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INSIDE THIS ISSUE

- TD Develops Handbook on Socioeconomic Data Collection in Small-scale Fisheries 2
- Manuals on catfish culture and marine parasites launched by AQD 3
- SEAFDEC/AQD marks 51st anniversary with stakeholder-oriented activities 4
- IFRDMD celebrates a Decade of Dedication to Sustainable Development of Inland Fisheries in Southeast Asia 5
- Special Report: Regional Guidelines on Good Manufacturing and Handling Practices (GMP & GHP) for Ready-to-Eat Raw Fish and Fishery Products 8
- Kick-off meeting for Project on Combating Marine Debris from Fisheries organized 15
- USAID and SEAFDEC launch partnership to promote sustainable fishing practices in Indo-Pacific Region 16
- SEAFDEC, FAO co-host Training Workshop on Mixed Stock Fisheries in the Gulf of Thailand 17

Regional Fishery Statistics Framework (2024 Edition) deliberated at the fourth RTC



The SEAFDEC Secretariat organized the “Fourth Regional Technical Consultation on Fishery Statistics and Information in Southeast Asia” on 28–30 August 2024 in Bangkok, Thailand. The Consultation was attended by representatives from the ASEAN Member States (AMSs), an expert from Hokkaido University, and relevant officers from

the SEAFDEC Secretariat and Training Department. As the fourth in a series of Consultations on Fishery Statistics and Information in Southeast Asia, this Consultation intended to come up with the agreed tabulation for the preparation of the fishery statistics database based on the Regional Framework for Fishery

(Continued on Page 2)

EDITORIAL

The highlights during the third quarter of 2024 include the organization of several events that are beneficial to the Member Countries. The Fourth RTC on Fishery Statistics and Information in Southeast Asia was held and came up with a tabulation for preparing the fishery statistics online database based on the Regional Framework for Fishery Statistics of Southeast Asia (2024 Edition). Another important regional event was the Regional Training Course on Basic Stock Assessment for Marine Fishery Resources in Southeast Asia under the program Regional Capacity Building Network (RECAB) (supported by the JTF6-2) and the Training Workshop on Mixed Stock Fisheries in the Gulf of Thailand (co-hosted by SEAFDEC and FAO) which successfully enhanced the capacity of relevant officers from the ASEAN Member States (AMSs) as well as strengthen regional cooperation and

(Continued on Page 2)

MFRDMD convenes 3rd Core Expert Meeting on pelagic fish resources, 8th meeting of SWG-Neritic Tunas



Participants of the Third Core Expert Meeting of Fisheries Management Strategies for Pelagic Fish Resources in the Southeast Asian Region on 20 August 2024

Under the Japanese Trust Fund project held the “Third Core Expert Meeting of Fisheries Management Strategies for Pelagic Fish Resources in the Southeast Asian Region,” SEAFDEC/MFRDMD

held the “Third Core Expert Meeting of Fisheries Management Strategies for Pelagic Fish Resources in the Southeast Asian Region,” SEAFDEC/MFRDMD

(Continued on Page 3)

EDITORIAL

(Continued from Page 1)

network among the AMSs. In addition, the Third Core Expert Meeting of Fishery Management Strategies for Pelagic Fish Resources in the Southeast Asian Region and Eight Meeting of the SWG-Neritic Tunas Stock Assessment in the Southeast Asian Waters discussed the progress of stock assessment on selected fishes as well as genetic and life history studies of kawaka. Moreover, the kick-off meeting for the project “Regional Collaborative Research and Capacity Building for Monitoring and Reduction of Marine Debris from Fisheries in Southeast Asia” was organized to discuss the details of activities that are aligned with four priority areas of the ASEAN Framework of Action on Marine Debris.

SEAFDEC also continued to conduct several other trainings and workshops to enhance the capacity of SEAFDEC staff, relevant fisheries officers from the Member Countries, and fisheries students. The topics include MCS tools and innovations, artificial reefs, gender in fisheries, sharks and rays genetics, kawakawa otolith analysis, marine fish hatchery, and fish health management.

Toward strengthening cooperation with the regional and international agencies and organizations such as ASEAN, FAO, and CITES to address priority fisheries issues, SEAFDEC attended the 14th Meeting of Asian Shrimp Alliance, 16th Meeting of ASEAN Fisheries Consultative Forum, and 32nd Meeting of ASEAN Sectoral Working Group on Fisheries, 36th Session of the Committee on Fisheries (COFI36) of the FAO, 33rd Meeting of Animal Committee (AC33) of CITES.

Lastly, AQD celebrated its 51st anniversary with a series of events, including coastal cleanup, student visits, Farmer’s Forum, book launching, and Aquaculture Research Talk, among others. IFRDMD also commemorated its 10th anniversary and conducted activities that focused on its achievements. ✦

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Regional Statistics Framework (2024 Edition) deliberated at the fourth RTC (Continued from Page 1)



Statistics of Southeast Asia (2024 Edition) approved at the Fifty-sixth Meeting of SEAFDEC Council and endorsed by the 32nd Meeting of the ASEAN Sectoral Working Group on Fisheries or ASWGFi.

During the Consultation, the AMSs presented their respective countries’ fishery statistics and shared their experience on the availability of fishery statistics based on the revised Regional Framework and Questionnaires, and the Consultation came up with suggestions

for issues/challenges encountered. Subsequently, the Consultation discussed and agreed on the tabulation for future compilation and reporting of the regional fishery statistics, which will serve as the basis for the development of the database for fishery statistics of Southeast Asia for 2024 onwards. In this connection, the SEAFDEC Secretariat is in the process of developing a project proposal for funding support from the Japanese Trust Fund and it is expected that the new fishery statistics database will be ready by 2026. ✦

TD develops handbook on socioeconomic data collection in small-scale fisheries

Under the project “Small-scale Fisheries Management for Better Livelihood and Fisheries Resources,” SEAFDEC Training Department organized the “Core Expert Consultation on Preparation to Develop the Technical Manual for Socioeconomic Data Collection of Small-scale Fisheries” from 22 to 23 August 2024 at SEAFDEC/TD, Samut Prakan, Thailand. Fourteen experts in small-scale fisheries management from Kasetsart University, Prince of Songkla University, Department of Fisheries of Thailand, Ministry of Marine Affairs and Fisheries of Indonesia, and TD attended in the Consultation. The Consultation identified the key elements

of socioeconomic data collection and discussed the outline of the handbook on socioeconomic data collection in small-scale fisheries.

The Project is implemented by TD in 2020–2024 with support from the Japanese Trust Fund 6-2, and the development of the “handbook on socioeconomic data collection in small-scale fisheries” is based on experience of TD in socioeconomic data collection in fishing communities. The handbook it is intended to be used by SEAFDEC researchers and fisheries officers and researchers. ✦



Manuals on catfish culture and marine parasites launched by AQD



SEAFDEC/AQD launched two new aquaculture extension manuals during its 31st Book Launching activity on 9 July 2024 held at Tigbauan, Iloilo, Philippines as part of its 51st Anniversary celebration.

The first manual, “Breeding, Seed Production, and Culture of African Catfish *Clarias gariepinus*” is authored by Dr. Josefa D. Tan-Fermin, Jebrham Navarro, Gemma Arnaldo, and Rheniel Dayrit. The manual summarizes the existing techniques on the induced breeding, seed production, and culture of the African catfish based on surveys conducted from 2020 to 2021 in Iloilo, Philippines.

The second manual, “Manual on Important Marine Parasites and their Hosts in the Philippines” provides basic

information on parasites submitted to AQD’s Diagnostic Service Laboratory. The authors, Ms. Gregoria Pagador, Mr. Blan Jericho Caloyloy, and Dr. Leobert de la Peña, prepared this manual to serve as a reference for those working in marine aquaculture.

Fish farmers, aquaculture extensionists, and members of the academe attended the Book Launching program, during which 20 attendees were selected to receive the first copies of the new publications. ❖

AQD Chief briefs top Philippine agriculture, fisheries officials on SEAFDEC programs

SEAFDEC/AQD Chief, Mr. Dan Baliao, met with key officials from the Department of Agriculture (DA) of the Philippines on 10 September 2024 to discuss ongoing projects and research initiatives. Among those present were DA Secretary Mr. Francisco Tiu Laurel, Jr.; DA Undersecretary for Fisheries, Ms. Drusila Esther Bayate; and Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources (BFAR) Officer-in-Charge, Mr. Isidro Velayo, Jr.



