

**REPORT OF THE SIXTEENTH MEETING
OF THE SEAFDEC INFORMATION STAFF PROGRAM (ISP)**

26-28 October 2015, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia

I. INTRODUCTION

1. The Sixteenth Meeting of the SEAFDEC Information Staff Program (ISP) was organized from 26 to 28 October 2015 in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, and hosted by the SEAFDEC Marine Fishery Resources Development and Management Department (MFRDMD). The Meeting was attended by the Acting SEAFDEC Secretary-General and Chief of the Training Department (TD), Chief of MFRDMD, Deputy Chief of the Inland Fishery Resources Development and Management Department (IFRDMD), and officers from the SEAFDEC Secretariat, TD, Aquaculture Department (AQD), MFRDMD and IFRDMD. The List of Participants appears as **Annex 1**.

II. OPENING OF THE MEETING

2. The Chief of MFRDMD, *Mr. Ahmad Adnan bin Nuruddin* welcomed the participants to the 16th Meeting of SEAFDEC ISP, and articulated the importance of ISP Meetings in enhancing the visibility of SEAFDEC. Specifically, he added that the forum could be mobilized to examine and discuss activities on information sharing, communication, and coordination among the SEAFDEC Departments as well as with other organizations toward raising the visibility of the Center. He then expressed his wish for the meeting to have fruitful deliberations and discussion, and the participants to have pleasant stay in Kuala Lumpur.

3. The Acting Secretary-General of SEAFDEC, *Mr. Hajime Kawamura* expressed his appreciation to the participants for coming to the 16th Meeting of SEAFDEC ISP, and to MFRDMD for hosting the Meeting in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia. He reiterated that SEAFDEC has recently integrated the “results-based approach” in the formulation and implementation of programs and projects in order to come up with tangible outputs and outcomes. Thus, the information staff of the Departments should play active roles in working closely with the technical staff in packaging information based on such outputs to enhance wider dissemination of the results from SEAFDEC activities. In addition, as SEAFDEC is planning to publish the “Southeast Asian State of Fisheries and Aquaculture” in 2017, this ISP Meeting should be a good opportunity to discuss this matter, and especially to agree on the structure and scope of inputs required from the Departments for the publication. He also cited that some of the outputs of the Meeting, particularly those that require consideration and support from the Departments would be reported to the forthcoming Department Chiefs’ Meeting in Manila, Philippines. After sharing some insights about the Meeting, he declared the Meeting open. His Opening Remarks appears as **Annex 2**.

III. BACKGROUND AND OBJECTIVES OF THE MEETING

4. The SEAFDEC Secretariat provided a brief background on the information-related activities of SEAFDEC, as well as on the objectives, agenda and arrangements of the 16th Meeting of SEAFDEC ISP (16 ISP Meeting). The Agenda of the Meeting appears as **Annex 3**.

IV. REVIEW OF THE PROGRESS AND ACHIEVEMENTS IN THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE INFORMATION STRATEGIES FOR ENHANCING SEAFDEC VISIBILITY AND COMMUNICATIONS IN 2015

5. The “Progress in the Implementation of the Information Strategies for Enhancing SEAFDEC Visibility and Communications” during the period from January-September 2015 (**Annex 4**) was presented by the Secretariat based on compiled inputs from the Departments. The 16 ISP Meeting

subsequently provided views, observations and recommendations for improving the implementation and monitoring of the progress of the Information Strategies.

Strategy 1: Production of relevant, timely, and useful information materials to meet the requirements of the target audience

- As clarified by TD during the discussion, the high number of technical materials published in 2014 was due to the number of on-site training activities organized by TD in 2013, of which the reports were published in 2014.
- Recording of information materials under this Strategy has been made only after the reports or other related information were published into appropriate materials, *e.g.* as reports of meetings. However for policy recommendations, these should only be recorded once endorsed by the Council and published as materials, *e.g.* in the form of booklets, policy briefs, etc.
- The category on “Materials for general public, policy makers, politicians, etc.” should be modified to focus only on “Materials for policy makers”, while those on “general public” should be merged with “Materials for students and youth.” Moreover, “politicians” should be removed from this category.
- Considering the high number of copies of technical materials produced but not disseminated to target audience during the year, henceforth, the target number of recipients and lifespan of the contents of publications should be considered in determining the number of copies to be produced.

