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EDITORIAL

One of the key highlights during this quarter was the successful convening of the Fifty-eighth Meeting of the SEAFDEC Council. The Council reviewed the progress and achievements of SEAFDEC's activities in 2025 and approved the proposed programs of activities for 2026. In reaffirming the strategic direction of the organization, the Council emphasized regional priorities, including combating illegal, unreported and unregulated (IUU) fishing, promoting science-based fisheries management, addressing marine debris and abandoned, lost, or otherwise discarded fishing gear (ALDFG), and enhancing regional cooperation.

SEAFDEC also organized a series of regional meetings, training courses, and technical workshops to strengthen the capacities of ASEAN Member States. These activities covered a wide range of priority areas, including multispecies/multigear (MSMG) fisheries management, the ecosystem approach to fisheries management (EAFM), combating IUU fishing, fish health management, aquaculture technologies, fisheries resource assessment, and marine resource conservation. Through these initiatives, SEAFDEC continues to facilitate

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Fifty-eighth Meeting of the SEAFDEC Council convenced

SEAFDEC Council Directors during the Inaugural Ceremony of the 58th Council Meeting

At the kind invitation of the Government of Thailand through its Department of Fisheries, as the host, the Fifty-eighth Meeting of the SEAFDEC Council (58CM) was convened on 19–21 May 2026 in Bangkok, Thailand.

In attendance at the Meeting were the Council Directors and delegates from the SEAFDEC Member Countries, namely Brunei Darussalam, Cambodia (online), Indonesia (online), Japan, Lao PDR, Malaysia, Myanmar, the Philippines, Singapore, Thailand, and Viet Nam. The Inaugural Ceremony of the 58CM was held on 19 May 2026 and presided over by *Dr. Pornthep Sritanatorn*, Inspector General of the Ministry of Agriculture and Cooperatives of Thailand. The Council unanimously elected the Council Director for Thailand, *Dr. Thitiporn Laoprasert*, represented by *Mr. Prathet Sorrak* as the Chairperson of the SEAFDEC Council for the Year 2026–2027, succeeding the Council Director for Singapore, *Mr. Leong Der Yao*, who served as the Chairperson of the SEAFDEC Council for the Year 2025–2026.

The year 2025 was consequential for SEAFDEC with multiple programs and projects, while also emphasizing the importance of strengthening regional solidarity, resilience, and adaptive capacity that address emerging fisheries-related issues confronting the region, such as illegal, unreported and unregulated (IUU) fishing, climate change, marine pollution, and gender equality, among others. In recognition of SEAFDEC's achievements, the Council approved the proposed programs of activities for 2026, which ensure effective implementation that corresponds to the priorities and needs of the countries in the Southeast Asian region.

The Council reaffirmed that combating IUU fishing remains among the top priorities. Notable advancements include strengthened monitoring, control, and surveillance (MCS), improved traceability systems, and enhanced capacity for port State measures implementation. The Council further encouraged the adoption of digital technologies and electronic traceability systems to strengthen transparency and monitoring in fisheries management. Building on ongoing initiatives, the Council also noted the continued

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EDITORIAL

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knowledge exchange, technology transfer, and the sharing of best practices among fisheries professionals throughout the region.

Furthermore, SEAFDEC continued to advance technical innovation and strengthen capacity development with a wide range of initiatives. Recent efforts included the application of hydroacoustic technologies for fisheries stock assessment, renewable energy solutions for small-scale fisheries, innovations in aquaculture, fisheries traceability, socioeconomic research, and marine resource conservation. Collectively, these demonstrate SEAFDEC's commitment to promoting science-based and evidence-driven fisheries management while enhancing the productivity, sustainability, and livelihoods of fishing communities.

Another significant milestone was the public launch of the SEAFDEC Database on Fishery Statistics of Southeast Asia, an important regional platform that provides comprehensive fisheries statistics to support evidence-based policy development, fisheries management, and regional cooperation. The database also serves as an important regional information platform for monitoring fisheries trends and supporting future regional publications.

Partnership remains at the heart of SEAFDEC's work. Collaboration with internationaland regional organization, national governments, academic institutions, development partners, and regional organizations continues to expand opportunities for knowledge exchange, technology transfer, and coordinated actions to address regional and global fisheries issues.

Finally, SEAFDEC announces a leadership transition at SEAFDEC/IFRDMD. SEAFDEC warmly welcomes *Dr. Maulana Firdaus* as the new Chief of SEAFDEC/IFRDMD, succeeding *Mr. Andi Soesmono*, whose dedicated leadership and valuable contributions have greatly strengthened the Department's work in inland fisheries research and regional cooperation.

Fifty-eighth Meeting of the SEAFDEC Council convenced

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development of the Regional Fishing Vessels Record (RFVR) Database, which supports more effective monitoring of smaller-sized fishing vessels. Progress was further recognized in addressing transshipment at sea, including the identification of key challenges, future directions, and capacity-building needs.

The Council noted the successful completion of the project "Regional Collaborative Research and Capacity Building for Monitoring and Reduction of Marine Debris from Fisheries in Southeast Asia," including the outcomes of the regional symposium, which highlighted key messages and recommendations for future actions to address ALDFG. The formulation of the draft "Technical Guidelines to Assess, Prevent, and Remove Abandoned, Lost, or Otherwise Discarded Fishing Gear (ALDFG) in the Southeast Asian region," expected to be submitted to the SEAFDEC Council at its 59th Meeting in 2027, is one of the impactful policy papers being developed.

Recognizing the importance of hydroacoustic-based stock assessment, the Council took note of the progress of the fisheries acoustic survey for pelagic fish stock assessment along the west coast of Peninsular Malaysia and the Future Plan for the Transfer of Hydroacoustic-based Stock Assessment Technology to the SEAFDEC Member Countries. In this connection, the Council supported the relevant SEAFDEC Departments in continuing the regional implementation and development of fisheries acoustic technologies, and underscored the importance of science-based fisheries management and evidence-based policymaking to ensure the long-term sustainability of fisheries resources in Southeast Asia.

The Council acknowledged the outcomes of the 20th Meeting of the Conference of the Parties (CoP20) to CITES, and reaffirmed the important roles of SEAFDEC in supporting the Member Countries in utilizing scientific evidence and developing common/coordinated positions in response to proposals for listing commercially exploited aquatic species (CEAS) in the CITES Appendices. The Council also noted the progress of a new project, "Toward Science-Based Stock Assessment and Management of CEAS," to strengthen the scientific basis for the management of sharks and anguillid eels in Southeast Asia.

Coming into fruition this year is the "SEAFDEC Database on Fishery Statistics of Southeast Asia," which is now accessible to the public at https://fisherystatistics.seafdec.org/. The Council congratulated SEAFDEC for its successful development, which is in line with the Regional Framework for Fishery Statistics of Southeast Asia (2024 Edition).

In 2027, SEAFDEC will hit a milestone 60th year since its establishment in 1967. With the Council's support, the organization will mark the occasion with a special Anniversary Event, to be co-hosted by the Government of Thailand and scheduled for 19 August 2027 at the Centara Grand & Bangkok Convention Centre at CentralWorld in Bangkok, Thailand.

The 58CM was successfully concluded, with the Council noting the progress and achievements of SEAFDEC's programs and projects in 2025 and approving the proposed programs of activities for 2026. The Council encouraged SEAFDEC to effectively implement programs and projects that are responsive to the priorities and needs of Member Countries. The 58CM further underscored the continued commitment of Member Countries to work closely with SEAFDEC and collaborate with partner organizations to enhance the sustainable contribution of fisheries and aquaculture to food security, economic development, and the well-being of people in the Southeast Asian region.

TD participates in Crimes in the Fisheries Sector Workshop

Mr. Kongpathai Saraphaivanich, Training and Research Supporting Division Head, and *Ms. Yanida Suthipol*, IUU Fishing Countermeasure Section Head, from SEAFDEC/TD participated in the "Regional Workshop on Crimes in the Fisheries Sector" held from 14 to 16 April 2026 in Bali, Indonesia.

