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EDITORIAL

In the second quarter of 2024, the most significant SEAFDEC event was the 56th Meeting of the SEAFDEC Council organized in Tagaytay City, Philippines, which reviewed the progress of SEAFDEC activities undertaken in 2023 as well as important regional fisheries-related issues. The Council approved regional policy document, *i.e.* the Regional Framework for Fishery Statistics in Southeast Asia (2024 Edition), for further submission and endorsement under the ASEAN mechanism.

Moreover, SEAFDEC and FAO co-organized a workshop on the application of AquaGRIS, a global information system, to build national registries of aquatic genetic resources where, the participants learned about the AqGR and AquaGRIS concepts and conducted a trial data entry into AquaGRIS. Additionally, SEAFDEC/TD, in partnership with the Commonwealth of Australia, organized the Women in Fisheries Workshop. The Workshop explored the concept of establishing a voluntary

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The Fifty-sixth meeting of the SEAFDEC council convened



At the kind invitation of the Government of the Philippines through its Department of Agriculture, Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources as the host, the Fifty-sixth Meeting of the SEAFDEC Council (56CM) was convened on 6–9 May 2024 in Tagaytay City, Philippines.

In attendance at the Meeting were the Council Directors and delegates from the SEAFDEC Member Countries, namely: Brunei Darussalam, Cambodia, Indonesia, Japan, Lao PDR, Malaysia, Myanmar, Philippines, Singapore, Thailand, and Viet Nam. The Inaugural Ceremony of the Fifty-sixth Meeting of the SEAFDEC Council was held on 6 May 2024 and presided over by the Undersecretary for Fisheries of the Department of Agriculture (DA) of the Philippines and Council Director for the Philippines, *Ms. Drusila Esther E. Bayate*. The Council unanimously elected the Council Director for the Philippines, *Ms. Bayate*, as the Chairperson of the SEAFDEC Council for the Year 2024–2025, succeeding, *Mr. Wai Lin Maung*, SEAFDEC Council Director for Myanmar who ser Editorial 472 ved

as the Chairperson of the SEAFDEC Council for the Year 2023–2024.

Recognizing the need for continued efforts in combating illegal, unreported and unregulated (IUU) fishing, the Council noted the significant regional initiatives undertaken by SEAFDEC, including the Regional Fishing Vessels Record (RFVVR) Database, electronic ASEAN Catch Documentation Scheme (eACDS), and enhancement of national capacities in port State measures (PSM) implementation. While noting the priority areas for future action to combat IUU fishing in Southeast Asia, the Council requested SEAFDEC to collaborate with relevant agencies, including the Regional Plan of Action to Promote Responsible Fishing Practices Including Combating IUU Fishing (RPOA-IUU) and the ASEAN Network to Combat IUU Fishing (AN-IUU), among others in its future efforts for combating IUU fishing.

The Council congratulated SEAFDEC for coming up with the preliminary results of stock and risk assessments of Indo-Pacific king mackerel (*Scomberomorus*

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EDITORIAL

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regional network of women officers from RPOA-IUU participating countries to serve as a platform for sharing of experiences, discussing barriers and strategies, and celebrating success.

Another important activity was the marine resources and oceanographic survey utilizing the M.V. SEAFDEC 2 as well as hydroacoustic survey using the Simrad EK80 which was conducted by TD in collaboration with the DOF of Brunei Darussalam. Also, TD, in collaboration with Chulalongkorn University, conducted a survey in the Gulf of Thailand using the M.V. SEAFDEC 2 and the results will be used in developing an action plan for mitigating marine plastic debris in Thailand.

As part of capacity building for students, SEAFDEC conducted training courses for university students including the 64th Short-term Training Course on Ecosystem-based Fisheries for Sustainable Fisheries Resources Management; knowledge-sharing on freshwater fish identification, fishing gear in inland waters, etc. (by TD); aquaculture technologies for shrimp, marine fish, mangrove crab, giant freshwater prawn, and seaweed (by AQD).

SEAFDEC also continued to conduct several training courses to build the capacity of the Member Countries, which include onboard tuna handling preservation and transport, climate change and its impact on fish stock, essential ecosystem approach to fisheries management (E-EAFM), fish nutrition and feed development, and sandfish seed production and management.

During the same quarter, the SEAFDEC Secretary-General, *Dr. Suttinee Linthammahisorn*, paid courtesy visits to Singapore, Viet Nam, and Philippines to discuss critical topics such as food security, climate change, and sustainable fisheries management. The visits strengthened cooperation and explored avenues for collaboration on fisheries innovations and technologies.

On the 1 April 2024, SEAFDEC welcomed *Mr. Toru Shimoda* as the new Deputy Chief of the SEAFDEC Inland Fishery Resources Development and Management Department (IFRDMD) succeeding *Mr. Tomohito Shimizu*.



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SEAFDEC experts share insights in aquaculture expo



Three SEAFDEC/AQD experts shared their expertise in seminars and conferences during the event “Aquaculture Philippines 2024” held from 22 to 24 May 2024 at the World Trade Center in Pasay City, Philippines.

On the second day of the event, *Dr. Leobert de la Peña* delivered a lecture entitled “Biosecurity Practices at SEAFDEC/AQD’s Hatchery and Pond Facilities” at the Biosecurity Asia Forum organized as part of the event. He discussed how to design and implement a biosecurity plan and program, and detailed the biosecurity practices used by AQD in hatchery and grow-out operations.

Meanwhile at the Aquaculture Conference, as another part of the event, *Dr. Roger Edward Mamauag* made a presentation entitled “Utilization

of Alternative Ingredients to Promote Cost-Effective Feeds for Sustainable Aquaculture” highlighting the development of cost-efficient feeds using byproducts from agriculture to partially substitute fish meal which is an expensive ingredient serving as a protein source. He shared the results of the study conducted in 2020 at AQD Dumangas Brackishwater Station showing that the SEAFDEC-formulated diet outperformed commercial feeds.

Additionally, *Mr. Marwin Dela Cruz* presented “SEAFDEC/AQD’s Recent Developments on Giant Freshwater Prawn (GFP) Grow-out Technology.” He explained that GFP is a high-value species that can be cultured in slightly saline environments, is profitable, and can be co-cultured with other fresh or brackishwater species.

Aside from the talks, AQD showcased live giant freshwater prawns and silver tharapon from its Binangonan Freshwater Station in an exhibition held alongside the event. A mobile bookstore was also set up at the exhibit to disseminate the aquaculture manuals developed by AQD to farmers, government personnel, and other stakeholders attending the event.