Strategy 2: Raising SEAFDEC image at international, regional and national levels

- Since the IFRDMD website has already been established under the domain *www.seafdec.or.id*, the Secretariat should start establishing a link from the SEAFDEC website to IFRDMD website accordingly.
- The current practice of recording the number of visitors to SEAFDEC exhibitions, *e.g.* TD’s booth in 2015 is based on the number of gifts or souvenirs given out during the exhibitions. Nevertheless, for adequate monitoring of visitors to SEAFDEC exhibitions, appropriate criteria could also be considered, *e.g.* through the use of visitors’ logbook or counting only those visitors who actually inquire for information from the booth. Thus, the report on “number of visitors to SEAFDEC exhibitions” should specify how such number was collected, which should be indicated in a footnote.
- On the limited record of appearances in public media of press statements annually produced during the SEAFDEC Council Meetings, countries hosting the Council Meetings through their National Coordinators should be requested to help in monitoring and collecting the necessary information, particularly the news articles published in the host countries’ national newspapers or other media, even if these appear in their respective national languages. Similarly, Departments organizing any events (including events in Member Countries at regional/national/local levels) should also request the countries hosting the events to help in compiling the necessary information and sending the feedbacks to the Departments concerned.
- Nonetheless, in order to obtain more attraction of the media to publicize about SEAFDEC activities, SEAFDEC should consider improving its activities to ensure that these would generate “high-impact” outputs.

- The use of social media, such as YouTube and Facebook, could also be intensified to promote SEAFDEC activities and channel important information to the public, thus contributing also to enhancing the visibility of SEAFDEC.

Strategy 3: Enhancing communication and information sharing both within SEAFDEC and with Member and non-Member Countries, other international/regional organizations, and public

- TD should re-check the number of Databases that it had established which are accessible in the website, and relay such information to the other Departments for proper dissemination.
- Since IFRDMD is still in the process of setting up an official e-mail for its staff, once this is available, IFRDMD should relay the information to the Secretariat and other Departments to improve communication among the staff of the Departments.
- The Departments should provide inputs to the additional table on “Establishment/extension of Memoranda and Understanding (MOUs) in 2015” as shown in **Appendix 11 of Annex 4**.

Strategy 4: Strengthening SEAFDEC capability in information-related activities

- Under “Enhancing staff capabilities that could contribute to information-related activities/visibility of SEAFDEC,” the HRD activities to be reported should focus only on activities that are relevant to enhancing the dissemination of information.
- The “Percentage of program budget allocated to information activities” should be changed to “Percentage of program expenditures for information activities.” Information on “total program expenditures” and “expenditures for information activities” should be extracted from project documents of the respective Departments, where “information” is indicated as one of the categories of activities under the projects.

Strategy 5: Regular monitoring and evaluation of information activities

- The Departments should consider conducting formal surveys on the types of information materials that are required by the Member Countries and most preferred by target audience, as the results could help in improving the materials to be produced by the Departments in the future.

6. After the discussion, the Departments agreed to provide updated information on the progress of implementation of the Information Strategies (to cover the period from January-December 2015) taking into account the abovementioned recommendations, to the Secretariat by the end of January 2016. The Meeting was informed that a short summary of this annual progress would be included as part of the SEAFDEC Annual Report 2015.

