

REPORT OF SEAFDEC DEPARTMENT CHIEFS' MEETING

16 November 2019, Chiang Mai, Thailand

I. Introduction

1. The SEAFDEC Department Chiefs' Meeting (DCM2019) was organized on 16 November 2019 in Chiang Mai, Thailand. The Meeting was attended by the SEAFDEC Secretary-General, Deputy Secretary-General, the Chiefs, Deputy Chiefs, and Special Departmental Coordinators of the Departments, as well as the staff and officers of the SEAFDEC Secretariat and Departments. The List of Participants appears as **Annex 1**. The Agenda of the Meeting appears as **Annex 2**.

II. Follow-up Actions to SEAFDEC Annual Meetings

- **Follow-up actions to the 51st Meeting of the SEAFDEC Council**

2. During the discussion, the respective Departments provided the updated information on the required follow-up actions to the directives given at the Fifty-first Meeting of SEAFDEC Council (51CM) in April 2019, and the corresponding recommendations of the DCM2019 are also summarized below:

- On the **ASEAN Guidelines** for Preventing the Entry of Fish and Fishery Products from IUU Fishing Activities into the Supply Chain, the terminal meeting report and final project report being prepared by MFRDMD would be made available during the SEAFDEC Council Meeting in 2020
- On the **Regional Fishing Vessel Record**, TD should consider conducting a Workshop prior to the next Council Meeting in 2020 to discuss the way forward as suggested during the 41st PCM, *i.e.* improving the RFVR ≥ 24 meters including its usage, exploring the appropriate size range for RFVR < 24 meters, and developing a watch list, the outputs of which should be presented as the way forward of the RFVR, to the forthcoming SEAFDEC Council Meeting
- On the **ASEAN Catch Documentation Scheme**, especially on the suggestion of the 51CM to link the ACDS systems of the AMSs and provide for exchange of e-certificates, considering that this SEAFDEC project is still being pilot-tested in participating countries, each country should consider incorporating the ACDS implementation in their national systems first, before the systems adopted among the countries could be linked
- On **RPOA-Capacity**, as it might be difficult for JAIF to provide funds for the project on RPOA-Capacity as proposed by MFRDMD, some activities could be accommodated under the new JTF projects, *e.g.* on Fisheries Management Strategies for Pelagic Fish Resources in the Southeast Asian Region, and in so doing, linkages with the management of fishing capacity should be clearly stated in the background and description of such projects
- On the Progress of Implementation of the **RPOA-Neritic Tunas**, the activities of the SWG-Neritic Tunas should be continued with support from other funding sources as funding from the SEAFDEC-Sweden to the activities on neritic tunas would be completed by December 2019, thus, MFRDMD should come up with list of activities with corresponding figures on required funding support for further discussion