The briefing, held at the BFAR Central Office in Quezon City, Philippines, focused on the contributions of AQD

to the advancement of aquaculture in the Philippines. Mr. Baliao emphasized the importance of research-driven development in sustaining the aquaculture sector of the country. He also highlighted the strong partnership between AQD and the Government of the Philippines, which has been the host country of AQD for over 51 years. ❖

MFRDMD Convenes 3rd Core Expert Meeting on pelagic fish resources, 8th meeting of SWG-Neritic Tunas (Continued from Page 1)



Participants of the Eighth Meeting of the SWG-Neritic Tunas Stock Assessment in the Southeast Asian waters on 22 August 2024

Asian Region” on 20 August 2024. Afterward, MFRDMD organized the “Eighth Meeting of the SWG-Neritic Tunas Stock Assessment in the Southeast Asian Waters” on 22 August 2024. The two Meetings were attended in-person and online by the representatives from Brunei Darussalam, Cambodia, Indonesia, Malaysia, Myanmar,

Philippines, Thailand, and Viet Nam; resource persons from the Fisheries Research and Education Agency (FRA) Japan, Hokkaido University, Japan, and Universiti Malaysia Terengganu, Malaysia; observers from Fisheries Research Institute Bintawa, Malaysia and Department of Fisheries, Sabah; representatives from SEAFDEC Secretariat and Training Department; and officials and staff from MFRDMD.

During the two Meetings, the Project Coordinator, Mr. Mohammad Faisal Md Saleh, made a presentation on the stock status of pelagic fish resources. The presentation covered the stock status of three pelagic species, namely: *Rastrelliger kanagurta*, *R. brachysoma*, and *Decapterus* spp. as well as seerfish (tuna-like) species *Scomberomorus*

guttatus and *S. commerson*. Furthermore, the Research Officer from MFRDMD, Ms. Annie Nunis Billy, presented the findings of the study of the life history of neritic tuna species (*Euthynnus affinis*).

The Core Expert Meetings are organized every two years to discuss the progress of stock assessment on selected fishes, as well as the genetic and life-history studies of *E. affinis* (kawakawa). Moreover, the Scientific Working Group on Neritic Tuna Stock Assessment in the Southeast Asian Waters (SWG-Neritic Tunas) provides technical and scientific insights into the status of neritic tuna fishery resources and offers policy recommendations to ensure their sustainable exploitation and management in the region. ❖

DEPARTMENTAL ACTIVITIES

AQD marks 51st anniversary with stakeholder-oriented activities



SEAFDEC/AQD launched its week-long anniversary celebration with a coastal cleanup along the shoreline of its Tigbauan Main Station in Iloilo, Philippines on 5 July 2024 bringing together AQD staff, trainees, local police, local government personnel, and volunteers

SEAFDEC/AQD celebrated its 51st anniversary in July 2024 with a series of events. Kicking off the activities, a coastal cleanup was organized on 5 July along a 1.7-km shoreline surrounding its Tigbauan Main Station in Iloilo, Philippines. AQD staff, trainees, local police, local government personnel, and other volunteers, helped collect litter along the beach.

The festivities began on 8 July 2024 with students from the Guimbal and Tigbauan towns visiting the FishWorld museum and different AQD hatchery facilities. On the following day, around 100 fish farmers attended a Farmer's Forum, gaining insights into shrimp, eel, and giant freshwater prawn culture.

The Forum was followed by the 31st Book Launching of AQD where two aquaculture extension manuals were released entitled "Breeding, Seed



Students from Guimbal and Tigbauan towns participated in SEAFDEC/AQD Open-House Tour on 8 July 2024 exploring the FishWorld museum and various hatchery facilities. Students are holding abalone during their tour of the hatchery.

Production, and Culture of African Catfish" and "Manual on Important Marine Parasites and Their Hosts in the Philippines."

On 10 July 2024, AQD hosted the 2nd Aquaculture Research Talk and the 30th Dean Domiciano K. Villaluz Memorial Lecture where *Dr. Tipparat Pongthanapanich* from the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) delivered a lecture on aquaculture innovation, emphasizing collaboration for sustainable practices.

Furthermore, a blood donation drive was held on 11 July in partnership with the Philippine Red Cross, and a Medical-Dental Mission for local fisherfolk and senior citizens who were provided with free health services.

The anniversary concluded on 12 July 2024 with keynote addresses delivered by President of the Fisheries Agency of Japan, *Dr. Ichiro Nakayama*; Deputy Secretary-General of SEAFDEC, *Dr. Tomoko Nakazato*; and Secretary of the Department of Agriculture of the Philippines, *Mr. Francisco Tiu Laurel, Jr.* AQD staff were also recognized for their achievements, with the appointment of *Dr. Frolan Aya* and *Dr. Ma. Junemie Hazel L. Leбата-Ramos* as new senior scientists. ❖

IFRDMD shares the fascinating story of eels at International Literacy Day Celebration

In the commemoration of International Literacy Day, which is celebrated globally every 8 September, SEAFDEC/IFRDMD participated in a storytelling session about eels. The event gathered 23 girls and 14 boys and was organized in collaboration with the Employees' Wives Association of the Research Institute for Inland Fisheries and Extension on 10 September 2024 at Rumah Tahfidz Pinggiran Silaberanti Tsa Lihah in Palembang.

The storytelling session captured the imagination of the young audience as they were taken on an enthralling journey of the eel, from its mysterious origins in the deep sea to its migration upstream into the highland lakes. The children were captivated by the story and learned the importance of eels as a food source that can benefit their health. The eel, they learned, is packed with omega-3 fatty acids, essential for brain and nerve

development, and rich in vitamin A, which helps maintain eye health.

In addition to the storytelling, IFRDMD also distributed magazines and comics to the children to spark their interest in reading. The materials offered entertainment and educational content, reinforcing the event's message of promoting literacy and healthy living. ❖

IFRDMD celebrates a decade of dedication to sustainable development of inland fisheries



The year 2024 marks the 10th anniversary of SEAFDEC/IFRDMD as a Department of SEAFDEC, inaugurated on 2 September 2014. This milestone is an opportune time for IFRDMD to

reflect on its achievements and celebrate success. It is also a promising year to look to the future to grow as an institution specializing in sustainable development and management of inland fisheries

in Southeast Asia. IFRDMD extends gratitude to the Ministry of Marine Affairs and Fisheries of Indonesia for the constant support to reach its 10th year as well as to the SEAFDEC Member Countries for supporting its establishment and past and ongoing activities. IFRDMD is also grateful to the SEAFDEC Secretariat and Departments for the continued support; to the Government of Japan for its support through the Japanese Trust Fund (JTF) and Japan-ASEAN Integration Fund (JAIF); and to partners including FAO and USAID for the unwavering commitment and collaboration.



AQD conducts on-site training in Brunei Darussalam



A total of 68 trainees from Brunei Darussalam upgraded their skills through on-site training courses on marine fish hatchery operations and shrimp disease identification (Level 1) held from 19 to 27 August 2024, with the sponsorship of the Department of Fisheries under the Ministry of Primary Resources and Tourism of Brunei Darussalam. The Training, led by SEAFDEC/AQD

scientists and experts, was designed to enhance the country's capacity in aquaculture, particularly to combat disease outbreaks affecting the industry.

Thirty-four participants underwent a comprehensive training program from 19 to 24 August 2024 on marine fish hatchery operations, which included a mix of lectures and hands-on practical activities. Key lecture topics covered biology and broodstock management of marine fish, natural food culture (including *Artemia* culture), hatchery operations and biosecurity protocols, diseases of marine fish, nutrient requirements, and feed formulation. The trainees also engaged in practical activities such as natural food culture scaling techniques, broodstock sampling and

breeder selection, hormone preparation and larval rearing, egg collection, incubation, and feed preparation.

The second training held on 26–27 August 2024, focused on shrimp disease identification and was attended by another 34 participants. This two-day course addressed topics such as disease development and pathology, shrimp disease surveillance, biosecurity in aquaculture, and disease prevention, control, and diagnostics. Participants also had hands-on opportunities to practice sampling methodologies, apply biosecurity measures, and learn proper techniques for sending samples for disease diagnosis.



TD Welcomes USAID CTI-CFF Youth Ambassador Program participants

The participants in the USAID Coral Triangle Initiative on Coral Reefs, Fisheries, and Food Security (CTI-CFF) Youth Ambassador Program (YAP) were welcomed at the SEAFDEC Training Department (SEAFDEC/TD) on 13 September 2024 by the SEAFDEC Secretary-General and Chief of TD, *Dr. Suttinee Limthammahisorn*. The 36 visitors were composed of youth ambassadors and representatives from CTI-CFF, USAID

Regional Development Mission for Asia, and USAID Sustainable Fish in Asia Technical Support (SuFiATS). The activities of TD related to the ecosystem approach to fisheries management (EAFM), gender equality and social inclusion, fisheries technology, and youth involvement in fisheries were presented to the visitors. In addition, the visitors also had the opportunity to observe TD facilities including the fishing workshop and M.V. SEAFDEC.