IV. PREPARATION AND ENHANCEMENT OF SEAFDEC INFORMATION TOOLS/ACTIVITIES IN 2016

4.1 Overview of SEAFDEC Regular Information Materials

7. The 16 ISP Meeting took note of the SEAFDEC regular information materials that will be produced in 2016 (**Annex 5**), which include the SEAFDEC Annual Report 2015, Annual Information Compilation CD-ROM 2015, SEAFDEC Newsletter (4 issues), Special Publication “Fish for the People” (3 issues), and the SEAFDEC Calendar 2017. The working schedule and contact persons of each Department for the preparation of these materials were also specified.

8. While conforming in principle to the indicated timeframe in 2016 for providing the required inputs to the Secretariat, the Departments also agreed to inform the Secretariat on any changes in the contact persons responsible for their respective information materials.

9. In order to enhance the dissemination of information to wider audience, the Departments should also consider producing e-news (not in PDF format, but with text that would link to more detailed information). Subscription system could also be established for such e-news as well as for periodic publications of SEAFDEC in electronic format.

10. In addition, the SEAFDEC Introductory Video, which was produced several years ago, should be updated considering the establishment of IFRDMD as the new SEAFDEC Department, changes in the expected role of SEAFDEC in the region, and the movements of several senior staff of SEAFDEC and changes of officials of the Member Countries. After the discussion, the 16 ISP Meeting therefore agreed that such Introductory Video should be revised to reflect the current situation and works of SEAFDEC, and that TD in consultation with the Secretariat and Departments should prepare the revised script. IFRDMD was then requested to provide interesting pictures and video footages on their technical activities to be used for the said Video, while the other Departments should also provide additional and updated video footages that reflect their current activities.

11. Moreover, production of a shorter version of SEAFDEC video should also be considered focusing more on technical issues and milestones of SEAFDEC achievements, which should have catchy information to capture the attention of the audience. The Secretariat would consult with TD on the workplan and budget required for production of the revised SEAFDEC Introductory Video and the shorter version of the video, which should be proposed for consideration of the Department Chiefs' Meeting (DCM) to be organized on 28 November 2015 in the Philippines. However, such proposal should be circulated for comments by the Department before submission to the DCM.

4.2 SEAFDEC Annual Report 2015

12. The 16 ISP Meeting noted the proposed structure of the SEAFDEC Annual Report 2015, the required inputs from Secretariat and Departments, and the timeframe for compilation and production of the Annual Report (**Annex 6**). The inputs required from the Departments for the Annual Report (*i.e.* for the sections on Overview of SEAFDEC Activities in 2015, and Cooperation with Donors and Partner Organizations) should be submitted to the Secretariat by the end of January 2016.

13. In response to the recommendation of the SEAFDEC Council for "*future reports of SEAFDEC to take into consideration the benefits that could be obtained by target beneficiaries,*" the Departments agreed to provide inputs based on the criteria suggested by the Secretariat (*e.g.* elaboration on the general scenario of the region; rationale, objectives and anticipated results from the projects; description of all activities, outputs and beneficiaries, etc.).

14. While noting that an electronic copy of SEAFDEC Annual Report 2015 would be made accessible through the SEAFDEC website, the 16 ISP Meeting also agreed that this would be included in the Information Compilation CD-ROM to be given to the SEAFDEC Council during its following year's annual meeting. Meanwhile, the request of TD to reduce the number of copies of Annual Report from 300 to 100 copies was considered.

4.3 SEAFDEC Calendar 2017

15. The Meeting supported the suggestion that commemorating 50th Anniversary of SEAFDEC in 2017 could be a potential theme for the SEAFDEC Calendar 2017. This could cover the past and current milestones of SEAFDEC as well as its future direction. In addition, issues related to the Joint Declaration to be adopted by the Senior Officials of the ASEAN-SEAFDEC Member Countries during the High-level Consultation to be convened in early August 2016 could also be incorporated in the proposed theme of the Calendar. However, these concerns should be proposed for consideration by the forthcoming DCM.