Training course on sandfish seed production and management completed



Three participants from Germany, Hungary, and Vanuatu completed the “Training Course on Sandfish (*Holothuria scabra*) Seed Production, Nursery, and Management” held from 29 April to 14 May 2024 in Iloilo and Negros Occidental, Philippines. The trainees gained technical knowledge on the

biology of sea cucumbers, particularly the sandfish through the lectures on sandfish spawning techniques, nursery rearing, community-based sea ranching, and sea cucumber processing provided by SEAFDEC/AQD experts. Moreover, the trainees were equipped with skills in broodstock preparation and spawning induction; spawning and larval rearing tank setup; and egg collection, counting, and stocking. They also engaged in nursery pen harvesting and monitored sea ranch sites at Molocaboc, Sagay City, Negros Occidental. The Training is offered annually by SEAFDEC/AQD to the public as part of its Training Program.



The Fifty-sixth meeting of the SEAFDEC council convened

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guttatus) and narrow-barred Spanish mackerel (*S. commerson*) in the Southeast Asian waters. The Council further recommended that after obtaining the final results, the ASEAN Member States (AMSs) shall discuss the holistic management of the species before endorsing the results to the 33rd Meeting of the ASEAN Sectoral Working Group on Fisheries (ASWGF) in 2025.

Noting the progress made by SEAFDEC in revising the Regional Framework for Fishery Statistics in Southeast Asia, the Council approved the “Regional Framework for Fishery Statistics of Southeast Asia (2024 Edition)” for further submission and endorsement under the ASEAN mechanism. It is expected that the Framework (2024 Edition) will be applied by SEAFDEC for the compilation of regional fishery statistics data for 2024 onwards.

The Council took note of the CITES-related issues and reiterated the important role of SEAFDEC to continue supporting the Member Countries in utilizing scientific evidence and developing common positions in response to proposals for listing of commercially exploited aquatic species (CEAS)

into CITES Appendices. Moreover, SEAFDEC was requested to continue to provide capacity-building activities to address the challenges faced by the AMSs, *e.g.* species identification, data collection of catch, stock assessment, and traceability of critical CEAS.

The Council recognized the significance of global biodiversity and environmental conservation frameworks, *i.e.* the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework; Agreement under the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea on the Conservation and Sustainable Use of Marine Biological Diversity of Areas Beyond National Jurisdiction (BBNJ Treaty); Other effective area-based conservation measures (OECM); and the new international legally binding instrument on plastic pollution, including in the marine environment. In light of these frameworks, the Council recommended that SEAFDEC provide updated information to support the Member Countries in navigating and implementing these global frameworks effectively.

The Council recognized with appreciation the longstanding support extended by the Government of Japan through the Japanese Trust Fund (JTF) to

projects and activities that addressed the priorities of the AMSs for the sustainable development of fisheries and aquaculture in Southeast Asia. Moreover, the Council expressed gratitude to the Government of Japan for the continued commitment to supporting sustainable fisheries and aquaculture development of the region through the new phase of the JTF (JTF-7) which will be implemented from 2025 to 2029.

This Fifty-sixth Meeting of the SEAFDEC Council was successfully concluded. The Council noted the progress and achievements of the SEAFDEC programs and projects in 2023 and approved the proposed programs of activities to be undertaken in 2024. The Council encouraged SEAFDEC to effectively implement programs and projects responsive to the priorities and needs of the Member Countries. Moreover, the Meeting signified the continued commitment of the Member Countries to continue working with SEAFDEC as well as collaborating with partner organizations towards the sustainable contribution of fisheries and aquaculture to food security, economy, and well-being of the people in the Southeast Asian region.



IFRDMD boosts inland fisheries knowledge of university students



IFRDMD, in collaboration with the Research Institute for Inland Fisheries and Extension (RIIFE), organized knowledge-sharing activities for university students in May–June 2024. Students from Jakarta

Fisheries Engineering University, PGRI University Palembang, and Muhammadiyah University Palembang joined the classroom discussions, laboratory and field exercises, and games

related to inland fisheries and fisheries extension. A total of 27 students learned the basics of fish genetics, freshwater fish identification techniques, various types of fishing gear in inland waters, benthic and plankton sampling techniques and analysis, water quality measurement techniques, fish farming techniques, and remote sensing technology for fisheries. The knowledge-sharing activities were under the project “Management Scheme of Inland Fisheries in the Southeast Asia Region” supported by the Japanese Trust Fund 6-2.



DEPARTMENTAL ACTIVITIES

AQD hosts sea cucumber roadshow



The SEAFDEC Aquaculture Department (SEAFDEC/AQD) hosted the “Regional Sea Cucumber Roadshow 2024 West Visayas Session” on 13–14 June 2024 at AQD Tigbauan Main Station in Iloilo, Philippines. The two-day event was participated by various academic institutions, regional government agencies, and local government units. Supported by the Australian Centre for International Agriculture Research (ACIAR), the event featured the latest developments in sea cucumber fisheries and management. The attendees — who hailed not only from the provinces in the

Western Visayas region but also from the provinces of Cebu, Marinduque, Palawan, and Misamis Oriental, Philippines — explored newly developed sea cucumber culture methods and best practices for sea cucumber aquaculture and ocean rearing. Furthermore, they also discussed partnerships with various agencies and organizations to expand sandfish farming to new localities.

On the first day of the event, key lectures included “Overview of Sea Cucumber Ecology, Fisheries, and Trade,” “Current Knowledge & Practices

– Hatchery, Nursery, Grow-out of Sandfish,” “Integrated Systems, Cluster Production and Linkages (Luzon Highlights),” “Community-friendly Approaches (East Visayas Highlights),” and “NICER Program on Sea Cucumbers (Mindanao Highlights).”

The second day featured workshops aimed at identifying sea cucumber status (resources, research, and projects) by area, identifying gaps and needs (technical, funding, permits, partners), and exploring potential collaborations, projects, and assistance, among others. Open forums allowed the participants to ask questions, share thoughts, and engage in discussions.

The event was part of an ACIAR-funded project on community-based sea cucumber production that aims to enhance the skills of sea cucumber farmers in aquaculture and resource management through research and community development in the Philippines. ❖

IFRDMD staff train in creative thinking



Staff from SEAFDEC/IFRDMD attended the Basic Level Creative Thinking Technical Training organized by the Research Institute for Inland Fisheries and Extension (RIIFE) on 6–8 May 2024 in Palembang, Indonesia.

The trainer, *Ms. Anastasia Dian Rosalina* was from the Sukamandi Apparatus Education and Training Centre, Marine and Fishery Human Resources Extension and Development Agency under the Ministry of Marine Affairs and Fisheries.

The Training program was designed to be engaging and interactive with topics and exercises including creative thinking concept, measuring one's creativity level and barriers, and practice of creative thinking techniques, group discussions, creative idea exploration, and icebreakers. It is envisaged that after the Training, IFRDMD staff will be able to develop new ideas, find ways to solve problems using imagination that is sometimes overlooked by logic, and evaluate ideas and options to make decisions. ❖

Fisheries graduates complete intensive aquaculture training course



Five fisheries graduates completed an intensive three-month training course on aquaculture technologies on 19 February–31 May 2024. The Training covered the culture of shrimp, marine fish, mangrove crab, giant freshwater prawn, and seaweed, as well as marine cage and brackishwater pond

aquaculture. The trainees sat in dozens of lectures and engaged in numerous practical sessions at SEAFDEC/AQD facilities at Tigbauan and Dumangas in Iloilo, as well as Nueva Valencia in Guimaras. At the final stage of the training, the trainees hurdled individual oral reporting and oral examinations

on hatchery and grow-out procedures evaluated by a panel of experts.