Organized by the IMCS Network and the RPOA-IUU Secretariat with support from Fisheries and Oceans Canada (DFO), the workshop focused on developing practical skills in cross-border investigation, intelligence analysis, and operational tactics such as hot pursuit. Through applied simulations and regional case studies, the program aimed to foster collaborative approaches and establish sustainable networks among inspectors, investigators, and prosecutors. This ensures ongoing knowledge sharing and mutual support in combating IUU fishing.

During the event, *Mr. Kongpathai* delivered a presentation titled "SEAFDEC's Experience and Perspectives on Regional/Subregional Cooperation and Information Sharing," highlighting TD's active implementation of initiatives aimed at combating IUU fishing across Southeast Asia.

TD empowers next generation of fisheries experts with 66th Short-term Training Course

SEAFDEC/TD conducted "The 66th Short-term Training Course for University Students" from 19 to 29 May 2026. Held under the theme "Ecosystem-Based Fisheries for Sustainable Fisheries Resources Management," the program gathered together 44 students from 10 educational institutions across Thailand, alongside participants from Japan's Hokkaido University.

The comprehensive training methodology featured a blend of in-class lectures, group discussions, and practical sessions. Participants received theoretical knowledge and practical training centered on responsible fishing practices. Key field activities included training in small vessel operations, at-sea safety and survival techniques, and data collection within coral reef ecosystems. Participants also developed practical skills in designing questionnaires to gather socioeconomic data from local fishing communities. These diverse modules worked together to enhance technical skills, foster teamwork, and equip students to support sustainable fisheries initiatives in their future careers.

Besides gaining knowledge and experience, students also made new friends and built connections with peers from various Thai universities and Hokkaido University in Japan. TD is pleased to support this new generation, who will become the future of the fisheries industry, and to help them care more about responsible and sustainable fishing.

A training course on Marine Resource Management under the Legal Framework of Thailand

SEAFDEC organized an in-house training course on "Marine Resource Management under the Legal Framework of Thailand" on 8 May 2026 at the Training Department of SEAFDEC (SEAFDEC/TD) in Samut Prakan, Thailand. The training aimed to strengthen staff understanding of Thailand's fisheries laws, policies, and management measures for sustainable marine resource management.

The training was attended by 52 staff members from SEAFDEC/Secretariat and various divisions of TD, including the Research and Development Division, Planning and Project Management Division, and Training and Research Support Division. The course was delivered by *Mr. Decha Pratchayarat*, Director of the Human Resources Management Division of the Department of Fisheries, Thailand and his team.

Key sessions covered the overview of Thailand's fisheries legal framework, management measures for marine fisheries resources, and the application of fisheries laws and regulations in resource management practices. The training also provided opportunities for participants to discuss and exchange views, enhancing their capacity to support sustainable fisheries management in the region.

DEPARTMENTAL ACTIVITIES

IFRDMD partners with DoF Malaysia for sustainable fisheries

SEAFDEC/IFRDMD conducted an official visit to the Department of Fisheries Malaysia (DoF Malaysia) to strengthen cooperation in fisheries assessment, management, and capacity development.

The IFRDMD delegation was warmly received by *YBhg. Dato' Haji Azahari bin Haji Othman*, Deputy Director General of DoF Malaysia, together with his staff. Fisheries officers from Pahang also joined the meeting online. The visit served as an opportunity for both institutions to discuss upcoming technical activities in Pahang and align their priorities in support of sustainable fisheries development.

During the meeting, *Dato' Haji Azahari* welcomed the delegation and highlighted the importance of continued partnership between DoF Malaysia and IFRDMD. He emphasized that the collaboration would strengthen institutional cooperation and address fisheries-related challenges more effectively.

IFRDMD Chief *Dr. Maulana Firdaus* presented the planned activities in Pahang scheduled for 27 June–1 July 2026. The activities will be implemented under two Japan Trust Fund VII-supported projects, namely "Improving Fisher's Livelihood and Fisheries Co-management in Inland and Coastal Small-scale Fisheries" and "Enhanced Research Capacities for Sustainable Utilization and Management of Eel and Other Inland Fisheries Resources."

A six-member IFRDMD team, comprising the Chief, Deputy Chief, and technical staff, will conduct a socioeconomic assessment using the Ecosystem Approach to Fisheries Management (EAFM) and Community-Based Fisheries Management (CBFM) approaches, as well as a fish stock assessment using hydroacoustic tools.

The mission will focus on knowledge transfer by sharing lessons learned and conducting capacity-building activities for DoF Malaysia staff on the implementation of socioeconomic and fish stock assessment methods to support sustainable inland fisheries management in Pahang.

The event concluded with a souvenir exchange as a symbol of appreciation and a lasting memory of the strengthened collaboration between DoF Malaysia and IFRDMD.

IFRDMD highlights inland fisheries research at SICO-FIMS 2026

SEAFDEC/IFRDMD participated in the Sriwijaya International Conference on Fisheries and Marine Science (SICO-FIMS) 2026, held on 18 June 2026 under the theme "Sustainable Marine and Fisheries as a Pillar for Achieving the SDGs." The conference was conducted in a hybrid format, with an onsite session at Hotel Beston Palembang, Indonesia, and online participation through Zoom Meeting and YouTube Streaming.

As one of the supporting partners, IFRDMD took part in the conference to strengthen scientific collaboration and promote knowledge exchange in fisheries and marine science, particularly in inland fisheries. *Mr. Toru Shimoda*, Deputy Chief of IFRDMD, attended the event, reflecting the Department's continued support for regional cooperation and fisheries research.

At the offline session, four staff members of IFRDMD presented research findings on the SPEECTRA Model, hydroacoustic applications, eel fisheries, and small-scale fisheries. Their presentations highlighted IFRDMD's ongoing contributions to scientific advancement and sustainable fisheries management in the region.

Participating in SICO-FIMS 2026 allowed IFRDMD to raise awareness on the importance of inland fisheries research in supporting freshwater ecosystem sustainability, food security,

biodiversity conservation, and community livelihoods. The conference also enabled the organization to broaden its networks with researchers, academics, practitioners, and stakeholders while promoting collaborative efforts toward sustainable fisheries and marine resource management in line with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

IFRDMD, collaborators advance ocean literacy for SDG 13

SEAFDEC/IFRDMD, in collaboration with the Research Institute for Inland Fisheries and Extension (RIIFE), Ministry of Marine Affairs and Fisheries of Indonesia, participated in a series of collaborative activities organized by the Department of Marine Science, Faculty of Mathematics and Natural Sciences, Universitas Sriwijaya, Indonesia, through the EQUITY Program on 21 May 2026.

One of the main activities was a Focus Group Discussion (FGD) on "Strengthening Climate Awareness and Action Based on Ocean Literacy to Support SDG 13 through International Collaboration." The event served as a platform for academia, government institutions, research organizations, schools, and international partners to exchange knowledge and discuss strategies for strengthening climate awareness and promoting sustainable action through ocean literacy.

The discussion featured speakers from academia, government agencies, and international organizations, including *Dr. Jitraporn Phaksopa*, Assistant Professor at the Department of Marine Science, Faculty of Fisheries, Kasetsart University, Thailand; *Mr. Wahyudi*, Head of the Environmental Department of Ogan Ilir Regency, South Sumatra Province, Indonesia; and *Mr. Aroef Hukmanan Rais*, staff member of IFRDMD and RIIFE.

Approximately 20 participants attended the FGD, including school partners, teachers, school representatives, representatives from the South Sumatra Provincial Education Department, the Environmental Department of Ogan Ilir Regency, lecturers from the Department of Marine Science of Universitas Sriwijaya, and representatives from IFRDMD and RIIFE.

The FGD aimed to enhance students' awareness and capacity in ocean and inland water literacy, as well as climate action education. It also explored strategies for integrating these topics in secondary school education, particularly in non-coastal areas. In addition, the activity strengthened collaboration among Universitas Sriwijaya, local and central government institutions, research institutes, schools, and international academic partners, while supporting the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals, particularly SDG 13 on Climate Action and SDG 17 on Partnerships for the Goals.