Designed for youth and young professionals, the YAP is co-organized by CTI-CFF and SuFiATS Activity. The YAP is envisioned as an important opportunity to leverage and amplify regional efforts to enhance marine biodiversity conservation, promote (sea)food security, and advance the sustainable management of fishery resources.



Fukui Prefectural University students trained in aquaculture



Thirteen undergraduate students from Fukui Prefectural University in Japan, accompanied by three university lecturers, trained at SEAFDEC/AQD from 2 to 12 September 2024.

For ten days, the trainees, who were taking a degree in advanced aquaculture science, received an overview of SEAFDEC-developed aquaculture

technologies, specifically on mangrove crab, sandfish, and marine fish. The group was led by *Dr. Koichi Okuzawa* who served as Deputy Chief of AQD from 2005 to 2007. Apart from lectures, AQD provided the students with both theoretical and hands-on experience through visits to hatcheries in Tigbauan, Iloilo and marine fish cages at Nueva Valencia, Guimaras. ❖

Ten graduate from training course on marine fish hatchery



The Training Course on Marine Fish Hatchery Operations is one of the most sought-after courses at SEAFDEC/AQD.

Nine trainees graduated from the 37-day Training Course on Marine Fish Hatchery Operations. The Course, which ran from 17 June to 23 July 2024, was attended by trainees from Cambodia, Philippines, Saudi Arabia, Singapore, Thailand, and Viet Nam. Primarily held at the broodstock and hatchery facilities of AQD in Iloilo and Guimaras, the Training provided participants with comprehensive technical knowledge and practical skills in broodstock management, spawning, and larval rearing of marine fishes.

The Training Course offered an immersive experience to the trainees through lectures and hands-on practical sessions on natural food culture, feed formulation, and cage culture of marine fishes. Partly sponsored by the Japanese Trust Fund, the trainees also learned about biosecurity measures and protocols for hatcheries, fish health management, and nutritional diseases of marine fishes. ❖

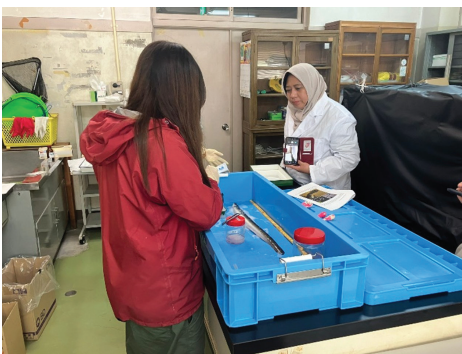
JTF-supported projects reviewed at IFRDMD Semi-annual Meeting



SEAFDEC/IFRDMD held a Semi-annual Meeting on 2 September 2024 in Palembang, Indonesia to review the accomplishments and future activities of two projects funded by the Japanese Trust Fund. The two projects include “Sustainable Utilization of Anguillid Eel Fisheries in Southeast Asian Region”

and “Management Scheme of Inland Fisheries in Southeast Asian Region” on the fifth year of implementation. The attendees of the Meeting are IFRDMD staff and observers from the Bureau of Public Relations and Foreign Cooperation, Ministry of Marine Affairs and Fisheries of Indonesia. ❖

IFRDMD staff training liaised by Marino Forum 21



The staff from SEAFDEC/IFRDMD, *Dr. Dina Muthmainnah*, spent a fortnight in Japan to take part in the “Training on small-scale fisheries, women’s

participation in fisheries, and survey methods in inland fisheries” with support from the Japanese Trust Fund. Organized by Marino Forum 21 of Japan from 20 July to 2 August 2024, the Training was aimed at enhancing the capacity of IFRDMD staff involved in training activities and establishing a network with universities and fisheries institutions in Japan.

The Training took place at the Graduate School of Kuroshio Science, Kochi University; Department of Japanese Food Studies of the Faculty of

Agricultural and Food Science, Kyoto Prefectural University; and Freshwater Biology Institute, Nagano University. Moreover, the Training also included a study visit to the Ainan Fishery Cooperative Association in Hirome Market and a discussion on “The Sea, People, and Life Network” at the School of Humanities, Tokai University were arranged. The Training culminated with a courtesy visit to the Fisheries Agency of Japan and the Fisheries Research and Education Agency (FRA) of Japan. ❖

University students learn gender mainstreaming in fisheries at TD



SEAFDEC Training Department (SEAFDEC/TD) imparted the knowledge of gender mainstreaming in fisheries to 17 fisheries management students from the Faculty of Fisheries, Kasetsart University. The Fisheries Management

Scientist and Gender Expert from TD, *Ms. Jariya Sornkliang*, delivered the lecture which focused on gender concepts, gender mainstreaming, and its tools, and gender integration in fisheries. The lecture was conducted at Kasetsart University and SEAFDEC Secretariat on 25 July and 1 August 2024, respectively.

Moreover, *Ms. Jariya* was invited by the Faculty of Agriculture and Natural Resources, University of Phayao as a guest lecturer at the University of Phayao, Phayao Province, Thailand

from 21 to 22 September 2024. The lecture was attended by 26 students taking up the fisheries technology and innovation course. The topics of the lecture include sustainable fisheries management with a focus on ecological and socioeconomic aspects, gender concepts, gender mainstreaming tools, and integration of gender into fisheries practices under SEAFDEC projects. The university students actively engaged throughout the lectures, gaining and sharing insights on gender issues in fisheries. ❖

TD surveys offshore area of the Gulf of Thailand for marine habitat establishment



Under the project on marine habitat establishment in the offshore area of the Gulf of Thailand, SEAFDEC Training Department (SEAFDEC/

TD), conducted a survey in the Gulf of Thailand using M.V. SEAFDEC from 23 June to 22 July 2024. The survey was purported to explore potential sites

for the deployment of artificial reefs made of used oil rig platforms for the establishment of marine habitats in the Gulf of Thailand.

The project with the objectives of supporting fisheries resource management and conserving and rehabilitating aquatic animals is implemented by TD in collaboration with the Department of Fisheries of Thailand and PTTEP International Limited. ❖

IFRDMD enhances inland fisheries knowledge of Lampung Fisheries Polytechnic students



SEAFDEC/IFRDMD brought invaluable insights into inland fisheries to 80 students from Lampung Fisheries Polytechnic in Kota Agung, Indonesia on 15 August 2024 to foster a greater understanding of the growing inland fisheries sector. The educational session focused on freshwater fish farming, eel fisheries, and SPECTRA system.

The event commenced with a warm welcome from the Academic Service Coordinator of Lampung Fisheries Polytechnic, *Mr. Made Ariana*, who expressed his gratitude to IFRDMD for their dedication to enhancing the knowledge of the students of inland fisheries. The students engaged in discussions on eel fisheries and SPECTRA system which highlighted sustainable practices and innovative

approaches to inland fisheries management. The sessions underscored the potential of inland fisheries, not only as a career path but also as a contributor to food security and economic growth.

The event concluded with closing remarks from the Principal of Intermediate Fisheries Business School and Vice Coordinator of Lampung Fisheries Polytechnic, *Mr. Kurman*. He underscored the success of the knowledge-sharing session and expressed optimism that such activities would continue in the future, ensuring that the upcoming generations are well-equipped with the knowledge and skills to contribute to the growth of the inland fisheries sector. ❖

SPECIAL REPORT

Regional Guidelines on Good Manufacturing and Handling Practices (GMP & GHP) for Ready-to-Eat Raw Fish and Fishery Products

SEAFDEC/MFRD

In today's fast-paced world, consumers increasingly demand quick and easy ready-to-cook (RTC) foods and ready-to-eat (RTE) meals. Many are drawn to seafood due to its high nutritional value and versatility in preparation. Popular quick and easy-to-prepare RTE seafood dishes include sushi, sashimi, shucked shellfish, and RTC seafood in sauce. However, the minimally processed or raw nature of these foods poses a high microbiological risk.

