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EDITORIAL

For the first quarter of 2017, one of the highlighted events was the visit to TD of the SEAFDEC Council Director for Brunei Darussalam, *Mr. Abdul Halidi bin Mohd. Salleh* together with officers from the Department of Fisheries of Brunei Darussalam. During the period, courtesy visit of the Secretary-General to *Comm. Eduardo B. Gongona* the Council Director for Philippines and the Department of Agriculture Sec. *Emmanuel F. Piñol* was also made to discuss on the Philippine Government's support to the future activities of SEAFDEC, particularly to AQD which is hosted by the Philippines.

The SEAFDEC Departments continued to conduct several training courses and surveys related to fisheries,

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SEAFDEC Council Director for Brunei Darussalam visits TD



Mr. Abdul Halidi bin Mohd. Salleh during his visit to the SEAFDEC Training Department

The Director General of Department of Fisheries and SEAFDEC Council Director for Brunei Darussalam *Mr. Abdul Halidi bin Mohd. Salleh* and his team paid a visit to the SEAFDEC Training Department (TD) on 17 January 2017. At the welcoming reception, SEAFDEC Secretary-General and Chief of TD, *Dr. Kom Silapajarn* led the SEAFDEC staff to welcome the guests. The roles

played by SEAFDEC and TD on regional fisheries development and significant achievements were presented. This was followed by discussions on the plan for future development of fisheries industry in Brunei Darussalam. Subsequently, a tour to observe TD facilities such as the fishing and engineering workshop as well as facilities onboard the M.V. SEAFDEC 2 was conducted. ❖

Working Group Meeting on Tuna Research in Sulu and Sulawesi Seas

SEAFDEC/TD in collaboration with the Secretariat organized the "Working Group Meeting to Follow-up Activities on Joint Program on Tuna Research in Sulu and Sulawesi Seas" from 30 to 31 March 2017 in Bangkok, Thailand. Twenty-three participants, comprising representatives from Malaysia, Indonesia,

and Philippines, SEAFDEC staff, and a Japanese resource person, attended the Meeting, which came up with an updated progress on tuna research in Sulu and Sulawesi Seas. Topics on stock assessment, spawning grounds, genetics, among others, were discussed, while solutions for the difficulties on data analysis were explored. Planning of a joint program on tuna research in Sulu and Sulawesi Seas during 2017-2019 was also initiated. ❖



EDITORIAL

(Continued from Page 1)

aquaculture and fisheries post-harvest including regional practical training on energy audit for fishing vessels, EAFM, mangrove crab farming, gender analysis, etc. SEAFDEC also conducted the “Workshop on Establishment of Institutional Repository” which came up with strategies required for the establishment of the repository system by SEAFDEC Secretariat and Departments that would facilitate wider dissemination of results of SEAFDEC works to target audience and enhanced visibility of SEAFDEC in the future.

Activities were also conducted to facilitate sub-regional cooperation. The “Sub-regional Meeting on Tuna Research in Sulu and Sulawesi Seas” was organized to update the progress of activities on tuna stock assessments, spawning grounds and genetics, and plan for the joint program on tuna research in the future. Moreover, the “6th Meeting of the Gulf of Thailand Sub-region” was organized, where progress on the implementation of activities was reviewed to ensure that the activities address the common priority areas on transboundary fisheries and habitat management, and the needs of countries bordering the Gulf of Thailand sub-region.

In addition, collaboration with various organizations and agencies had been enhanced while SEAFDEC continued to participate in the international and regional fora as well as strengthened cooperation with national agencies which have been serving as platforms for collaborative activities on human resources development and sustainable development of fisheries in the Southeast Asian region. ✦

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AQD participates in regional biodiversity conservation workshop

SEAFDEC/AQD Scientist *Dr. Ma. Rowena Eguia* attended the “Southeast Asia Regional Forum on the Conservation and Sustainable Use of Marine Biodiversity Beyond Areas of National Jurisdiction (BBNJ)” on 17-18 January 2017 in Manila, Philippines as a session moderator and panel discussant.

The two-day forum gathered public and private entities and representatives



Dr. Eguia (right) together with University of Tokyo's Atty. Jacqueline Espenilla (left) during a panel discussion

of the scientific community to provide insights and inputs for the national and regional positions in UN meetings that tackle the issues on managing marine biodiversity beyond national jurisdictions. Presentations on specific topics included marine genetic resources, marine protected area management tools, environmental assessments and capacity building, and marine technology transfer. Through this meeting, AQD managed to get updates on vital issues and imparted knowledge to technical discussions.

The workshop was organized by the Department of Agriculture (DA), DA-Philippine Council for Agriculture and Fisheries, and Department of Environment and Natural Resources in collaboration with Greenpeace and Pew Charitable Trusts. ✦

ASEAN delegates visit AQD

Even the rainy weather did not dampen the enthusiasm of the delegates attending the “17th ASEAN Socio-Cultural Community (ASCC) Council Meeting” and the “22nd Senior Officials Committee for the ASCC Meeting” as they trooped to SEAFDEC/AQD Tigbauan Main Station on 9 March 2017.

The delegates were ushered to the informative exhibits featuring aquaculture commodities and the research and information dissemination activities of AQD. They also visited the Integrated Fish Broodstock and Hatchery Complex and FishWorld. To make the delegates’ visit more gratifying, they were served with Ilonggo native delicacies.



Philippine Social Welfare Secretary Judy Taguiwalo was briefed about abalone culture by Ms. Mary Dianne Grace Arnaldo

Iloilo City hosted the two meetings led by the Philippine Department of Social Welfare and Development. The tour was part of the ASCC meetings on 6-9 March 2017 that aimed to contribute in realizing an ASEAN Community that is people-oriented and socially responsible.

The ASEAN was established to accelerate economic growth, social progress and cultural development in the region. The ASEAN Member States include Brunei Darussalam, Cambodia, Indonesia, Lao PDR, Malaysia, Myanmar, Philippines, Singapore, Thailand, and Viet Nam. ✦

SEAFDEC Secretary-General pays courtesy visit to BFAR and DA, Philippines



SEAFDEC mission with DA Secretary Emmanuel Piñol (third from the right) together with with Comm. Gongona (second from the right) and Mrs. Bayate (rightmost)

On 6 February 2017, the Mission Team of SEAFDEC led by the Secretary-General *Dr. Kom Silapajarn* made a

courtesy visit to the newly appointed SEAFDEC Council Director for the Philippines and Director of BFAR *Comm. Eduardo B. Gongona* and the Alternate Council Director *Mrs. Drusila Esther E. Bayate* at the Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources (BFAR) Office in Quezon City. During the visit, discussions were made on SEAFDEC and its recent activities, particularly the collaborative efforts in combating illegal, unreported and unregulated (IUU) fishing and development of technologies to support the sustainable development of fisheries and aquaculture in the region.

