

# REPORT OF THE REGIONAL TECHNICAL CONSULTATION ON ASEAN CATCH DOCUMENTATION SYSTEM

Langkawi, Malaysia  
16-18 December 2014

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## I. INTRODUCTION

1. The Regional Technical Consultation on ASEAN Catch Documentation System was held in Langkawi, Malaysia from 16 to 18 December 2014 and co-hosted by the Marine Fishery Resources Development and Management Department (MFRDMD) and the SEAFDEC Secretariat.

2. The Consultation was attended by representatives from the ASEAN Member States (AMS) except Myanmar as well as the SEAFDEC Secretary-General, Deputy Secretary-General and senior officials from the SEAFDEC Secretariat and concerned Departments. The list of participants appears as **Annex 1**.

## II. OPENING OF THE MEETING

3. The Secretary-General of SEAFDEC *Dr. Chumnarn Pongsri* welcomed the participants and observers to the Meeting. He cited that SEAFDEC was sought by the Southeast Asian countries to develop a common catch documentation system for the region taking into consideration the standards and information requirements of existing schemes of importing countries, which would be simplified to be applicable for the region's small-scale fisheries. He pointed that SEAFDEC initiated the development of a draft of the ASEAN Catch Documentation or ASEAN CDS for discussion and possible revision during this Regional Technical Consultation. He emphasized that this Regional Consultation was meant to review the first draft of the ASEAN CDS and come up with a final draft to be submitted for endorsement by the higher authorities of the ASEAN and SEAFDEC. With that note, he declared the Regional Technical Consultation on ASEAN Catch Documentation System open. His Opening Remarks appears as **Annex 2**.

## III. ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA AND ARRANGEMENTS OF THE MEETING

4. The Consultation noted the background and arrangements of the meeting as presented by SEAFDEC Policy and Program Coordinator, *Dr. Somboon Siriraksophon*, who cited the importance of the development of a common catch documentation system to support intra-regional trade in fish and fishery products. Such trade would include import and export of fish and fishery product from AMS and re-export within and outside the region except the EU. He also cited that this system could facilitate not only intra-regional trade in fish and fishery products but also and as a tool for combating IUU fishing and enhance the cooperation among the AMS for the realization of the ASEAN Economic Community (AEC) by 2015. His presentation appears as **Annex 3**.

5. The Agenda which appears as **Annex 4** was adopted.

## IV. Country Review on Capture Fishery Documentation System

- *Brunei Darussalam*

6. The representative from Brunei Darussalam, *Mr. Zul-faisal.Saherin* presented the background of capture fisheries industry of his country as well as management approaches by highlighting on two types of catch document which form part of the conditions for fishing gear license issuance as per the country's Fisheries Order 2009. These are: 1) logbook and 2) documentation sheet. He also pointed out some problems in implementing the catch documentation system (CDS) of the country such as unreliability of data, delayed submission of necessary information, insufficient cooperation from fishers, and weak implementation of procedure and processes. He then provided some ways towards improving the country's CDS such as replacement of logbook system with catch certification, application of CDS to all commercial fishing vessels, and strengthening inspection and enforcement procedures. His presentation appears in **Annex 5**.

7. On the use of document sheet, he clarified that this document sheet is used by small scale fishers on voluntary basis. He added that by replacing logbook with catch certification system, fishers could apply for the necessary document by submitting the catch certification form, and the authorities would then issue a catch certificate upon such request.

- **Cambodia**

8. The representative from Cambodia, *Mr. Kimchhea Chhuon* provided an overview of marine capture fisheries and action plan against IUU fishing in Cambodia. He emphasized on the importance of fish to the people of Cambodia, providing 81.5% of the animal protein in the national diet as could be seen from the country's fish consumption of 63 kg/person/year, and thus, there is a need to manage the country's fishery resources for sustainability. He informed the Meeting that registration of fishing vessels are not the responsibility of the Fisheries Administration but is under the authority of the Ministry of Transport and Public Works, the latter of which is tasked to issue the certificate of origin of fish and fishery products as authorized by the Ministry of Commerce. He also pointed out that one of the main constraints in the country's fisheries management is when the catch from large marine fishing boats are sometimes sold at sea to boats of neighboring countries (Thailand and Vietnam) without proper recording. In this regard, he cited that fishing boat registration need to be enforced and cooperation among relevant agencies to be enhanced. His presentation appears in **Annex 6**.

9. The Meeting noted that several countries face the same problem of transshipment at sea and misreporting of catch, so that catch reports are lower than the actual catch to avoid tax. In this regard, the Meeting suggested that a good data system and procedure should be put in place to improve such reports. The Meeting also noted that even though some countries in the region do not directly export fish and fishery products to the EU, some fish and fishery products are re-exported to the EU and thus should be accompanied with catch certificate based on the requirements of the EU.