Ready-to-Eat (Fish & Fishery) Products

Ready-to-eat fish and fishery products have gained significant popularity in the ASEAN region due to their convenience, diverse flavors, and cultural significance. These products cater to the busy lifestyles of consumers who seek quick and convenient meal solutions without compromising on taste and nutrition. It is, therefore, essential that these foods are prepared under good manufacturing practices (GMP) and good handling practices (GHP), and leverage technologies such as high-pressure processing (HPP), to mitigate this risk while retaining the high nutritional content. These measures will improve the safety, quality, and value of seafood products.

Box. Some examples of ready-to-eat fish and fishery products in the region

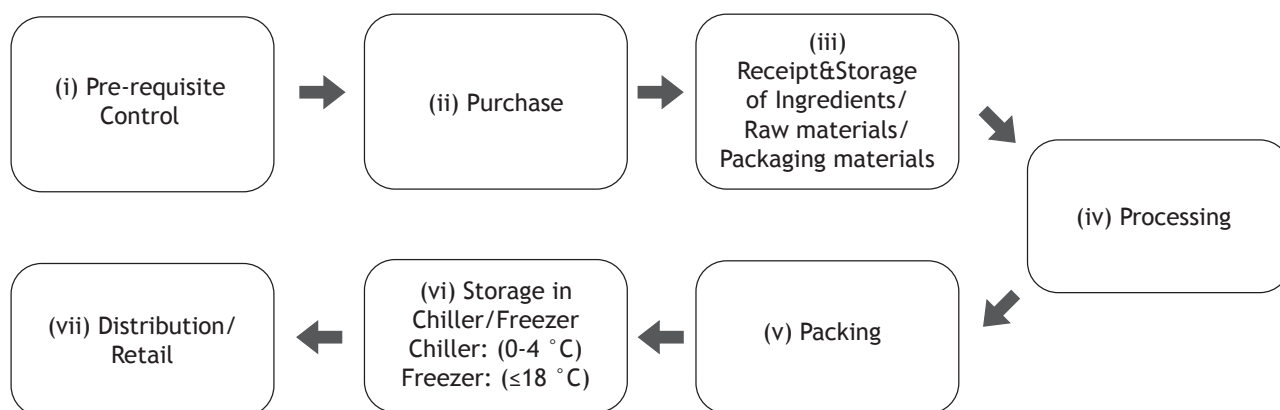
Sushi and Sashimi : <i>Japanese dish</i>	Ready-to-eat sushi and sashimi packs offer a variety of fresh fish, served with rice or as raw fish slices
Raw Fish Salad (Yam Pla) : <i>Thai dish</i>	features raw fish or seafood marinated in lime juice, fish sauce, chili, and other seasonings
Ceviche (suh vee chee)	It consists of raw fish or seafood marinated in citrus juice, such as lime or calamansi.
Fish Tartare	A raw fish preparation finely chopped or minced and mixed with various seasonings
Kinilaw : <i>Filipino dish</i>	raw fish or seafood marinated in vinegar or citrus juice, such as calamansi or kalamansi
Indonesian Rujak : <i>Indonesian dish</i>	A fruit salad that occasionally features thinly sliced or finely chopped raw fish or seafood.
Yu-sheng : <i>Malaysian/ Singaporean dish</i>	A raw fish salad typically made up of raw fish slices, shredded white and green radish and carrots, ginger slices, onion slices, crushed peanuts, pomelo, pepper, and oil
Umai : <i>Malaysian dish</i>	A seafood salad dish. It is traditionally prepared using thin slices of raw fish mixed with citrus juice, onions, vinegar and chilies, seasoned with salt



Regional Guidelines on GMP & GHP for Ready-to-Eat Raw Fish and Fishery Products

To strengthen capabilities of the ASEAN Member States (AMSs) in the safe handling and preparation of high-risk seafood, SEAFDEC/MFRD has developed the “Regional Guidelines on Good Manufacturing and Handling Practices (GMP & GHP) for Ready-to-Eat Raw Fish and Fishery Products.” This initiative is part of the project “Enhancing Food Safety and Competitiveness of Seafood Products” funded by the Japanese Trust Fund from 2020 to 2024. The Guidelines will serve as a reference for developing national standards for GMP and GHP for RTE raw fish and fishery products. The main content of the guidelines comprises the process flow for RTE raw fish and fishery products preparation, good manufacturing and handling practices, and verifications. These guidelines apply to the handling, processing, storage, transportation, and retail of RTE raw fish and fishery products that are intended for human consumption. By following the Guidelines, which are aligned with international standards, local seafood processors can adopt best practices for quality assurance.





Flow diagram of ready-to-eat raw fish and fishery products

The Guidelines were finalized through during the End of Project Meeting held in Singapore from 10 to 11 September 2024, in which representatives from the AMSs participated. The Meeting incorporated the final inputs and feedback from the AMSs. Moreover, the participants also had the opportunity to observe GMP and GHP practices first-hand through a technical site visit.

The final draft of the Guidelines will be submitted to the SEAFDEC Council during its Fifty-seventh Meeting in 2025 for approval. Subsequently, it will be circulated to the Fisheries Consultative Group of the ASEAN-SEAFDEC Strategic Partnership (FCG/ASSP) for endorsement prior to submission to the 33rd Meeting of the ASEAN Sectoral Working Group on Fisheries (ASWGF_i) in 2025.



End of Project Meeting for Enhancing Food Safety and Competitiveness of Seafood Products

REGIONAL PROGRAMS

Regional Capacity Building Network (RECAB) Training on Stock Assessment convened



24 participants in the Training including representatives from the SEAFDEC Member Countries, namely: Brunei Darussalam, Cambodia, Indonesia, Japan, Lao PDR, Malaysia, Myanmar, Philippines, Thailand, and Viet Nam as well as MFRDMD staff. The Training covered the topics of fisheries biology and biostatistics, fishing gear selectivity, fisheries acoustic survey, population dynamics, and maximum sustainable yield (MSY), among others. In addition, a study visit to the commercial fisheries landing port in Kuantan, Pahang was also undertaken as part of the Training.

courses provided by the SEAFDEC Departments to enhance the capacity of relevant fisheries officers from the SEAFDEC Member Countries as well as strengthen regional cooperation and network among the Member Countries on various disciplines of fisheries and aquaculture.

The SEAFDEC Secretariat in collaboration with the SEAFDEC/MFRDMD co-organized the “Regional Training Course on Basic Stock Assessment for Marine Fishery Resources in Southeast Asia,” under the Regional Capacity Building Network (RECAB) on 17–24 September 2024 in Kuala Terengganu, Malaysia. There were

The RECAB program covers a series of intensive technical training

The RECAB is a part of the project “Assistance for Capacity Development in the Region to Address International Fisheries-related Issues” funded by the Government of Japan through the Japanese Trust Fund.



SEAFDEC takes part in 33rd Meeting of Animals Committee



The Senior Policy Officer from the SEAFDEC Secretariat, *Ms. Pattaratjit Kaewnuratchadasorn*, and the Senior Expert and Assistant Project Manager for the Japanese Trust Fund Programs, *Mr. Fumiya Takahashi*, took part in the “33rd Meeting of Animals Committee (AC33) of the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES)” convened on 12–19 July 2024 in Geneva, Switzerland. The AC33 was attended by the CITES

Animal Committee members from six geographical regions (Africa, Asia, Europe, North America, Central and South America and the Caribbean, and Oceania), observer parties, and observer organizations.

During the AC33, the discussions focused on CITES trade regulations and compliance, capacity building, and other relevant topics. The AC33 also reviewed the species-specific matters of

endangered animals including aquatic species (e.g. sharks and rays, eels, seahorses, and marine ornamental fishes, among others). Moreover, in-session working groups were established to consider and discuss specific issues and draft recommendations for reporting back to the plenary discussion of AC33, where SEAFDEC participated in the working groups on sharks, seahorses, and Review of Significant Trade. SEAFDEC also made a short statement on its ongoing initiatives to enhance the capacity of the ASEAN Member States (AMSs) in identifying sharks and rays species and improving data collection for appropriate CITES implementation. The recommendations from the AC33 will be further considered at the upcoming 78th Meeting of the Standing Committee and Conference of the Parties (COP) of CITES in 2025. ❖

SEAFDEC takes part in the Gender Equity and Social Inclusion (GESI) Regional Exchange



The Senior Information Officer from the SEAFDEC Secretariat, *Ms. Saivason Klinasukhon*, and Fisheries Management Scientist from SEAFDEC/TD, *Ms. Jariya Sornkliang*, attended the “Gender Equality and Social Inclusion (GESI) Regional Exchange” convened in Bangkok, Thailand on 9–10 September 2024 hosted by the USAID Sustainable Fish Asia Technical Support (USAID SuFiA TS) in cooperation with the Coral Triangle Initiative on Coral Reefs, Fisheries, and Food Security (CTI-CFF). The Workshop was attended by representatives from CTI countries, namely: Indonesia, Malaysia, Philippines, Timor-Leste,

Papua New Guinea, Solomon Islands, and other countries from Southeast Asia including Lao PDR, Thailand, and Viet Nam as well as the relevant partners and SEAFDEC. The objectives of the Workshop were to discuss the establishment of a regional Gender Equality Hub (GE Hub); provide capacity building on grant proposal writing and GESI-sensitive communications and reporting; and develop a communication and knowledge product to document GESI status, success, and challenges in sustainable fisheries management.