- As proposed during the 51CM that the scope of the **SWG-Neritic Tunas** should also include other small pelagic species, some activities of neritic tunas and other small pelagic species have been included in the project “Fisheries Management Strategies for Pelagic Resources in the Southeast Asian Region.” Nevertheless, MFRDMD should prepare a proposal on the modification of the TOR for SWG-Neritic Tunas for consideration by the SEAFDEC Council in 2020, *e.g.* to also include small pelagic species, and the AMSs to secure annual budget to participate in the activities of the SWG-Neritic Tunas including the possible rotational hosting of the meetings of the SWG-Neritic Tunas by the participating countries.
- On **sharing of the findings from SWG-Neritic Tunas with concerned RFMOs**, the participation of *Dr. Tsutomu (Tom) Nishida* in the Meeting of the IOTC Scientific Working Group in May or June 2020 to present the findings of the SWG-Neritic Tunas would be supported by the JTF. In addition, MFRDMD should also consider inviting representative(s) from relevant RFMOs to attend the future meetings of the SWG.
- On the **Regional Technical Guidelines on Early Warning System for Aquatic Animal Health Emergencies**, which was endorsed by the AMAF in August 2019, AQD should consider continuing its support to the respective activities of the AMSs related to the implementation of the Guidelines, which could be pursued through the proposed ASEAN-JICA Food Value Chain Project. Furthermore, AQD should also continue engaging with the activities on transboundary diseases in cooperation with NACA and OIE
- On the **Regional Guidelines on Cold Chain Management for Seafood**, which was endorsed by the AMAF in October 2019, MFRD will continue to support the activities of the AMSs related to the implementation of the Guidelines through the proposed ASEAN-JICA Food Value Chain Project
- On **Fishery Subsidies**, considering that the SEAFDEC Secretary-General will attend the COFI Sub-Committee on Fish Trade on 25-29 November 2019 in Spain, results from the discussions on this matter should be shared with the Member Countries
- On the recommendations to establish **mariculture set up and environmental friendly fishing gears**, TD has been undertaking a study on environmental friendly materials for FEDs and for culture of green mussel. As for the mariculture setup, AQD could consider initiating discussions to develop the relevant activity with the assistance from other countries, *e.g.* Norway or other AMSs that have successfully set up mariculture facilities
- On the proposed development of artificial seed production techniques for **anguillid eels**, as the Council Director for Japan already shared during the 51CM that the experience of Japan on the production of artificial seeds of eel species has been very challenging due to certain problems such as the availability of juvenile feeds, and as indicated also by AQD that seed production of anguillid eel has not yet been successful in the region, AQD therefore should continue to focus its activities on improving the survival rate in the nursery stage of juvenile eels captured from the wild
- On the operations of the **SEAFDEC Training and Research Vessels**, since consultations had been conducted by TD with the AMSs on their plans to utilize the M.V. SEAFDEC 2 in 2020-2025, *e.g.* Viet Nam (in 2020-2021), Malaysia (in 2021-2023), and Philippines (in 2021), thus TD should consider consulting further with these countries for the possibility of merging their proposed cruises to reduce on operation costs

3. After the discussion, the Departments were requested again to report to the Secretariat their respective updated progress by the end of January 2020, in response to the recommendations of the 51CM covering the period from April to December 2019. In addition, the DCM2019 also recommended the following actions for the SEAFDEC Secretariat and Departments to undertake:

- **Follow-up actions to the 42nd Meeting of the SEAFDEC Program Committee**

4. The SEAFDEC Secretariat would circulate the list of required follow-up actions to the directives given at the Forty-second Meeting of the SEAFDEC Program Committee (42PCM), and the Departments should consider reporting the progress of their respective actions undertaken, to the Secretariat on a quarterly basis.

- **Follow-up actions to the 22nd Meeting of the ASEAN-SEAFDEC FCG/ASSP**

5. The SEAFDEC Secretariat would circulate the list of required follow-up actions to directives given at the Twenty-second Meeting of the ASEAN-SEAFDEC FCG/ASSP (22FCG/ASSP), and the Departments should consider reporting the progress of their respective actions undertaken, to the Secretariat on a quarterly basis.

III. Resolution and Plan of Action on Sustainable Fisheries for Food Security for the ASEAN Region Towards 2030

6. The DCM2019 made recommendations for an effective and efficient process of evaluating the progress in the implementation of the Res&PoA-2030 in the future that all programs and projects of the Secretariat and Departments should be linked with relevant items of the Res&PoA2030. In this connection, the SEAFDEC Policy and Program Coordinator (PPC) should consider revising the Project Document Template accordingly. Nevertheless, since the Res&PoA is meant to be implemented mainly by the AMSs, the activities of SEAFDEC might not cover all the items in the Res&PoA.

7. On ways and means of encouraging the AMSs to report their respective mid-term progress in the implementation of the Res&PoA2030 in the future, SEAFDEC could consider conducting a workshop under the Project “Assistance for Capacity Development in the Region to Address International Fisheries-related Issues” to discuss such issue, or informing the AMSs directly that their respective mid-term progress would be compiled by SEAFDEC and reported to high level meetings of SEAFDEC and the ASEAN.

8. With regards to the results of the evaluation of the implementation of the Res&PoA-2020 carried out by the SEAFDEC Secretariat, where only three countries submitted their inputs to the questionnaire, the Secretariat should consider following-up with the remaining countries for them to submit their respective inputs for compilation.

IV. Monitoring the Implementation of the SEAFDEC Gender Strategy

9. After taking note of the draft Template for Monitoring of the Implementation of the SEAFDEC Gender Strategy of which the SEAFDEC Gender Focal Persons (SGFPs) have been requested to provide inputs from their respective Departments for inclusion in the SEAFDEC Annual Report of 2019 and onwards, the DCM2019 supported the request of the Secretariat for all Departments to provide feedback on the Draft Template by 15 December 2019. Moreover, through their SGFPs, the Departments were also requested to subsequently provide their inputs based on the agreed Template to the Secretariat by the end of January 2020.