On the same day, the Secretary-General also made a courtesy visit to

the Secretary of the Department of Agriculture *Sec. Emmanuel F. Piñol*. The discussions focused on enhanced support of the Philippine Government to the future activities of SEAFDEC, particularly the operation of SEAFDEC/AQD hosted by the Philippine Government since 1973.

On 7 February, the Secretary-General together with the AQD Acting Chief *Dr. Chihaya Nakayasu*, met with the AQD staff. During the general assembly, the discussion dealt with the future operation of AQD, as well as the plans for the celebration of the 50th Anniversary of SEAFDEC which is scheduled towards the end of 2017. ❖

Mangrove crab training in Mindoro Oriental and Iloilo

A total of 80 participants from Oriental Mindoro and Iloilo took part in SEAFDEC/AQD's training sessions on mangrove crab farming, organized in partnership with various organizations.

AQD conducted a training on Mangrove Crab Nursery and Grow-out Culture in Concepcion, Iloilo, Philippines on 31 January-1 February 2017. This was attended by 32 participants from members of Plandico Fisherfolk Association, World Renew-Philippines, and Northern Iloilo Polytechnic State College. The training was organized in partnership with the World Renew Fund, an international organization that helps rehabilitate the communities affected by typhoon Haiyan.

Moreover, 48 participants took part in the "Klinika Series: Aquaculture Reform 3.0 - Training Course on Mangrove Crab

Nursery and Grow-out Culture" organized by AQD in partnership with Tamaraw Young Professional Reformers on 8-10 February 2017 in Oriental Mindoro, Philippines. The training was funded by the Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources Region 4B and aimed to provide the participants with the knowledge and technical skills needed to culture mangrove crab.

AQD scientists *Dr. Emilia Qunitio*, *Dr. Fe Dolores Estepa*, and *Dr. Mae Catacutan* gave lectures on: (1) overview of the mangrove crab industry, hatchery operations, site selection and pond preparation, crab culture in ponds, pens and cages, crab fattening, aquasilviculture, soft-shell crab production and good aquaculture practices; (2) biology and identification of the mangrove crab and nursery management; and (3) nutrient



AQD Mangrove Crab Experts Dr. Fe Dolores Estepa and Dr. Emilia Qunitio discuss the anatomy of mangrove crab to the trainees; and Dr. Qunitio demonstrates the proper way of tying crabs



Participants observing how to install a hapa net in the pond

requirements, feed formulation, and feed preparation for grow-out, respectively.

The participants also took part in practical sessions that included stocking and acclimation of crab instar, sampling, monitoring of pond water, feeding management, harvesting, tying of mangrove crabs, packing and transport. ❖

DEPARTMENTAL ACTIVITIES

AQD campaigns for sustainable seafood



AQD signs commitment to support sustainable fisheries and aquaculture

SEAFDEC/AQD supported the cause of various organizations, including restaurants and hotels, to improve the health of the oceans by sourcing seafood products from more sustainable fisheries and aquaculture during the week-long celebration of “Sustainable Seafood Week (SSW) 2017” held from 20 to 26 February 2017.

AQD highlighted its efforts in Molocaboc Island, Sagay City, Negros Occidental, Philippines through its Community-Based Resource Enhancement (CBRE) Project that was greatly commended during the event for successfully involving fisherfolk organizations and the local government in replenishing abalone and sandfish wild stocks and promoting the recovery of the marine ecosystem around the island.

The fisherfolk organization at Molocaboc Island already agreed to supply 20 kg of live abalone per week to Marriott Hotel Manila through Meliomar Incorporated. The abalones are sustainably sourced because the size and

volume of spill-overs caught by fishers comply with agreed regulations.

“Actually, Meliomar wants 50 kg per week because the New World Hotel is also asking for live abalone. But we are being cautious, we informed them that we will supply volumes that will not compromise the stocks in the CBRE site in Molocaboc,” remarked Associate Scientist *Dr. Nerissa Salayo* of AQD.

Dr. Salayo was together with AQD Scientist *Dr. Ma. Rowena Eguia* in promoting good aquaculture practices during the SSW in order to provide food for tables while protecting natural resources. *“Give a man a fish and you feed him for a day. Teach a man to fish and you feed him for a lifetime. But teach a man how to grow fish and he’ll feed generations even beyond his lifetime,”* said *Dr. Salayo* during the NGO Workshop in Enderun Colleges, Manila, Philippines on 21 February 2017.

During the Workshop, *Dr. Salayo* gave a lecture on “Resource Enhancement as Provider of Sustainable Seafood” while *Dr. Eguia* spoke on “Aquaculture as Provider of Sustainable Seafood.”

The SSW calls for the establishment of an open and dynamic platform for stakeholders to discuss the status, challenges and promote awareness for more sustainable seafood in the Philippines.



Dr. Nerissa Salayo (left) and Dr. Ma. Rowena Eguia (right) during their presentations

At present, over 31% of global fisheries have been overfished and a further 58% are fully exploited (FAO SOFIA, 2016) as presented by Marine Stewardship Council Program Director *Ms. Sheryl Torres-Wu* who emphasized the importance of awareness of the ocean’s sustainability for it is a strong driving force for consumers to buy sustainable seafood. This is why the country’s top restaurants and hotels vow to protect the world’s seafood supply. One of the partners for this cause is the five-star hotel Hyatt City of Dreams in Manila whose Executive Chef, *Mr. Michael Ludtke*, said that 58% of the seafood served in his kitchen last year was already sustainably sourced.

This move was commended by Greenpeace Southeast Asia Executive Director *Mr. Naderev Sano* who said, *“When we start looking at our plates, we [must] realize what’s at stake and be mindful of our oceans.”*

The week-long event, spearheaded by Meliomar Incorporated, included sustainable seafood cooking masterclass, working group sessions, workshops and a beach clean-up in Pandawan Fishport in Rosario, Cavite where AQD’s Binangonan Freshwater Station (BFS) staff participated along with Le Club Juniors PH, Greenpeace Philippines and Cavite’s local government unit – all as part of the promise of improving the health of our oceans. ❖



Community involvement in AQD research lauded by evaluators

Involvement of the community in SEAFDEC/AQD research projects was lauded by external evaluators as a positive development to make technology transfer faster and more effective.

