

**Report of the Regional Consultation for Development of the ASEAN-SEAFDEC
Common Position on the Proposed Listing of Commercially-exploited Aquatic Species
into the CITES Appendices**

**Bangkok, Thailand
30-31 January 2019**

Introduction

1. The “Regional Consultation for Development of the ASEAN-SEAFDEC Common Position on the Proposed Listing of Commercially-exploited Aquatic Species into the CITES Appendices” was organized by the Southeast Asian Fisheries Development Center (SEAFDEC) on 30-31 January 2019 in Bangkok, Thailand with support from the Government of Japan through the Japanese Trust Fund. The Consultation was attended by fisheries experts and National Coordinators from the ASEAN-SEAFDEC Member Countries, namely: Cambodia, Indonesia, Japan, Lao PDR, Malaysia, Myanmar, Philippines, Thailand, and Viet Nam as well as from the SEAFDEC Secretariat and Departments, namely TD, AQD, MFRDMD and IFRDMD. Representatives from the Fisheries and Aquaculture Department of FAO, Rome and from Burapha University, Thailand also attended the Consultation as Resource Persons. The List of Participants appears as **Annex 1**.

Agenda 1. Opening of the Consultation

2. The SEAFDEC Secretary-General *Dr. Kom Silapajarn* welcomed the participants to the Consultation. He reiterated the importance of the Consultation as it is meant to serve as fora for the ASEAN-SEAFDEC Member Countries to discuss the proposed listing of several commercially-exploited aquatic species (CEAS) into the CITES Appendices, which could have impacts to the trade in fish and fisheries products of the countries in the region. After encouraging the participants to actively participate in the discussion and to provide inputs for the development of common or coordinated positions on the said proposals that would be reflected by the countries at the next 18th Session of the Conference of the Parties of CITES (CITES-CoP18) in May 2019, he declared the Consultation open. His Remarks appears as **Annex 2**.

Agenda 2. Selection of Chairperson

3. The representative from Malaysia, *Mr. Lawrence Kissol Jr.*, was elected as Chairperson of the Regional Consultation.

Agenda 3. Meeting Arrangements

4. At the outset, it was reiterated that the Consultation aims to facilitate the discussion among the ASEAN-SEAFDEC Member Countries on the possible impacts of the newly proposed inclusion of several CEAS into the CITES Appendices. The Consultation was then informed that from the discussion, the common/coordinated position of the ASEAN-SEAFDEC Member Countries could be developed, which would be reflected at CITES-CoP18, including a set of recommendations on the issues related to conservation and utilization of the said CEAS.

5. Furthermore, the National Coordinators or delegates attending the Regional Consultation were requested to report the results of this Regional Consultation to their respective SEAFDEC Council Directors for consideration. Specifically, considering that Brunei Darussalam and Singapore were not able to participate in the Consultation, it was agreed that the results of the Consultation would be sent to the respective SEAFDEC Council Directors of these countries to also obtain their views of the said proposals.

6. Specifically, for the Common/Coordinated Position developed from this Regional Consultation, once this is considered and approved by the SEAFDEC Council, such Common/Coordinated Position would be subsequently submitted to the Fisheries Consultative Group of the ASEAN-SEAFDEC Strategic Partnership (FCG/ASSP) through the FCG/ASSP Focal Points *ad referendum*, for endorsement to the ASEAN under the ASEAN mechanism.

Agenda 4. Adoption of the Agenda

7. The Agenda of the Consultation which appears as **Annex 3** was adopted.

Agenda 5. Overview of the Proposed Listing of Commercially-exploited Aquatic Species into the CITES Appendices

8. The Regional Consultation was informed of the proposed inclusion of several commercially-exploited aquatic species in the in CITES Appendices at CITES-CoP18 to be organized on 23 May-3 June 2019 in Sri Lanka. These proposals include:

- a) Inclusion of the blackchin guitarfish (*Glaucostegus cemiculus*) and the sharpnose guitarfish (*Glaucostegus granulatus*), and all of other giant guitarfish, *Glaucostegus* spp. in Appendix II (**Annex 4**)
- b) Inclusion of the following three species belonging to the subgenus *Holothuria* (*Microthele*): *Holothuria (Microthele) fuscogilva*, *Holothuria (Microthele) nobilis* and *Holothuria (Microthele) whitmaei*, in Appendix II (**Annex 5**)
- c) Inclusion of the short-fin Mako shark, *Isurus oxyrinchus* and long-fin Mako shark *Isurus paucus* in Appendix II (**Annex 6**)
- d) Inclusion of the two species commonly referred to as the white-spotted wedgefish, *Rhynchobatus australiae* and *Rhynchobatus djiddensis* in Appendix II, and inclusion of all other species in the Family Rhinidae (wedgefish): *Rhynchobatus cooki*, *Rhynchobatus immaculatus*, *Rhynchobatus laevis*, *Rhynchobatus luebberti*, *Rhynchobatus palpebratus*, *Rhynchobatus springeri*, *Rhynchorhina mauritaniensis*, *Rhina ancylostoma*, and any other putative species of Family Rhinidae in Appendix II (**Annex 7**)

9. The representative from FAO, *Dr Kim Friedman* shared with the Consultation the results of the FAO Expert Advisory Panel held on 21-25 January 2019 at the FAO Headquarters in Rome, Italy. He reiterated the criteria for listing of species into the CITES Appendices, and the role of the FAO Expert Advisory Panel in ensuring that the species are assessed against the CITES criteria based on the best available scientific evidence and not on advocacy. He also highlighted that the information considered by the FAO Expert Advisory Panel mainly came from published data, but through reanalyzing the available data, the Panel could collate and assess the information that are of relevance to CITES.

10. Upon thorough analysis of the aforementioned proposals, and taking into consideration the impacts of the inclusion of the said CEAS in the CITES Appendices, on the fisheries and trade in the Southeast Asian region, the Regional Consultation came up with the following conclusion and recommendations:

A. Inclusion of the blackchin guitarfish (*Glaucostegus cemiculus*) and the sharpnose guitarfish (*Glaucostegus granulatus*), and all of other giant guitar fish in Appendix II

Status of the species proposed for listing:

- In the Southeast Asian region, the catch of these species has been recorded except *Glaucostegus cemiculus*
- Only few *G. granulatus* had been caught in Thailand, while reports indicate that this species had been observed to be distributed in Viet Nam
- For Cambodia, Japan, Myanmar, there is no record of the catch of *Glaucostegus* spp.
- For Indonesia, Malaysia and Viet Nam, although *Glaucostegus* spp. had been reported to be caught in their respective waters, there had been no species specific information (*e.g.* oftentimes these are recorded together with sharks)
- For the Philippines, there is no record of catch of *Glaucostegus* spp. However, as the species have been classified as threatened under the IUCN Red List and the country’s national laws subscribe to the IUCN list, the Philippines supports the proposed listing of guitarfish under the genus *Glaucostegus* into the CITES Appendix II.

Technical recommendations:

- As *Glaucostegus cemiculus* and *G. granulatus* are not reported in the Southeast Asian region, while other species under the Genus *Glaucostegus* are caught as “by-catch,” listing of the species into the Appendix II of CITES might not reduce the catch of these species. Promotion of better management schemes, *e.g.* by-catch reduction, use of selective fishing gears, would therefore be the more appropriate approaches for the conservation of the species.

Countries’ positions towards the proposal:

Country	Position	Remarks
Cambodia	Not support	There is no record of catch of this species in Cambodia, while some published data is insufficient to support the listing of the species into the Appendix II
Indonesia	Not support	Although the two species are not commonly found in the region, some other species under the Genus <i>Glaucostegus</i> are found, so problems on products identification and traceability could be enormous
Japan	Not support	There is insufficient data to support the listing of the species into Appendix II, also considering that this is by-catch species, regulating trade would not help in conserving the species
Lao PDR	Not support	As a landlocked country, Lao PDR will follow the position of majority of the ASEAN countries
Malaysia	Not support	As there is inadequate data to support the listing of the species into the Appendix II, and since Malaysia is not range State of these species, Malaysia recommends that the species (<i>Glaucostegus cemiculus</i> and <i>G. granulatus</i>) could instead be listed in Appendix III

Myanmar	Not support	The proposed species are found only in few numbers (as by-catch) in Myanmar waters
Philippines	Support	The Philippine position on the proposed listing is consistent with the provisions in the Philippine national law for aquatic species that are classified as threatened under the IUCN Red List
Thailand	Not support	Only few numbers of the species are caught in Thai waters, and there would be problems on the identification of the species
Viet Nam	Follow ASEAN common position	There is not enough scientific evidence to support the listing of the species in CITES Appendices, and if there is no ASEAN common position, the position of Viet Nam will be subject to the decision of the CITES authorities in Viet Nam