10. The DCM2019 also noted that the Chief of MFRD would serve as the focal person for communication on gender strategy.

V. Information-related Matters

5.1 Results from the Twentieth Meeting of Information Staff Program

11. While noting the results of the Twentieth Information Staff Program Meeting (20ISP) organized on 15-17 October 2019 in the Philippines, the DCM2019 shared the views and made recommendations on particular issues as follows:

- For the **Preparation of SEAFDEC Calendar 2021** and based on the themes proposed during the 20ISP, the final theme should be a merger of “Resolution and Plan of Action Towards 2030” and “Historical milestones of SEAFDEC.” The Departments should therefore consider providing relevant pictures with high resolution to the Secretariat; and on the calendar format, the Secretariat should maintain the table calendar format (similar to that of the previous years).
- On the **Development of SEAFDEC Repositories**, especially the difficulties faced by MFRDMD in supporting the cost for the repository server and the possibility of adopting alternative solutions as proposed by AQD for maintaining the repository at lower cost, the Departments should consider maintaining their respective repositories, and that the cost of such maintenance should be the responsibility of respective Departments.
- On **focal person for production of materials in 2020**, MFRDMD would change the focal person for materials under the coordination of *Mr. Abdul Razak Latun* to *Ms. Mazalina Ali*, as *Mr. Abdul Razak Latun* will retire in 2020.
- On **staff exchange program** for the period of week or a month, the cost entailed during such program should be shouldered by the Department(s) requesting for the staff exchange as such Department(s) would benefit from the exchange program.

5.2 Workplan of SEASOFIA 2020

12. On the recommendation from the 42PCM for SEAFDEC to harmonize the timeline between SOFIA and SEASOFIA, *e.g.* publishing SEASOFIA every two or four years, and the difficulties expressed by the Secretariat and Departments in coming up with such publication more frequently than every five years which is currently done, the DCM2019 suggested that the SEAFDEC Secretariat should express the various concerns to the SEAFDEC Council to make them understand the issues, during the presentation of the proposal for SEASOFIA2020 at the forthcoming SEAFDEC Council Meeting. The concerns could include:

- Differences in the coverage of SOFIA and SEASOFIA:

SOFIA provides global view and policy recommendations on fisheries and aquaculture, as well as more updates on the changing fisheries situation, and the issues and challenges from the different regions of the world.

SEASOFIA on the other hand, focuses on the Southeast Asian setting where the information and policies in fisheries and aquaculture do not change very frequently, thus, the necessary information might not have much updated within few years.

- Other publications produced more frequently by SEAFDEC include relevant information on the issues and concerns in fisheries development of Southeast Asia, *e.g.* Fishery Statistical Bulletin for Southeast Asia (annually) contains a summary part that provides information on production trends, articles in Fish for the People (3 issues/year) that address the issues and challenges in fisheries, and relevant regional initiatives

- The limited number of staff of the SEAFDEC Secretariat and Departments to develop, contribute, and finalize articles for the SEASOFIA

13. Considering the planned workshop to prepare the outline of SEASOFIA2022 during the third quarter in 2020 for submission to 43PCM in 2020 and discuss the important issues that should be incorporated in the publications, the DCM2019 suggested that the Departments should consider gathering the relevant information on issues and concerns in the region's fisheries development, as well as the relevant materials that could be used by the Departments in preparing their respective inputs for the publication.

VI. Administrative and Finance-related Matters

6.1 Procedures for Establishment of Cooperation Between SEAFDEC and Other Organizations

14. On the draft Procedures for Establishment of Cooperation Between SEAFDEC and Other Organizations, and recalling the recommendations made during the 42PCM that "*the Council's approval is required prior to signing any Agreement with other organizations, except for a certain scenario that requires the Secretary-General's approval instead of the Council's approval, i.e. agreement with the Government agencies of Member Countries responsible for the SEAFDEC Secretariat and Departments,*" the DCM2019 suggested that the SEAFDEC Secretariat should consider revising the draft Procedures for submission to the SEAFDEC Council during its forthcoming Meeting in April 2020. Moreover, the Departments should henceforth, seek the approval of the SEAFDEC Council through the Secretariat, when signing MOUs or LOAs that indicate the legal relationship between SEAFDEC and other organizations (under Article 12 and Article 13).