Recounting how AQD research was just an academic undertaking in the past, *Dr. Carlos Baylon* of the University of the Philippines Visayas, noted that this later evolved to include technology packaging and dissemination. *“Now I am hearing the next stage which is the involvement of the community. I think this is a good strategy so that technology transfer will be faster and more effective, from the researcher to the community. I think this is a good thing so I would like to commend SEAFDEC for this evolving research philosophy,”* *Dr. Baylon* added.

Dr. Baylon was one of the external evaluators during the “2016 Annual Progress Meeting under the ASEAN-SEAFDEC Consultative Group Mechanism

funded by the Government of Japan-Trust Fund (GOJ-TF)” held on 9 February 2017 at AQD, Tigbauan, Iloilo, Philippines.

The Meeting reviewed 12 research studies that were part of two programs funded by GOJ-TF: 1) Reinforcement and optimization of fish health management and the effective dissemination in the Southeast Asian region; and 2) Environment-friendly, sustainable utilization and management of fisheries and aquaculture resources.

Dr. Joselito Somga, an evaluator from the Department of Agriculture-Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources (DA-BFAR), also noted the good results of AQD’s research into alternative ingredients as replacement for fish meal and expressed support towards involving the community in research programs. *“BFAR is willing to collaborate in the technology transfer of these projects so that the rural community will benefit from these projects,”* *Dr. Somga* remarked.



Participants of the 2016 Annual Progress Meeting of the GOJ-TF Program and evaluators Dr. Takuro Shibuno of Fisheries Research and Education Agency (seated, 6th from left), Dr. Joselito Somga of the Department of Agriculture-Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources (seated, 5th from left), Dr. Carlos Baylon of the University of the Philippines Visayas (seated, 4th from left) and SEAFDEC Deputy Secretary-General Dr. Kaoru Ishii (seated, 3rd from left)

Dr. Takuro Shibuno, Director of the Research Center for Aquaculture Systems, Fisheries Research and Education Agency and Former AQD Deputy Chief, also remarked on the importance of AQD’s study on aquasilviculture given that *“mangrove ecological function is very important for the farmers and small-scale aquaculture.”*

“All the outputs of the current projects are very impressive,” over-all GOJ-TF fund manager and SEAFDEC Deputy Secretary-General *Dr. Kaoru Ishii* said while noting that the comments and suggestions given by scientists during the progress meeting are helpful in refining AQD’s research projects funded by Japan.

In closing, Research Division Head *Dr. Evelyn Grace Ayson* explained that AQD has indeed shifted from *“purely academic research and publication, to publication and technology dissemination, and to the current publication plus technology dissemination plus community involvement.”* *“It is good to hear that we are on the right track,”* she added. Likewise, she encouraged all the study leaders to revisit the proposed deliverables and timelines so that next year there will be more progress and more exciting results.

Dr. Chihaya Nakayasu, AQD’s Trust Fund Manager and Acting Chief, thanked the study leaders and the rest of the staff for all the efforts made in their reports. He also acknowledged the important and insightful comments of the evaluators.



EAFM training for Trat Provincial Fisheries Committee

SEAFDEC/TD in collaboration with REBYC-II CTI Project organized the “Essential Ecosystem Approach to Fisheries Management (EAFM) Training Course” from 16 to 21 January 2017 in Trat Province, Thailand. Twenty-five trainees who are Trat Provincial Fisheries Committee members and stakeholders participated. The training course provided the concept and principles of EAFM

through practice to reduce user group conflicts, work cooperativism with stakeholders, and for resolution of fisheries issues and challenges. The training came up with the draft EAFM plans developed for Trat fisheries including trawl to support fisheries management plan of the DOF Thailand in the pilot site of REBYC-II CTI project in Trat Province.



Research interests of AQD presented at DLSU workshop

SEAFDEC/AQD participated in the “Strategic Planning Workshop of the Technologies for Biodiversity Use and Conservation (TechBiodive) Unit” of De La Salle University (DLSU) in Manila, Philippines on 11 February 2017. This activity was conducted so that TechBiodive can discuss future research projects with potential collaborators for possible funding by granting agencies such as DOST, DLSU, and USAID among others.

During the workshop, *Dr. Maria Rowena Eguia* and *Dr. Maria Lourdes Aralar* talked about AQD’s research

projects on genetics and biodiversity, and freshwater ecology and conservation, respectively. AQD’s Senior Technical Assistant *Mr. Dan Joseph Logronio* also attended the workshop.

TechBiodive is one of the 10 research units under the Center for Natural Science and Environment Research (CENSER), the research center of DLSU’s College of Science. CENSER Research Teams are given a one-time seed fund of Php 200,000 to start-up a research project. This workshop is the first activity for the DLSU investment.



SEAFDEC/AQD Scientists Dr. Maria Rowena Eguia (seated, 2nd from left), Dr. Maria Lourdes Aralar (seated, 3rd from left) and Senior Technical Assistant Mr. Dan Joseph Logronio (standing, 4th from right) together with other workshop participants

Workshop on Establishment of Institutional Repository of SEAFDEC Secretariat and Departments

SEAFDEC Secretariat organized the “Workshop on Establishment of Institutional Repository of SEAFDEC Secretariat and Departments” to enhance the accessibility of SEAFDEC information through their respective institutional repository. The Workshop was held from 6 to 9 March 2017, in Samut Prakan, Thailand and was attended by information-related staff from SEAFDEC Secretariat and Departments.

The participants were embedded with knowledge required for the establishment of the repository system. The resource persons were from SEAFDEC/AQD and they shared lessons learned and experiences on the establishment of the AQD Repository and guided the participants through the process of establishing a repository system.



Representatives from SEAFDEC Departments during the Workshop

It is planned that the Secretariat would hold the centralized repository system that links the different departmental information repositories. It is also envisaged that the SEAFDEC repository will contribute to the wider dissemination of results of SEAFDEC works to target audience and enhanced visibility of SEAFDEC in the future.



Participants of the Institutional Repository Workshop

TD celebrates National Children’s Day in Thailand

SEAFDEC/TD joined Thailand at its 2017 celebration of the “National Children’s Day” on 14 January at the Prachunlachomklao Navy Dockyard at the mouth of the Chao Phraya River in Samut Prakan. TD put on display information and games with the theme on fisheries resources conservation. Several groups of children, guided by their chaperons, were attracted to the TD activities.