Following the discussions, *Dr. Phaksopa* visited the offices of IFRDMD and RIIFE in Palembang, Indonesia. She was warmly welcomed by staff members of the two institutions and was introduced to various facilities, including the Inland Fishing Gear Collection, Inland Fish Product Display, Freshwater Fish Museum, laboratories, and the IFRDMD Corner.

This series of activities strengthened communication and collaboration among academic institutions, research organizations, government agencies, schools, and international partners. The activities also emphasized the importance of continued cooperation in promoting ocean and inland water literacy, climate awareness, and sustainable fisheries education, while supporting joint efforts toward climate resilience and sustainable resource management in Southeast Asia.

IFRDMD supports student climate change education in Ogan Ilir

SEAFDEC/IFRDMD, in collaboration with Indonesia's Research Institute for Inland Fisheries and Extension (RIIFE) under the Ministry of Marine Affairs and Fisheries (MMAF), participated in a climate change dissemination activity held on 22 May 2026 at Astri Al Ikhlas Islamic Senior High School, Tanjung Batu Seberang Village, Ogan Ilir Regency, South Sumatra, Indonesia.

The activity served as a follow-up to the recommendations and outcomes of the Focus Group Discussion (FGD) on climate change organized by the Department of Marine Science, Faculty of Mathematics and Natural Sciences, Universitas Sriwijaya, under the EQUITY Program. It aimed to enhance students' awareness and understanding of climate change, particularly its impacts on the environment, inland waters, and fisheries resources.

To support this objective, two staff members of IFRDMD and RIIFE-MMAF shared insights on the relationship between climate change, inland fisheries, and aquatic ecosystems. The first session focused on climate change and its impacts on inland water ecosystems, highlighting the importance of sustainable fisheries resource management, habitat conservation, and community awareness

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IFRDMD supports student climate change education in Ogan Ilir

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in responding to climate-related environmental challenges. This was followed by a practical session on water quality measurement, where students used digital instruments to measure water quality in freshwater fishponds. Through these sessions, students gained a better understanding of climate change issues and the importance of monitoring environmental parameters in fisheries and aquatic ecosystem management.

The dissemination activity was further enriched by *Dr. Jitraporn Phaksopa* of Kasetsart University, Thailand, who delivered a presentation on global climate change causes, impacts, and their relevance to local environmental conditions. Together, the scientific explanations and practical demonstrations offered students a broader perspective on climate change and its environmental implications.

Following the school activity, IFRDMD and representatives from Kasetsart University toured the Universitas Sriwijaya campus. The visit provided an opportunity to strengthen institutional networks and explore future academic, research, and capacity-building collaborations.

Through its participation, IFRDMD reaffirmed its commitment to supporting climate change education, environmental awareness, and sustainable inland fisheries resource management. The activity also demonstrated IFRDMD's role in translating scientific knowledge and stakeholder discussions into practical outreach activities for students and educational institutions.

IFRDMD joins academic forum on ocean plastic pollution

The Deputy Chief of SEAFDEC/IFRDMD, *Mr. Toru Shimoda*, together with IFRDMD staff, attended a Studium Generale on ocean plastic pollution at Universitas Sriwijaya in Indralaya, South Sumatra, Indonesia. Organized by the university's Department of Marine Science, Faculty of Mathematics and Natural Sciences, the event was hosted under the Visiting World Class Professor Program on 28 April 2026.

The Studium Generale featured *Prof. Atsuhiko Isobe* from Kyushu University, Japan, who delivered a keynote lecture titled "Ocean Plastics Pollution and Its Relation to Oceanography." *Prof. Isobe* shared scientific insights on the growing threat of ocean plastic pollution, particularly microplastics, and explained how oceanographic processes such as currents, vertical mixing, and coastal circulation influence the transport, accumulation, and fate of plastic debris in marine environments. The event was attended by lecturers and students from various departments within the Faculty of Mathematics and Natural Sciences, as well as the Faculty of Agriculture, Department of Fisheries.

Following the forum, *Prof. Isobe* visited the office of SEAFDEC/IFRDMD and the Research Institute for Inland Fisheries and Extension (RIIFE) under the Ministry of Marine Affairs and Fisheries (MMAF). He toured the research facilities, laboratories, and inland fisheries display room, where he was briefed on the ongoing research activities and institutional programs related to inland fisheries.

IFRDMD's participation in the Studium Generale and the visit of *Prof. Isobe* provided an opportunity to strengthen scientific knowledge exchange and explore potential collaboration on aquatic environmental issues, microplastic contamination, and sustainable fisheries management. This engagement also supports IFRDMD's efforts to enhance awareness, monitoring, and mitigation of plastic pollution in aquatic ecosystems, including inland and marine fisheries resources in Southeast Asia.

IFRDMD supports hydroacoustic training for fisheries students

SEAFDEC/IFRDMD supported a series of hydroacoustic training and field practicum activities organized by the Department of Marine Science, Faculty of Mathematics and Natural Sciences, Universitas Sriwijaya, Indonesia. The activities were conducted in Lampung Province, Indonesia, as part of efforts to strengthen students' technical capacity in hydroacoustic applications for fisheries resource assessment and aquatic resource management.

Mr. Freddy Supriyadi, a staff member of SEAFDEC/IFRDMD, served as the resource person, delivering technical lectures and hands-on training on the introduction, operation, and application of the SIMRAD EK15 Single Beam Echosounder.

The first phase comprised a Hydroacoustic course and student capacity-building program. Field practicum sessions were held in the waters around Klegian Island, Pesawaran Regency, from 31 March to 2 April 2026 with 95 participants, and in the shallow waters of Merak Belantung Village, South Lampung Regency, from 10 to 12 April 2026 with 74 participants. Students received lectures and hands-on technical guidance on hydroacoustic methods, focusing on the operation of the SIMRAD EK15 Single Beam Echosounder at a frequency of 200 kHz.

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IFRDMD supports hydroacoustic training for fisheries students

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The training covered acoustic data acquisition, instrument calibration, signal interpretation, and practical survey techniques in coastal and shallow water environments. Through direct field operations, students gained practical knowledge and experience in fish detection, biomass estimation, and the application of acoustic technology in tropical aquatic systems. The activities also bridged classroom learning with field application, enabling students to better understand how hydroacoustic technology can support fisheries research and sustainable resource management.

As a continuation, a Training of Trainers was held from 19 to 21 June 2026 at the Lampung Marine Aquaculture Center, MMAF, Indonesia. The training aimed to enhance the competence of marine resources exploration and acoustic laboratory assistants in supporting laboratory management and practicum activities. Thirteen students from the Department of Marine Science, Universitas Sriwijaya, participated as laboratory assistants.

The training covered the introduction and operation of the SIMRAD EK15 Single Beam Echosounder, as well as other topics related to laboratory management, laboratory standard operating procedures, fisheries socio-economic questionnaire development, water quality equipment operation, and the introduction and operation of AUV and drone technology. Field exercises also strengthened the participants' ability to operate equipment under real field conditions.

Through this collaboration, IFRDMD, RIIFE under MMAF of Indonesia, and Universitas Sriwijaya strengthened capacity building and knowledge transfer in hydroacoustic technology, marine exploration, laboratory management, and field-based fisheries research. The program enhanced the competencies of students and laboratory assistants to support future practicum and research activities, while also promoting stronger cooperation in the application of hydroacoustic technology for fisheries resource assessment. The experience could serve as a useful reference for similar capacity-building initiatives among SEAFDEC Member Countries.

IFRDMD highlights socioeconomic perspectives for LSMPA Development in Indonesia

The Workshop on the Identification of Scientific Studies for the Southern Java–Bali–East Nusa Tenggara Large-Scale Marine Protected Area (LSMPA) was held on 22–23 June 2026 in Bali, Indonesia. The event gathered government officials, researchers, academics, and relevant stakeholders to identify scientific priorities in support of the proposed offshore LSMPA.