This Training was the fourth phase held as part of an initiative to build a pool of highly skilled aquaculturists under the SEAFDEC/AQD collaborative program with the Government of the Philippines “Aquaculture Technologies for Manpower Development (ManDev).” This year’s ManDev graduates follow three other batches trained in 2018, 2021, and 2022–2023 which equipped graduates from Philippine state universities and colleges with enhanced knowledge and proficiency in various aquaculture technologies. ❖

SEAFDEC advocates collaboration with DA-BFAR for sustainable fisheries and aquaculture



SEAFDEC officials led by the Secretary-General, *Dr. Suttinee Limthammahisorn*, together with the Policy and Program Coordinator of the SEAFDEC Secretariat, *Dr. Worawit Wanchana*; Project Planning and Management Division Head of Training Department (SEAFDEC/TD), *Mr. Isara Chanrachkij*; Chief of Aquaculture Department (SEAFDEC/AQD), *Mr. Dan Baliao*; and AQD senior staff paid a courtesy visit to Department of Agriculture-Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources (DA-BFAR) of the Philippines.

The SEAFDEC delegation was warmly welcomed by the Undersecretary

for Fisheries of DA and SEAFDEC Council Director for the Philippines, *Ms. Drusila Esther E. Bayate*, and Director of BFAR and SEAFDEC Alternate Council Director for the Philippines, *Atty. Demosthenes R. Escoto*, at BFAR Central Office in Manila on 11 April 2024. In the meeting between SEAFDEC and DA-BFAR, the discussions centered around the pivotal role of SEAFDEC in promoting sustainable fisheries development across Southeast Asia for over 55 years and its activities in supporting the ASEAN Member States, emphasizing coordination SEAFDEC/TD and BFAR in marine fishery resources research and development. Moreover, the meeting also delved into strategies

for sustainable aquaculture development where AQD Chief and officials provided valuable insights.

On the second day, the SEAFDEC delegation visited the Regional Fisheries Training Division and Fisherfolk Coordination Center in Alaminos City, Pangasinan to discuss capacity-building initiatives and community-based approaches to coastal and marine aquaculture development. During the dialogue, *Dr. Suttinee* and *Mr. Baliao* underscored the importance of empowering small-scale fish farmers and enhancing their resilience to environmental challenges. Furthermore, DA-BFAR personnel also accompanied SEAFDEC officials for a field visit to the BFAR Regional Mariculture Technology Demonstration Center in Lucap, Pangasinan.

The visit has strengthened advocacy for collaboration and cooperation between SEAFDEC and BFAR in various activities, including research, training programs, and joint initiatives to address regional and international fisheries-related issues. ❖

TD opens the door for visitors from universities, institutions



SEAFDEC Training Department (SEAFDEC/TD) has been regularly visited by various guests including students, lecturers, researchers, and fisheries officers, among others from universities and institutions in Thailand and other countries. During the visits, the guests learn about the role and activities of SEAFDEC, gain more knowledge of relevant fisheries subjects, and observe the facilities including the fishing workshop, marine engineering workshop, marine biology laboratory, and M.V. SEAFDEC.

On 5 April 2024, SEAFDEC/TD welcomed 20 students and two lecturers

from Siam Maritime School (SMS) and M.V. SEAFDEC to increase their knowledge and experience outside the classroom. SMS was established in 2017 in Samut Prakan Province, Thailand to provide various international training and education for seafarers and interested persons who desire to upgrade their knowledge and experiences in the maritime field.

Moreover, seven participants from the State of Eritrea and three lecturers from Kasetsart University visited SEAFDEC/TD on 13 May 2024. They acquired more knowledge about the longtail fishing boat

of Thailand, trawl and purse seine fishing operations, and onboard preservation methods

From the Philippines, a total of 15 delegates including faculty members and administrators from the College of Fisheries and Aquatic Sciences of the Iloilo State University Fisheries Science and Technology (ISUFST) were welcomed by SEAFDEC/TD on 4 June 2024. Following the presentation of TD, ISUFST also shared its internationalization of fisheries education through the exchange of information on fishery-related issues. In the end, TD and ISUFST discussed possible cooperation in the future.

More guests were welcomed by SEAFDEC/TD which included six government staff from the Skill Development Institute of the Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare of Lao PDR on 7 June 2024. On this occasion, the possible capacity-building support for Lao PDR fishers on basic fishing gear construction and fishing techniques was discussed. ❖

University students trained on sustainable fishery resource management



SEAFDEC Training Department (SEAFDEC/TD) organized the “64th Short-term Training Course on Ecosystem-based Fisheries for Sustainable Fisheries Resources Management” from 13 to 21 May 2024 at SEAFDEC/TD in Samut Prakan, Thailand. There were 26 university students from six universities in Thailand including Burapha University



(Bangsaen and Chanthaburi Campus), Chulalongkorn University, Kasetsart University, Maejo University, Prince of Songkla University, and Silpakorn University (Phetchaburi IT campus) as well as from two universities in Japan including Hokkaido University and Tokai University participated in the Training. The Training sessions consisted of lectures, practical exercises, and field

surveys in the fishing community. The lectures include oceanographic features of the Gulf of Thailand, marine pollution, combating IUU fishing, fish handling and preservation techniques, fishery extension media, ecosystem approach to fishery management (EAFM), safety at sea, coral reef ecology and biodiversity, fishing gear in Thailand, and socioeconomic conditions in fishery community. Practical sessions were composed of safety at sea, coral reef survey, reef benthic survey images analysis, and rope and knot tying. The Training was one of the activities under the program of TD “Promotion on Strengthening of SEAFDEC Visibility and Enhancing Human Capacity Building.” ❖

SEAFDEC, DOF Viet Nam, RIMF deepen collaboration on fisheries innovations and technologies



SEAFDEC paid a courtesy visit to the Department of Fisheries (DOF) of Viet Nam on 19–20 April 2024. The SEAFDEC delegation was led by the Secretary-General of SEAFDEC, *Dr. Suttinee Limthammahisorn*, alongside Policy and Program Coordinator of the SEAFDEC Secretariat, *Dr. Worawit Wanchana*, Training and Supporting Division Head of SEAFDEC Training Department

(TD), *Mr. Suthipong Thanasansakorn*, and Marine Engineering Section Head of SEAFDEC/TD, *Mr. Thaweesak Thimkrap*. During the meeting in Hanoi with the DOF Director-General and SEAFDEC Council Director for Viet Nam, *Dr. Tran Dinh Luan*, and DOF senior officials, SEAFDEC presented an overview of its programs and successful collaborations with Viet Nam and across the Southeast Asian region. Moreover, the meeting also identified areas of mutual interest and cooperation for concerted efforts to address pressing regional fisheries challenges including sustainable fisheries management, capacity-building, and research collaboration.