The National Children’s Day in Thailand is traditionally organized on the second Saturday of January every year. The celebration largely receives a widespread attention by the public. Most government organizations, especially the Prime Minister and the military, stage their impressive shows for the benefit of children as a contribution to the future of the nation.



TD staff and children during the activity

Officer of the MAFF of Japan visits IFRDMD

The officer of Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries (MAFF) of Japan, *Ms. Mari Mishima* visited SEAFDEC/IFRDMD in Palembang, Indonesia on 2-3 February 2017 for inspection and meeting with the staff.

On the first day, *Ms. Mishima* had a small meeting with the IFRDMD Chief *Dr. Arif Wibowo*, together with Deputy Chief, Special Departmental Coordinator (SDC), Project Leaders and Section Heads where the Chief introduced to her the structure, function, and general information of IFRDMD that has a collaboration with the National Research Institute of Inland Fisheries (RIIF), Indonesia. The Deputy Chief explained the two projects conducted by IFRDMD under Japanese Trust Fund, namely: 1) Promotion of Responsible Utilization of Inland Fisheries in Southeast Asia; and 2) Enhancement of Sustainability of Catadromous Eel Resources in Southeast Asia. The detailed contents and activities of the two projects were



also presented by the project leaders, *Dr. Dina Muthmainnah* and *Ms. Ni Komang Suryati*, respectively. Also, *Ms. Mishima* presented the status of fisheries in Japan and the overseas cooperation on fisheries. After the meeting and discussions with the staff of IFRDMD, *Ms. Mishima* observed the facilities of IFRDMD with the Chief. On the second day, *Ms. Mishima* together with the Deputy Chief and IFRDMD staff visited Mariana office, which is the former office of IFRDMD and RIIF, located at the bank of Musi River, to observe the laboratories and collections of endemic fish species in their specimen room. ❖

SEAFDEC joins the Meeting on Sharing Lessons Learned from the Mangrove for the Future/Small Grant Facility Project

SEAFDEC staff joined the “Meeting on Sharing Lessons Learned of the Mangrove for the Future/Small Grant Facility (MFF/SGF) Project,” which was co-hosted by United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and MFF on 27 March 2017 in Trat Province, Thailand. The Meeting was organized to share experiences and lessons learned during the implementation of the nine (9) community-based activities in Mai Rood Sub-district of Khlong Yai District and Laem Klad Sub-district of Muang District in Trat Province.

The SGF focuses on three main thematic areas, namely: 1) Rehabilitation and conservation of coastal and marine resources and ecosystem; 2) Knowledge management and data collection and community database management on coastal ecosystem; and 3) Demonstration

of coastal community waste management for livelihood improvement and sustainability. In this connection, the representatives from SEAFDEC had the opportunity to observe community activities such as crab bank, mangrove and Fish Aggregating Devices (FADs) for rehabilitation and conservation of fishing areas as well as shared experiences on fisheries enhancement with the fishers in the area. ❖



Participants during the observation trip

Electron microscopy at AQD promoted in science congress



SEAFDEC/AQD Microscopist speaks about electron microscopy to students of PSHSWV in an exhibit

SEAFDEC/AQD is host to a scanning electron microscope (SEM) and the only transmission electron microscope (TEM) in Visayas and Mindanao. The SEM is capable of magnifying objects up to 25,000x while the TEM can magnify up to 1,000,000x.

AQD Microscopist, *Mr. Norwell Brian Bautista* talked about the different SEM and TEM images generated over the years. He discussed how each image provided answers to different research problems.

Electron microscopy services used for AQD’s research activities are also available for students doing research work and the private sector.

The science congress was attended by students and teachers of Philippines Science High School-Western Visayas (PSHSWV) and other high schools from Western Visayas. An exhibit of photos captured from the AQD’s electron microscopes was also displayed during the week to showcase the capabilities and applications of the technology.

The Panubason science congress brought together PSHSWV alumni who are active in the research field and intended to help science high school students to see themselves as career scientists in the future. ❖

SPECIAL REPORT

The SEAFDEC/UNEP/GEF South China Sea Fisheries *Refugia* Initiative

By SEAFDEC Training Department (TD)

The South China Sea is a global center of shallow water marine biological diversity that supports significant fisheries that are important to the food security and export income of Southeast Asian countries. These fisheries are characterized by high levels of fishing effort from the small-scale sector. Accordingly, all inshore waters of the South China Sea basin are subject to intense fishing pressure. This situation of high small-scale fishing pressure and declining fishery resources has contributed to the adoption of unsustainable fishing methods to maintain catch and increase incomes in the short-term. These include the use of destructive fishing gear and practices, such as the operation of demersal trawls and push nets in seagrass areas, and the detonation of explosives and release of fish poisons in coral reef areas. Small-scale inshore fishing pressure has therefore been identified as a significant cause of the degradation and loss of coastal habitats in the South China Sea.

Although actions aimed at reducing the rate of loss of coastal habitats have been implemented by countries bordering the South China Sea, the decadal rate of loss of such habitats remains high, e.g. 30 percent seagrass beds), 16 percent mangroves, and 16 percent coral reefs. This continued decline in the total area of habitats critical to the life cycles of most aquatic species, combined with the high levels of coastal community dependence on fish, has raised serious concerns for the long-term sustainability of small-scale fisheries in the region. With fish production being intrinsically linked to the quality and area of habitats and the heightened dependence of coastal communities on fish, a need exists to improve the integration of fish habitat considerations and fisheries management in the region. The project on “Establishment and Operation of a Regional System of Fisheries *Refugia* in the South China Sea and Gulf of Thailand” has been developed to meet this need via implementation of the fisheries component of the Strategic Action Programme for the South China Sea. Executed regionally by the Training Department of the Southeast Asian Fisheries Development Center in partnership with the government agencies responsible for fisheries in the six participating countries, the project comprises the following four project components.

Identification and management of fisheries and critical habitat linkages at priority fisheries *refugia* in the South China Sea and Gulf of Thailand

Component 1 will result in the establishment of operational management at 14 priority fisheries *refugia*, with community-based *refugia* management plans being key outputs. Supporting activities include consultative processes to facilitate agreement among stakeholders on the boundaries of fisheries *refugia*, identification of key threats to *refugia* sites, recording of fishing community views

regarding appropriate fisheries and habitat management measures, and eliciting stakeholder inputs to management plan review. *Refugia* management plans will provide rules inter alia on operating requirements for the use of particular types of fishing vessels or fishing gear within *refugia*, procedures for adjusting management measures over time, and mechanisms for enforcement. Specific direction is given to drafting of regulations and ordinances required in support of plan implementation.



