in by 19 trainees from 11 different countries, namely, Brunei Darussalam, Cambodia, Madagascar, Maldives, Myanmar, Philippines, Samoa, Sri Lanka, Timor Leste, Tonga and Vietnam.

The objective was to provide government management and laboratory officers with an overview of seafood safety requirements and to train the officers in the various elements in seafood safety and in the analysis of various chemical contaminants as well as

in the application of the Hazard Analysis Critical Control Point (HACCP) quality assurance system relevant to the seafood industry.

Lectures on seafood safety programs and regulatory requirements for fish and fish products inspection were followed by laboratory practical sessions on the analytical methods for the various test parameters relating to seafood safety such as chemical contaminants and food additives. The trainees found the practical hands-on sessions beneficial as they were able to acquire laboratory skills in areas such as testing for drug residues, formaldehyde, histamine, hygiene and sanitation, mercury, pesticide residues and sulphur dioxide residues. The course ended with a series of lectures and case studies on the application of the HACCP quality assurance system for the seafood processing industry.

The course also included visits to the various laboratories at the Veterinary Public Health Centre and the Jurong and Senoko Fishery Ports. In addition, the trainees visited mussel and milkfish coastal farms and a wet market.



M.V. SEAFDEC 2 starts its new cruise

On 3 March 2008, the M.V. SEAFDEC 2 started its new cruise as a collaborative effort between TD and the Department of Marine and Coastal Resources of Thailand. The 33-day cruise took place in the Andaman Sea to conduct ocean-



Oceanographic Survey onboard the M.V. SEAFDEC 2

reef coupling and biogeochemical processes survey.

The activities included the ACDP mooring and re-deployment, oceanographic survey by ICTD, water samplings, plankton survey by horizontal and vertical sampling, sediment samplings from Box-Core (alternative gear: Gravity core), and Biosonic experiments. Moreover, whale sighting survey, deployment of tuna FADs, as well as fishing ground survey and fishing trials on Deep Sea Beam Trawl and IDMT, would also be carried out.



AQD welcomes vet med student trainees

Veterinary medicine students may well augment the fish health workforce of aquaculture. Thus, AQD welcomed 18 such students from the Aklan State University in the Philippines who are on their 6th and final year for a hands-on training on fish diseases. The future vets came in two groups for their clinical internship, and were trained by Dr. Gilda Lio-Po, Head of AQD's fish health section, and her staff.

The students had their lectures and practical activities on bacterial, viral, parasitic and fungal diseases. There were also demos on PCR methods, slide preparation, shrimp postlarvae monitoring, electron microscopy and video showing on fish vaccination methods.

The students were able to discuss topics on disease prevention and control and study three modules of the AquaHealth Online, AQD's distance learning course.



AQD promotes aquaculture for Overseas Filipino Workers (OFWs)

Upon the invitation of the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas (Central Bank of the Philippines), AQD joined the government's Financial Literacy Campaign (FLC) for Overseas Filipino Workers (OFWs) and their beneficiaries. AQD was in the provinces of Iloilo and Aklan on January 22 and 23 to present aquaculture as a possible small and micro-business venture under its Agree-Build-Operate-Transfer AquaBusiness Project.

The conduct of FLCs in places where most marginalized OFWs come from was strongly encouraged by Pres. Gloria Arroyo. Among the provinces identified were those in the Visayas region, particularly Iloilo, Capiz and Aklan.



TD participates in WIO-Marine Turtle Task Force Meeting

From 27 to 29 February 2008, Mr. Bundit Chokesanguan from TD participated in the Western Indian Ocean (WIO)-Marine Turtle Task Force Meeting in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania. The meeting aimed to evaluate the current status of marine turtle conservation and management, and the scope of sea turtle issues for implementation in the WIO region, and was participated in by 30 participants from various countries, e.g. Comoros, France (Reunion), Kenya, Madagascar, Mauritius, Mozambique, Seychelles, Somalia, South Africa, United Kingdom and United Republic of Tanzania, as well as from international organizations.

During the Meeting, Mr. Bundit provided a brief information on marine turtle interaction with fisheries, with particular focus on the use of Turtle Excluder Devices (TEDs) in shrimp trawl and circle hooks in longlines. He also made a short presentation on

his experience in the implementation of TEDs in Southeast Asian countries, Nigeria, Madagascar and the Middle East; and on the SEAFDEC project on Stock Enhancement of Sea Turtles in Southeast Asia which is supported by the Japanese Trust Fund.