Possible impacts of the listing of the species to CITES Appendix II:

- Although *Glaucostegus cemiculus* and *G. granulatus* are not reported in the Southeast Asian region, if these species are listed in the Appendix II, this might have an impact on the trade of other species under this Genus and their products. Therefore, more trained officers would be needed in the field (landing ports) to identify the catch up to the species level, and also identify the products from these other species.
- If these species are listed in the Appendix II, it is likely that the other species under the Genus *Glaucostegus* found in the region would also be proposed for listing in Appendix II in the future. Thus, it would be necessary to conduct an assessment to support the development of non-detriment finding (NDF) documents to sustain the trade of the listed as well as the look-like species.

B. Inclusion of the following three species belonging to the subgenus *Holothuria* (*Microthele*): *Holothuria* (*Microthele*) *fuscogilva*, *Holothuria* (*Microthele*) *nobilis* and *Holothuria* (*Microthele*) *whitmaei* in Appendix II

Status of the species proposed for listing:

- The three species proposed for listing are distributed in the Southeast Asian waters, but the catch data has not been classified at the species level (*i.e.* the catch is generally grouped as sea cucumbers)
- Based on scientific evidence, the three species proposed are found to be over-exploited in most range States, while the major threats are not only from fishing activities but also due to habitat destruction and pollution
- Besides the three species proposed, there are nearly 40 species of sea cucumbers distributed in the region which could be considered as look-alike species, making it difficult to distinguish the species from their products, *e.g.* in dried and powdered forms
- The species of sea cucumber widely cultured in the region is *Holothuria scabra*. For Thailand, Philippines, Malaysia and Viet Nam, hatchery technologies have been developed for some *Holothuria* species (but not on the three species proposed), mainly for stock enhancement purposes as well for commercial aquaculture. For Indonesia, however, sea cucumber culture relies mainly on wild seeds, and the country is still in the process of developing the hatchery techniques for sea cucumbers
- There are existing management measures for sea cucumbers adopted by the countries in the region, *e.g.* one island in Malaysia has been declared as sea cucumber sanctuary; the Philippines allows the commercial export of only the dried whole sea cucumber meat with the minimum size

limit of 5-cm in length regardless of the species; while Cambodia has established a working group to identify and protect the aquatic species listed as endangered species and under CITES.

Technical recommendations:

- Although fisheries management measures for sea cucumbers are being promoted in some countries in the region, such effort should be strengthened.
- The potentials for hatchery production of teatfish should be explored to support prospects for aquaculture and stock enhancement.

Countries' positions towards the proposal:

Country	Position	Remarks
Cambodia	Pending	Although there is no catch data on the three species (<i>i.e.</i> not species specific), Cambodia is more concerned about the over-exploited status of other sea cucumber populations in Cambodia, and so currently, Cambodia has the position to “support” the proposal however the country’s Fisheries Office would consult with the CITES Scientific Authority for Aquatic Resources in Cambodia to finalize and confirm such position
Indonesia	Not Support	There is no available species specific data record for these species, while sea cucumber has been recorded as a single commodity (as <i>trepan</i>) in Indonesia, listing the species into the CITES Appendices would therefore require big effort in recording and trade monitoring, especially that the fisheries statistical data does not classify it into species, not even genus specific
Japan	Pending	There is not enough scientific evidence to counter the proposal, but implementation should also be considered
Lao PDR	Not Support	As a landlocked country, Lao PDR will follow the position of majority of the ASEAN countries
Malaysia	Not support	There is no available species specific data recorded for these species, while sea cucumber trade categorized these species under a single commodity (<i>gamat</i> in Malay; sea cucumber in English) in Malaysia, so that up listing these species in CITES requires a big challenge for traceability
Myanmar	Not support	There is no catch data available in the country on the three proposed species.
Philippines	Support	The Philippine position on the proposed listing is consistent with the provisions of the Philippine national law for aquatic species that are already classified as threatened in the IUCN Red List. Furthermore, prior to CITES CoP16, the Philippines had the plan to submit a proposal for the Appendix III listing of selected high value species that includes <i>Holothuria scabra</i> and the two teatfish species: <i>H. fuscogilva</i> and <i>H. whitmae</i> , using as scientific evidence the results of the 2004-2008 national stock assessment and trade surveys conducted by the Philippine Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources (BFAR) and local academic institutions
Thailand	Not support	Although <i>H. nobilis</i> is a species rarely found in Thailand, but Thailand has compiled some import data of other sea cucumber