- **Indonesia**

10. The representative from Indonesia, *Ms. Novia Tri Rahmawati* informed the Meeting on the capture fisheries documentation system in Indonesia by outlining the country's Fisheries Management Areas and its catch data documentation system which aims to estimate the annual catch, combat IUU fishing activities, support scientific work such as stock assessment and catch limit as well as support fisheries management. The country adopts five categories of catch data documentation system such as 1) fishing logbook, 2) IOTC Bigeye Tuna Statistical Document, 3) Catch Certificate, 4) SBT Catch Documentation Scheme, and 5) Statistical System. She added that some concerns related to the development of the ASEAN CDS could include the template for fishing vessel data which should be developed in two categories, namely: 1) large-

scale fishing vessels and small-scale fishing vessels; templates for market requirements, *i.e.* export, import, and re-export; verification and validation procedures; responsible unit to monitor compliance; pilot project (target species, budget and period); compliance strategy, and legal basis. Her presentation appears as **Annex 7**.

11. The Meeting was also informed that the small landing sites in remote areas of the country had remained an issue considering that the whole country has about 661,000 landing sites. Catch data collected by sampling the districts are submitted to the provincial level. In this regard, the country has considered increasing the budget for enumerators as an optimistic approach towards the right direction of improving the reliability of data. It was also clarified that logbook is still the first form of data source and based on legislations authorities could issue catch certificate at landing sites.

- **Malaysia**

12. The representative from Malaysia, *Mr. Abdul Razak Buang* reviewed the capture fishery documentation scheme/system of Malaysia emphasizing on the documentation for fish and fishery products to the EU. He informed the Meeting that currently, issuance of Catch Certificate in Malaysia involves two (2) types of business transactions: 1) Indirect Export (common exportation), and 2) Import, Process and Re-export. There are legal supports to implement the documentation system with several competent authorities such as Ministry of Health as the Central Competent Authority responsible for issuance and validation of Health Certificate, Department of Fisheries for issuance and validation of Catch Certificate under Annex IV of the country's Fishery Law, and the Malaysian Maritime Enforcement Agency (MMEA) for monitoring and surveillance of fishing activities under Fisheries Act 1985. His presentation appears as **Annex 8**.

13. The Meeting was informed that aside from its export to the EU which should comply with the procedures of certification, catch landed is also reported by the fishers and such fishers in return would be provided fuel subsidy by the government.

- **Philippines**

14. The representative from the Philippines, *Mr. Peter Erick M. Cadapan* informed the Meeting on the catch certification system adopted in the Philippines. He cited that there are three main fishing areas of Philippine-flagged fishing vessels of which the corresponding catches of such vessels would have to comply with different requirements for catch certificate. As such, catches in the Philippines EEZ or within 15 km from the shoreline should be indicated in the Fish Catch Report (simplified form) which is under authority of Local Government Units (LGUs). He informed the Meeting that in June 2014, the Philippines received a 'yellow card' based on the audit made by the EU Directorate-General for Maritime Affairs and Fisheries (DG-MARE). This is a warning for the country to cooperate and work closely with the EU through formalized dialogue to resolve the identified issues and implement the necessary action plan to fight IUU fishing but this does not necessarily entail measures affecting the trade. He also informed the Meeting on the country's recommendations for the ACDS, such that in the harmonized ACDS the actual fishing operation of fishing vessels of the AMS should be reflected without dismissing the requirements of importing countries, and that existing operations such as mixed catches from different fishing vessels and/or different catch dates that comprise one whole consignment should be specified as well as a mechanism for information sharing among the AMS should be established especially on the quantity of fish caught and/or landed in their respective territories. His presentation appears as **Annex 9**.

15. The Meeting was also informed that foreign flagged vessels are not allowed to land their catches in the country. However, even if the country does not license such vessels, their catches

are still considered catches from Philippine waters, and thus could be mixed with other countries' catches in one consignment.

- *Singapore*

16. The representative from Singapore, *Mr. Adrian Lim Yeong Hun* informed the Meeting that the country has been adopting fishery documentation scheme which includes licensing of fishing vessels, and declaration of catch on landing. He added that catches from Singapore fishing vessels are domestically sold and consumed. He also provided recommendations regarding the effective implementation of ACDS which include the need for legislative administration and enforcement to be in place; buy-in process of stakeholders especially for fishing vessel owners, processors and exporters; capacity building on the implementation of ACDS for all stakeholders; robustness of the ACDS; regular consultations with external markets/parties; and monitoring and collation of documents. His presentation appears as **Annex 10**.