On the next day, SEAFDEC visited the Research Institute for Marine Fisheries (RIMF) in Hai Phong to explore fisheries innovations and technologies aimed at enhancing efficiency and sustainability in the sector such as ultra-fine bubble technology for onboard fish handling and seaweed tissue culture, among others. Additionally, the importance of fishery resource surveys and data-driven approaches in sustainable fisheries management were also discussed. Both SEAFDEC and RIMF expressed eagerness to deepen collaboration and leverage research and technology to address challenges and opportunities in the fisheries sector. ❖

SEAFDEC, Singapore fortify cooperation for food security and safety



The Mission from SEAFDEC, led by the Secretary-General *Dr. Suttinee Limthammahisorn*, together with the Policy and Program Coordinator, *Dr. Worawit Wanchana*, and Information Program Coordinator, *Ms. Nualanong*

Tongdee, paid a courtesy visit to the SEAFDEC Council Director for Singapore on 25 April 2024. SEAFDEC visited the Aquaculture and Marine Aquaculture Center (MAC) of Singapore which serves as a Collaborating Centre for the SEAFDEC/MFRD Programme. The Director of Aquaculture Department of the Singapore Food Agency (SFA) and SEAFDEC Alternate Council Director and National Coordinator for Singapore, *Dr. Jiang Jun Hui*, and Chief of MFRD *Mr. Tan Yit Wee*, explained the vision and activities of MAC. Subsequently, SEAFDEC also visited the SFA where a discussion was held with the Deputy

Chief Executive Officer (Corporate Industry and Technology) and SEAFDEC Council Director for Singapore, *Mr. Chan Hian Lim*. During the discussion, *Mr. Chan* emphasized the crucial role of SFA in ensuring food security and safety and addressing issues affecting sustainable food production *e.g.* climate change focusing on environmental sustainability in food production in Singapore. The discussion was further made on how SFA through MFRD could enhance its contribution to supporting the SEAFDEC Member Countries in the future. ❖

TD joins Fisheries Fair “Pramong Nomklao”



The SEAFDEC Training Department (SEAFDEC/TD) joined the “Pramong Nomklao” or Fisheries Fair with the theme “Aquatic Arena” which was

organized by the Department of Fisheries (DOF), Thailand from 28 June to 7 July 2024 at the Future Park Shopping Mall in Pathumthani Province, Thailand. SEAFDEC/TD exhibited different types of equipment used in oceanographic surveys including a bongo net for collecting plankton, sediment grab, and an instrument to measure conductivity, temperature, and depth (CTD). Samples of deep-sea fish and fish larvae were also presented at the SEAFDEC/TD booth which allowed the visitors to have a

close-up look at these rare underwater creatures. Moreover, information materials such as technical publications, brochures, and posters were distributed to promote the activities of SEAFDEC.

The Fisheries Fair has been held annually since 1986 to impart fisheries knowledge to the public. The income generated from the Fair is donated to the cancer research of the Chulabhorn Research Institute. ❖

Training course on climate change and the impact on fish stock life in ASEAN



June 2024 back-to-back with the “Core Expert Meeting on Improving the Draft Work Plan and Way Forward on Project Implementation” on 14 June 2024 in Samut Prakan, Thailand.

The Training was intended to build the capacity of the participants from TD, MFRDMD, IFRDMD, and Burapha University Chanthaburi Campus on the dynamics of the marine environment and biomass monitoring based on per-recruit analysis. Moreover, the Meeting was held to improve the draft project work plan to be more realistic and comprehensive by considering the point of view of the experts in fish stock

assessment and climate change on the appropriate methods for monitoring and forecasting the impact of climate change on fishery resources and on the target fishery resource species sensitive to climate change. The resource persons for both activities include *Dr. Matsuishi Takashi Fritz* from Hokkaido University, *Dr. Jitraporn Phaksopa* from Kasetsart University, and *Dr. Rishi Sharma* from the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO). The activities were organized under the project “USAID DOI International Technical Assistance Program (ITAP)”.



SEAFDEC Training Department (SEAFDEC/TD) organized the “Training Course on Monitoring the Phenomenon of Climate Change and the Impact on Fish Stock Life History Parameters in Waters in Southeast Asia” from 10 to 13

TD, Chulalongkorn University survey marine plastic debris in the Gulf of Thailand



SEAFDEC/TD, in collaboration with the Aquatic Resources Research Institute of Chulalongkorn University, conducted a survey in the Gulf of Thailand from 3 to 10 April 2024 utilizing the M.V. SEAFDEC 2. The survey was carried out at the 12 stations in the Gulf of Thailand composed of visual observation of floating marine debris; sampling of microplastics, marine debris, benthic organisms, and sediment; and collecting data on conductivity, temperature, and depth.

The survey was part of the research on marine plastic debris in the Gulf of Thailand under the “Formation of a Center of Excellence for Marine Plastic Pollution Studies in the Southeast Asian Seas Project” of the Science and Technology Research Partnership for Sustainable Development (SATREPS) program of Japan. The results of the survey will be used to propose an action plan for mitigating marine plastic debris to the Government of Thailand.



SEAFDEC reinforces commitment to sustainable fisheries at the Fourth SOI Global Dialogue



Korea. Organized by the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), and Ministry of Ocean and Fisheries of Korea, the event brought together regional seas organizations (RSOs), regional fishery bodies (RFBs), UN agencies, and other stakeholders.

The key discussions of the Dialogue focused on the implementation of the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework (GBF) and the 2023 Agreement under the United Nations

Convention on the Law of the Sea on the Conservation and Sustainable Use of Marine Biological Diversity of Areas Beyond National Jurisdiction (BBNJ) Agreement. The participants explored collaborative efforts to monitor and report the progress of GBF and support the future implementation of BBNJ Agreement. The participation of SEAFDEC in the Dialogue reinforced its commitment to promoting sustainable fisheries management across inland, coastal, and marine ecosystems and habitats.




The SEAFDEC Secretariat, represented by the Senior Policy Officer, *Ms. Pattaratjit Kaewnuratchadasorn*, emphasized the vital role of SEAFDEC in sustainable fisheries, food security, food safety, and regional collaboration at the 4th Sustainable Ocean Initiative (SOI) Global Dialogue held on 11–14 June 2024 in Seoul, Republic of

Tailor-made Training for INFOFISH on onboard tuna handling preservation and transport

SEAFDEC Training Department (SEAFDEC/TD), in cooperation with INFOFISH, organized the “Training for Trainer on Onboard Tuna Handling Preservation and Transport” from 27 to 28 May 2024 in Samut Prakan, Thailand. The tailor-made Training was participated by 13 government officials from INFOFISH Member Countries involved in tuna post-harvest and quality assurance. The Training consisted of lectures on fish handling tools, facilities, current situation,

and problems in tuna handling in the Asia-Pacific region. Moreover, the participants engaged in field observation of tuna handling, preservation, and transportation techniques at a landing site. At the end of the Training, the participants are expected to be able to use knowledge and skills they have obtained to guarantee the quality of tuna for export .