He also informed the Meeting of the second phase of the FAO/UNEP/GEP project on Reduction of Environmental Impact from Tropical Shrimp Trawling, through the Introduction of By-catch

Reduction Technologies and Change of Management, which has been recently formulated; and invited Mozambique, Kenya, Madagascar and Tanzania to be participating countries as requested by the FAO Headquarters. In addition, the Meeting was also informed of the gillnet-sea turtle workshop to be organized in 2009 by the Western Pacific Fishery Management Council (WPFMC) for which SEAFDEC has been requested to co-host the workshop.



Participants in the WIO-Marine Turtle Task Force Meeting

Successful harvests: turning fishers and rice farmers into fishfarmers

Natural or man-made calamities often mean finding new livelihood options. For fisherfolk families affected by an oil spill in Guimaras, Philippines, this has been milkfish culture in cages. The good news is that the transition from fishing to farming may now be considered a success.

The fisherfolk have just completed early this year the last two modules (harvest, post-harvest & marketing and economics & business planning) of a

season-long training course on milkfish culture that is being funded by Petron Foundation Inc. and conducted by AQD at its Igang Marine Station. These fishers-turned-fishfarmers harvested two of the three floating cages (600 m³ capacity each) that they constructed, installed, and stocked as part of their training practicals.

More than two tons of milkfish were harvested on 28 February 2008, and another 2 tons were harvested on 18 March. The milkfish were about 400 g a piece and the harvest was timed with high prices in the Iloilo Fishing Port. The milkfish were roughly six months in culture, having been stocked in 2007. The last cage harvest

will be scheduled with the trainees' graduation ceremony.

For rice farmers in Dumarao, Capiz whose farms were flooded by the backwaters of a small dam, the alternative is freshwater culture. They too underwent AQD's season-long training course, funded by the Capiz Provincial Government, with the last two modules (fish health management & economics and harvest & postharvest) completed in February 19-20 and March 17-18, respectively. On February 19 and March 18, the rice farmers-turned-fish farmers partially harvested from the eight units of 4 x 4 x 1.5 m cages they built, installed and stocked. More than 200 kg were harvested, with Nile tilapia and hybrid catfish weighing around 100-120 g apiece after about 4 months.

It is to be noted that both SEAFDEC-formulated feeds and commercial feeds were used in the two sites.



With the help of an AQD-Petron project, fisherfolk have found a new livelihood alternative: milkfish culture

Establishment of Advisory Body for Fisheries Management in Southeast Asia



Background

In response to the current declining state of world fishery resources due to unsustainable utilization, there has been concern expressed by international society for the need to improve current fisheries management framework and practices. Echoing the international concern, countries in Southeast Asia have over the years discussed ways to strengthen the fisheries management in the region through both individual country's effort and regional cooperation.

Over the last few years, concern and need for improving fisheries management in the region particularly addressing issues related to fishing capacity and Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated (IUU) fishing have been discussed. Several fisheries management bodies have been established to regulate the utilization of resources in many regions of the world. The necessity in establishing a regional management mechanism in the Southeast Asian region and sub-regions has also been raised for discussion at several regional technical consultations organized by SEAFDEC, i.e. the ASEAN-SEAFDEC "Regional Technical Consultation on Management of Fishing Capacity

and Human Resource Development in Support of Fisheries Management in Southeast Asia (19-22 September 2006), and the ASEAN-SEAFDEC "Expert Meeting on Fisheries Statistics, Information and Indicators (27-29 November 2006). It was recommended that the Regional Scientific Advisory Committee for Fisheries Management, should be established to enhance information collection for fisheries management. Based on the recommendation, SEAFDEC Secretariat has consulted with Member Countries and formulated a proposal with the scopes and terms of reference. The draft proposal has been scrutinized by the SEAFDEC Program Committee; and at the 40th Meeting of SEAFDEC Council in 2008, the proposal for the establishment of a "Regional Advisory Committee for Fisheries Management in Southeast Asia (RAC) as a subsidiary body of the SEAFDEC Council was endorsed.

Scopes

RAC is established to assist the SEAFDEC Member Countries in achieving sustainable utilization of fisheries resources through improved fisheries management for food security, sustainable livelihoods of the people, as well as

economic development and integration in Southeast Asia through the provision of technical advice on fisheries management issues or as requested by the SEAFDEC Council. The advice provided by RAC covers management of fisheries generally conducted in marine waters within the EEZs and inland waters in Southeast Asia including fisheries with particular attention to trans-boundary fish stocks.