Representing IFRDMD, *Dr. Maulana Firdaus*, Chief of IFRDMD and Associate Planner at the Ministry of Marine Affairs and Fisheries (MMAF), Indonesia, delivered a presentation entitled "Socioeconomic Values in Large-Scale Marine Protected Areas (LSMPA)." He emphasized the importance of integrating social and economic considerations into conservation planning to ensure that ecological objectives are aligned with community welfare and sustainable resource utilization.

Dr. Maulana highlighted three key research priorities for LSMPA development: Total Economic Valuation (TEV), Stakeholder Mapping, and Cost-Benefit Analysis (CBA). He noted that socioeconomic assessments should serve as an initial basis for evidence-based policy and management decisions.

The workshop also presented scientific findings on the possible offshore spawning areas of tropical eels (*Anguilla* spp.) along the southern coast of Java. These findings complement IFRDMD's long-term SIDAT research, which has focused on eel migration and habitat connectivity among inland, coastal, and offshore ecosystems since 2014.

The workshop underscored the importance of combining socio-economic assessments with species-based scientific evidence in LSMPA planning. Through this participation, IFRDMD continues to support science-based, inclusive, and sustainable conservation and fisheries management in interconnected aquatic ecosystems.

TD participates in Thailand Research Expo & Symposium 2026

Two staff from the Marine Engineering Section of the Training and Research Supporting Division of SEAFDEC/TD participated in the "Thailand Research Expo & Symposium 2026" from 22 to 26 June 2026 in Bangkok, Thailand. Organized by the National Research Council of Thailand (NRCT), the event served as a national platform to showcase innovative research and promote stakeholder collaboration. TD staff joined as members of a collaborative research team with the Department of Fisheries (DOF) of Thailand to present the findings of the NRCT-funded project titled "Efficiency of Ozone Slurry Ice in Black Tiger Shrimp and Cold Chain Logistics Management of Shrimp Farmer Clusters in the Andaman Zone."

The study investigated the application of ozone slurry ice technology and temperature-controlled logistics to enhance the quality and shelf life of black tiger shrimp, thereby supporting the export potential of farmer clusters in the Andaman coastal region.

During the symposium, the research findings were disseminated to researchers, government agencies, and industry stakeholders to provide practical guidelines for shrimp depots, collectors, and farmer groups throughout the supply chain. The presentation demonstrated that integrating ozone slurry ice with effective cold chain management could halt quality deterioration and strengthen the competitiveness of Thailand's aquatic products. In recognition of their contributions to the project's successful implementation, the research team members received Certificates of Appreciation from the NRCT. This achievement reflects TD's continued commitment to promoting research and innovative post-harvest technologies, strengthening partnerships with national agencies, and supporting sustainable fisheries development in the Southeast Asian region.

TD presents regional traceability tool at Seafood Traceability Workshop

Mr. Kongpathai Saraphaivanich, Head of the Training and Research Supporting Division at SEAFDEC/TD, presented virtually on the "Regional Traceability Tool for Fish and Fishery Products" at the Seafood Traceability Technical and Industry Engagement Workshop on 8 April 2026. The event was organized by the Directorate General of Marine and Fisheries Product Competitiveness, Ministry of Marine Affairs and Fisheries, Indonesia, in collaboration with the Indonesian Pole & Line and Handline Fisheries Association (AP2HI) and the Global Dialogue on Seafood Traceability (GDST).

The workshop aimed to strengthen the implementation of the National Fish Traceability and Logistics System (STELINA) platform, promote the adoption of global traceability standards, and enhance collaboration among government agencies, industry stakeholders, and technology providers particularly within the tuna, crab, and shrimp supply chains.

During his session, *Mr. Kongpathai* highlighted the importance of Catch Documentation Schemes (CDS) in effective fisheries management and the traceability of fish products. He also introduced the electronic ASEAN Catch Documentation Scheme (eACDS) as a key regional tool for ensuring sustainable and transparent fisheries trade.

TD shares marine debris, fish stock assessment expertise in Brunei Darussalam expedition

SEAFDEC/TD researchers *Mr. Santiphong Putsa*, Fishing Technology Researcher and *Dr. Supapong Pattarapongpan*, Fishery Oceanographic Researcher, participated in the "Brunei Darussalam Expedition on Sustaining Our Oceans: Innovation, Governance, and Resilience For A Blue Future" held from 4 to 6 May 2026 at Pelong Rocks. The event was organized by the Department of Fisheries, Ministry of Primary Resources and Tourism, Brunei Darussalam.

During the expedition, *Mr. Santiphong* provided technical expertise on marine debris and abandoned, lost or otherwise discarded fishing gear (ALDFG), particularly from samples collected through diving-based retrieval activities. This included classification, measurement, weighing, and systematic data recording. Meanwhile, *Dr. Supapong* provided technical expertise and support in fish stock surveys and estimation.

Their contributions are expected to enhance the capacity of officers and researchers from the Department of Fisheries of Brunei Darussalam who participated in the expedition, benefit the fishery development aspects of SEAFDEC Member Countries, and strengthen future events and collaborations.

TD participates in Brunei Darussalam Conference on Sustaining Our Oceans

SEAFDEC/TD researchers *Mr. Santiphong Putsa*, Fishing Technology Researcher, and *Dr. Supapong Pattarapongpan*, Fishery Oceanographic Researcher, participated as guest speakers in the "Brunei Darussalam Conference on Sustaining Our Oceans: Innovation, Governance, and Resilience For A Blue Future." Held from 2 to 4 June 2026 at the Pro-Chancellor Arts Centre, UBD, Bandar Seri Begawan, Brunei Darussalam, the event was organized by the Department of Fisheries, Ministry of Primary Resources and Tourism, Brunei Darussalam in collaboration with the University of Brunei Darussalam (UBD), the Maritime and Port Authority of Brunei Darussalam (MPABD), and Poni Group Sdn Bhd in conjunction with the Mid-year Conference and Exhibition (MYCE) 2026.

During the Conference, *Mr. Santiphong* and *Dr. Supapong*, who participated in the Brunei Darussalam Expedition previously conducted from 4 to 6 May 2026 at Pelong Rocks, Brunei Darussalam, presented their findings from the expedition under the "Thematic Topic 5–Expedition Findings." This session focused on the preliminary results of the expedition, highlighting key observations and initial data to support evidence-based insights, ongoing analysis, and informed decision making.

The insights from the expedition proved invaluable to the discussion, and the findings from the conducted field research in Brunei waters will greatly contribute towards marine resource management and policy direction.

TD participates in FAO-ICES Symposium and the ICES-FAO WGFTFB26

Mr. Santiphong Putsa, Fishing Technology Researcher at SEAFDEC/TD, participated in the "FAO-ICES Symposium and the ICES-FAO Fishing Technology and Fish Behavior Working Group Meeting (WGFTFB26)" held from 11 to 15 May 2026 in Cairns, Australia.

The symposium revolved around the theme "Marine plastic pollution from fisheries: developments, innovative technologies, and approaches to prevent and reduce marine plastic pollution with a focus on addressing abandoned, lost or otherwise discarded fishing gear (ALDFG) and ghost fishing."

During the event, *Mr. Santiphong* delivered a presentation on "Advancing Mitigation of ALDFG through ROV Development: Evidence from a Field Demonstration in Rayong, Thailand." His participation provided an opportunity to exchange knowledge and engage in discussions with experts in the fields of fishing technology and fish behavior from the FAO and ICES member countries, as well as with other international researchers.

Training Course on Reducing the Costs of Fishing Operations in Small-Scale Fisheries Using Solar Cells

SEAFDEC/TD, in collaboration with the Fisheries Development and Restoration Group, Marine Fisheries Research and Development Division, Department of Fisheries, Thailand, organized a training course on "Reducing the Costs of Fishing Operations in Small-Scale Fisheries Using Solar Cells" on 4 June 2026 at the Bang Saphan Fisheries Association, Prachuap Khiri Khan Province, Thailand.