One of the highlights of the Workshop was the discussion on the

establishment of the GE Hub included priority themes and issues, target outputs and outcomes, evaluation and impact measurement, membership and leadership, administrative and role and responsibilities, coordination and communication, as well as funding and sustainability. The GE Hub would serve as a platform for sharing, learning, addressing, and solving issues affecting the well-being. Moreover, the Workshop also noted the proposal writing techniques; lessons learned on gender integration in fisheries policies and management; gender research on GESI in fisheries; monitoring, evaluation, and learning (MEL), and GESI outcomes. ❖



SEAFDEC extends academic and educational cooperation with two universities in Japan

In the third quarter of 2024, SEAFDEC extended partnerships with two universities in Japan to promote scientific and educational cooperation toward the sustainable development of fisheries in the Southeast Asian region.

On 17 July 2024, SEAFDEC signed the Extension of Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with Nagano University which covered scientific, technical, academic, and educational cooperation on inland fisheries and freshwater ecology in the areas of

mutual interest. The MOU between SEAFDEC and Nagano University was first established in July 2019 for a period of five years, and the extension of the MOU would enable the cooperation between the two institutions to be effective for another five years until July 2029.

Additionally, on the same day, SEAFDEC also signed another Extension of Agreement for Academic and Educational Cooperation with the Faculty of Fisheries, Kagoshima

University. This Arrangement covers collaboration for research, symposia, and other academic pursuits; the exchange of staff members and students for education, training, and research; as well as the exchange of data, documentation, and research materials in the field of mutual interests. The arrangement between SEAFDEC and Kagoshima University was first established in 2003 and renewed every five years. This latest extension would enable the cooperation to be effective until August 2029.



SEAFDEC, Universiti Malaysia Terengganu sign MOU



The Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between SEAFDEC and Universiti Malaysia Terengganu (UMT) was signed during a ceremony held in Kuala Terengganu, Malaysia on 24 September 2024. Signed by the SEAFDEC Secretary-General, *Dr. Suttinee Limthammahisorn*, and the Vice Chancellor of the UMT, *Prof. Ts. Dr. Mohd Zamri Ibrahim*, the five-year MOU is aimed at strengthening and developing cooperation between SEAFDEC and UMT on the exchange of academic staff, administrative staff, and students; fostering joint opportunities in

the field of mutual interests; and sharing of research and academic information and other research and academic activities. The Signing Ceremony was witnessed by the Chief of SEAFDEC/MFRDMD, *Mr. Abd. Haris Hilmi bin Ahmad Arshad*, Director of the Institute of Tropical Aquaculture and Fisheries (AKUATROP), *Dr. Mhd Ikhwanuddin Abdullah*, and senior officials and representatives from SEAFDEC and UMT.

Prior to the Signing Ceremony, SEAFDEC was warmly welcomed by

the Deputy Director of the AKUATROP, Associate *Prof. Ts. Dr. Nor Azman Kasan*. AKUATROP is a research institute of UMT established on 3 October 2024 with the goal of increasing the production of important fishes, shrimps, and other aquatic species through research and development. SEAFDEC and AKUATROP exchanged information on the organization's roles, areas of work, and potential areas of collaboration. SEAFDEC also visited the laboratories and hatchery facilities of the AKUATROP.



Capacity of AMSs in MCS implementation strengthened



SEAFDEC Training Department (SEAFDEC/TD) organized the “Regional Training Course on Strengthening Capacity of Implementation for

Monitoring Control and Surveillance (MCS) in Southeast Asia” from 16 to 19 September 2024 at TD in Samut Prakan, Thailand. The 44 participants in the Training were from the ASEAN Member States (AMSs) and TD. Resource persons from the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), Global Fishing Watch, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), and Department of Fisheries (DOF) Thailand were invited to the Training. During the Training, the

participants enhanced their skills in risk assessment and analysis to combat IUU fishing by obtaining the knowledge of fisheries intelligence/innovation technology/application with notification on surveillance and MCS integration. This Training is an activity under the project “Strengthening Regional Cooperation and Enhancing National Capacities to Eliminate IUU Fishing in Southeast Asia” implemented by TD in 2020–2024 with support from the Japanese Trust Fund 6-2.



Project End Meeting on Responsible Fishing Technology and Practice convened



SEAFDEC Training Department (SEAFDEC/TD) organized the “Project End Meeting on Responsible Fishing Technology and Practice” from 19 to

21 August 2024 in Bangkok, Thailand. The Meeting aimed to summarize the implementation of the Project from 2020 to 2024 supported by the Japanese Trust Fund 6-2. There were 52 participants in Meeting including representatives from the ASEAN Member States (AMSs), resource persons, and researchers and staff from TD. The Meeting was divided into three sessions including 1) fishing technologies, 2) marine engineering technologies, and 3) post-harvest fish handling where information on ongoing activities in the respective AMSs and

responsible fishing and technology practices were shared.

As ways forward for promoting responsible fishing technology and practices in Southeast Asia, the Project recommended continuing the conduct of relevant activities on research, capacity building, and awareness raising; fostering collaboration among the AMSs; and promoting sound fisheries management measures.



TD facilitates installation of eACDS application in Brunei Darussalam



SEAFDEC Training Department (SEAFDEC/TD) organized the “Practical Training on Installation of the eACDS Application to Server” at

the Capture Fisheries Industry Division, Fish Landing Complex Muara, Brunei Darussalam from 23 to 25 July 2024. During the first two days of the activity, relevant officers from the Department of Fisheries (DOF) and Ministry of Primary Resources and Tourism of Brunei Darussalam were trained in the installation of the electronic ASEAN Catch Documentation Scheme (eACDS) application in the server. Subsequently, new staff from DOF Brunei Darussalam were trained on the use of the eACDS application particularly in the part of

Catch Declaration (CD), Movement Document (MD), Statement of Catch (SC), and Catch Certification (CC) via web-based and mobile applications.

The eACDS application is a prototype software for enhancing the traceability of fish and fishery products which was developed by TD and is now being implemented in Brunei Darussalam, Cambodia, Malaysia, Myanmar, and Viet Nam.



TD holds Workshop on NPOA-IUU and Innovative MCS Tools for Combating IUU Fishing Vessels



SEAFDEC Training Department (SEAFDEC/TD) organized the “Workshop on the Current Status of NPOA-IUU and Identification Need on Innovation MCS Tools for Combating IUU Fishing Vessels” from 3 to 5 September 2024 at TD premises in Samut Prakan, Thailand. The 34 participants of the Workshop include managers for combating IUU fishing activities representing Indonesia, Malaysia, and Thailand as well as representatives

from the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), SEAFDEC Secretariat, and TD. During the Workshop, the status of the National Plan of Action to Prevent, Deter and Eliminate Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated Fishing (NPOA-IUU) and its implementation in BOBLME-Southeast Asia area was shared, the need for innovative MCS tools to combat IUU fishing was identified, and the initiatives for cooperation among participating countries on MCS activities to combat IUU fishing were discussed. Furthermore, the Workshop came up with a list of innovative tools for enhancing MCS activities to combat IUU fishing which include radio detection finder to detect suspicious illegal vessels, upgraded VMS system, and an improved risk-based criteria system using AI.

The outcomes of the Workshop will be integrated into the future programs and activities of SEAFDEC related to MCS activities to combat IUU fishing.

The Workshop was an activity under the project “Sustainable Management of Fisheries, Marine Living Resources, and their Habitats in the Bay of Bengal Region for the benefit of Coastal States and Communities” or BOBLME II Project. SEAFDEC, together with the Bay of Bengal Programme Inter-Governmental Organization (BOBP-IGO) and International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN), is executing the BOBLME II Project from 2024 to 2028, which is an initiative of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) and Global Environment Facility (GEF).