		species, <i>i.e.</i> for <i>H. fuscogilva</i> , and the information provided by the proponent (EU) is inconsistent with the available data of Thailand, so that more studies on the species would be necessary, while listing of this species in CITES Appendices would be a big challenge for traceability
Viet Nam	Follow ASEAN common position	Most of sea cucumber species are under strict management under the country's new Fisheries Law (in endangered and rare list), in which it is forbidden to catch teatfish, although Viet Nam supports for the fisheries management of sea cucumbers

Possible impacts of the listing of the species to CITES Appendix II:

- The listing might create impacts to the trade of products from other species from the same Genus that could not be identified from the product forms (particularly powdered form, as dried teatfish could be easily distinguished) at the entry or exit point of the countries. Furthermore, other species could also be proposed for listing in the Appendix II in the future.
- Data on catch and status of the proposed species from all Southeast Asian countries are still insufficient. Thus, the listing of the species might lead to difficulties in data collection in the future. Although it could be expected that CITES would support the data collection once the species are listed in the CITES Appendices, such data collection would require considerable amount of investments from donors.
- Listing of the proposed species into the CITES Appendix II could result in increased illegal trade of the species in the future.

C. Inclusion of the short-fin Mako shark, *Isurus oxyrinchus* and long-fin Mako shark *Isurus paucus* in Appendix II

Status of the proposed species:

- Short-fin Mako shark is under the management of several RFMOs, and stock assessments have been undertaken, coming up with the following information on its stock status:
 - In North Atlantic, it was evaluated (undertaken by ICCAT in 2017) and the results indicated that the stock was overfished and that overfishing was occurring so that the conservation and management measure was adopted in 2017.
 - In the North Pacific, it was evaluated (undertaken by the International Scientific Committee for Tuna and Tuna-Like Species in the North Pacific Ocean (ISC) in 2018) and the results showed that the stock was not overfished and that overfishing was not occurring.
 - In both North Atlantic and North Pacific, the stock status does not meet the criteria for listing of the species into the CITES Appendices.
 - In the Indian Ocean, IOTC plans to undertake stock assessment in 2020, but the CPUE data did not show a marked increasing or decreasing trend

Technical recommendations:

- As the proposed species are not targeted in the Southeast Asian region but is caught as “by-catch,” listing of the species into the CITES Appendix II would not reduce the catch of these species. Promotion of better management schemes should therefore be the more appropriate measures for the conservation of the species.
- Listing of the species should be considered taking into account the situation that the stock status does not meet CITES listing criteria and that implementation challenges are expected.

Countries' positions toward the proposal:

Country	Position	Remarks
Cambodia	Not support	Although the species is not native to Cambodia, the species does not meet the criteria for listing under Appendix II
Indonesia	Not support	The species is mainly caught as by-catch from longline, while Indonesia has already developed the NPOA (1 st period: 2010-2015; 2 nd period: 2016-2020) for sharks, so this species can be addressed through this management plan and the Regional Fisheries Management Organizations (RFMOs) management measures
Japan	Not support	The species does not meet the criteria for listing under Appendix II, and also, implementation issues are also expected
Lao PDR	Not support	As a landlocked country, Lao PDR will follow the position of majority of the ASEAN countries
Malaysia	Not support	Although the species does not meet the criteria for listing the species under Appendix II, Malaysia recommends that range States of these species in areas with depleted stocks should consider proposing the species for listing under Appendix III
Myanmar	Not support	The species is mainly caught as by-catch in the country and only in small quantity
Philippines	Support	The Philippine position on the proposed listing is consistent with the provisions of the Philippine national law for aquatic species that are classified as threatened under the IUCN Red List so that by subscribing to the IUCN Red List and imposing total ban on CITES-listed aquatic species as initial management scheme would benefit both the species and stakeholders as the national law gives priority to the commercially-exploited aquatic species in CITES Appendix II and III for further population assessments by the expert members of the Philippine Aquatic Red List Committee (PARLC). The outcome of such assessments are management tools, <i>i.e.</i> the National Red List of Threatened Aquatic Species and species-specific Non-Detriment Finding (NDF) framework as required by CITES, to be used by policy makers in formulating science-based management schemes, <i>e.g.</i> annual quota, size limits, close/open fishing season, etc. or to maintain the ban on international trade, if deemed appropriate.
Thailand	Not support	The species is oceanic and not native to Thailand, so that after Thailand ceased the oversea operations of Thai fishing vessels since 2016, only few accidental catch had been reported although there could be crucial issues on species identification
Viet Nam	Follow ASEAN common position	There is insufficient data to support listing of these species under the CITES Appendix II