Guiding Principles

The establishment and implementation of RAC are in line with several international and regional fisheries-related frameworks. These include the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea and its provisions, the Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries, as well as the Resolution and Plan of Action on Sustainable Fisheries for Food Security in the ASEAN Region as adopted by the ASEAN-SEAFDEC Member Countries in 2001. The following considerations also form the important guiding principles for RAC.

- The right to fish and the obligation to do so in a responsible manner so as to ensure effective conservation and management of the living aquatic resources;
- Rationale and responsible utilization, and maintenance of resources in sufficient quantities for present and future generations in the context of food security, poverty alleviation and sustainable development;
- Management decisions for fisheries should be transparent and based on the best scientific evidence available, also taking into account traditional knowledge of the resources and their habitat, as well as relevant environmental, economic and social factors;
- Protection and rehabilitation of critical fisheries habitats and integration of fisheries into multiple aquatic resources use planning, development and management;
- Cooperation among the Member Countries within their respective competences and in accordance with international law, at sub-regional, regional and global levels through fisheries management organizations, other international agreements or other arrangements to promote conservation and management, ensure responsible fishing and ensure effective conservation and protection of living aquatic resources, taking into account the need for compatible measures in areas within and beyond national jurisdiction; and
- Involvement of and consultation with stakeholders, through awareness and capacity building, in the policy formulation and implementation process, and the conservation and management of the fishery resources on which they depend.


Terms of Reference

Terms of Reference of RAC include:

- To review and assess the current status of the fishery resources in particular transboundary fish stocks, the status of fishing industries, and fisheries management measures and administrations in the region;
- To provide advice on priority fisheries management issues including policy considerations, coordinated fisheries management actions, and human and institutional capacity building, in order to formulate recommendations for improved fisheries management;
- To facilitate addressing the identified issues, including assessment and in-depth studies, possibly through ad-hoc technical working group(s); and
- To collaborate with international/regional organizations, programs or projects concerned with fisheries management and sustainable use of fisheries resources in formulating advice.

Towards the action

Based on RAC's advice, the SEAFDEC Council would further decide on how such advice should be considered and followed-up. The advice may also be conveyed to the ASEAN through ASEAN Sectoral Working Group on Fisheries (ASWGF), as well as other agencies/institutions with dealing with fisheries management in the region, e.g. the Coordination Committee of RPOA on Responsible Fishing Operations including Combating IUU Fishing, as well as the countries outside the region operating fisheries in the region.

It is envisaged that through the establishment of RAC, management of fisheries in the region would be based on the best scientific evidence available in order to ensure the sustainable and responsible exploitation of fishery resources in the Southeast Asian region. 



REGIONAL PROGRAMS

ASEAN-SEAFDEC Regional Expert Meeting on Sea Cucumber Fisheries

Following up the regional initiatives on the desk study on sea cucumber fisheries, utilization, and trade in Southeast Asia launched in July 2007, the National Focal Points and members of an Ad-hoc Regional Experts Group on Sea Cucumber Fisheries of the ASEAN-SEAFDEC Member Countries except Lao PDR, Myanmar, and Singapore; resource persons from Japan, Thailand, and Vietnam as well as SEAFDEC staff attended the ASEAN-SEAFDEC Regional Expert Meeting on Sea Cucumber Fisheries held from 18 to 20 March 2008 in Bangkok, Thailand. The event was convened as an activity under the program on Environmental Related Tasks in Southeast Asia with the support of Japanese Trust Fund.

The objectives of the Meeting were: to discuss the findings of the desk study on status of sea cucumber fisheries, utilization and trade in the Southeast Asian countries; to identify the need for and actions to be taken to manage the utilization of sea cucumber resources in the region; and to develop policy recommendations on sustainable utilization of sea cucumber resources including a joint approach of Member Countries to sea cucumber issues at relevant international fora. Additionally, the Meeting also learnt the experiences and national initiatives on sea cucumber conservation and management in

the Philippines; status of sandfish (*Holothuria scabra*) culture in Vietnam; taxonomic study of shallow-water Holothurians from the Andaman sea coast of Thailand; and sea cucumber fisheries in Japan.

After brainstorming and intensive discussion, the Meeting came up with the conclusion and recommendations on sustainable utilization of sea cucumbers in Southeast Asia including conservation as well as future follow-up actions and a joint approach of ASEAN-SEAFDEC Member Countries at international fora to reflect the concerns and address the effort in conserving and managing such resource from the fisheries sector. The Meeting also agreed to have management measures of sea cucumbers in place in an effective and efficient manner, which should be accommodated into a national fisheries management framework where possible.