Overfishing and destructive fishing practices are the leading causes of coral reef degradation in the region

Improving the management of critical habitats for fish stocks of transboundary significance via national and regional actions to strengthen the enabling environment and knowledge-base for fisheries *refugia* management in the South China Sea and Gulf of Thailand

Component 2 focuses on strengthening the enabling environment for the formal designation and operational management of *refugia*. Preparatory activities include legal reviews to identify, inter alia: legal terminology for describing *refugia*; formal procedures for



The fisheries refugia initiative is part of broader SEAFDEC dynamism to foster sustainable fisheries in Southeast Asia

demarcating boundaries of spatial management areas such as *refugia*, including requirements for assessing the socio-economic impacts of management measures and stakeholder consultation; and provisions for decentralizing *refugia* management to the community level via development of co-management and rights-based approaches. These national reviews are aimed at informing the drafting of required policy and legislative amendments for adoption by competent authorities. This component will also build the national and site-level science and information base required for monitoring and evaluation of the effectiveness of individual *refugia* and the regional network of sites.

Information Management and Dissemination in support of national and regional-level implementation of the fisheries *refugia* concept in the South China Sea and Gulf of Thailand

Component 3 focuses on strengthening information management and dissemination aimed at enhancing the national uptake of best practices in integrating fisheries management and biodiversity conservation, and in improving community acceptance of area based approaches to fisheries and coastal environmental management. Supporting activities involve the development of national knowledge management systems on the use of fisheries *refugia* in capture fisheries management, and the establishment of a Regional Education and Awareness Center that will operate as a facility for the production and sharing of information and education materials on fisheries and critical habitat linkages in the South China Sea. Importantly, Component 3 will support the development of indicators to monitor the effectiveness of coastal fisheries management systems established for priority fisheries *refugia*. A regional program for the compilation of standardised fisheries statistics for use in identifying and managing fisheries *refugia* will be developed also to support longer-term management.

National and regional cooperation and coordination for integrated fish stock and critical habitat management in the South China Sea and Gulf of Thailand

At the national level, **Component 4** will strengthen cross-sectorial coordination for integrated fisheries and environmental management and will harness the national scientific and technical expertise and knowledge required to inform the policy, legal and institutional



The rate of loss of critical fisheries habitat such as sea grass has been estimated to be as 30 percent per decade

reforms for fisheries *refugia* management in the participating countries. Local community action and strengthened ‘community to cabinet’ linkages will be facilitated via establishment and operation of site-based management boards for fisheries *refugia* at the 14 priority locations in the South China Sea. Regionally, Component 4 will foster regional cooperation in the establishment and operation of a regional system of fisheries *refugia*’ and in the integration of scientific knowledge and research outputs with management and policy making. This component also includes project coordination and management activities aimed at ensuring the timely and cost effective implementation of regional and national level activities, and satisfying the reporting requirements of UNEP and the GEF.

Project Goals and Targets

The long-term goals of this initiative are to contribute to improved integration of habitat and biodiversity conservation considerations in the management of fisheries in the South China Sea and Gulf of Thailand; improved national management of the threats to fish stock and critical habitat linkages within fisheries *refugia*; and enhanced uptake of good practice in integrating fisheries management and biodiversity conservation in the design and implementation of regional and national fisheries management systems. The medium-term objectives align with those of the fisheries component of the Strategic Action Programme for the South China Sea are to build the resilience of Southeast Asian fisheries to the effects of high and increasing levels of fishing effort; improve the understanding among stakeholders, including fisherfolk, scientists, policy-makers, and fisheries managers, of ecosystem and fishery linkages as a basis for integrated fisheries and ecosystem and habitat management; and build the capacity of fisheries departments/ministries to engage in meaningful dialogue with the environment sector regarding the improvement of fisheries and management of interactions between fisheries and critical marine habitats. Related end of project targets are:

- by 2020, to have established a regional system of a minimum of fourteen *refugia* for the management of priority transboundary, fish stocks and endangered species; and
- by 2020, to have prepared and implemented fisheries management systems in the identified priority *refugia* based on and consistent with, the ASEAN-SEAFDEC Regional Guidelines for Responsible Fisheries in Southeast Asia.

Given the limited integration of the work of fisheries and environment ministries observed in Southeast Asia and many other parts of the world, the establishment and operation of the regional system of fisheries *refugia* provides an opportunity to learn from a regional fishery sector-led initiative to collaborate with the environment sector on integrating fisheries and coastal habitat management. It is anticipated that the experience gained in the South China Sea region through this project will be suitable for application in other marine areas such as the Yellow Sea where overfishing and the use of inappropriate fishing gears are significant impediments to more sustainable exploitation of fisheries resources and the use of coastal habitats.



REGIONAL PROGRAMS

MFRDMD organizes Workshop on Comparative Studies for Management of Purse Seine Fisheries in the Southeast Asian Region

The Workshop on Comparative Studies for Management of Purse Seine Fisheries in the Southeast Asian Region was organized by SEAFDEC/MFRDMD in collaboration with Hokkaido University, Japan on 7-8

March 2017 in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia. The objectives of this Workshop were to understand the concept and data-requirement for several management measures for purse seine fisheries in the Southeast Asian region,

and train responsible officers from ASEAN Member States (AMSs) to update their skills in analyzing stock indicators for purse seine fisheries. The Workshop was attended by 20 participants from AMSs, namely: Cambodia, Indonesia, Myanmar, Malaysia, Philippines, Thailand, Viet Nam, SEAFDEC Secretariat, SEAFDEC/MFRDMD, and resource persons from Hokkaido University of Japan. The participants were taught about the methods of estimating Allowable Biological Catch (ABC) and Allowable Biological Effort (ABE) by the resource persons from Japan. At the end of the Workshop, the participants made presentations on the results of ABC and ABE implementation by different areas.



Facilitating fisheries information gathering through CBRM/co-management in Lao PDR

Under the project on “Facilitating Fisheries Activities Information Gathering through Community-based Resources Management/Co-management,” SEAFDEC carried out new activities in Khammouane Province, Lao PDR starting with the conduct of baseline survey at the project site in Banmai Namprakan Village, Hinboun District on 19-22 December 2016.