Based in Kuala Lumpur and hosted by Malaysia since its inception in 1981,


INFOFISH is an intergovernmental organization established by the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) to provide marketing information and technical advisory services for fishery products in the AsiaPacific region and beyond. INFOFISH members include Bangladesh, Cambodia, Fiji, Kiribati, Malaysia, Maldives, Papua New Guinea, Philippines, and Thailand. This Training was under the framework of the MoU established since 2000. 

SEAFDEC/AQD-NFRDI project nets 4.3 t of shrimp



A collaborative project between SEAFDEC/AQD and the National Fisheries Research and Development Institute (NFRDI) successfully harvested 4.3 t of whiteleg shrimp (*Litopenaeus vannamei*) from 7 to 9 May 2024 at the NFRDI Freshwater Fisheries Research and Development Center in Batangas, Philippines. Approximately 160,000 shrimp were stocked in a 4,000m² pond at a density of 40 shrimp per m²

on 5 February 2024. After 91 days, the shrimp reached an average weight of 29.5 g each.

This collaboration, which began in March 2023, is part of the Joint Mission for Accelerated Nationwide Techno-Transfer Program (JMANTTP) and a priority initiative of AQD aimed at empowering local stakeholders including government agencies. 

SEAFDEC, DAFF Australia support women to combat IUU fishing




SEAFDEC Training Department (SEAFDEC/TD), in partnership with the Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry (DAFF) of Australia, organized the “Women in Fisheries Workshop” from 14 to 16 May 2024 in Bangkok, Thailand. The regional Workshop was attended by 66 participants from Cambodia, Indonesia, Lao PDR, Malaysia, Papua New Guinea, Philippines, Timor-Leste, Thailand, Viet Nam, SEAFDEC, DAFF, Australian Fisheries Management Authority (AFMA), Commonwealth Scientific

and Industrial Research Organization (CSIRO) including fisheries officers engaged in monitoring, control and surveillance (MCS) as well as observers from Regional Plan of Action to Promote Responsible Fishing Practices Including Combating IUU Fishing (RPOA-IUU) Secretariat and Nha Trang University.

Through knowledge-sharing sessions and small group discussions, the Workshop was able to identify challenges and barriers faced by women fisheries officers in the region and practical opportunities for shifting gender norms within the sector in the short- and medium-term; boost the status and confidence of women in the fisheries MCS sector across the region by providing a platform to share their expertise and stories; and encourage male champions for gender equality in the sector who can actively support and

promote gender inclusion in spaces where women are not well represented. At the end of the Workshop, the participants explored the concept of establishing a voluntary regional network of women fisheries officers from RPOA-IUU participating countries where they could continue sharing experiences, discussing barriers and strategies, and celebrating success.

The Workshop was under the program of the Commonwealth of Australia “Combating Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated (IUU) Fishing and Promoting Sustainable Fisheries in Southeast Asia” which aims to strengthen the capacity of the RPOA-IUU and ASEAN Member States to combat IUU fishing, foster greater regional collaboration, and promote gender inclusion in fisheries-related MCS. 

SPECIAL REPORT

SEAFish Project: SEAFDEC and USAID partnership for improved fishery resource management and sustainable biodiversity in the Southeast Asian region

Sawitree Chamsai, Worawit Wanchana
SEAFDEC Secretariat



Southeast Asia is a major contributor to global fisheries production, both from capture fisheries and aquaculture. The region's significant and diverse fishery production is driven by its extensive coastline and rich biodiversity in inland, coastal, and marine ecosystems. In 2021, the region contributed about 21 % (45.8 million t) to the world fishery production (Southeast Asian Fisheries Development Center or SEAFDEC, 2024) while the average per capita fish consumption was about 40 kg/person which was double that of the world's average per capita fish consumption in 2017 (SEAFDEC, 2022). It is crucial to ensure the sustainable development of the fisheries and aquaculture sector in the region because of its important role in people's nutrition, food security, livelihood, and economies.

However, several prevalent and emerging issues and challenges threaten the fisheries and aquaculture sector in Southeast Asia. These issues and challenges include illegal, unreported and unregulated (IUU) fishing; destructive fishing gear and practices; abandoned, lost or otherwise discarded fishing gear (ALDFG); management of transboundary fish species; management and insufficient information on inland capture fisheries; socioeconomic and ecological impacts of aquaculture practices; and alternative feed ingredients, among others. Efforts to promote sustainable management and responsible practices are crucial for ensuring the long-term viability of fishery resources to benefit the communities that depend on them.

To address the abovementioned issues and challenges, the Southeast Asian Fisheries Development Center (SEAFDEC) and the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) established the five-year project "USAID Southeast Asia Fisheries Partnership (SEAFish)" with the duration from October 2023 to September 2028 (United States Agency for International Development, 2024). SEAFish aims to improve the management of fishery resources as well as inland and marine biodiversity in the Indo-Pacific region. The Project envisions empowering and supporting a wide range of stakeholders, including local and national government officers, research institutions, and local fishing communities to enhance fisheries and aquaculture management practices and contribute to the efforts in addressing the issues and challenges.

Destructive fishing practices

The misapplication of advanced fishing techniques and the use of non-selective fishing gear such as trammel nets, trawlers, and longlines has led to the overexploitation of fishery resources (Cañete, *et al.*, 2022). Moreover, ALDFG contributed to marine pollution and continued to capture marine life which is known as ghost fishing. These destructive fishing practices deplete fish stocks and increase microplastic contamination which adversely affect the livelihoods of fishers (Lyons *et al.*, 2019).

To mitigate the impact of capture fisheries operations on coastal and marine ecosystems, SEAFish will focus on developing environment-friendly fishing gear. In addition, SEAFish will promote the best practices of fishing gear marking and support the development of an action plan to address ALDFG.

Management of transboundary fish species

Migratory fish species, especially tuna, are under threat from various factors including overexploitation. Hence, the management of transboundary fish species is necessary to sustain these resources (SEAFDEC, 2017). In particular, the Sulu-Sulawesi Seas have abundant and diverse resources including tuna species, which provide food and livelihood for around 40 million people (Heileman, 2020; Huffard, *et al.*, 2012). In this regard, it is necessary to enhance the national capacity in compliance with regional conservation and management measures, data collection, and international cooperation for sustainable tuna fisheries development (Sunoko & Huang, 2014).

To enhance the regional data and forecast fish stock status and related trends, SEAFish will conduct a series of technical consultations with key stakeholders including governments, experts, and research institutes. SEAFish will compile scientific information on fish stock status and develop a forecast model aimed at biodiversity conservation and mitigating the impacts of climate change on fisheries. Subsequently, SEAFish plans to develop technical guidelines for tuna stock assessment and forecasting models specific to the Sulu-Sulawesi Seas.