Possible impacts of the listing of the species to CITES Appendix II:

- If the proposed species are listed under the CITES Appendix II, trade of the species might require NDF documents
- Implementation issues might emerge, such as introduction from the sea

D. Inclusion of the two species commonly referred to as the white-spotted wedgefsh, *Rhynchobatus australiae* and *Rhynchobatus djiddensis*, in Appendix II; and Inclusion of all other species in the Family Rhinidae (wedgefsh): *Rhynchobatus cooki*, *Rhynchobatus immaculatus*, *Rhynchobatus laevis*, *Rhynchobatus luebberti*, *Rhynchobatus palpebratus*, *Rhynchobatus springeri*, *Rhynchorhina mauritaniensis*, *Rhina ancylostoma*, and any other putative species of Family Rhinidae in Appendix II

Status of the proposed species:

- Out of the ten proposed species, six species are distributed in the Southeast Asian waters.
- From the stock assessment based on available data, the species population had been observed to have declined in most regions including the Southeast Asian region. Nevertheless, the available data is still insufficient to determine whether the species meet the criteria for listing in CITES Appendix II.
- From the 1-year data collection undertaken by SEAFDEC in selected Member Countries, wedgefshes were caught as by-catch, but with very low composition in the total catch. Despite the limited data that may not be able to represent the status of the species, it could be observed that most species are still easily found in the region and not over-exploited.

Technical recommendations:

- As the proposed species are not targeted in the Southeast Asian region but caught as “by-catch,” listing of the species into the CITES Appendix II might not reduce the catch of these species. Promotion of better management schemes for reduction of by-catch should therefore be the more appropriate measures for the conservation of the species.

Countries’ positions toward the proposal:

Country	Position	Remarks
Cambodia	Not support	There is insufficient data to support the listing of the species into the CITES Appendix II
Indonesia	Not support	Wedgefshes are still abundant and contribute to 16% of Indonesia’s production of rays, although Indonesia needs to put more efforts on species identification to distinguish wedgefshes from other species
Japan	Not support	There is no scientific evidence on the stock that meet the criteria for listing of the proposed species into the CITES Appendix II, and also considering that it is by-catch species; regulating trade would not help in conserving the species of th same genus
Lao PDR	Not support	As a landlocked country, Lao PDR will follow the position of majority of the ASEAN countries
Malaysia	Not support	Listing of the species into CITES Appendix II would create difficulties in distinguishing the proposed species from other species of the same genus, <i>e.g.</i> guitarfish, by officers at entry and exit points of the country, so Malaysia recommends that the range State of the species <i>Rhynchobatus djiddensis</i> could propose that the species be listed under the Appendix III as <i>R. australiae</i> are still abundant in the country
Myanmar	Not support	The species is mainly caught as by-catch and only in small quantity
Philippines	Support	The Philippine position to support the proposal and its acceptance to be one of the proponents stemmed from the fact that Philippines was the proponent of the uplisting of wedgefshes to Appendix I that was adopted by the Convention on Migratory Species (CMS) CoP12 hosted by the Philippines in 2017. The Philippines is the only ASEAN Member State that is Party to the CMS.

Thailand	Not support	Only small amount of the proposed species has been caught in Thai waters, so there is still insufficient data for listing of the species into the CITES Appendix, and if the species is listed, the problem on identification of the species could arise
Viet Nam	Follow ASEAN common position	From 2-year data collection of SEAFDEC, the composition of the species in the total catch is very low

Possible impacts of the listing of the species to CITES Appendix II:

- If the species are listed in the Appendix II, the trade of other species and their products (*e.g.* guitarfishes) would create some impacts, *e.g.* more officers in the field (landing ports) would be necessary to classify the catch up to the species level, and also identify the products from other species (*e.g.* dried fins)
- Implementation issues might emerge, such as introduction from the sea

Agenda 6. ASEAN-SEAFDEC Common/Coordinated Position on CEAS

11. During the ensuing discussion, the Regional Consultation agreed on the Positions of the ASEAN-SEAFDEC Member Countries on the proposed listing of several CEAS into the CITES Appendices, to be raised by the countries during the CITES-CoP18 (**Annex 8**).