Conducted by SEAFDEC team comprising *Mr. Isao Koya*, Assistant Japanese Trust Fund Project Manager, and the socio-economic group from SEAFDEC/TD led by *Dr. Yuttana Theparoonrat*, the survey came up with recommendations that were used as basis for developing the workplan of



Providing knowledge on Co-management/ CBRM to local people at the project site

the activities. Specifically, the planned activities include: 1) Establishment of Fisheries Management Committee; 2) Implementation of statistics and marketing surveys; and 3) Supporting activities of Fisheries Management Committee (aquaculture and fish processing techniques). After the official launching of the activities, the SEAFDEC

team proceeded with the establishment of the Fisheries Management Committee (FMC) as well as transfer of knowledge on co-management/community-based fisheries management to the local people at the project site on 27-31 March 2017. These activities are part of the 3-year workplan for 2017-2019.



Launching the project at the pilot site



SEAFDEC joins the discussion on development of the ASEAN Common Fisheries Policy

The Department of Fisheries of Thailand hosted the Technical Consultation on Development of the ASEAN Common Fisheries Policy on 27-28 March 2017 in Bangkok, Thailand. Officiated by *Dr. Theerapat Prayoonsit*, Permanent Secretary of the Ministry of Agriculture and Cooperatives of Thailand, the Consultation was attended by representatives from governmental agencies responsible for fisheries and the private sector of the ASEAN Member States (AMSs), as well as representative from ASEAN Secretariat, international/regional organizations including SEAFDEC represented by the Secretary-General, *Dr. Kom Silapajarn* accompanied by *Dr. Magnus Torell*, *Dr. Somboon Siriraksophon*, and SEAFDEC officers. The objectives of the Consultation were to obtain views and experiences from relevant international/regional

organizations and provide platform among the AMSs to discuss on the proposed development of the ASEAN Common Fisheries Policy (ASEAN CFP).

During the Consultation, the possible elements to be included in the Concept Note for Proposed Development of ASEAN CFP were discussed and agreed upon. While agreeing that several existing policy frameworks and guidelines available in the region should be mobilized in the development and implementation of the ASEAN CFP, the Consultation supported that such possible elements would serve as common direction for the AMSs to work forward. The Consultation also supported that the results of this Consultation would be submitted to the higher authorities of the ASEAN under the ASEAN mechanism for consideration.



Representatives from the AMSs and regional/international organizations during the Technical Consultation on Development of the ASEAN Common Fisheries Policy

SEAFDEC takes part in the Workshop on Co-creation for Transformation of Effective Delivery on SDGs

SEAFDEC Secretary-General, *Dr. Kom Silapajarn* together with *Dr. Magnus Torell* and *Ms. Suntree Pumpuang* attended the Annual Workshop “Co-Creation for Transformation- Effective Delivery on SDGs through Enhanced Cross-Sectorial Interaction,” hosted by the Swedish Embassy on 21-22 March 2017 in Bangkok, Thailand. The Workshop was organized for the regional development partner organizations of Swedish International Development Cooperation in Asia and the Pacific region to share their expertise, vision, experiences from the diverse sectors towards contributing sustainable development.

While recognizing the works undertaken by different organizations, the Workshop inspired the participants towards designating, co-creating and strategizing mutually beneficial collaboration and interaction between human rights, democracy, gender equality, environment, climate change and prevention of conflicts over natural resources to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in the region. During the Workshop, *Dr. Magnus Torell* was a discussant for the topic on partnerships for oceans governance and guidelines in relevance to the fisheries sector.



Regional practical training on energy audit for fishing vessels

SEAFDEC/TD in collaboration with the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations/Global Environment Facility (FAO/GEF) organized “the Practical Training on Energy Audits for Fishing Vessels” from 23 to 27 January 2017 in TD, Samut Prakan, Thailand with 14 participants from SEAFDEC Member Countries, namely: Indonesia, Malaysia, Myanmar, Philippines, Thailand and Viet Nam attending. The training comprised three modules including literature review, practical demonstration, and shipboard training at sea for real time fuel consumption measurement. The



Attendees during training on energy audit

participants obtained an applicable technical knowledge on energy audits and ways to improve fuel efficiency. The practical training on-board M.V. PLALUNG trained the participants on



how to measure the fuel consumptions of trawl fishing vessels, in terms of fuel consumption rate and parameter for energy audits process.



SEAFDEC takes part in APEC Policy Partnership on Food Security (PPFS) in Viet Nam

Dr. Kom Silapajarn, Secretary-General of SEAFDEC, attended the “Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation Policy Partnership on Food Security (PPFS)” in Nha Trang, Viet Nam on 27 March 2017. Discussing the Action Plan to implement the “APEC Strategic Framework on Rural-Urban Development to Strengthen Food Security and Quality Growth” and “APEC Program on Food Security and Climate Change,” many invited speakers

including those from APEC Secretariat, APEC-USA, and representatives from Peru, Japan, Indonesia, and Viet Nam attended the event. *Dr. Kom* presented the “Sustainable Fisheries, Responsible Development of Aquaculture Contribution to Improve Nutrition Security.” Most of the presentations were focused on strengthening food security, adopting to climate change with the engagement of fisheries and other key sectors. ☒



Training Course on Laboratory Equipment Operation and Organic/Inorganic Compound Analysis in Cambodia

The “Training Course on Laboratory Equipment Operation and Organic/Inorganic Compound Analysis” was organized at Prek Leap National College (PLNCA) in Cambodia from 14 to 16 March 2017. Supported by the Japanese Trust Fund, the training was aimed at providing knowledge to Cambodians working in the laboratory of PLNCA.

The course was attended by 25 trainees including teaching staff and students of PLNCA, as well as government officers of the Fisheries Administration of Cambodia. With the cooperation of Hokkaido University of Japan, *Dr. Hideo Maruyama* and *Dr. Masaki Fujita* served as instructors for this training course, and transferred knowledge



on the use of advanced apparatus for analyzing components in food. The trainees also learned how to use the equipment that has already been set up in the PLNCA Laboratory. After the training, the trainees gained knowledge and skills on the use of various equipment for analyzing components found in fishery and agricultural products in the future. ☒

TWG of SEAFDEC joins gender analysis inception meeting in the Philippines

USAID in cooperation with SEAFDEC has been implementing the project on “USAID Oceans and Fisheries Partnership” with the aim of strengthening regional cooperation to promote sustainable fisheries across Southeast Asia’s diverse marine

ecosystem. The project targets to support and engage in implementing a financial sustainable catch document treatability system and complementary sustainable fisheries management plans through regional demonstration at regional, national and site levels. The output on

“human welfare” dealing with issues on gender and labor was integrated into the Project component.