Furthermore, appropriate technical information, e.g. identification guide to the highly diverse sea cucumber species in Southeast Asia and proceedings from this Meeting should be published and disseminated in appropriate form at appropriate regional and international fora particularly during the CITES CoP15. To ensure future sustainable sea cucumber utilization in the region, appropriate policy recommendation based on the outcome of this Meeting will be further submitted to the forthcoming meetings of SEAFDEC Council and ASEAN Sectoral Working Group on Fisheries for their support. ❖



SEAFDEC participates in the Workshop on a Toolbox for Applying the Ecosystem Approach to Fisheries

Following the adoption of the Convention on Biological Diversity and the FAO Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries, the need for an ecosystem approach to fisheries (EAF) is now globally recognized. The application of the EAF has been emphasized in the Reykjavik Conference on Responsible Fisheries in the Marine Ecosystem and in the Plan of Implementation of the World Summit on Sustainable Development.

Thus, from 26 to 29 February 2008, the workshop for applying the EAF was held at the FAO in Rome with the objectives of reviewing the main tools currently available for applying an ecosystem approach to fisheries; assessing the usefulness and applicability of these tools particularly for less developed countries; and identifying the role of FAO and partners in completing dissemination and facilitating use of existing tools and in developing a toolbox.

SEAFDEC senior official, Dr. Worawit Wanchana, participated in the workshop, where a number of useful tools to implement ecosystem-based fisheries management were discussed. Among the major challenges, as from the discussions, include: how to utilize the existing tools, knowledge and available information; promotion of the integration of an ecosystem approach into national and regional coastal areas management. It was also noted that the application of the EAF does not necessarily involve any new activities or directions. The EAF can largely be implemented if fisheries agencies ensure that consideration of environmental, social and economic issues is integrated into the fishery decision-making process. ❖

Monitoring on ICRM-SV Project Activities in Cambodia

TD researchers monitored and followed up the project activities implementation under the project on Integrated Coastal Resources Management in Sihanoukville (ICRM-SV) in Cambodia.

The ICRM-SV was implemented by TD in collaboration with the Fisheries Administration of Cambodia since 2004. The project aimed to develop the capacity of the local human resources by empowering them to be able to manage and sustain coastal resources and vigorous community development; develop systematic voluntary participation of the local people in managing the local body; and proactively strengthen community development and resource management by promoting people's participation in creating job opportunities and in establishing local businesses to increase

local people's access to income source for poverty alleviation and development of the community's economies.

From 17 to 20 February 2008, TD followed-up the progress of the project activities such as the establishment of the mushroom producers association, implementation of the crab bank scheme, and establishment of fish refugia for blood cockle. It was observed that these on-going activities have successfully contributed to the increasing income of the local people. The 4th Project Steering Committee meeting was also organized to discuss a

number of strategic issues related to the project management. The Meeting was attended by representatives from various agencies and institutions concerned with the project management.



Mushroom production activity by the women association

Sub-Regional Meeting to combat IUU fishing in the Gulf of Thailand

From 28-29 March 2008, SEAFDEC organized the "the Sub-Regional Meeting on the Gulf of Thailand in following up the RPOA-IUU MCS in Bali" in Bangkok, Thailand. The Meeting was attended by representatives from four countries bordering the Gulf of Thailand, namely, Cambodia, Malaysia, Thailand and Vietnam. The meeting aimed to discuss the MCS and other relevant matters, in order to develop recommendations for future collaboration with particular

emphasis in combating IUU fishing in the Gulf of Thailand.

The RPOA or the Regional Plan of Action (RPOA-IUU) to Promote Responsible Fishing Practices including Combating IUU Fishing in the Region was endorsed by Ministers responsible for fisheries from Australia, Brunei Darussalam, Indonesia, Malaysia, Papua New Guinea, the Philippines, Singapore, Thailand, Timor-Leste and Vietnam

during the Ministerial Meeting in Bali in 2007. Following-up on the Ministerial meeting, SEAFDEC has participated in a series of meetings to discuss the implementation of the RPOA: on 13 August 2007 in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia; from 13-15 November 2007 in Bangkok Thailand; as well as the discussion on the strengthening of Monitoring, Control and Surveillance (MCS) system to combat IUU fishing held on 3-5 March 2008 in Bali, Indonesia.



Deep sea exploration and cetacean research program

TD researchers visited Japanese institutions to discuss the collaborative program on deep sea exploration and cetacean research. From 24 to 29 February 2008, a mission from TD led by Dr. Somboon Siriraksophon visited and discussed with various institutions in Japan. The main objective of this mission was to discuss with the Japanese Fisheries Agency on the future research collaboration between SEAFDEC and the Japanese fishery research institutions, i.e. the Institute of Cetacean Research

(ICR), the Tokyo University of Marine Science and Technology (TUMSAT), the Seikai National Fisheries Research Institute, and the Fishery Agency.