IFRDMD holds FGD with fishers in Musi Banyuasin Regency, Indonesia



SEAFDEC/IFRDMD held a focus group discussion (FGD) with 22 fishers in Lake Ulak Lia, Sekayu, Musi Banyuasin Regency, South Sumatra Province, Indonesia on 3–4 September 2024. During the FGD, the fishers were interviewed about the progress of the activities conducted in the fishing community in 2018. The women provided insights into their

fishery activities that support their families, highlighting the significant contributions of women in this sector. In this regard, IFRDMD underscored the vital and often underappreciated role of women in inland fisheries, particularly in improving family welfare. Furthermore, the FGD brought to light the challenges in collecting data on inland fisheries production where

the absence of fish landing sites and the difficulty in gathering data on fishers are significant hurdles. These challenges stress the urgent need for a comprehensive and accurate data collection system for inland fisheries that would allow better identification of fishers and other stakeholders, ensuring that resources, training, and assistance are allocated effectively. The urgency of this need should prompt immediate action to address these challenges and enhance the sustainability and productivity of inland fisheries in Musi Banyuasin Regency and beyond.

The FGD was part of the project “Management Scheme of Inland Fisheries in Southeast Asian Region” funded by the Japanese Trust Fund.



IFRDMD investigates impact of microplastic contamination on fishes in Komering River



SEAFDEC/IFRDMD assessed the impact of microplastic contamination on fishes in the Komering River, a tributary of the Musi River in South Sumatra, under the project “Regional Collaborative Research and Capacity

Building for Monitoring and Reduction of Marine Debris from Fisheries in Southeast Asia” funded by the Japan-ASEAN Integration Fund (JAIF). The study was conducted from 12 to 17 July 2024 where 35 fish species were collected to identify the microplastic particles in their digestive organs. Moreover, water and sediment sampling were also undertaken to analyze the environmental impact of microplastics on the river. The water and sediment samples will be analyzed to extract and identify the quantity, size, and structure

of the microplastic particles including the types of polymers.

This study is critical to shed light on the growing concern of microplastic pollution in inland waters. Microplastics, tiny plastic particles less than 5 mm in size, have become a significant environmental threat, often originating from various human activities. These contaminants can accumulate in aquatic ecosystems and be ingested by fish, potentially affecting their health and the health of the humans who consume them.



IFRDMD conducts eel catch sampling survey in Poso River



SEAFDEC/IFRDMD conducted an eel catch sampling survey in the Poso River from 2 to 7 August 2024. The survey also included water quality measurements, deployment of fishing gear, and interviews with local fishers to

assess the current status of eel fisheries in the Central Sulawesi region.

In addition, IFRDMD gathered more information on eel fisheries from other Central Sulawesi regions to obtain comprehensive data to support sustainable fishery practices throughout the region. IFRDMD also visited a fishery company in Palu, specializing in catching, farming, and processing eel into a diverse range of fish products, including kabayaki and fish balls. It is the first company in Indonesia to produce eel

fish balls, setting a significant milestone in the country’s fish processing industry.

After completing the field surveys and visits in Central Sulawesi, a financial coordination meeting was held at IFRDMD in Palembang to ensure smooth financial management of activities funded by the Japan-ASEAN Integration Fund (JAIF). A representative from the SEAFDEC Secretariat who is overseeing the JAIF project, *Ms. Parinthon Youkongkaew*, joined in the activities.



TD, DOF Thailand define EAFM learning sites in Andaman coastline



Under the project “Sustainable Management of Fisheries, Marine Living Resources, and their Habitats in the Bay of Bengal Region for the Benefit of Coastal States and Community” or BOBLME II Project, the surveys to define the learning sites for the ecosystem approach to fisheries management (EAFM) in Thailand were conducted on 8 and 15 August 2024. The EAFM learning sites along the coast of

Andaman Province, covering Phang Nga, Krabi, Trang, and Satun Provinces were surveyed by the officers from the Department of Fisheries of Thailand. Moreover, the “Consultation Meeting to Define EAFM Learning Sites for EAFM Implementation in Thailand” was organized from 22 to 23 August 2024 at the Marine Fisheries Research and Development Center in Phuket, Thailand with 13 participants from

the DOF Thailand and SEAFDEC/TD. The Consultation aimed to define the two appropriate fisheries management units (FMUs) in the EAFM learning sites—one in the lower Andaman and one in the upper Andaman coastline—that would support the objectives of the Project and institutionalize EAFM at the national level.

The BOBLME II Project, implemented by TD from 2024 to 2028 and funded by the Global Environment Facility (GEF) and Norad, aims to contribute to the sustainable management of fisheries and marine resources in the Bay of Bengal region. Its objectives include reducing environmental stress, addressing transboundary concerns such as overexploitation and pollution, and enhancing stakeholder awareness and participation, particularly regarding socio-economic improvements and climate resilience. ❖

Workshop on effective management strategies for small-scale fisheries organized



SEAFDEC Training Department (SEAFDEC/TD) organized the “Regional Workshop on Compilation of Lesson Learned on the Project: Small-scale Fisheries for Better Livelihood and Fisheries Resource” from 5 to 7 August 2024 in Krabi Province, Thailand. The participants of the Workshop include 41 representatives from the ASEAN Member States (AMSS), SEAFDEC Secretariat, TD, AQD, and IFRDMD. The Workshop summarized the key successes, challenges, and lessons learned from the implementation of the Project in participating countries,

namely: Cambodia, Myanmar, and Thailand. The way forward to strengthen small-scale fisheries management in Southeast Asia was also discussed in the Workshop. Moreover, the participants of the Workshop visited Ban Nai Nang Community, which is the ecosystem approach to fisheries management (EAFM) learning site of the Project, to observe the activities of the community such as fishery resource conservation and rehabilitation, apiculture, mangrove conservation, crab bank, and fish processing.

The increased abundance of fishery resources and restored habitats due to the involvement of the community in the implementation of EAFM; the establishment of alternative livelihoods such as ecotourism and crab bank supported by capacity building; and women empowerment through targeted training programs and development of gender-responsive action plans are among the key successes of the Project. Moreover, the lessons learned for effective management strategies for small-scale fisheries include community involvement; adaptability and resilience to cope with environmental changes and economic challenges; incorporation of local knowledge and traditional practices; capacity development; and comprehensive monitoring and evaluation for effective management strategies for small-scale fisheries. The Project is implemented by SEAFDEC/TD in 2020–2024 with support from the Japanese Trust Fund 6-2. ❖

Training on evaluation approaches of artificial Reefs installation



Under the project “Sustainable Utilization of Fisheries Resources and Resources Enhancement in Southeast Asia” implemented in 2020–2024 with support from the Japanese Trust Fund 6-2, SEAFDEC/TD organized the “Regional Training Course on the Evaluation Approaches of Artificial

Reefs Installation to Enhance Marine Resources: Case Study of Fish Enhancing Devices (FEDs)” back-to-back with the “Seminar on Resource Enhancement in Southeast Asian Region” on 27–28 and 29 August 2024, respectively, at SEAFDEC/TD in Samut Prakan, Thailand. The participants in both

events include 25 fisheries officers from the ASEAN Member States. The invited resource persons for both activities include *Dr. Tuantong Jutagate* from Ubon Ratchathani University, *Dr. Sontaya Koolkalya* from Rambhai Barni Rajabhat University, *Dr. Ahmad Ali* formerly from MFRDMD, and *Ms. Penchan Laongmanee* from Burapha University. The topics of the Training and Seminar include sampling protocols for evaluation of the effectiveness of FEDs; fish diversity and assemblage patterns analysis; and hypothesis testing for evaluating the effectiveness of FEDs. These activities were organized to support the resource enhancement activities in the Southeast Asian region.



Kick-off meeting for project on combating marine debris from fisheries organized



SEAFDEC organized the regional kick-off meeting for the project “Regional Collaborative Research and Capacity Building for Monitoring and Reduction of Marine Debris from Fisheries in Southeast Asia.” Representatives from the ASEAN-SEAFDEC Member Countries, namely: Cambodia, Japan, Malaysia, Myanmar, Philippines,

Singapore, Thailand, and Viet Nam; a representative from the Japan-ASEAN Integration Fund (JAIF) Management Team, as well as officials and staff from the SEAFDEC Secretariat, TD, MFRDMD, and IFRDMD participated in the Meeting held virtually on 10 September 2024.

The Project, which is implemented by SEAFDEC from 2024 to 2026 with support from the JAIF, seeks to address the growing issue of marine debris, particularly from abandoned, lost, or otherwise discarded fishing gear (ALDFG), and build regional capacity for sustainable solutions. The Meeting discussed the details of the activities of the Project which were aligned with four priority areas of the ASEAN Framework of Action on Marine Debris including Policy Support and Planning; Research, Innovation, and Capacity Building; Public Awareness, Education, and Outreach; and Private Sector Engagement. Moreover, the indicative workplan and working mechanisms were also deliberated during the Meeting.