The training brought together fisheries officers, marine research personnel, and local small-scale fishermen from Bang Saphan District to enhance their knowledge of renewable energy applications in fisheries. The program focused on introducing solar-cell technology as an alternative energy solution to help reduce operational costs in small-scale fishing activities. Participants learned about the principles of solar energy, the benefits of clean energy in fisheries, the main components of solar-cell systems, equipment selection, installation techniques, and basic maintenance. Hands-on sessions were also conducted to provide participants with experience in safely installing and operating solar-cell systems on small fishing vessels.

During the opening ceremony, *Ms. Sampan Panjarat*, Chief of TD, emphasized the importance of adopting sustainable technologies to improve the livelihoods of coastal fishing communities while reducing environmental impacts. A total of 40 participants attended the

training, including 20 local fishermen, 16 staff members from Marine Fisheries Research and Development Centers in Samut Prakan, Rayong, Chumphon, Ranong, Phuket, Satun, Songkhla, and Narathiwat, as well as four officers from the Department of Fisheries headquarters.

TD anticipates that the training will enable participants to apply solar-cell technology in their fishing operations and further promote sustainable fisheries development in the region.

DOF Thailand receives solar-cell training kits for small-scale fisheries extension

On 12 June 2026, SEAFDEC/TD officially handed over a set of solar-cell training equipment to the Fisheries Ground Development and Rehabilitation Group under the Marine Fisheries Research and Development Division of the Department of Fisheries (DOF) Thailand.

The handover follows the successful completion of the training course on "Reducing the Costs of Small-Scale Fisheries Operations Using Solar Cells" held on 4 June 2026 in Bang Saphan District, Prachuap Khiri Khan Province. The transfer aimed to support future capacity-building activities and promote the continued dissemination of knowledge on solar energy applications in fisheries.

The equipment was provided to facilitate training, demonstrations, and practical exercises for fisheries officers, fishers, and other interested stakeholders. The training set included four solar panels, four inverters, four batteries, and four charger controllers, all of which were inspected and confirmed to be in good condition and ready for use.

The equipment is expected to serve as an important learning resource for future training programs on solar energy systems, enabling participants to gain practical experience in system assembly, operation, and maintenance. Through the continued use of these training materials, the DOF will be able to strengthen technical capacity among fisheries personnel and local fishing communities, supporting the adoption of renewable energy technologies.

The handover reflects the continued collaboration between TD and the DOF Thailand in promoting renewable energy applications in the fisheries sector and enhancing the resilience of small-scale fishing communities through innovative and environmentally friendly technologies.

Training Workshop on Economic Valuation Assessment of Marine Fisheries Resources

SEAFDEC/TD, in collaboration with the Department of Fisheries (DOF) Thailand, organized the "Training Workshop on Economic Valuation Assessment of Marine Fisheries Resources" during 28–29 May 2026 at the SEAFDEC Secretariat in Bangkok, Thailand.

The workshop brought together resource persons from Kasetsart University, DOF officers, and SEAFDEC staff to strengthen technical capacity on economic valuation concepts, valuation methodologies, and data requirements for marine fisheries resources. Using Rayong Bay in Thailand as a case study, participants discussed the valuation of fisheries resources and assessed the environmental damage related to marine pollution incidents.

The workshop also supported the development of a valuation framework to strengthen fisheries management and evidence-based policy development for sustainable marine resource conservation.

TD and partners strengthen marine mammal conservation

SEAFDEC/TD, Department of Fisheries (DOF), and Department of Marine and Coastal Resources (DMCR) Thialand, conducted the "Online Consultation Meeting to Mitigate the Impacts of Fishing Gear on Marine Mammals" on 7 May 2026.

During the meeting, the DOF Thailand highlighted the ongoing deployment of "High-Frequency Acoustic Transmitter Technology" or pingers—small, compact acoustic devices attached to fishing gillnets—to meet international safety requirements, particularly the U.S. Marine Mammal Protection Act (MMPA). Meanwhile, the DMCR shared updates on its conservation efforts for the rare and vulnerable Irrawaddy dolphin using novel high-frequency sound technology.

A crucial conclusion of the online meeting was a commitment from all three organizations to work together on producing a new, locally customized version of this pinger device. TD will play a key role in developing solutions tailored to Thailand's unique maritime environment and easy for local fishermen to implement. Through this collaboration, these organizations are taking crucial steps to protect dolphins and other marine species from threats posed by fishing gear in Thailand and across the region.

Guimaras officials conduct feed mill learning tour

SEAFDEC/AQD hosted a delegation from the provincial government of Guimaras, Philippines on 21 April 2026, for a learning visit focused on the potential establishment of a fish feed mill in their province.

The delegation, composed of representatives from the Office of the Governor, Congressional Office, and the Provincial Offices of Agriculture and Economic and Development Planning, met with AQD specialists to examine feed mill design, production processes, and operational requirements.

AQD provided an overview of feed formulation, quality control, and facility management, offering the Guimaras team practical insights into setting up and operating a feed mill.

The visit is part of ongoing efforts to strengthen technical capacity among local government units (LGUs) and support the growth of the aquaculture

sector. AQD links LGUs with technical experts to help ensure future facilities are sustainable, efficient, and aligned with industry standards.

Philippine lawmakers seek aquaculture insights during AQD visit

Members of the Committee on Aquaculture and Fisheries Resources of the Philippine House of Representatives visited SEAFDEC/AQD on 18 June 2026 to gain insights to help guide legislative measures for the aquaculture sector.

The delegation visiting the Tigbauan Main Station in Iloilo, Philippines was led by committee chair Rep. *Tsuyoshi Anthony Horibata* and included Reps. *Jane Castro, Jesus Marquez,* and *Howard Guinto*.

The visit formed part of the committee's ongoing deliberations on fish hatchery development and aquaculture technologies as Congress explores measures to strengthen the Philippine fisheries and aquaculture sectors.

The lawmakers said they sought firsthand information on hatchery technologies after learning in previous hearings about AQD's aquaculture facilities. They met with AQD officials, researchers, and other senior staff and toured the Department's hatcheries and broodstock facilities.

During the tour, committee members noted the affordability and scalability of several hatchery models. They emphasized that similar facilities could be established in the provinces to help improve seedstock availability, boost local fish production, and support the livelihoods of coastal communities.

Discussions touched on encouraging more young Filipinos to enter the aquaculture sector. Legislators expressed concern over declining youth interest in the industry, citing limited awareness of viable career and business opportunities despite growing demand for food production and aquaculture expertise.

In response, AQD officials cited the institution's technology manuals, which include economic assessments such as capital requirements and projected returns on investment. The publications are publicly available online and can serve as practical guides for aspiring aquaculture entrepreneurs looking to adopt the technologies.

The consultation also clarified AQD's role in research and training. While extension activities are carried out in partnership with the Department of Agriculture–Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources (DA–BFAR) and local government units, AQD mainly conducts training for trainers and extension workers.

Meanwhile, the annual On-the-Job Training (OJT) Program provides hundreds of students from around the country with immersive training in AQD facilities to give them hands-on experience in aquaculture.

Among the recent research impacts shared was AQD's work on seaweed micropropagation, or tissue culture, which produces seedlings that have been shown to boost farm growth up to 6.5 times faster than traditional methods.

Researchers shared that the tissue-cultured seedlings, recently distributed to farmers in Iloilo, have also been shown to be more robust against diseases and environmental stressors, which can significantly improve farm productivity while supporting environmental goals through carbon sequestration and nutrient absorption.

SEAFDEC witnesses MOU signing to repurpose petroleum platforms for marine conservation

On 29 May 2026, SEAFDEC General Administrative Division Head, *Dr. Taweekiat Amornpiyakrit*, served as an honorary witness at the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) signing ceremony between the Department of Fisheries, the Department of Mineral Fuels, PTT Exploration and Production Public Company Limited (PTTEP), PTTEP International Limited, and PTTEP Energy Development Company Limited at the Energy Complex in Bangkok, Thailand. The MOU establishes a cooperative framework for repurposing decommissioned petroleum production platforms into artificial marine habitats.