Agenda 7. Other CITES-related Issues

7.1 Changing of Strategic Mission of CITES

12. The Resource Person from FAO informed the representatives from the ASEAN-SEAFDEC Member Countries attending the Regional Consultation of the “Standing Committee Working Group on the CITES Strategic Vision” that is making inputs to the 2021-2030 CITES Strategic Vision. This is an important discussion as it describes the mandate of CITES work, which has traditionally centered on biodiversity conservation and sustainable use of threatened or near threatened species and not all species. Changes to this mandate to all species would likely cause overlap with sectoral management and conservation, and therefore the ASEAN-SEAFDEC Member Countries were urged to keep track of this discussion in order to ensure that the mandate of CITES is appropriate to the vision of its function.

7.2 CITES Listing Procedures

13. The Resource Person from FAO highlighted the issue that many proposals on the listing of CEAS species into the CITES Appendices did not include or assess the best available information. In addition, the FAO Experts Advisory Panel was tasked to review these proposals, and the FAO Members have insufficient time between submission of the proposals until voting at the CITES-CoP, to have an orderly discussion of the information on these species. Because of the quality of these proposals, the FAO Experts Advisory Panel cannot review the proposals, but instead are tasked with rewriting these proposals so that they present the best available information against the CITES criteria. The ASEAN-SEAFDEC Member Countries should therefore consider making their advice clear to the CITES-CoP to ensure that the listing process is useful for their decision making purposes, *e.g.* to have a single open meeting for discussion among stakeholders and deliver the consolidated advice - rather than multiple reports for countries’ decision makers and ministries to consider when making their decision in the run-up to the CITES-CoP.

14. The representative from SEAFDEC/AQD agreed that the timeline from the deadline for submission of the proposal to the CITES-CoP Session is rather short, making it difficult for countries to come up with their position(s). He therefore suggested that to facilitate more proactive preparation by the countries in the region, countries in the future may consider looking into the threatened species and coming up with a process and data to support discussions for species highlighted for proposals – well in advance of the voting at the CITES-CoP.

15. The representative from Malaysia noted that proposals for the CITES-CoP18 are only available the following 24 December 2018, so countries have only 6 months to review the relevant proposals prior to the CITES-CoP session, which is insufficient for countries to implement activities on capacity building and information collection of the species being proposed. He therefore supported the suggestion that the countries may benefit from an earlier discussion on threatened species and so as to predict and be informed on the species that could be proposed under the CITES-CoP in the future.

16. The representative from the Philippines provided additional information on other regional platform that the AMSs could use to address CITES-related issues such as common/coordinated position on the listing proposals. She cited that the Coral Triangle Initiative on Coral Reefs, Fisheries and Food Security (CTI-CFF) have several working groups that include the Threatened Species Working Group and Science Advisory Group tasked to develop criteria for the national and eventually listing of threatened species and formulation of species-specific NDF framework for CITES Appendix II-listed species.

17. The Regional Consultation noted that within the CITES procedures, countries have 3-year period to prepare the proposals for listing of species into the CITES Appendices, and the preparation of proposals receives support from NGOs. The AMSs should encourage the NGOs to support the countries in the implementation of the listings, as a possibly more important input that investment could get, when the species is listed into the CITES Appendices.

7.3 Trade database

18. The Resource Person from FAO expressed the view that the CITES trade database may be one of the best tools to collect information on trade in threatened or near threatened CEAS, and also for following the implementation of CITES provisions. This information is important in order to know the shifts in the flow of trade of the species listed under CITES, and issues with collection of this information should be worked out to make the process reflect the reality on the ground.