15. On the concern that AQD has signed cooperation with very large numbers of local universities and organizations in the Philippines, the DCM2019 suggested that in order to reduce the need to seek the approval of the Council, such forms of cooperation or arrangements should be established in different forms other than MOUs or LOAs between the concerned Departments and organizations.

16. For organizations that SEAFDEC already established broad MOUs (*e.g.* FAO, USAID), the DCM2019 suggested that when signing LOAs for specific projects or contracts of work under such MOUs (also called umbrella MOUs), *e.g.* for BOBLME Project, new USAID project, the approval of the Council would still be necessary. Furthermore, for extension of MOUs or LOAs, the DCM2019 noted that the SEAFDEC Secretariat would propose to the SEAFDEC Council that extension of such arrangements shall not require prior approval of the Council provided that there is no change in the circumstances and the nature of cooperation (but this is still subject to the Council's final decision).

6.2 Guidelines on Procurement of Products and Services of SEAFDEC

17. On the Guidelines on Procurement of Products and Services which is applicable to the SEAFDEC Secretariat and TD although such Procurement Guidelines has been one of the requirements when donors consider providing large project funds to SEAFDEC, *e.g.* the SEAFDEC-Sweden and the BOBLME projects, the DCM2019 suggested that the other SEAFDEC Departments should also consider establishing and implementing their respective Guidelines on Procurement for enhanced visibility and transparency of their financial transactions.

VII. Preparation for the 52nd Meeting of SEAFDEC Council in 2020

18. On proposed date and venue of the 52nd Meeting of the SEAFDEC Council which has already been proposed by Government of Japan to be 6-9 April 2019 in Fukuoka, Japan, the DCM 2019 was informed that the SEAFDEC Secretariat still needs to seek the concurrence of the Council Directors before finalizing the date.

19. On the draft agenda of the Fifty-second Meeting of the SEAFDEC Council, which was proposed by the SEAFDEC Secretariat, the DCM 2019 suggested the following revisions:

- Under Agenda 5:
 - Remove Agenda 5.3.1 “Regional Guidelines on Cold Chain Management for Seafood”
 - Add new Agenda “Regional Action Plan for Management of Transboundary Species: Indo-Pacific Mackerel in the Gulf of Thailand Sub-region”

- Under Agenda 7:
 - Add new Agenda “Preparation of SEASOFIA 2022”

- Under Agenda 9:
 - Remove Agenda 9.3 “SEAFDEC Gender Strategy”
 - Remove Agenda 9.4 “Procedures for Inviting Other Organizations and Non-member Government to Attend the SEAFDEC Council Meeting”
 - Add new Agenda “Procedures for Establishment of Cooperation Between SEAFDEC and Other Organization”

20. On possibility of also having policy documents with respect to inland capture fisheries for consideration by the Council in the future as proposed by the Chief of IFRDMD, the DCM2019 shared the view that most of the issues on inland fisheries are national in nature and only few could be transboundary, and suggested that this issue could be raised for discussion during the forthcoming Council Meeting, *e.g.* under the Agenda 8 on Future Direction Requested by the Council (Closed Session).

21. The DCM2019 also suggested that the Departments should continue to provide further comments on the Agenda of the Fifty-second Meeting of SEAFDEC Council, if any, to the Secretariat by 25 December 2019.

VIII. Other Matters

8.1 Template for Reporting of JTF6 Phase I Project Achievement

22. On the Template for Reporting of JTF6 Phase I Project Achievement, wherein the Project Completion Reports of all projects should be submitted to the ATFM by mid-February 2020, the DCM2019 was informed that the timeframe, *i.e.* starting and ending years of different projects could be different.

8.2 Supporting the Implementation of Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)

23. In support of the implementation of the SDGs, the DCM2019 suggested that the SEAFDEC Secretariat and Departments should consider linking their programs and projects with relevant items in the SDGs (in addition to linking these with the Res&PoA2030), which should be accommodated accordingly in the revised Project Document Template.