17. Considering that Singapore is a big transit site for fish and fishery products, he clarified that the country applies the port State Measures for re-exporting products to ensure that such products are not from IUU fishing activities.

- *Thailand*

18. The representative from Thailand, *Dr. Kamonpan Awaiwanont* cited that catch documents of the country comprises six types of fishing logbooks, Marine Catch Transshipping Document (MCTD), and Marine Catch Purchasing Document (MCPD). The country has two centers authorized to issue catch certificates: 1) Fish Inspection and Quality Control Division in Bangkok, and 2) Songkla Fish Inspection and Quality Control Center. He identified some issues in relation to the development and implementation of the ACDS, which could include double-flagging of fishing vessels, nature of fisheries which is small-scale, and border trade of fish and fishery products. He mentioned that for coral reef fishes, reporting is under the responsibility of the Department of Marine and Coastal Resources. His presentation appears as **Annex 11**.

19. On the few centers authorized to issue catch certificate, he clarified that the country plans to computerize the system in the near future. He also explained that MCPD is issued only to those exported to the EU. Regarding the number of issuances under Annex IV which is higher than the number of Catch Certificates issued, it was also clarified that the number recorded in Annex IV is for products re-exported while Catch Certificate is issued only for raw materials imported from other countries.

20. The Meeting raised the concern on transshipment at sea as well as double-flagging which requires close collaboration among neighboring countries, and suggested that the ACDS should be an entry point to address this issue. The Meeting noted that the initiative of SEAFDEC to develop the Regional Fishing Vessels Record for vessels 24 m in length and over would also support the efforts to combat IUU fishing in the region.

- *Vietnam*

21. The representative from Vietnam, *Dr. Nguyen Thanh Binh* mentioned that in an effort to combat IUU fishing activities, Vietnam had issued additional legal documents such as NPOA for the management of fishing capacity, and NPOA for combating IUU fishing activities. The country also improved its monitoring, control and surveillance system by initiating a project to install VMS for 3,000 offshore vessels, strengthening provincial and central fisheries inspection, providing training to local fisheries authorities, etc. He also cited that the country

still needs support to the scientific conversion of the units used in vessel measurement, such as from HP to GT for vessel management, improvement of MCS system for fisheries management, training and capacity building activities, strengthening existing mechanisms such as fishing vessel registration and licensing. His presentation appears as **Annex 12**.

22. On the issue of measurement conversion, the Meeting was informed that SEAFDEC had sent researchers to assist Vietnam to support scientific HP-GT conversion. Results of the analysis however showed that there is no relation between the two units of measurements since the resulting coefficient was found to be very low. It was therefore suggested that actual measurements of vessels might be needed.

#### **V. Finalization of the Draft of ASEAN Catch Documentation System**

23. Taking into consideration the issues, concerns and recommendations made by the AMS, the draft ACDS was discussed and revised. At the onset, the Meeting agreed to revise the title of the ACDS to 'ASEAN CATCH DOCUMENTATION SCHEME: Marine Capture Fisheries'. The Meeting also agreed to provide additional information on small fishing vessels and fishing areas of each ASEAN Member State as well as comments (if any) on the second draft of ACDS (**Annex 13**) which was adopted by the Meeting, to the Secretariat by end of January 2015.

#### **VI. Future Activities related to the ASEAN Catch Documentation System**

24. While noting that the progress of the development of ACDS would be submitted to the Council and ASWGFi during their respective forthcoming meetings, the Meeting suggested that stakeholder consultations, trial activities such as pilot sites, target species, role playing should be conducted as soon as possible. The Meeting also suggested that AMS should consult with importing countries for the possibility of superseding their existing documentations with the ACDS. In addition, the Meeting suggested that ACDS for other commodities such as reef-based ornamental fishes, freshwater fish and fishery products could be developed in the future.

#### **VII. Closing of the Meeting**

25. The Deputy Secretary-General, *Mr. Hajime Kawamura* expressed his sincere appreciation to everyone for their cooperation and active participation that resulted in the settlement of important issues indicating the region's interest in improving intra-regional trade in fish and fisheries products, as well as in enhancing the cooperation among the ASEAN Member States for the realization of the ASEAN Economic Community (AEC) by 2015. He then urged the Member Countries and SEAFDEC to continue maintaining the momentum of partnership that had been initialized. Before closing, he recalled that it has been almost 10 years when the 2004 Indian Ocean earthquake and tsunami affected the island of Langkawi causing serious damages to the fisheries sector. He therefore expressed the hope that the fishers must have already recovered from such devastation, and declared the Meeting closed. His speech appears in **Annex 14**.