4.4 SEAFDEC New Year Card 2016

16. After considering the three options of SEAFDEC New Year Card 2016 prepared by TD, the 16 ISP Meeting agreed on “design c” which is the image of fishing vessels in watercolour, however, the 48th anniversary logo on the cover, and the greeting text inside the card should be removed. The Meeting also noted the number of copies of the New Year Card 2016 required by the Secretariat and Departments, as follows: Secretariat = 500 copies, TD = 450 copies, AQD = 200 copies, MFRD = 50 copies, MFRDMD = 150 copies and IFRDMD = 250 copies.

17. Considering the time required by the staff of TD in designing the New Year Cards, the 16 ISP Meeting suggested that for the SEAFDEC New Year Card 2017, TD could now start conceptualizing the designs which could focus on SEAFDEC Member Countries’ cooperation toward sustainable fisheries development in the region.

18. Henceforth, draft designs of SEAFDEC New Year Cards should be circulated by TD to all Departments for comments before these are discussed and considered during the ISP Meetings.

4.5 SEAFDEC Websites

19. The 16 ISP Meeting took note of the structure and analysis of the main SEAFDEC website (**Annex 7**) and those of TD, MFRD (as part of the main website), AQD, MFRDMD, and IFRDMD. In particular, the Meeting suggested that the structure of SEAFDEC Secretariat website should be re-arranged by regrouping the buttons of the login staff e-mail system. As for the MFRDMD website, the buttons intended to be used by external visitors should be made more prominent than those to be used by internal staff. The Meeting subsequently congratulated IFRDMD for establishing its website.

20. The 16 ISP Meeting also suggested that the Departments should provide definitions of terminologies used for monitoring and evaluation of the websites, *e.g.* “unique visitor”, “new visitor”, “retaining visitor”, “returning visitor”, etc.

21. While suggesting on the ways and means of improving the SEAFDEC websites to meet the requirements of users, the 16 ISP Meeting expressed the view that the websites should be made more attractive not only in terms of the design but also in the contents to be able to draw the attention of more visitors. Moreover, the information and inputs in the websites should be interesting and persuasive to capture more users, *e.g.* technical matters should be a collaborative work between information officers and technical officers in order to generate interesting information for the websites.

4.6 SEAFDEC Special Publication “Fish for the People”

22. The 16 ISP Meeting was informed on the effort of the Secretariat to sustain the Special Publication and come up with articles that focus on the impacts of regional movements on sustainable fisheries development, especially for the next two years (2016-2017). In addition, since SEAFDEC would be on its 50th year as a regional fisheries research and development center in the Southeast Asian region in December 2017, the forthcoming volumes of Fish for the People in 2016-2017, could dovetail with the interests and achievements of SEAFDEC and the ASEAN on the sustainable development of fisheries (**Annex 8**).

23. In discussing the theme of the forthcoming volumes of the Special Publication “Fish for the People” in 2016 and 2017, the 16 ISP Meeting agreed that the theme for the volume in 2016 could be on combating IUU fishing in Southeast Asian region and improving the competitiveness of fish and fisheries products in the region. As for the volume in 2017 when SEAFDEC would celebrate its 50th Anniversary, focus would be on the achievements of SEAFDEC and ASEAN on sustainable fisheries development that contribute to food security and poverty alleviation.

24. In order that the Departments could improve their efforts in contributing articles for “Fish for the People,” the 16 ISP Meeting was of the opinion that the proposals and plans of projects should already include provisions to come up with popularized articles for the Special Publication “Fish for the People,” just like the allocations for scientific publications at the end of projects implementation usually required by donors. Meanwhile, considering that there are many programs and projects implemented under the FCG/ASSP and funded by the Japanese Trust Fund (JTF) and other donors, the Departments should make sure that the results of such programs and projects should be packaged into articles for “Fish for the People,” which could also be a way of expressing gratitude to JTF and the other donors for providing funds that enabled the Departments’ researchers to conduct such projects.