The Mekong River and its tributaries sustain one of the world's most productive inland fisheries which are crucial for local livelihoods, nutrition, and cultural practices. For about 60 million people or 60 % of the total residents in the Lower Mekong Basin, fish represent the most easily accessible source of protein (Vu *et al.*, 2021). However, fish stocks and aquatic ecosystems are declining due to overfishing, habitat degradation, climate change, pollution, and hydropower development. These pressures, along with land reclamation and shifting climate patterns, are severely impacting the aquatic resources.

Efforts to address these challenges and support the sustainability of inland fisheries are ongoing. SEAFish is actively contributing to these efforts by promoting sustainable fishing practices, establishing management areas, involving local communities, conducting research, and fostering international cooperation. These strategies are essential for preserving fish stocks, habitats, and biodiversity. Applying the ecosystem approach to fisheries management, SEAFish intends to balance ecological health with human needs to ensure the continued rich biodiversity and economic benefits of inland fisheries of the Mekong Basin.

Socioeconomic and ecological impacts of aquaculture practices

Aquaculture is a rapidly growing industry in Southeast Asia contributing significantly to the region's fishery production. It accounts for more than 50 % of the total fish and fishery products in the region, including seaweed (*Eucheuma* spp., *Gracilaria* spp.), fish (tilapia, catfish, and carp), shrimp (*Penaeus vannamei*, *P. monodon*), and mollusk (oysters and mussels) (SEAFDEC, 2024). With the increasing demand for farmed fish, promoting responsible aquaculture practices would reduce pressure on marine fish resources (SEAFDEC, 2022).

While focusing on responsible aquaculture practices that minimize negative environmental impact and enhance the socioeconomic benefits for small-scale fish farmers, SEAFish supports integrated multi-trophic aquaculture systems. These systems utilize various aquaculture commodities, including seaweed, mollusks, finfish, and crustaceans. SEAFish will develop a comprehensive set of guidelines and recommendations for implementing seaweed-based integrated multi-trophic aquaculture systems in Southeast Asia.



Feeds represent the largest expense in aquaculture production, and the increasing costs of fish meal and oil highlight the need for alternative feed ingredients (Aquaculture Department, Southeast Asian Fisheries Development Center, 2021). The region's diverse and abundant resources offer potential replacements that can lower costs and reduce reliance on fish meal as well as imports through locally sourced ingredients.

To address high aquafeed costs, SEAFish is exploring alternative and cost-efficient feeds for milkfish and tilapia by utilizing locally available alternative protein sources instead of fish meals. SEAFish will involve fish farmers, local governments, fisheries agencies, and other stakeholders to demonstrate the benefits of these alternative sources of protein and reduce dependence on fish meals in aquaculture.

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REGIONAL PROGRAMS

New IFRDMD Deputy Chief visits study sites of eel projects



Mr. Toru Shimoda and the eel processing plant owner in Palu, Central Sulawesi discussing eel sustainability

The new Deputy Chief of SEAFDEC/IFRDMD, Mr. Toru Shimoda joined the IFRDMD researchers to visit the study sites of the project “Development of Stock Assessment Methods and Strengthening Resource Management Measures for Tropical Eel in Southeast Asia” supported by the Japan-ASEAN

Integration Fund (JAIF). Mr. Shimoda visited the Cikaso and Cimandiri Rivers in Palabuhan Ratu, West Java, Indonesia from 13 to 17 May 2024 and the Poso River, Pandiri River, Poso River Estuary, and Tentena in Poso, Central Sulawesi, Indonesia from 7 to 9 June 2024. IFRDMD is carrying out a monthly visit at the study sites for data collection on catches of eels at all stages (glass eel, elver, and yellow eel) and water quality. The visits were also an opportunity for Mr. Shimoda to interact with enumerators and fishers. Moreover, Mr. Shimoda also visited an eel processing plant in Palu, Central Sulawesi on 9 June 2024 and discussed with the company owner the sustainability of eels in Sulawesi Island while producing value-added eel products and supporting the economic welfare of the community.

For another project “Management Scheme of Inland Fisheries in the Southeast Asian Region” supported by the Japanese Trust Fund 6-2, Mr. Shimoda paid a visit to the Research Institute for Marine Aquaculture and Fisheries Extension (RICAFA) in Maros, South Sulawesi on 10 June 2024. On this occasion, the draft policy brief developed by IFRDMD was presented to RICAFA regarding Tempe Lake management to ensure the sustainability of fisheries activities. Furthermore, Mr. Shimoda also went to the Special Area for Conservation and Fish Refugia (SPECTRA) installation in Patra Tani, Muara Enim Regency, Indonesia on 25 June 2024 as part of a pilot project collaboration with the Research Institute for Inland Fisheries and Extension (RIIFE). ❖

M.V. SEAFDEC 2 conducts a mission in Brunei Darussalam



SEAFDEC/TD, in collaboration with the Department of Fisheries of Brunei Darussalam, conducted marine resources and oceanographic surveys in the waters of Brunei Darussalam utilizing the M.V. SEAFDEC 2 from 22 April to 10 June 2024. The marine resources survey include the sampling of demersal and pelagic fishes using bottom trawl, midwater trawl, and pelagic longline; while the oceanographic survey involve the collection of samples of water, fish larvae, and plankton from the on-shelf

and off-shelf marine areas. Moreover, a hydroacoustic survey was also carried out using the Simrad EK80.

Managed by SEAFDEC/TD, the M.V. SEAFDEC 2 is a 211 GT steel trawler utilized mainly to survey and assess the status of fishery resources of the respective SEAFDEC Member Countries. The research vessel is also used for training programs on fishery resources management and capacity building of fisheries personnel. ❖

Essential Ecosystem Approach to Fisheries Management Training Course

SEAFDEC/TD organized the “Training Course on Essential Ecosystem Approach to Fisheries Management (E-EAFM)” from 10 to 14 June 2024 in Trang Province, Thailand. The 24 participants of the Training include officers from the Department of Fisheries and the Department of Marine Coastal Resources of Thailand who are involved in fishery resource management

in the Lower Andaman Coastline. Subsequently, the 10 participants who passed this E-EAFM training course will be further trained in the Training of the Trainers on EAFM (TOT-EAFM) to equip them in becoming EAFM trainers, key persons, or core team members in implementing EAFM in the selected learning sites in Thailand.