This collaborative initiative aims to drive a concrete research project in the Gulf of Thailand. By transforming former petroleum structures into thriving marine ecosystems, the cooperation will promote the long-term restoration and conservation of fishery resources. Ultimately, the MOU establishes clear operational guidelines for all parties involved, ensuring these platforms successfully enhance Thailand's marine biodiversity and benefit local fisheries for years to come.

BFAR taps AQD for seaweed microplantlet initiative

The Philippine Department of Agriculture-Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources (DA–BFAR) is set to collaborate with SEAFDEC/AQD in developing standardized protocols for bioreactor-based seaweed microplantlet production under the Enhanced Philippine Seaweed Development Program (EPSDP).

To discuss the initiative, BFAR–National Seaweed Technology Development Center Chief *Ida Capacio* met with AQD Chief *Dan Baliao*, Research Division Head *Dr. Leobert de la Peña*, and the Seaweed Commodity Team at the AQD main station in Tigbauan, Iloilo, on 12 May 2026.

The proposed partnership seeks to craft guidelines that will strengthen efficiency, biosecurity, quality assurance, and sustainability in controlled seaweed culture systems.

Under the collaboration, AQD will oversee the transition and nursery phases of seaweed culture to support the production and management of high-quality seaweed planting materials.

AQD, DA-BFAR establish feed mill to boost aquaculture sector

The Executive Committee of SEAFDEC/AQD, led by Chief Dan Baliao, *join DA–BFAR Assistant Director* Zaldy Perez *and DA–BFAR 6 Regional Director* Remia Aparri *during the feed mill inauguration.*

A PHP 30-million (about USD 500,000) aquaculture feed mill was inaugurated on 27 April 2026 at SEAFDEC/AQD in Tigbauan, Iloilo, Philippines.

The facility, established through a partnership between AQD and the Philippine Department of Agriculture–Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources (DA–BFAR), is expected to help lower fish farming costs in the Western Visayas region by producing affordable feeds for species such as milkfish and tilapia.

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AQD, DA-BFAR establish feed mill to boost aquaculture sector

(Continued from page 12)

The project received an initial PHP 30 million from DA–BFAR Region 6 through a 2023 agreement with AQD. AQD then conducted the feasibility study, co-funded the project, supervised construction, and will manage plant operations.

The feed mill can produce up to five metric tons of feed daily and is expected to benefit around 6,240 fisherfolk annually. It will use locally available raw materials, including agricultural by-products, to produce cost-efficient feeds formulated by AQD.

DA–BFAR Assistant Director for Administrative Services *Zaldy Perez* said the plant is not intended to compete with commercial manu¬facturers but to address supply gaps during periods of high feed prices and limited supply.

Beyond feed production, the facility will also serve as a training center for feed formulation of economically important aquaculture species. It is equipped with feed processing machinery designed to improve efficiency, maintain feed quality, and extend shelf life.

Bougainville officials visit AQD to study seaweed, sandfish farming

A delegation from the Autonomous Region of Bougainville, Papua New Guinea, visited SEAFDEC/AQD on 1 June 2026 to learn about its seaweed and sandfish aquaculture programs.

The visitors were representatives from the Ministry of Fisheries, the Ministry of Commerce, Trade and Industry, the Ministry of Infrastructure and Utilities, and fisheries technical personnel.

During the visit, the delegation explored AQD's research, production, and extension initiatives, with particular interest in seaweed and sandfish (*Holothuria scabra*) farming.

The delegation noted that the science-based technologies and farming models demonstrated at AQD could serve as valuable references for strengthening aquaculture production and enhancing coastal livelihoods in Bougainville through future collaboration, technology transfer, and knowledge exchange.

The officials toured several AQD facilities, including the Igang Marine Station in Guimaras, and the Dumangas Brackishwater Station in Iloilo, where they observed ongoing research studies, hatchery operations, and production activities.

The Autonomous Region of Bougainville, a self-governing territory of Papua New Guinea with a population of approximately 367,000 people, is pursuing greater economic self-reliance as it prepares for a possible transition to nationhood.

AQD technologies, training courses draw strong interest at Aquaculture Philippines 2026

SEAFDEC/AQD showcased its aquaculture technologies, publications, and training courses at Aquaculture Philippines 2026 held from 24 to 26 June 2026 at the World Trade Center Metro Manila (WTCMM) in Pasay City, Philippines.

The three-day event attracted around 2,800 visitors primarily from the private sector and national and local government agencies. AQD's exhibit featured a bookstore and a live aquarium display showcasing giant freshwater prawn, silver therapon, and Pacific shortfin eel.

Throughout the exhibition, AQD distributed 276 hard copies of its publications, with manuals on freshwater aquaculture commodities among the most sought-after references. Thousands of brochures and flyers, including QR codes to electronic copies of books,

were also distributed to visitors seeking information on aquaculture technologies, training programs, and investment opportunities.

The exhibit was staffed by AQD staff led by Technology Verification and Extension Division (TVED) Head *Dr. Roger Edward Mamauag*. Research personnel from TVED, the Training and Information Division, and the Binangonan Freshwater Station assisted visitors who frequently inquired about training courses, particularly those related to freshwater commodities.

AQD also provided resource persons to the Aquaculture Conference held on 25 June at the WTCMM lobby. The conference drew approximately 250 participants and filled the venue to capacity.

AQD experts delivered four presentations during the conference: "Nursery and Grow-out Culture of Rabbitfish in Brackishwater Ponds" by *Ms. Pedrita Caballero*; "Hatchery-based Seed Production and its Role in Sustainable Mangrove Crab Fattening" by *Ms. Jenalyn S. Lames*; "The Critical Role of Hatcheries in Giant Freshwater Prawn Farming" by *Dr. Sheryll Avanceña*; and "Tilapia-Giant Freshwater Prawn Polyculture" by *Mr. Marwin de la Cruz*.

SPECIAL REPORT

Solar Energy Application for Reducing Fishing Operational Cost in Bang Saphan District, Prachuap Khiri Khan Province, Thailand

SEAFDEC Training Department

Bang Saphan District is one of eight districts in Prachuap Khiri Khan Province, Thailand, comprises seven sub-districts: Kamnoet Nopphakhun, Phong Prasat, Mae Ramphueng, Thong Chai, Ron Thong, Chai Kasem, and Thong Mongkhon. Fisheries in Bang Saphan District play a vital role in the local economy, supporting household incomes, employment, and community-based coastal resource management. According to the Bang Saphan District Fisheries Office (as of 25 July 2025), there are 11 fisheries-related community organizations operating in the district. Of these, nine are directly engaged in small-scale coastal fisheries, representing approximately 451 registered members and around 400 fishing vessels. However, local records indicate that the total number of small-scale fishing vessels in the area is approximately 750, suggesting that a significant proportion of fishers remain outside formal organizational structures.

Map of Prachuap Khiri Khan provinced

Fishing activities in Bang Saphan District are highly diverse, with a wide range of gears including handlines, squid gillnets, crab gillnets, traps, longlines, and other selective fishing gear targeting multi-species coastal resources. Despite their importance, small-scale fishers face increasing operational challenges, particularly rising fuel costs, fluctuating fish prices, declining fish stocks, and climate-related risks. These challenges have intensified the need for innovative, cost-effective, and environmentally sustainable technologies to support fishing operations.

1. Rationale for Solar Energy Application

Due to rising fuel and energy costs have become a major constraint on the profitability of small-scale fisheries in Bang Saphan. Fishing operations require energy for navigation lights, communication systems, battery charging, and onboard equipment. Dependence on fossil fuels increases operational expenses and contributes to greenhouse gas emissions.

Solar energy presents a practical and sustainable alternative. As a clean and renewable energy source, solar photovoltaic (PV) systems can reduce fuel consumption, lower operating costs, and improve energy efficiency. In addition, solar energy supports environmental conservation by reducing carbon emissions and promoting climate-smart fisheries practices.