MFRDMD continues data collection on sharks and rays in Kota Kinabalu and Tawau

Under the Japanese Trust Fund project “Research for Enhancement of Sustainable Utilization and Management of Sharks and Rays in the Southeast Asian Region,” SEAFDEC/MFRDMD continued its data collection on the landings of sharks and rays. With assistance from the enumerators, the data were gathered from Kota Kinabalu and Tawau in Sabah, Malaysia.

The long-term landing data collected by MFRDMD will be utilized to estimate stock and biomass as the basis for the development of management measures. On 10–11 September 2024, MFRDMD visited the Fisheries Development Authority of Malaysia (LKIM) jetty in Tawau, and the adjacent Semporna Fisheries Jetty to oversee the landing of sharks and rays.



USAID and SEAFDEC launch partnership to promote sustainable fishing practices in Indo-Pacific Region



In July 2024, SEAFDEC and the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) officially launched a five-year partnership to enhance the management of fisheries and aquaculture resources which will safeguard the inland and marine biodiversity and fisheries resources in the Indo-Pacific region.

Co-created by SEAFDEC and USAID, the USAID Southeast Asia Fisheries Partnership represents a significant step forward in USAID's commitment to supporting regional organizations in addressing critical environmental challenges in the Indo-Pacific region. The partnership empowers a diverse range of stakeholders, including government officials at local and national levels, non-governmental organizations, and international bodies through support to enhance fisheries and aquaculture management practices, contributing to the efforts in addressing illegal, unreported, and unregulated (IUU) fishing.

USAID Southeast Asia Fisheries Partnership aims to improve and sustainably manage fisheries and aquaculture practices and productions, with three key objectives:

1. Fishery policies, programs, and plans supported by SEAFDEC are adopted and implemented by national fisheries agencies.
2. Commercial and small-scale fishers have appropriate financial and human resources, capacity, and good governance to adopt sustainable fishing and aquaculture practices.
3. National fisheries agencies and fisheries institutions enhance their operational and technical capacity.

“This partnership demonstrates our dedication to channeling funds directly to leading regional organizations,” said *Linda McElroy*, Acting Mission Director, USAID Regional Development Mission for Asia. “By working with SEAFDEC, we are leveraging regional expertise to develop tailored solutions for sustainable fisheries management and biodiversity conservation, benefiting both local communities and the global environment.”



“The Indo-Pacific region is rich in marine biodiversity, providing better livelihoods and food security to millions,” said *Dr. Suttinee Limthammahisorn*, Secretary-General, SEAFDEC. “With USAID's support, we are committed to promoting responsible practices in sustainable fisheries management and aquaculture to enhance fisheries resources and improve socioeconomic stability for Southeast Asian communities.”

On 23–24 July 2024, SEAFDEC and USAID held an Inception Workshop to introduce USAID Southeast Asia Fisheries Partnership to the SEAFDEC member countries and collaborating partners. The workshop addressed cross-cutting issues such as promoting gender equality and social inclusion, engaging the private sector, and advancing science and technology. It also served as a platform for calibrating the coordination and areas of collaboration to synergize their works.



MFRDMD conducts Workshop on Sharks and Rays Genetics and Kawakawa Otolith Analysis



SEAFDEC/MFRDMD conducted a Workshop on Sharks and Rays Genetics and Kawakawa Otolith Analysis in Pahang, Malaysia from 25 to 29 August 2024 to analyze the genetic data of three selected species of sharks and rays as one of the activities of the project “Research for Enhancement of Sustainable Utilization and Management of Sharks and Rays in the Southeast Asian Region.” Moreover, the Workshop

also covered the analysis of kawakawa otolith as part of the project “Fisheries Management Strategies for Pelagic Fish Resources in the Southeast Asian Region.” The Workshop was attended by the MFRDMD project staff and two doctorate students from the Universiti Malaysia Terengganu who are also involved in the two Projects supported by the Japanese Trust Fund.



SEAFDEC participates in 5th ITWG on AqGR, AquaGRIS launching



A representative from the SEAFDEC Secretariat, *Ms. Nualanong Tongdee*, participated as an observer in the “Fifth Session of the Intergovernmental Working Group on Aquatic Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture” organized by the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) at its Headquarters from 18 to 20 September 2024.

Attended by the Intergovernmental Working Group (ITWG) members from different regions, including the Southeast Asian region represented by Indonesia, Malaysia, and Philippines, the Session provided updates on the progress made by FAO in the implementation of the Global Plan of Action on Aquatic Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture (AqGR), including the development

of relevant new guidelines, *i.e.* the Guidelines for Sustainable Aquaculture (GSA); draft Guidelines for Genetic Management of Stocking Programmes for Aquatic Species; and draft Practical Guide for *ex-situ in vitro* gene banking of aquatic genetic resource for food and agriculture. The Session also noted the proposed indicators for monitoring the implementation of the Global Plan of Action, *i.e.* sets of resource indicators and process indicators, where countries would be requested to update the information every two and five years, respectively, to contribute to the preparation of the Second Report on the State of the World’s Aquatic Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture in 2029. Moreover, the requirements from countries were also raised at the Session, including continued capacity building

on AquaGRIS as well as enhancing the understanding and implementation of the relevant guidelines once adopted in the future.

Prior to the ITWG Session, FAO organized an event to launch the AquaGRIS on 17 September 2024. AquaGRIS is a tool through which countries, on a voluntary basis, will regularly report to FAO the information on the aquatic genetic resources for food and agriculture or AqGR within their national jurisdictions. At this event, *Ms. Nualanong* presented the development program for creation of national registries of aquatic biodiversity implemented in 2024 under the Letter of Agreement (LoA) between FAO and SEAFDEC for the provision of “Support for strengthening regional capacity to monitor the status of management of aquatic genetic resources.”



SEAFDEC presentation during launching of the AquaGRIS

SEAFDEC, FAO co-host Training Workshop on Mixed Stock Fisheries in the Gulf of Thailand



SEAFDEC and the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) jointly hosted the “Sub-regional Training Workshop on Mixed Stock Fisheries in the Gulf of Thailand” on 26–30 August 2024 in Bangkok, Thailand. The Workshop was attended by the fishery officers from the Gulf of Thailand countries, namely:

Cambodia, Malaysia, Thailand, and Viet Nam; representatives from SEAFDEC and FAO; and resource persons. The Workshop was a continuous effort of SEAFDEC and FAO to enhance the capacity of the fishery officers engaged in stock assessment in Southeast Asia to enable them to provide science-based advice for management plans towards sustainable utilization of fishery resources. The Workshop focused on the Gulf of Thailand sub-region and covered several sessions including multispecies assessment and management framework, development of a common set of indicator species for the Gulf of Thailand, harvest strategies, and empirical alternatives in data-poor situations.

In addition, the participants were informed of the new GEF-funded project “Promoting the blue economy and strengthening fisheries governance of the Gulf of Thailand through the Ecosystem Approach to Fisheries (GoTFish Project)” and the assessments and reporting system to monitor the future changes in the fisheries in the Gulf of Thailand sub-region were discussed during the Workshop.

The Workshop was funded by FAO and the Japanese Trust Fund as part of the project “Assistance for Capacity Development in the Region to Address International Fisheries-related Issues” implemented by SEAFDEC.