8.3 Others

24. On the request made by the Chief of AQD for the Secretariat to continue conducting capacity building on Project Cycle Management, the DCM2019 was informed by the Special Advisor that such request would be looked and that such advanced training would focus on project monitoring and evaluation. In this connection, the Chief of MFRD also expressed his willingness to attend such training at AQD.

IX. Conclusion and Follow-up Actions

25. The SEAFDEC Secretariat will circulate the Draft Report of the DCM2019 to all participants by 22 November 2019, and request all participants to provide their comments by 29 November 2019. The Report, after accommodating such comments, would be considered adopted.

X. Closing of the Meeting

26. The Secretary-General of SEAFDEC thanked the officers and staff of TD for the arrangements of the Department Chiefs' Meeting, as well as the officers and staff of the SEAFDEC Secretariat and Departments for their active participation during the Meeting. After wishing the participants the best in their undertakings, she declared the DCM2019 closed.

LIST OF PARTICIPANTS

SEAFDEC Secretariat

1. Ms. Malinee Smithrithee, Secretary-General and Chief of TD
2. Mr. Akito Sato, Deputy Secretary-General and Deputy Chief of TD
3. Mr. Mazanami Izumi, Special Advisor (SA)
4. Mr. Izaoy Koya, Assistant Trust Fund Manager (ATFM)
5. Dr. Worawit Wanchana, Policy and Program Coordinator (PPC)
6. Ms. Nualanong Tongdee, Information Program Coordinator (IPC)
7. Ms. Pattaratjit Kaewnuratchadasorn, Senior Policy Officer
8. Ms. Suwanee Sayan, Senior Program Officer
9. Mrs. Virgilia Sulit, Technical Writer and Editor
10. Ms. Saivason Klinsukhon, Senior Information Officer
11. Ms. Matinee Boonyintu, Senior Administration Officer

Training Department

1. Ms. Angkhanarat Tomyai, Administration and Finance Division Head
2. Mr. Isara Chanrachkij, Research and Development Division Head
3. Ms. Panitnard Weerawat, Special Departmental Coordinator

Marine Fisheries Research Department (MFRD)

1. Mr. Ong Yihang, Chief

Aquaculture Department (AQD)

1. Mr. Dan Baliao, Chief
2. Dr. Koichiro Mori, Deputy Chief
3. Ms. Joesyl Maria V dela Cruz, Special Departmental Coordinator

Marine Fishery Resources Development and Management Department (MFRDMD)

1. Mr. Raja Bidin Raja Hassan, Chief
2. Dr. Masaya Katoh, Deputy Chief
3. Mr. Abdul Razak Latun, Special Departmental Coordinator

Inland Fishery Resources Development and Management Department (IFRDMD)

1. Dr. Arif Wibowo, Chief
2. Mr. Shibuno Takuro, Deputy Chief
3. Mr. Siswanta Kaban, Special Departmental Coordinator

AGENDA

Agenda 1: Opening of the Meeting

Agenda 2: Adoption of the Agenda

Agenda 3: Follow-up Actions to the 51st Meeting of SEAFDEC Council, 42nd Meeting of SEAFDEC Program Committee and the 22nd Meeting of ASEAN-SEAFDEC Strategic Partnership of the Fisheries Consultative Group (FCG)

Agenda 4: Resolution and Plan of Action on Sustainable Fisheries for Food Security for the ASEAN Region Towards 2030

Agenda 5: Monitoring the Implementation of the SEAFDEC Gender Strategy

Agenda 6: Information-related Matters

- 6.1 Results from the Twentieth Meeting of Information Staff Program
- 6.2 Workplan of SEASOFIA 2022

Agenda 7: Administrative and Finance-related Matters

- 7.1 Procedures for Establishment of Cooperation Between SEAFDEC and Other Organizations
- 7.2 Guidelines on Procurement of Products and Services of SEAFDEC

Agenda 8: Preparation for the 52nd Meeting of SEAFDEC Council in 2020

Agenda 9: Other Matters

- 9.1 Template for reporting of JTF 6 phase I project achievement
- 9.2 SEAFDEC Supports Implementation of Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)
- 9.3 Others

Agenda 11: Conclusion and Follow-up Actions

Agenda 12: Closing of the Meeting