The Training was an activity under the project “Sustainable Management for Fisheries, Marine Living Resources and their Habitats in the Bay of Bengal Region for the Benefit of Coastal States and Communities” implemented by TD from 2024 to 2028 supported by FAO/GEF. ❖

SEAFDEC participates in the Kick-off Meeting for USAID Sustainable Coral Triangle



The Policy Officer from the SEAFDEC Secretariat, *Ms. Sawitree Chamsai*, participated in the Kick-off Meeting for USAID Sustainable Coral Triangle on 29–30 April 2024 in Manado, Indonesia. Organized by the Coral Triangle Initiative for Coral Reefs, Fisheries, and Food Security (CTI-CFF) Regional Secretariat, the Meeting was attended by representatives

from the Coral Triangle six member countries (CT6), United States Agency for International Development Regional Development Mission for Asia (USAID/RDMA), CTI-CFF Regional Secretariat staff, Sustainable Fish Asia (SUFiA) project Implementing Partners *e.g.* SUFiA Technical Support, and other relevant stakeholders including SEAFDEC and University Partnership.

During the Meeting, *Ms. Sawitree* presented the overview of the SEAFDEC five-year grant from USAID/RDMA for the USAID Southeast Asia Fisheries Partnership, known as the “Activity.” She conveyed the Activity’s objectives, experiences, and challenges as well as potential collaborations with CTI-

CFF. Moreover, she emphasized the importance of regular consultation with the Agreement Officer’s representative, developing working mechanisms, and the need for capacity building in areas such as USAID finance, monitoring and evaluation, and gender issues during the initial phase of implementation of the USAID direct funding implementation. She also underscored the potential collaboration efforts between SEAFDEC and CTI-CFF. This includes inviting CTI-CFF for participation in the Inception Workshop of the Activity, sharing information on stock assessment of tuna in Sulu-Sulawesi seas, and research on seaweed-based integrated multi-trophic aquaculture (IMTA) in the Coral Triangle. ❏

12 complete training on fish nutrition and feed development



SEAFDEC/AQD organized the “Training Course on Fish Nutrition and Feed Development” on 20–27 May 2024 in Tigbauan, Iloilo, Philippines. The 12 trainees were mostly government fisheries officers from Brunei

Darussalam, Cambodia, Lao PDR, Singapore, Thailand, and Philippines.

During the Training, AQD experts shared basic principles of fish nutrition and techniques for formulating, preparing, and evaluating cost-efficient fish diets. Through practical sessions, the trainees engaged in feed preparation and pilot feed milling. They also gained experience in feed evaluation, processing and use of alternative feed ingredients, and economic analysis of feed production. As takeaways from the Training, the trainees emphasized the need for quality assurance of the

raw materials and the feeds produced and remarked that the special focus on alternative feed ingredients is timely due to the increasing fish production effort from aquaculture and the declining supply of fish meal.

The Japanese Trust Fund (JTF) 6-2 funded the participation of eight trainees as part of the activity on capacity enhancement on sustainable aquaculture of the project “Sustainable Aquaculture through Cost-Effective Culture Systems, and Prompt and Effective Aquatic Animal Health Management.” ❏

IFRDMD promotes inland fisheries in sustaining livelihood and environment

SEAFDEC/IFRDMD, in cooperation with the Research Institute for Inland Fisheries and Extension and Muara Enim District Fisheries Service, conducted a series of activities to promote inland fisheries for sustainable livelihood and environment. Under the project “Management Scheme of Inland Fisheries in the Southeast Asia Region” supported by the Japanese Trust Fund 6-2, the activities were organized in the fishing villages of Muara Belida District and Muara Enim District in South Sumatra Province, Indonesia on 25 June 2024.

A focus group discussion (FGD) was carried out with the key stakeholders including fishers, fish farmers, fish product producers, fishery workers, and sub-district office employees. The discussion revolved around the community’s environmental concern for the Meriak River and Arisan Belida River and the flood swamp where the participants shared information on the problems and causes of the problems across sustainable development dimensions—ecological, social, and economic. Such information will support

the establishment of a better planning and management framework for resource management.

Furthermore, IFRDMD also took note of the significant roles that women play in inland fisheries, particularly in enhancing family welfare. The interviewed women provided insights into their fishery activities which include fish processing to produce crackers, salted fish, smoked fish, and fermented fish, using the raw materials from inland fisheries ❏

FUTURE ACTIVITIES

Date	Venue	Title	Organizer(s)
2024			
1–5 July	Penang, Malaysia	14 th ASEAN Shrimp Alliance (ASA) 16 th Meeting of the ASEAN Fisheries Consultative Forum (AFCF) 32 nd Meeting of the ASEAN Sectoral Working Group on Fisheries (ASWGF)	DOF Malaysia & ASEAN
2–4 July	Chonburi, Thailand	19 th Meeting of the ASEAN Working Group on CITES and Wildlife Enforcement (AWG CITES and WE)	ASEAN
8–12 July	Rome, Italy	36 th Session of FAO Committee on Fisheries (COFI)	FAO
12–19 July	Geneva, Switzerland	33 rd Meeting of CITES Animals Committee	CITES
23–24 July	Bangkok, Thailand	USAID Southeast Asia Fisheries Partnership: Inception Workshop	SEC (USAID Project)
2–4 August	Samut Prakan, Thailand	Online Regional Training on Research Cruise Planning for Marine Resources and Oceanography	TD
5–7 August	Bangkok, Thailand	Regional Workshop on Effective and Appropriate of Fisheries Management Concepts/Approaches/Tools for Small-scale Fisheries in Southeast Asian Region	TD
6–8 August	Kota Kinabalu, Malaysia	Expert Consultation on Stock Assessment for Priority Species in the Sub-Region Area (Sulu Sulawesi Sea)	MFRDMD (USAID Project)
12–30 August	Tigbauan, Iloilo, Philippines	Training Course on Mangrove Crab Hatchery Operations (regular course)	AQD
19–21 August	Bangkok Thailand	Project End Meeting on Responsible Fishing Technology and Practice	TD
19–23 August	Binangonan, Rizal, Philippines	Training Course on Carp Hatchery & Grow-out Operations (regular course)	AQD
20 August	online	3 rd Core Expert Meeting on Fisheries Management Strategies for Pelagic Fish Resources in the Southeast Asian Region	MFRDMD
22–23 August	Samut Prakan, Thailand	Core Expert Consultation on Preparation to Develop the Technical Manual for Socio-economic Data Collection of Small-scale Fisheries	TD
22 August	online	8 th Meeting of the Scientific Working Group on Neritic Tunas Stock Assessment in the Southeast Asian Waters	MFRDMD
26–30 August	Bangkok, Thailand	Sub-regional Training Workshop on Mixed Stock Fisheries in the Gulf of Thailand	SEC
28–30 August	Bangkok, Thailand	4 th Regional Technical Consultation on Fishery Statistics and Information in Southeast Asia	SEC
27–28 August	Samut Prakan, Thailand	Regional Training Course on the Evaluation Approaches of Artificial Reefs Installation to Enhance Marine Resources: Case Study of Fish Enhancing Devices (FEDs)	TD
2 September	Palembang, Indonesia	2024 JTF Semi Annual Meeting Progress of IFRDMD Activity	IFRDMD
3–5 September	Samut Prakan, Thailand	Workshop on the Current Status of NPOA IUU and Identification Need on Innovation MCS Tools for Combating IUU Fishing Vessels	TD (BOBLME II Project)
9–8 September	Tigbauan, Iloilo, Philippines	Training Course on Seaweed Farming (regular course)	AQD
10–11 September	Singapore	End-of-Project Meeting for the Project Enhancing Food Safety and Competitiveness of Seafood Products	MFRD
16–19 September	Samut Prakan, Thailand	Regional Training Course on Strengthening Capacity on Implementation of Monitoring Control and Surveillance (MCS) in Southeast Asia	TD
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)
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)