FUTURE ACTIVITIES

Date	Venue	Title	Organizer(s)
2024			
1–3 October	Bangkok, Thailand	Regional Training on Traceability and Effective Management Tools for Fish and Fishery Products in Southeast Asia	TD (ASEAN-JICA project)
7–15 October	Samut Prakan, Thailand	Training Course on The Principle of Hydroacoustic Survey using Quantitative Echosounder (EK80) and Data Analysis	TD
8–10 October	Samut Prakan, Thailand	Regional Workshop on Gender Mainstreaming in Fisheries in Southeast Asia	TD
16–18 October	Samut Prakan, Thailand	Regional Seminar on the Progress of Fish Stock Assessment in SEAFDEC Member Countries	TD
22–25 October	Online meeting	46 th Meeting of Meeting of the ASEAN Ministers on Agriculture and Forestry (AMAF)	ASEAN
23 October	Online meeting	2 nd Core Expert Meeting on Research for Enhancement of Sustainable Utilization and Management of Sharks and Rays in the Southeast Asian Region	MFRDMD
23–24 October	Palembang, Indonesia	Workshop on 10-year Achievement of SEAFDEC/IFRDMD	IFRDMD
29 October	Online meeting	Regional Kick-Off Meeting for the Implementation and Assessment of the ASEAN Regional Plan of Action for the Management of Fishing Capacity	MFRDMD
4–6 November	Chiang Mai, Thailand	25 th SEAFDEC Information Staff Program (ISP) Meeting	SEC
4–7 November	Nagasaki, Japan	International Conference on Underwater Acoustics for Sustainable Fisheries in Asia (AFAS2024)	AFAS
5–7 November	Cambodia	Workshop on Introduction of Socioeconomic Monitoring (SocMon) for Coastal and Small-scale Fisheries Management in Southeast Asia	TD
11 November	Webinar	Webinar on Addressing Abandoned, Lost, and Discarded Fishing Gear and Marine Debris in Southeast Asia	TD
13 November	Online meeting	2 nd Core Expert Meeting Research for Enhancement Sustainable Utilization and Management of Sharks and Rays in the Southeast Asian Region	MFRDMD
13–27 November	Binangonan, Rizal, Philippines	Training Course on Community-based Freshwater Aquaculture for Remote Rural Areas of Southeast Asia (regular course)	AQD
19 November	Manila, Philippines	Philippine Technical and Administrative Committee (PTAC) Meeting	AQD
19–20 November	Bangkok, Thailand	Regional workshop on the Utilization of Geographic Information System (GIS) and Remote Sensing (RS) in Fisheries and Environmental Science	TD
19–22 November	Samut Prakan, Thailand	Regional Training Course on Enhancing Capacity for Monitoring Control and Surveillance (MCS) of Domestic and International Fishing Vessels to Combat IUU Fishing	TD (BOBLME II project)
2–4 December	Singapore	47 th Meeting of SEAFDEC Program Committee Meeting	MFRD & SEC
5–6 December	Singapore	27 th Meeting of the Fisheries Consultative Group of the ASEAN-SEAFDEC Strategic Partnership	SEC
7 December	Singapore	SEAFDEC Department Chiefs' Meeting	SEC
10–12 December	Rome, Italy (Hybrid mode)	9 th Session of the FIRMS Technical Working Group (TWG9)	FAO/FIRMS
11–13 December	Bangkok, Thailand	On-site Training on Traceability of Fish and Fishery Products	TD (ASEAN-JICA project)
12 December	Palembang, Indonesia	2024 JTF Annual Meeting Progress of IFRDMD Activity	IFRDMD
16–18 December	Bangkok, Thailand	2 nd Regional Project Steering Committee Meeting for the Sustainable Management of Fisheries, Marine Living Resources, and Their Habitats in the Bay of Bengal Region for the Benefit of Coastal States and Communities Project Phase II	RCU of BOBLME II Project

SEAFDEC highlights commitments and achievements at FAO COFI36

(Continued from Page 20)

to securing sustainable small-scale fisheries through capacity building, policy advocacy, and community empowerment.

At the high-level event of COFI36 marking the 10th Anniversary of the Voluntary Guidelines for Securing Sustainable Small-Scale Fisheries in the Context of Food Security and Poverty Eradication (SSF Guidelines), the importance of addressing illegal, unreported, and unregulated (IUU) fishing and promoting gender equality in fisheries management were underscored. SEAFDEC shared its achievements in enhancing resource management and market access for small-scale fishers in Southeast Asia which are crucial for sustaining food security and improving livelihoods.

Furthermore, SEAFDEC expressed its support for the outcomes of the 12th Session of the Sub-Committee on Aquaculture advocating for the sustainable use of aquatic genetic resources and the Blue Transformation roadmap and emphasizing the need for guidelines on eco-friendly practices, climate-resilient aquaculture, and social equity. Discussions highlighted the role of sustainable aquaculture in enhancing food security and addressing the challenges of climate change, underscoring the importance of cohesive international efforts. The ongoing collaboration of SEAFDEC with FAO in organizing workshops and promoting advanced technologies reflects its commitment to sustainable aquaculture and fisheries management in the region.



Malaysian researchers train on marine fish hatchery and health management

Six staff from the Borneo Marine Research Institute, Universiti Malaysia-Sabah underwent training at SEAFDEC/AQD Tigbauan Main Station in Iloilo, Philippines from June to August 2024, focusing on marine fish hatchery operations and fish health management.

The marine fish hatchery training course was organized from 29 July to 9 August where the trainees gained knowledge of broodstock management, spawning, and larval rearing. They attended both lectures and practical sessions on hatchery management, natural food culture, and feed formulation, and visited the Dumangas Brackishwater Station and Igang Marine Station.

Moreover, the fish health management course held from 12 to 19 August provided hands-on training and lectures on topics such as disease development in aquaculture; viral, bacterial, and parasitic diseases; and biosecurity measures. The trainees also engaged in practical sessions, diagnosing diseases in shrimp and fish, identifying fungal diseases, and isolating bacteria and parasites.



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 highlights commitments and achievements at FAO COFI36



SEAFDEC participated in the “36th Session of the Committee on Fisheries (COFI36) of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO)” organized on 8–12 July 2024

at the FAO Headquarters in Rome, Italy. The COFI36 was participated by representatives from COFI Members, COFI country observers, and relevant organizations. The attendees from SEAFDEC were the SEAFDEC Secretary-General, *Dr. Suttinee Limthammahisorn*, and the Policy and Program Coordinator from the SEAFDEC Secretariat, *Dr. Worawit Wanchana*.

During the COFI36, SEAFDEC commended the new edition of The State

of World Fisheries and Aquaculture (SOFIA) for its vital insights and applauded the FAO for its efforts in promoting sustainable practices. Moreover, SEAFDEC reaffirmed its commitment to align its initiatives with SOFIA and the Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries, highlighting the significance of sustainable fisheries management in achieving the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and ensuring global food security. SEAFDEC also reiterated its dedication

(Continued on Page 19)

SEAFDEC attends ASEAN fisheries-related meetings



*Dr. Suttinee Limthammahisorn
The Secretary-General of SEAFDEC*

The Secretary-General of SEAFDEC, *Dr. Suttinee Limthammahisorn*, along with the Senior Policy Officer of the SEAFDEC Secretariat, *Ms. Pattaratjit Kaewnuratchadasorn*, took part in the ASEAN fisheries-related meetings, namely: 14th Meeting of ASEAN Shrimp Alliance (14th ASA), 16th Meeting of ASEAN Fisheries Consultative Forum (16th AFCF), and 32nd Meeting of ASEAN Sectoral Working Group on Fisheries (32nd ASWGF_i). The Meetings were held in Penang, Malaysia, and hosted by the Department of Fisheries Malaysia of the Ministry of Agriculture and Food Security of Malaysia.

During the 16th AFCF organized on 2 July 2024, SEAFDEC presented the initiatives and activities undertaken by its Departments in 2023–2024 including fishing capacity, sustainable small-scale fisheries, impacts of climate

change on fisheries, combating IUU fishing, and traceability of fisheries and aquaculture products to support the ASEAN Member States (AMSs). Moreover, *Dr. Suttinee* congratulated the AMSs on the approval of the project “Implementation and Assessment of Fishing Capacity and Zoning System for Southeast Asia” funded by the Japan-ASEAN Integration Fund (JAIF) to be implemented by SEAFDEC/MFRDMD. Furthermore, she informed the 16th AFCF that several new projects funded by various donors have been approved and started implementation in 2024 which focus on several topics *i.e.* EAFM, combatting IUU fishing, small-scale fisheries, and impacts of climate change. These projects were aimed at supporting the AMSs in achieving sustainable utilization of fishery resources and food security.

For the 32nd ASWGF_i convened on 3–5 July 2024, a number of ASEAN dialog partners including SEAFDEC were invited to present their respective cooperation with ASEAN. Under the ASEAN-SEAFDEC Strategic Partnership (ASSP), SEAFDEC reported the outcomes of the Twenty-sixth Meeting of Fisheries Consultative Group of the ASEAN-SEAFDEC Strategic Partnership (26FCG/ASSP) organized in November 2023. In particular, the 32nd ASWGF_i supported the submission of the Regional Framework for Fishery Statistics of Southeast Asia (2024 Edition), which was approved by the SEAFDEC Council during its 56th Meeting in 2024, to the Special Senior Officials Meeting of the ASEAN Ministers on Agriculture and Forestry (SOM-AMAF) for endorsement.



Participants of the 16th Meeting of ASEAN Fisheries Consultative Forum