To support the implementation of activities in relation to gender issue, the Technical Working Group (TWG) on human welfare from SEAFDEC/TD participated in the “Gender Analysis Inception Workshop and Value Chain Mapping of Tuna Fisheries” from 9 to 12 January 2017 in General Santos City, Philippines. The workshop focused on the process of data collection, training the enumerators for data collection with quality, and introduced the Open Data Kit (ODK) application for data collection to reduce the steps in data input. ☒



Seminar on Coastal Area Capability Enhancement in Southeast Asia

SEAFDEC/TD in collaboration with the Research Institute for Humanity and Nature of Japan (RIHN), Kasetsart University and Department of Fisheries (DOF) Thailand organized the “International RIHN Final Seminar on Coastal Area Capability Enhancement in Southeast Asia” on 15-17 March 2017 at the Faculty of Fisheries of Kasetsart University and in Rayong Province. Papers presented include the

results of the projects implemented from 2012 to 2016 that benefited the fishers and stakeholders in the project area. The 80 participants were from RIHN, SEAFDEC, Kasetsart University, the DOF Thailand, as well as fishers and other stakeholders.

The project on “Coastal Area Capability Enhancement in Southeast Asia” is a cooperative research activity

between RIHN, several universities in Japan, SEAFDEC/TD, the Eastern Fisheries Research and Development Center (EMDEC) under the DOF Thailand, Faculty of Fisheries of Kasetsart University, University of Philippines Visayas, Aklan State University and other related institutions and organizations. In this project, a “holistic approach” was adopted to give a full understanding on how people utilize the coastal resources, for the purpose of establishing rational and practical measures both for social and ecological sustainability. ❖



Representatives from regional/international organizations during the Seminar

Workplan for enhancing blue swimming crab stocks in Cambodia prepared

Under the project on “Promotion of Sustainable Fisheries Resources Enhancement Measures in Critical Habitats/Fishing Grounds in Southeast Asia,” SEAFDEC/TD with support from the Japanese Trust Fund started off an activity on enhancement of blue swimming crab stocks in Cambodia. Angkaul Community Fisheries (CFi) of Kep Province, smallest province of Cambodia was selected as the pilot site.

On 20-25 March 2017, SEAFDEC team comprising TD and Secretariat staff together with staff from the Fisheries Administration of Cambodia and Kep Provincial Fisheries

Cantonment conducted a baseline survey by interviewing fishers in Angkaul Village to gather information on community situation and the main issues in the target area. Results of the survey indicated that most fishers engaged in crab fishing use two kinds of fishing gear, namely: crab gill net and long trap. The target area already has conservation areas for sea grass while crab bank activities are ongoing, which the fishers are aware of and are willing to participate in the activities. Based on such information and the issues faced by fishers in the area, the project workplan and activities were developed using the Project Design Matrix Method (PDM). It is expected that



Meetings with the Kep Provincial Fisheries Cantonment, and with fishers in Angkaul Community



the activities, comprising: 1) strengthening of fisheries management knowledge; 2) facilitating countermeasures for increasing blue swimming crab resources; and 3) management of fisheries conservation zone, would be implemented for 3 years from 2017 to 2019. ❖

FUTURE ACTIVITIES

Date	Venue	Title	Organizer(s)
2017			
3-7 April	Brunei Darussalam	49 th Meeting of the SEAFDEC Council	Secretariat
19 Apr-3 May	Tigbauan, Philippines	Training Course on Sandfish (<i>Holothuria scabra</i>) Seed Production, Nursery & Management	AQD
24-28 April	Binangonan, Philippines	Training Course on Carp Hatchery & Grow-out Operations	AQD
10-30 May	Iloilo, Philippines	Training Course on Abalone Hatchery & Grow-out	AQD
15-16 May	Singapore	9 th Meeting of the ASEAN Fisheries Consultative Forum (AFCF)	ASEAN Secretariat
15-19 May	Binangonan, Philippines	Training Course on Freshwater Prawn Hatchery & Grow-out Operations	AQD
16-18 May	...	Regional Seminar on Improvement CBRM/Co-management Approach in Coastal Small-scale and Inland Fisheries of the Southeast Asian Region	TD
17-19 May	Singapore	25 th Meeting of the ASEAN Sectoral Working Group on Fisheries (ASWGF _i)	ASEAN Secretariat
29-31 May, and 1-2 June	Oslo, Norway	1 st Meeting of the Parties to the 2009 FAO Agreement on Port State Measures (PSM), and 1 st Meeting of the <i>Ad Hoc</i> Working Group	FAO
5-9 June	New York, USA	United Nations Ocean Conference	UN
5-9 June (Tentative)	Binangonan, Philippines	Training Course on Tilapia Hatchery & Grow-out Operations	AQD
8 and 9 June	Palembang, Indonesia	SEAFDEC Internal Meeting, and Preparatory Meeting for Project on Enhancing Sustainable Utilization and Management Scheme of Tropical Anguillid Eel Resources in Southeast Asia	Secretariat
20 June-26 July	Iloilo, Philippines	Training Course on Marine Fish Hatchery	AQD
10-13 July	Malaysia	Regional Training Course on Specimen Preservation and Its Application in Harmful Algal Bloom (HAB) Monitoring and Studies	MFRD
25-27 July (Tentative)	Singapore	Cold Chain Management for Seafood: Project Evaluation and Progress Meeting	MFRD
27 July	Kuala Terengganu, Malaysia	25 th MFRDMD Anniversary Celebration	MFRDMD
30 Jul-3 Aug	Kuala Terengganu, Malaysia	Advance Training Course on Stock Assessment: Risk Assessment for Neritic Tunas	MFRDMD & Secretariat
July (Tentative)	Iloilo, Philippines	44 th Anniversary Celebration of AQD	AQD
July (Tentative)	Thailand	Meeting on Mid-term Evaluation of Implementation on RFVR 24 Meters in Length and Over and Initiative on RFVR Below 24 Meters	TD
6-10 August	Kuala Terengganu, Malaysia	Workshop on Identification of Sharks and Rays in the Southeast Asian Region	MFRDMD
22-24 August	Makassar, Indonesia	RTC for the Project on Enhancing Coastal Community Resilience for Sustainable Livelihood and Coastal Resources Management	MFRDMD
4-7 September	Manila, Philippines	4 th Scientific Working Group Meeting on Neritic Tunas	MFRDMD & Secretariat
14-18 August	Binangonan, Philippines	Training Course on Tilapia Hatchery & Grow-out Operations	AQD
14 Aug-4 Sep	Tigbauan, Philippines	Training Course on Mangrove Crab Hatchery & Nursery Operations	AQD
15-18 August	Bangkok, Thailand	RTC on Fishery Statistics and Information in Southeast Asia	Secretariat
21-25 August	Tigbauan, Philippines	Training Course on Catfish Hatchery & Grow-out Operations	AQD
12-14 September	Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia	Core Expert Meeting on Purse Seine Fisheries	MFRDMD
26-29 September	Vung Tau, Viet Nam	On-site Training on Elasmobranch Taxonomy and Biology	MFRDMD
16-18 Oct	Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia	RTC on Promotion of the ASEAN Guidelines on Preventing the Entry of IUU Fish and Fishery Products into the Supply Chain	MFRDMD
15 November	Bangkok, Thailand	50 th SEAFDEC Anniversary Event	SEAFDEC