As a follow-up activity, communication and exchange of information on cetacean research and deep sea exploration between SEAFDEC and the Japanese institutions would be conducted. Further collaboration and technical assistance would also be explored.



Dr. Somboon visiting the Institute of Cetacean Research (ICR) in Japan

TD conducts activities to promote responsible fisheries

TD research staff conducted survey and collected information on light fishing in the Philippines and Thailand under the program on Responsible Fishing Technology and Practices, of which in 2008 various researches and studies are being conducted to assess the impacts of various kinds of fishing gear and practices on the fisheries resources, sea beds, environment and ecosystem.

A questionnaire on light fishing was prepared to collect the information from fishermen engaged in light fishing; and surveys were conducted in Catbalogan and Calbayog City in the Philippines from 11-15 March 2008, and in Chonburi,



TD researcher collecting information on light fishing from a fisherman

Rayong and Chantaburi Provinces in Thailand from 17-21 March 2008. It is expected that the collated data and information would be used to develop and improve this fishing gear to alleviate its impact on the resources.

In addition to the “light fishing activities”, during the survey in the Philippines, TD staff also participated in the Consultation on Fisheries Administrative Order for the use of Juvenile and Trash Excluder Devices (JTEDs) in Philippine waters. TD introduced and promoted the use of JTEDs in the Philippines since 2003 under the project on Responsible Fishing Technologies and Practices supported by the Japanese Trust Fund in conjunction with the GEF/UNEP/FAO project on Reduction of Environmental Impact from Tropical Shrimp Trawling, through the Introduction of By-catch Reduction Technologies and Change of Management. The adoption of JTEDs in the Philippines is therefore considered as one of the significant achievements in the implementation of responsible fisheries promoted by SEAFDEC. ❖

SEAFDEC advances the creation of alternative livelihoods in fishing to boost fisheries management

(Continued from Page 16)

RTC finalized the project activities and identified the beneficiaries of the FOVOP project aimed at seeking “Only One, not Number One” fish product.

The strategies identified during the RTC included: 1) modernization of domestic fish marketing system through public fish auctions in fishing communities to activate the economy in rural communities and uniquely recognize the fishing communities as fish producing centers; 2) product development and improvement by identifying the differentiated fish product of a fishing community using its unique resources in order to avoid competition with similar or the same products; 3) institutional set-up and human resource development by organizing fishers groups with specific purposes including conduct of public auctions and production of differentiated products, and specifically mobilizing women’s group and enhancing the involvement of young generation in rural economic activities.

The RTC participants also learned more about OTOP movements in rural communities in Chonburi Province, Thailand. At the Siracha Municipality, its Coastal Strategy Implementation Plan includes among others the local-based fishery development project promoting the Crab Condominium concept, floating mussel farm, and culture of economically important fishes in floating cages. In Bangsaray Municipality, activities include production of dried small squid, dried anchovies and fish sauce that are meant for the export market, while the locals participate in the coastal resource and environmental management including sea grass re-plantation for conserving dugong food, cleaning beaches, coral reef plantation and training camp for the youth. ❖

To the turtles’ rescue!

After being briefly trapped near the AQD station in west central Philippines, three sea turtles found themselves free again thanks to their conscientious rescuers.

The first was a green sea turtle (*Chelonia mydas*), nicknamed Neneng which was entangled in a seine net. Neneng weighed between 100-120 kg and measured 107 cm long and 100 cm wide. She was tagged (tag code: PH8504) and released on the same day by AQD FishWorld. The second was an olive ridley turtle (*Lepidochelys olivacea*) given the name Marcela which weighed

about 20 kilos and measured 21.5 cm long and 22.75 cm wide. She too was ensnared in a seine net. Tagged with the code PH 8505, she was released January 8. The third was another green, named Bibiday, weighing 50-60 kilograms and was about 38-inch long and 27.8-inch wide. She was released January 23 with tag code PH 8506. ❖



AQD FishWorld staff document each turtle rescued and released

Thailand starts development of STF report

The importance of knowledge of the status and trends of capture fisheries and fishery resources, including socio-economic aspects as a key to sound policy-making and responsible fisheries management is widely recognized; and application of the precautionary approach, based on the best scientific evidence available, is a key element for efforts to achieve responsible fisheries. In 2003 and 2007, FAO adopted the “Strategy for Improving Information on Status and Trends of Fisheries” and the “Strategy for Improving Information on Status and Trends of Aquaculture” with the overall objectives of providing frameworks for the improvement of knowledge and understanding of the status and trends of fishery and aquaculture as a basis for relevant policy making and management for the conservation and sustainable use of fishery resources within ecosystems.