25. The 16 ISP Meeting also expressed the view that Department staff, especially technical staff and researchers should also have the responsibility of raising the visibility of SEAFDEC, and one way where Departments could cooperate in this endeavor is through the articles that their respective technical staff and researchers publish in “Fish for the People.” The Meeting therefore suggested that these issues and concerns should be brought for discussion during the forthcoming DCM.

26. Along with these arguments, the 16 ISP Meeting also noted the suggestion that certain point system could be developed for the authors of articles in “Fish for the People,” a similar practice which is adopted at AQD for scientific publications, which could also be discussed during the DCM. In addition, articles on aquaculture could also be developed after these have already been packaged into extension manuals. Furthermore, during the conduct of SEAFDEC technical meetings and regional workshops, the respective prospectus should include as one of the expected outputs, the generation of articles that emanate from such fora that would be published in “Fish for the People.”

27. For the Volume in 2017, the 16 ISP Meeting was of the consensus that this could include the achievements of SEAFDEC based on the five Program Thrusts that were adopted by the SEAFDEC Council. This way, focus could be placed on the contribution of SEAFDEC to the fisheries development in the ASEAN region, considering that SEAFDEC would be 50 years in the service for promoting sustainable fisheries in the region and the ASEAN would also be 50 years old by then having been established in August 1967. Moreover, the Meeting also considered the suggestion that this volume of the “Fish for the People” could include the involvement of SEAFDEC in several ASEAN forums, especially in the various working groups organized by the ASEAN.

28. While agreeing to contribute articles for “Fish for the People”, the Deputy Chief of IFRDMD informed the 16 ISP Meeting that one article on eel as one of the species under international concern would be ready for the 2016 Volume. Considering therefore the relevance of eel fisheries in the region, especially from the management and conservation points of view, such article could be accommodated in the first issue of Volume 14 of “Fish for the People” in 2016.

V. PREPARATION OF THE SOUTHEAST ASIAN STATE OF FISHERIES AND AQUACULTURE (SEASOFIA) 2017

29. With regards to SEASOFIA which was first published in 2012, the 16 ISP Meeting noted that the publication has been highly regarded by the Member Countries as source of useful information while also serving as a tool to promote the outputs of SEAFDEC programs and projects. For the purpose of finalizing the draft of the next SEASOFIA, the Departments confirmed and in some cases modified the identified topics that could be included and where the Departments could provide the necessary inputs. The Meeting also took note of the timeframe, *i.e.* the draft outline of the SEASOFIA is expected to be finalized by November 2015, and the final draft SEASOFIA should be completed by 2016 for printing in early 2017.

30. After the discussion on the topics for SEASOFIA 2017, the draft outline including the Departments’ contributions in terms of articles or write-ups for the SEASOFIA was adopted as agreed upon during this ISP Meeting (**Annex 9**).

31. The 16 ISP Meeting noted that it might be necessary for staff of the Departments to meet and discuss on the draft of SEASOFIA 2017 during the preparation process. In this regard, such discussions could possibly be convened during the existing SEAFDEC gatherings and events to be organized in early 2016. Arrangements of extra events to discuss on the contents could be considered, but subject to the availability of funds.

32. In order to finalize the proposal on SEASOFIA 2017 to be submitted to the next SEAFDEC Program Committee Meeting (PCM) in November 2015 in Manila, Philippines, contributors for each subject/topic were requested to provide short paragraphs on their inputs for submission to the Secretariat by 3 November 2015.

VI. OTHER INITIATIVES IN ENHANCING SEAFDEC ACTIVITIES AND VISIBILITY

6.1 Information-related Activities to Commemorate the 50th Anniversary of SEAFDEC

33. While agreeing with the proposal of the Secretariat to produce a special coffee-table book on “SEAFDEC at 50: Quest for Fisheries Sustainability Continues” (**Annex 10**) to commemorate the 50th Anniversary of SEAFDEC in 2017, the 16 ISP Meeting suggested that the book should be produced in an easy reading style.