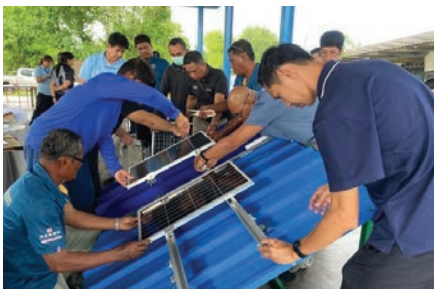
2. Collaboration and Implementation

Recognizing the importance of this potential to improve energy efficiency and reduce operational costs, the Fisheries Development and Restoration Group, Marine Fisheries Division, Department of Fisheries (DOF) Thailand, in collaboration with SEAFDEC/TD, implemented a training program on the application of solar energy in small-scale fisheries.

The DOF Thailand provided technical coordination, stakeholder engagement, and participant mobilization, while SEAFDEC/TD contributed technical expertise, training materials, and hands-on demonstrations on solar energy systems for fishing vessels. This collaboration aimed to integrate local fisheries development needs with appropriate renewable energy technologies, ensuring practical relevance and applicability.

The training program aims to:

- Enhance understanding of solar energy and renewable energy applications in fisheries
- Provide technical knowledge on solar photovoltaic (PV) system components and operation
- Develop practical skills in selecting, installing, and maintaining solar systems
- Promote cost reduction strategies for small-scale fisheries through solar energy
- Encourage environmentally sustainable and climate-smart fisheries practices



The Training combined classroom lectures, technical presentations, case studies, and hands-on practical exercises. These activities strengthened technical understanding and built confidence in applying solar systems in real fishing operations.

After completing the course, the training confirmed that:

- Solar energy is a viable solution for reducing fishing operational costs
- Fishers can significantly reduce fuel consumption and battery charging costs
- Knowledge and skills in renewable energy can be effectively transferred to local communities
- Practical training significantly improves technical competency

The program demonstrated that solar photovoltaic systems can:

- Reduce operational costs in fishing activities
- Improve energy efficiency and reliability
- Extend battery life and reduce maintenance costs
- Support climate-friendly and sustainable fisheries development

The training on solar energy application in small-scale fisheries in Bang Saphan District successfully achieved its objectives by strengthening knowledge, skills, and awareness among fisheries stakeholders.

REGIONAL PROGRAMS

Southeast Asia advances sustainable seaweed industry at Technical Working Group Meeting

SEAFDEC organized the Second Seaweed Technical Working Group (S-TWG) Meeting under the Blue Horizon Project on 5–7 May 2026, Bangkok, Thailand. the Meeting gather regional seaweed experts and policymakers, marking a critical step toward shaping a sustainable and inclusive seaweed industry across Southeast Asia to refine two key regional outputs namely "Guide to Promoting a Sustainable Seaweed Industry" and "Principles/Toolkits for Responsible and Safe Seaweed Aquaculture."

Led by SEAFDEC Project Management Unit, the meeting brings together representatives from ASEAN Member States, technical experts, and a representative from Global Seaweed Coalition, *Prof. Lim Phaik Eem* to harmonize approaches across the region, strengthen seaweed value chains, and position Southeast Asia as a global leader in sustainable seaweed production.

The "Guide" and "Principles" will focus on sustainability principles with national priorities, identify priority areas such as climate resilience, value chain competitiveness, and integrate gender equality and social inclusion into seaweed development strategies.

A field visit to seaweed farms in Phetchaburi Province is also scheduled to complement technical discussions, offering participants direct insights into real-world innovations and challenges in seaweed aquaculture.

As Southeast Asia continues to scale its blue economy ambitions, this meeting signals a shift from fragmented efforts to coordinated regional action ensuring that seaweed becomes a driver of sustainable growth, environmental resilience, and inclusive livelihoods. The outcomes of this meeting will guide the drafting and validation of regional frameworks over the coming years, culminating in their endorsement by the SEAFDEC Governing Council.

The Blue Horizon: Ocean Relief through Seaweed Aquaculture Project funded by the Global Environment Facility (GEF) through WWF US as GEF Agency, is executed by SEAFDEC in collaboration with national government partners, the Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources (BFAR) of the Philippines and the Department of Fisheries and Surveillance (DFiS) of Viet Nam.

Challenges to solutions: multispecies/multigear (MSMG) for fisheries management

FAO and SEAFDEC jointly organized the five-day "Regional Workshop on Key Challenges and Practical Solutions for Multispecies/Multigear (MSMG) Fisheries Management" on 8–12 June 2026 in Bangkok, Thailand.

At the opening of the Workshop, *Dr. Alue Dohong*, Assistant Director-General and Regional Representative of the FAO Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific, followed by *Ms. Sampan Panjarat*, Secretary-General of SEAFDEC, delivered the Welcome and Opening Remarks.

The Workshop brought together fisheries managers, scientists, and researchers from Southeast Asian and South Asian countries to examine the challenges and potential solutions for assessing and managing multispecies/multigear (MSMG) fisheries. The Workshop also identified and discussed key technical limitations inherent in tropical, small-scale, and mixed-stock fisheries, while introducing practical tools and approaches, including the MMSY-based framework and assessment toolbox, to support evidence-based fisheries management.

By the end of the Workshop, participants had enhanced their understanding of the trade-offs among multispecies yields, ecosystem sustainability, and socio-economic objectives. Furthermore, the Workshop successfully strengthened participants' capacity to assess and manage MSMG fisheries using pragmatic and ecosystem-based approaches, thereby contributing toward sustainable fisheries management goals, including SDG14.

This Workshop was part of the joint efforts between SEAFDEC and FAO under the Letter of Agreement on "Mixed Stock Fisheries in the Asia-Pacific: Identifying Key Technical Limitations and Providing Practical Solutions for Management"

TD convenes technical meeting to finalize fishing gear marking activities and work plan

SEAFDEC/TD organized the "Technical Meeting for the Discussion and Finalization of Activities and Work Plan for the Fishing Gear Marking Study" on 8–9 June 2026 at TD in Samut Prakan, Thailand and was attended by a total of 19 participants.

The Meeting was convened under the Sustainable Management of Fisheries, Marine Living Resources and Their Habitats in the Bay of Bengal Region for the Benefit of Coastal States and Communities Project (BOBLME Phase II), which aims to promote fishing gear marking and to develop and share related regional guidelines.

Building on the October 2025 webinar on knowledge-sharing and experiences in fishing gear marking, this Meeting focused on formulating workplans for participating BOBLME-Phase-II countries. The Meeting successfully established (1) an implementation plan for the study in each country, including key considerations; (2) the selection of pilot sites; (3) an agreement on the study

methodology; and (4) the clarification of roles, responsibilities, and logistical arrangements.

SEAFDEC and DOF Thailand discuss 2026–2027 workplan for the BOBLME II Project

SEAFDEC, in collaboration with the Department of Fisheries (DOF) Thailand, organized the Meeting on the Preparation of the 2026–2027 Work Plan for the Implementation of the Sustainable Management of the Bay of Bengal Large Marine Ecosystem (BOBLME II) Project on 12 May 2026 at DOF Thailand in Bangkok.

The Meeting gathered 34 participants from DOF Thailand, IUCN and SEAFDEC to discuss the Year 3 workplan under the BOBLME II Project. The Meeting was chaired by *Ms. Wantana Jenkijkosol*, Expert in Fishing Gears from the Marine Fisheries Research and Development Division and Thailand's Project Steering Committee Member for the BOBLME II Project.

The objectives of the Meeting were to report the progress of the BOBLME II Project from January 2025 to June 2026, discuss and finalize the 2026–2027 work plan (July 2026–June 2027), review key challenges and priority activities, and strengthen coordination among DOF Thailand, IUCN and SEAFDEC.

During the Meeting, participants reviewed progress under the project components, including the ecosystem approach to fisheries management (EAFM), combating illegal, unreported and unregulated (IUU) fishing, marine pollution management, biodiversity conservation, and community livelihood development. SEAFDEC also presented updates on port waste management and fishing gear marking activities. The meeting further highlighted successful pilot activities, including crab bank initiatives and habitat restoration efforts at Koh Panyee in Phang Nga Province and Rawai Tai in Satun Province.