To provide a regional platform for collaboration among countries in Southeast Asia as well as other

international/regional organizations in improving fishery statistics and information, SEAFDEC has implemented a program on “Improvement of Fishery Statistics and Information for Planning and Management of Fisheries in the ASEAN Region” with support from the Japanese Trust Fund. The program component on “Development of Status and Trends of Fisheries and Aquaculture (STF)” was formulated and implemented with particular emphasis on supporting the development of STF by the Southeast Asian countries. The component has particular objective to explore utilization various forms of fisheries data, statistics and information available at national levels in order to generate understanding on the status and trends of fisheries and aquaculture as basis for policy planning and management.

Starting in 2007, the Philippines has been involved in the project and started the development of its national STF report. At the 30th Meeting of SEAFDEC

Program Committee, the Department of Fisheries, Thailand also expressed the willingness to develop a national STF report in 2008; and identified “marine capture fisheries” as the priority area of interest for the development of the national STF report. Thailand has recently adopted the “Master Plan for the Marine Capture Fisheries in Thailand”, and it is envisaged that the STF report and its development process would provide a basis and contribute to the success in the implementation of the Master Plan. In this connection, the Fisheries Information Technology Center of the DOF Thailand would act as the key national agency, and collaborate with other offices, i.e. the Fisheries Foreign Affairs Division, the Marine Fisheries Research and Development Bureau, the Fisheries Economics Division, the National Statistical Office, the Fisheries Information Technology Center, etc. in the development of the STF report.

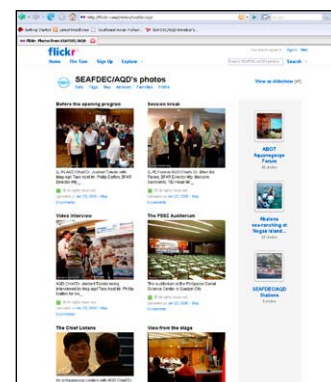


New AQD publications

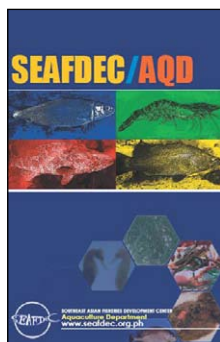
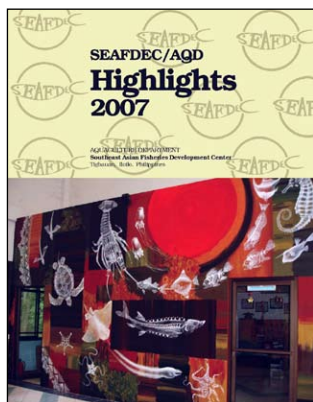
SEAFDEC/AQD Highlights 2007, a 44-page report of AQD’s accomplishment in 2007 under the helm of Dr. Joebert Toledo. In 2007, AQD institutionalized its technology transfer mechanism for the private sector while continuing to demonstrate technologies for people’s cooperatives and local governments. AQD approved and implemented about 80 research studies; trained 300 people in 23 training sessions; produced 44 scientific papers; published 5 new

manuals & 8 flyers; and, welcomed 17 new collaborative partners.

AQD spices up its website. (1) News is now presented in blog form, also directly accessible at www.aqdnews.blogspot.com. Visitors may leave comments & feedback, and e-mail interesting articles to friends. (2) A new photo gallery has also been set up, at www.flickr.com/seafdecaqd. Like the news blog, a visitor with a Flickr account may also leave comments on each of the photos. (3) The introductory video The



AQD Magic has been posted online and may be viewed at <http://youtube.com/watch?tv=C8W4a0v008k>.



SEAFDEC/AQD is a 2-page flyer giving general information on current AQD programs.

ABOT Aquanegosyo is a 2-page flyer on AQD’s technical assistance program for private entrepreneurs under an agree-build-operate-transfer (ABOT) scheme.