34. Considering that there are a number of publications to be produced by SEAFDEC during the same period, the 16 ISP Meeting agreed that the scopes and target audience of these publications should be different, *e.g.* SEASOFIA to focus on region’s fisheries status and trends; “Fish for the People” to inform the readers on recent issues, activities and achievements of SEAFDEC; and the special coffee-table book should be meant for light reading and attractive with lots of pictures especially those that portray the role that SEAFDEC had played during its 50 years of existence. In order to help enhance the visibility of SEAFDEC to the general public, the target recipients of the book should not only focus on important SEAFDEC guests, but also libraries, fishers’/farmers’ associations, big traders, fish processors and relevant organizations. Furthermore, the book should also be made available in electronic format to facilitate wider distribution to audience as well as to reduce on costs.

35. The 16 ISP Meeting was of the view that one of the strategies to be adopted in compiling information that would go into the coffee-table book is the conduct of interviews with relevant stakeholders, *e.g.* training alumni who have become successful in their fields of endeavour in fisheries and aquaculture, former Secretary-Generals of SEAFDEC. This is meant not only to get their insights and foresights on SEAFDEC but also to reflect what they as outsiders say and how they see SEAFDEC as a research and development organization rather than what SEAFDEC says about itself.

36. In order to conclude the outline of the contents of the book, the Secretariat was asked to consult with the Departments on the contents and the inputs required, and come up with more detailed proposal for discussion at the DCM. The 16 ISP Meeting was also of the opinion that outsourcing the production of the book might not be necessary as all the inputs could be contributed by the Departments and compiled by the Secretariat. However, as soon as all inputs are available, the part on lay-outing, especially making the book beautiful, could be contracted to professionals or experts on this aspect from the region.

37. Along with such initiative, the Departments were also asked to consider preparing posters in appropriate languages of the countries that could help portray SEAFDEC activities and information that are useful for stakeholders while also promoting the 50th Anniversary of SEAFDEC, *e.g.* fish species posters to be posted at fishing ports, fish farms, etc. Furthermore, TD was also requested to prepare several designs of the logo for 50th SEAFDEC Anniversary for the DCM to choose from and approve for use by SEAFDEC. The Departments should also consider other initiatives that should be undertaken to commemorate the 50th Anniversary of SEAFDEC.

VII. OTHER MATTERS

7.1 Hosting Arrangements for the 17th ISP Meeting

38. The Deputy Chief of IFRDMD informed the Meeting that IFRDMD would be happy to host the 17th Meeting of SEAFDEC ISP in 2016 in Indonesia. While conveying his gratitude to IFRDMD for offering to host the next SEAFDEC ISP Meeting, the Acting Secretary-General requested the SEAFDEC Secretariat to coordinate with IFRDMD for the detailed arrangements of the Meeting.

VIII. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

39. The conclusion and recommendations included in this Report of the 16th Meeting of the SEAFDEC Information Staff Program were adopted on 28 October 2015, and the Secretariat was asked follow up with the Departments on the progress made with respect to such conclusion and recommendations. This would ensure that the programs and projects of SEAFDEC are enhanced and the visibility of SEAFDEC is amplified.

IX. CLOSING OF THE MEETING

40. The Chief of MFRDMD, *Mr. Ahmad Adnan bin Nuruddin* expressed his appreciation to the participants for their productive inputs that allowed the 16 ISP Meeting to achieve its objectives paving the way for improving the information-related activities of SEAFDEC. He commended the initiative on SEASOFIA as it is a very important publication that displays the efforts of the technical Departments in fulfilling their respective mandates through the information they provide on the status of the fishery resources, as well as in addressing fisheries issues and challenges in the region. He then expressed the appreciation to IFRDMD for offering to host the next ISP Meeting in Indonesia, and declared the 16 ISP closed. His Closing Remarks appears as **Annex 11**.