SEAFDEC representatives attend the Gender Equality Training hosted by the Embassy of Sweden

“Gender Equality Training” was organized by the Embassy of Sweden on 23-24 March 2017 in Bangkok, Thailand. With the objective of setting up gender equality knowledge to decision-making level, the Training was attended by SEAFDEC Secretary-General, *Dr. Kom Silapajarn*; Senior Advisor, *Dr. Magnus Torell*; and Assistant Policy and Program Coordinator, *Dr. Worawit Wanchana*. The training has the overall objective of improving the institutional and organizational capacity of senior management staff of Sweden’s partners to integrate gender equality in the workplace and strengthen integration of gender equality in program implementation to develop the essential enabling organizational environment through which gender responsive development can take place. The key output would be the development of Gender Action Plans for SEAFDEC.

The Embassy of Sweden in Bangkok, Thailand has contracted the Women Organizing for Change in Agriculture and Natural Resource Management to be a Regional Gender Equality Support to the Embassy’s development cooperation partners for the implementation of Sweden’s development cooperation in Asia. The Gender Support Function was launched on 19 January 2017 with active participation of SEAFDEC’s gender focal points and experts.



Capacity building on gender analysis for TD staff

SEAFDEC started to integrate gender issues into its organization and projects as SEAFDEC sees the need to specially enhance the capacity of its gender focal points and key staff. In this regard, SEAFDEC/TD organized the “Intensive Training and Practical on Gender Analysis” from 24 to 26 January 2017 in Petchaburi, Province, Thailand. Nine TD staff who were identified as gender focal points participated in the training course which focused on important gender tools for Gender Analysis (GA) through gender indicator, sex-disaggregated data (SDD), gender budgeting, gender in M&E and reporting. The intensive training has enhanced TD staff’s skills in the application of important gender analysis tools which are important for inclusion in relevant projects in the future.



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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Enhancing coordination with Member Countries through the RFPN Program in 2017

Like in many years before, the Regional Fisheries Policy Network (RFPN) Program has been continued by SEAFDEC in 2017 by accepting the nominations of representatives from seven ASEAN Member States, namely: Indonesia, Lao PDR, Malaysia, Myanmar, Philippines, Thailand, and Viet Nam, to serve as members of the RFPN. For 2017, five members of the RFPN have started to serve their one-

year terms of appointment starting from January to December 2017. In addition, another two members from Lao PDR, *Mr. Kongkham Vonglorkham* and Malaysia, *Mr. Ahmad Faizal Bin Mohamed Omar* would be joining the 2017 batch starting May until December 2017.

While aiming to gain better understanding of major global and regional fisheries issues confronting

the region as part of their capacity development program, the RFPN members will continue to provide views and inputs on various fisheries priority issues and provide technical assistance in the implementation of regional programs of SEAFDEC. Moreover, during their tenure, the RFPN members will also support the efforts of SEAFDEC in developing strategies to promote fisheries policy dialogues as well as regional and sub-regional cooperation among the Member Countries and in following-up their commitments for the implementation of policies for the ASEAN. The 2017 batch of RFPN Members had been given the task to prepare the fisheries profile of their respective countries, to be compiled into a publication on the fisheries profile of Southeast Asia. ❖



2017 RFPN Members: from left to right - Mr. Thana Yenpoeng (Thailand), Mr. Nguyen Tuan Uyen (Viet Nam), Ms. Myat Khine Mar (Myanmar), Mr. Napoleon Salvador J. Lamarca (Philippines), and Mr. Ifan Ariansyach (Indonesia)

SEAFDEC holds the Sixth Meeting of the Gulf of Thailand Sub-region

SEAFDEC organized the “6th Meeting of the Gulf of Thailand Sub-region” from 28 February to 2 March 2017 in Bangkok, Thailand with support from the SEAFDEC-Sweden Project. The Meeting was attended by representatives from the four (4) Gulf of Thailand countries, namely Cambodia, Malaysia, Thailand and Viet Nam as well as senior officers from SEAFDEC Secretariat, MFRDMD and TD. The Meeting was also attended by representatives from collaborating agencies, namely: the Fish Marketing Organization (FMO), Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations/Regional Office for Asia and Pacific (FAO/RAP), International Labour Organization (ILO), Regional Plan of Action-Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated Fishing (RPOA-IUU) Secretariat, and Swedish Agency for Marine and Water Management (SwAM).

The objectives of the Meeting were to update the progress of the implementation of activities approved in the previous Meeting of the Gulf of Thailand Sub-region and to review the steps taken in strengthening cooperation on transboundary fisheries

and habitat management options for joint approaches on assessing the availability and exploring future expansion of bilateral dialogues on monitoring and control of fisheries activities including combating IUU fishing and management of fishing capacity. The Meeting introduced the recently started SEAFDEC/UNEP/GEF South China Sea and Gulf of Thailand *Refugia* Project and explored options that built upon common objectives to strengthen sub-regional cooperation for the integration of habitat and fisheries management. Progress in the implementation of the transboundary stocks and habitats, and sub-regional cooperation on the management of transboundary species, *e.g.* anchovy,

Indo-Pacific mackerel, blue swimming crab (AIB species), and management cooperation for the Gulf of Thailand sub-region based on the results of the stock study of tonggol tuna and kawakawa, and ASEAN Catch Documentation Scheme were also discussed.

Moreover, the Meeting also identified the common priority areas and developed recommendations for the Gulf of Thailand sub-regional management priority, the results of which will be used as a basis for Gulf of Thailand inputs for discussion during the development of the ASEAN Common Fisheries Policy (ASEAN CFP). ❖



Participants at the Sixth Meeting of the Gulf of Thailand Sub-region