FUTURE ACTIVITIES

Date	Venue	Title	Organizer
2008			
7-10 April	Bali, Indonesia	40 th Meeting of SEAFDEC Council	SEAFDEC Secretariat
8-10 April	Bangkok, Thailand	Fishery Conservation and Management Workshop for Young Generation	TD
7-25 April	Philippines	Training Course on Grouper Hatchery for the Philippines	AQD, NACA, ACIAR
8-22 April	Thailand	Regional Training Course on Set-Net Fishing Technology for Sustainable Coastal Fisheries Management	TD
21 Apr - 2 May	Bangkok, Thailand	Short Term Training Course in Fishing Technology for University Students# 45	TD
29 Apr-2 May	Bangkok, Thailand	ASEAN-SEAFDEC RTC on Small-scale Fisheries in Southeast Asia	SEAFDEC Secretariat
30 Apr-4 May	Philippines	Training Course on Mangrove Ecology, Taxonomy and Community Structure	AQD, RESCOPAR
5-8 May	Beijing, China	6 th Meeting of ASEAN Expert Group on CITES (AEG-CITES)	ASEAN
5-9 May	Philippines	Training Course on Seaweed (Kappaphycus) Farming	AQD, WWF-Philippines
6-15 May	Bangkok, Thailand	International Training Course on Coastal Fisheries Management for Fishery Managers	TD
7-27 May	Philippines	Training Course on Abalone Hatchery and Grow-out	AQD
11-25 May	Philippines	Shipboard Training Workshop on the Deep Sea Fishery Resource Exploration of the Continental Shelf Slopes in Southeast Asian Waters	TD, BFAR
19-23 May 2008	Islamabad, Pakistan	29 th FAO Regional Conference for Asia and the Pacific	FAO
20 May-25 Jun	Philippines	Training Course on Marine Fish Hatchery	AQD
21-23 May	Bangkok, Thailand	16 th Meeting of the ASEAN Sectoral Working Group on Fisheries	ASEAN
25-30 May	Paris, France	76 th General Session of the International Committee of the OIE	OIE
26 May-15 Jun	Bangkok, Thailand	Advance Training Workshop on Larval Fish Identification and Fish Early Life History Science	TD, UNEP/GEF/SCS
2-6 June	Bremen, Germany	11 th Session of FAO Sub-Committee on Fish Trade	FAO/COFI
10 Jun-1 Jul	Philippines	Training Course on Crab Seed Production	AQD
17-19 June	Bangkok, Thailand	Workshop on Assessment and Management of the Offshore Resource of South and Southeast Asia	TD, FAO
23-27 June	Bangkok, Thailand	Fishing Vessel Operation Training Course	TD
23-27 June	Rome, Italy	Technical Consultation to draft a legally-binding instrument on port State measures to prevent, deter and eliminate illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing	FAO
30 Jun-2Jul	Phuket, Thailand	Expert Meeting on Vessel Registration	SEAFDEC Secretariat
3-5 July	to be determined	RTC on HRD on Poverty Alleviation and Food Security by Fisheries Intervention in the ASEAN Region	SEAFDEC Secretariat
28-31 July (tentative)	to be determined	Regional Workshop for Capacity Building on Fishery Statistics in Southeast Asia (Framework and Streamlined Reporting)	SEAFDEC Secretariat
Jul-Nov (tentative)	Distance learning	Distance Learning: Principles of Health Management in Aquaculture	AQD
18-22 August (tentative)	to be determined	Regional HRD Workshop on Identification of Potentials and Problem Areas for the Promotion of "FOVOP" in the ASEAN Region	SEAFDEC Secretariat
1-15 September (tentative)	Lao PDR	2 nd Joint Regional Training on Community-based Aquaculture for Remote Rural Areas of Southeast Asia	SEAFDEC Secretariat
6-10 October	Puerto Varas, Chile	4 th Session of FAO Sub-Committee on Aquaculture	FAO
13-17 October 2008	Bangkok, Thailand	Global Conference on Small-Scale Fisheries	FAO, DOF Thailand
22-24 October	Singapore	End-of-Activity Seminar for the program on Chemical and Drug Residues in Fish and Fish Products in Southeast Asia	MFRD


Tailor-made training offered by AQD

In 2008, AQD offers training course tailor-made according to the needs of requesting party. The course duration could range from 5 to 30 days. The topics for these special trainings include:

1. Brackishwater Aquaculture
2. Cage / Pond Culture of High-Value Species (Seabass, Grouper, Snapper)
3. Hatchery of Selected Species (Milkfish, Seabass, Grouper)
4. Detection of Viral Diseases by PCR
5. Freshwater Aquaculture
6. Hatchery and Pond Grow-out Operations for:
 - (a) Freshwater Prawn
 - (b) Tilapia
 - (c) Bighead Carp
 - (d) Catfish


AQUAFAIR Malaysia 2008

From 20-23 November 2008, the Department of Fisheries Malaysia plans to organize the AQUAFAIR Malaysia 2008, the 2nd Malaysian International Ornamental Aquatic Industry Exhibition and Conference, at the Kuala Lumpur Convention Centre. AQUAFAIR Malaysia 2008 is dedicated exclusively to ornamental fishes, aquatic plants and their whole range of supporting industries and services.