TD Seminar shares success story of EAFM in Ban Nai Nang Village, Thailand



SEAFDEC Training Department (SEAFDEC/TD) organized the seminar “Strengths and Opportunities Driving Fisheries Resource Management at the Learning Site of Ban Nai Nang, Krabi Province in Thailand” held

in-person and virtually on 24 May 2024 in Bangkok, Thailand. There were 42 participants including relevant officers from the Department of Fisheries and the Department of Marine and Coastal Resources of Thailand, academicians, and staff from non-government organizations, among others. The Seminar was delivered by the Fisheries Management Senior Researcher from the SEAFDEC Training Department, *Ms. Panitnard Weerawat*.

The Seminar aimed to share the experiences and lessons learned from the implementation of the ecosystem approach to fisheries management (EAFM) at the learning site in Ban Nai Nang Village. The key success of the EAFM implementation in Ban Nai Nang was in terms of governance including fair and effective enforcement of fisheries rules and regulations, strong community leadership, and increased engagement and collaboration among fishers and stakeholder groups from various sectors. These resulted in positive attitudes toward governmental operations and strengthened collaboration with fisheries officials in reducing illegal, unreported, and unregulated (IUU) fishing. Moreover, the collaboration of the different groups and sectors helped further reduce conflicts and improved local livelihoods, increased awareness of the importance of resource sustainability, created a sense of ownership and shared responsibility in managing the fishery resources, and enhanced social cohesion.

Since the 1970s, Krabi Province has had a history of fisheries resource use conflicts involving illegal and destructive fishing. Ban Nai Nang was the first village in Krabi Province, Thailand where EAFM was implemented which has a strong community and high potential for successfully adopting and implementing EAFM. In 2017, SEAFDEC/TD introduced EAFM in Ban Nai Nang as a framework for identifying problems and developing a more effective fisheries management plan, and a full-fledged EAFM plan (2019-2023) was developed, reviewed, and approved by the stakeholders. The activities were carried out by multiple stakeholder groups, both individually and in collaboration with the DOF Thailand. The successful model of Baan Nai Nang has inspired other communities to adopt the EAFM approach, and the Provincial Office of DOF Thailand plans to expand EAFM efforts to encompass all of Krabi Province in the coming years.



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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Layout: Sunutta Pudtal

SEAFDEC/IFRDMD welcomes *Mr. Shimoda* as new Deputy Chief



Mr. Toru Shimoda has been appointed as the Deputy Chief of the SEAFDEC Inland Fishery Resources Development Management Department (IFRDMD) and Co-Trust Fund Project Manager. He succeeded *Mr. Tomohito Shimizu* who held the position of Deputy Chief from 1 April 2022 to 31 March 2024. Prior to his appointment at IFRDMD, *Mr. Shimoda* held the position of Director for Research Management at the Fisheries Technology Institute of Japan Fisheries Research and Education Agency (FRA) where he was responsible for overseeing the planning and coordination. With his

experiences as a scientist in aquaculture for over 30 years, *Mr. Shimoda* was nominated by the Government of Japan to serve in SEAFDEC/IFRDMD for two years from 1 April 2024 to 31 March 2026. It is hoped that he will guide IFRDMD in carrying out its diverse initiatives in collaboration with other SEAFDEC Departments and Member Countries. ❏

SEAFDEC, FAO co-organize Regional Workshop on the application of AquaGRIS



SEAFDEC and the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) co-organized the Regional Workshop on “The application of AquaGRIS: the FAO global information system, to build national registries of aquatic genetic resources” from 6 to 7 June 2024 in Bangkok, Thailand. The Workshop was attended by the FAO AqGR National Focal Points (NFPs) and representatives from the SEAFDEC Member Countries who are involved in data entry into AquaGRIS, namely: Brunei Darussalam, Cambodia, Indonesia, Lao PDR, Malaysia, Philippines, Thailand, and Viet Nam, experts from FAO, regional AqGR expert, and officials from the SEAFDEC Secretariat. The Workshop

aimed to enhance the awareness of the participants of AquaGRIS and importance of having a good information baseline on aquaculture species and related farmed types and wild stocks; enhance the capacity of the countries to create national registries; and develop a strategy plan for the creation and long-term maintenance of AqGR registries in the region.

During the opening session, the SEAFDEC Secretary-General, *Dr. Suttinee Limthammahisorn*, welcomed the participants and reiterated the importance of the AqGR which recently received substantial attention at the global level. While recalling the “Webinar on Aquatic Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture” organized by SEAFDEC in 2023 and the recommendations made during the 26th Meeting of the FCG/ASSP for SEAFDEC to organize an initiative to facilitate close cooperation among the NFPs for the activity on data entry and validation for AquaGRIS, she urged the participants to be actively engaged in the training sessions and continue to provide

data from their respective countries to AquaGRIS afterward.

With technical support from the FAO and AqGR experts, the participants learned the AqGR and AquaGRIS concept and underwent a trial data entry into AquaGRIS, familiarized with AquaGRIS, and obtained a clear understanding of the types and potential sources of AqGR data at the country level. Within three months after the Workshop, the countries, namely: Brunei Darussalam, Cambodia, Indonesia, Lao PDR, Malaysia, Philippines, Thailand, and Viet Nam, committed to follow up on the development of their national registry in AquaGRIS with the technical support of the FAO and the AqGR experts.

The AquaGRIS is an initiative of FAO to address the recognized lack of information on AqGR and is available for key stakeholders, including policymakers, resource managers, researchers, aquaculturists, and international/regional organizations. ❏

Workshop on Development of Statistics Database organized

The SEAFDEC Secretariat organized the “Workshop on Development of Statistics Database based on the Regional Framework for Fishery Statistics of Southeast Asia (2024 Edition)” from 13 to 14 June 2024 in Bangkok, Thailand. The Workshop was attended by the SEAFDEC Deputy Secretary-General and information officers from the SEAFDEC Secretariat, database

and information-related officers, researchers from the SEAFDEC Training Department, and a resource person from Kasetsart University. The Workshop focused on the discussion on structuring the statistical data provided by the ASEAN Member States (AMSs) into a database and constructing the tabulation of the new Statistics Database to maximize the usage by various groups of

audiences. Additionally, the way forward for the preparation of the database was also discussed. Furthermore, the results of this Workshop will serve as a guide for the Fourth Regional Technical Consultation on Fishery Statistics and Information to be organized in August 2024. ❏