7.4 Others

19. The representative from Cambodia reiterated that another proposal might be submitted by EU on the inclusion of water snakes in the Appendix II of CITES. He therefore requested the ASEAN-SEAFDEC Member Countries to carefully consider this proposal as the status of stock has not been clearly established and it is still abundant in the Great Lake of Cambodia, and harvested by local people for export to other counties, *e.g.* to China. He expressed the view that the inclusion of this species in Appendix II of CITES will negatively affect the poor local people's income. He added that the country's national management measures to recover the species are already in place. In response, the Regional Consultation suggested that Cambodia should raise this issue during the forthcoming meeting of the ASEAN Working Group on CITES, in which case Cambodia should also come up with the necessary document to counter the proposal for listing of the species during the CITES-

CoP18.

20. The representative from Japan also reminded the Consultation that the draft decision or resolutions on aquatic species will be discussed in the agenda item on eels and other aquatic species during the CITES-CoP18. He therefore requested the ASEAN-SEAFDEC Member Countries to check the agenda item and the working documents for aquatic species.

21. The representative from Malaysia shared the experience of Malaysia for the down-listing of *Crocodylus porosus* in Malaysia from Appendix I to Appendix II. In such a case, Malaysia negotiated with the proponent (EU) which has 28 votes, to seek their support and as a result, the species could be successfully down-listed. He therefore expressed the view that countries in the region may negotiate with other countries including EU to get support for voting at the CITES-CoP, and for the species to be sustainably managed rather than banned. The SEAFDEC Secretary-General also supported the suggestion that the number of votes is very important for obtaining decisions in the CITES-CoP, and thus a unified voice of the AMSs is necessary.

22. The Resource Person from FAO also highlighted that ornamental marine species are being considered for greater attention by CITES Parties, and that in many cases, information on trade of these species is difficult to understand *e.g.* species are often traded using trade names rather than species name, making it difficult to compare data across regions or regulate the trade of the species. While urging the ASEAN-SEAFDEC Member Countries to keep attention on this matter, he recommended that the countries should consider coming up with information on management of ornamental species in the region to support future CITES discussions on marine ornamental species. The representative from Japan added that the document on ornamental species as proposed by Switzerland has already been posted in the CITES website. He expressed the willingness of Japan to continue communicating and cooperating with the other SEAFDEC Member Countries on this matter.

23. The Resource Person from FAO also informed the Consultation of the opportunity for the ASEAN-SEAFDEC Member Countries to give inputs on the provisions related to “Introduction from the Sea” at the upcoming CITES-CoP. He explained that both movement of scientific samples and Appendix II-listed species products from the High Seas to EEZs would require CITES provisions to be dealt with and if the ASEAN-SEAFDEC Member Countries need more information or support to complete these functions, they should request the CITES Secretariat for support in terms of capacity enhancement so that the countries could comply with the provisions of this function in the future.

Agenda 8. Conclusion and Recommendations

24. The Consultation was informed that the SEAFDEC Secretariat will circulate the Report of the Consultation together with the Positions of the ASEAN-SEAFDEC Member Countries as agreed at this Consultation to their respective SEAFDEC Council Directors by 6 February 2019 for confirmation and approval. In addition, the Report together with the countries’ positions would also be sent to the Council Directors for Brunei and Singapore to seek their views and positions toward each proposal for listing of some CEAS in the CITES Appendices. The updated countries’ positions accommodating the views of the Council would be circulated to all countries again for information, and to the FCG/ASSP Focal Points *ad referendum* for endorsement under the ASEAN mechanism.

Agenda 9. Closing of the Consultation

25. The Resource Person from FAO expressed his gratitude for the opportunity given him to take part in the discussion and to share his views on the CITES-related issues with all ASEAN-SEAFDEC Member Countries at this Consultation.

26. The SEAFDEC Secretary-General thanked the Chairperson for his excellent chairpersonship that enabled the Regional Consultation to come up with fruitful results and to the Resource Person from FAO for his contribution which facilitates the discussion on several CITES-related issues.

27. In closing, the Chairperson expressed the appreciation to the resource persons, participants and the staff of SEAFDEC, and congratulated the Consultation for successfully coming up with the expected results. Although the Consultation could not come up with the same position for all countries, but the Consultation has achieved the agreement on various matters. He reiterated the need for regional cooperation among countries in the region and the concerned regional and international organizations on the CITES-issues. He also expressed the appreciation to the Japanese Trust Fund for supporting the conduct of this Consultation as well as to the Meeting Secretariat for the excellent arrangements for the Consultation. He then wished the participants to have a safe journey back to their respective countries, and declared the Meeting closed. His Remarks appears as **Annex 9**.