The event includes: ornamental aquatic industry exhibition, seminar on ornamental fish, ornamental fish competition, as well as farm visit. Visit www.dof.gov.my for more information. 

TUNA 2008 Bangkok

INFOFISH and its partner organizations will hold the TUNA 2008, in Bangkok, Thailand from 28 to 30 May 2008. The event is the 10th in the series of biennial INFOFISH Tuna Conferences which was first held in 1986. TUNA 2008 is expected to attract nearly 700 delegates from all sectors of the global tuna industry: fishing operators, suppliers, exporters, importers, canners, buyers, agents, etc.

The three-day conference will take a close look at the latest developments in the global and regional tuna industries, from resource management, marketing, products quality, up to environmental issues. In conjunction with the Conference, an exhibition will also be held with approximately 100 exhibition booths. Contact infish@po.jaring.my or infish@tm.net.my for more information. 

Note for contributors

The SEAFDEC Newsletter publishes quarterly news on all aspects of fisheries in Southeast Asia. The Editors reserve the right to accept and/or abridge articles based on available space. Anyone wishing to submit an article to the SEAFDEC Newsletter is requested to send it to the Editor in Chief or Editors at the given addresses.

Information in this Newsletter may be quoted only if reference is made to SEAFDEC.

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SEAFDEC Department Chiefs' Meeting



SEAFDEC Secretary-General (left) and Deputy Secretary-General (right)

SEAFDEC Secretariat organized the first SEAFDEC Department Chiefs' Meeting of 2008 on 15 February 2008 in Chiang Mai, Thailand. The meeting aimed to discuss the forthcoming SEAFDEC activities that required collaboration and inputs from the Secretariat and all Departments, particularly the new programs supported by the ASEAN Foundation, the preparations for the forthcoming 40th Meeting of SEAFDEC Council, as well as other important SEAFDEC operational matters.

In 2008, SEAFDEC would start the implementation of two programs under the ASEAN Foundation support. These are: 1) Promotion of "One Village, One Fisheries Products (FOVOP)" System to Improve the Livelihood for the Fisheries Communities in ASEAN Region, and 2) Human Resource Development (HRD) on Poverty Alleviation and Food Security by Fisheries Intervention in the ASEAN Region. In both programs, activities would involve close collaboration of all SEAFDEC Departments, thus the overall planning for the implementation of the two programs have been discussed, while the detailed activities would be organized during the project inception

meetings organized in March and May 2008, respectively.

In addition to these, the DCM also provided the opportunity for SEAFDEC to discuss the preparation for the forthcoming SEAFDEC Council Meeting in April 2008, and other important matters including the Minimum Regular Contribution (MRC) from the Member Countries, the preparation for SEAFDEC Annual Report 2007 and the 10-Year Japanese Trust Fund Booklet, as well as preparation for the SEAFDEC Program Committee to be organized in November 2008.



The SEAFDEC Department Chiefs' Meeting, February 2008

SEAFDEC advances the creation of alternative livelihoods in fishing to boost fisheries management

As part of the activities under the project on the Promotion of "One Village, One Fisheries Products (FOVOP)" System to Improve the Livelihood for the Fisheries Communities in ASEAN Region, SEAFDEC organized the

Regional Technical Consultation (RTC) on FOVOP from 24 to 27 March 2008 in Bangkok, Thailand with financial support from the ASEAN Foundation (Japan-ASEAN Solidarity Fund). Considering that poverty prevails in the region's

Specifically, the FOVOP project aims to develop a regional strategy and policy to promote the creation of alternative/additional livelihoods in the fishing communities.



The FOVOP Consultation participants

fishing communities, efforts should be made to minimize the deteriorating economic conditions of the fishers in order to achieve sustainable fisheries. Thus, FOVOP is promoted in the region as a means to address poverty issues in fishing communities.

Attended by delegates from the ASEAN and SEAFDEC Member Countries, and resource persons from Japan and Thailand, the RTC identified a number of preliminary strategies that would be carried out to advance the promotion of FOVOP in the region. Guided by the One Village, One Product (OVOP) experience of Japan and the One Tambon, One Product concept of Thailand as well as other similar initiatives in the ASEAN region, the

(Continued on Page 12)