The Meeting concluded with recommendations to strengthen regional collaboration and coordination among implementing agencies. The expected output was the finalization of the 2026–2027 work plan for endorsement at the 3rd Regional Project Steering Committee (RPSC) Meeting on 19–22 May 2026 in Negombo, Sri Lanka.

The BOBLME II Project implemented by the FAO and executed by IUCN, BOBP-IGO, and SEAFDEC, with financial support from the Global Environment Facility and the Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation.

SEAFDEC joins 3rd RPSC Meeting of the BOBLME II Project in Sri Lanka

SEAFDEC participated in the "Third Regional Project Steering Committee (3RPSC) Meeting of the Bay of Bengal Large Marine Ecosystem Phase II Project" held on 19–22 May 2026 in Negombo, Sri Lanka. SEAFDEC Training Department was represented by *Ms. Suwanee Sayan*, Senior Project Planning and Management Officer; *Ms. Yanida Suthipol*, IUU Fishing Countermeasure Section Head; and *Ms. Rattana Tiaye*, Fisheries Management Researcher. The Meeting gathered Project Steering Committee members and National Coordinators from Bangladesh, India, Indonesia, Malaysia, Maldives, Sri Lanka, and Thailand, together with representatives from partner organizations including Global Environment Facility (GEF), Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation, Food and Agriculture Organization Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific, International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN), and Bay of Bengal Programme Inter-Governmental Organisation (BOBP-IGO).

The event comprised technical sessions and the Third RPSC Meeting. During the technical sessions, SEAFDEC and BOBP-IGO presented progress, achievements, and budget proposals for activities implemented from January 2025 to June 2026 under Component 1

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SEAFDEC joins 3rd RPSC Meeting of the BOBLME II Project in Sri Lanka

(Continued from page 17)

on Sustainable Fisheries Management. Discussions focused on strengthening the ecosystem approach to fisheries management (EAFM) and combating illegal, unreported and unregulated (IUU) Fishing. Updates were also presented on Component 3 activities related to pollution reduction, particularly fishing port waste management and fishing gear marking initiatives.

Meanwhile, IUCN reported progress under Component 2 on the restoration and conservation of critical marine habitats and Component 4 on improving coastal livelihoods. Updates on Component 5, including the BOBLME Climate Change Resilience (CCR) Consortium, communication strategy, and monitoring and evaluation activities, were also shared. In addition, FAO presented updates on the project's Mid-Term Review, Terminal Evaluation, and future direction toward the GEF-9 phase.

The Third RPSC Meeting reviewed and endorsed the Annual Work Plan and Budget for July 2026 to June 2027. Following the meeting, the Regional Coordination Unit organized a field visit on 21–22 May 2026 to Jaffna and Mannar. Participants visited a sea cucumber farm and the Vidataltivu Nature Reserve, where they met local community members in Vidattaltivu Village to learn about community-based coastal resource management and livelihood activities.

These activities were conducted under the Bay of Bengal Large Marine Ecosystems Phase II (BOBLME II) project, implemented by FAO and executed by IUCN, BOBP-IGO and SEAFDEC, funded by GEF and Norad.

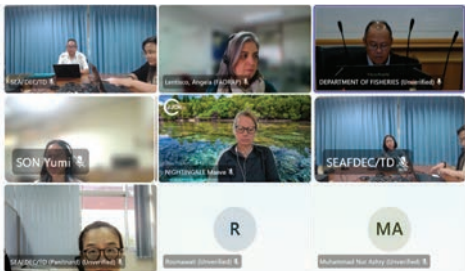
SEAFDEC participates online in the First National Project Steering Committee Meeting for BOBLME II in Malaysia

SEAFDEC, led by Secretary-General *Ms. Sampan Panjarat*, together with representatives from the Project Planning and Management Division (PPMD) and SEAFDEC Activity Leaders representing each BOBLME II project component, participated virtually in the "First Malaysia National Project Steering Committee (NPSC) Meeting for the Bay of Bengal Large Marine Ecosystem (BOBLME) Phase II: Sustainable Management of Fisheries, Marine Living Resources and Their Habitats in the Bay of Bengal Region for the Benefit of Coastal States and Communities," held on 7 April 2026 at the Department of Fisheries Malaysia, Putrajaya. The Meeting was conducted under the Bay of Bengal Large Marine Ecosystems Phase II (BOBLME II) project, implemented by FAO and executed by IUCN, BOBP IGO, and SEAFDEC, with funding support from GEF and Norad.

The Meeting was chaired by *Dato' Haji Adnan bin Hussain*, Director General of Fisheries Malaysia, and brought together key stakeholders from national agencies and partner organizations to discuss Malaysia's engagement in the BOBLME II project.

During the Meeting, representatives from the FAO, IUCN, and SEAFDEC joined the discussions and provided updates on the overall project framework and implementation arrangements. The sessions highlighted the collaborative efforts among regional and national partners in promoting sustainable fisheries management and conserving marine ecosystems in the Bay of Bengal region.

In her virtual remarks, the Secretary-General emphasized SEAFDEC's commitment to support Member Countries in implementing the ecosystem approach to fisheries management (EAFM), addressing illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing, improving port management, promoting the marking of fishing gear, and strengthening regional cooperation. *Ms. Suwanee Sayan*, Senior Project Planning and Management Officer, then presented the SEAFDEC-led components and the proposed national workplan for Malaysia.



The Meeting also discussed and confirmed the composition and Terms of Reference of the National Project Steering Committee, as well as key activities for 2026 and the necessary actions to be undertaken. These include capacity-building initiatives, national consultations, and the implementation of priority fisheries management plans.

The successful convening of the First NPSC Meeting marks an important milestone for Malaysia in advancing the implementation of the BOBLME Phase II project. SEAFDEC reaffirmed its readiness to continue working closely with Malaysia and other regional partners, both onsite and virtually, to achieve the shared goal of sustainable fisheries and healthy marine ecosystems in the Bay of Bengal region.

SEAFDEC delegates participate in High-Level AI Workshop and XIV Governing Council Meeting of BOBP-IGO

SEAFDEC Secretary-General and Training Department Chief *Ms. Sampan Panjarat* and Training and Research Supporting Division Head *Mr. Kongpathai Saraphaivanich* participated in the "High-Level Policy Guidance Workshop on Artificial Intelligence in Fisheries: Strengthening MCS, Traceability & Governance Readiness in the Bay of Bengal Region" from 28 to 29 May 2026, followed immediately by the "XIV Governing Council Meeting (GCM-XIV) of the Bay of Bengal Programme Inter-Governmental Organisation (BOBP-IGO)" on 30 May 2026 in Mumbai, India. Both events were organized by BOBP-IGO.

Convened under the BOBLME-II project, the two-day technical workshop brought together international experts, technology providers, and national delegates to explore operational AI tools tailored for artisanal fishing conditions. *Ms. Panjarat* delivered a presentation titled "What a Regional Technical Organization Can Do: Cooperation, Capacity Building, Traceability and MCS Tools in Southeast Asian Fisheries. She highlighted SEAFDEC's technical milestones in establishing interoperable data frameworks, standardizing vessel records, and building multi-agency operational networks across Southeast Asia, offering valuable peer-learning insights for the Bay of Bengal region. Following the general session of the workshop, the delegation participated in the BOBLME Project Partners Meet. This regional roundtable brought together key representatives from FAO, BOBP-IGO, IUCN, SEAFDEC, and UNODC to coordinate a Large Marine Ecosystem (LME)-wide MCS operational backbone. Crucially, the partners deliberated on establishing a structured dialogue to systematically delink maritime fisheries crime from routine small-scale fishing activities.

Following the workshop, regular Governing Council Members convened alongside observers to review the compiled outputs. The Governing Council officially adopted the Workshop Outcome Statement and endorsed a phased "pilot-and-learn" pathway for the 2026–2027 work program, which focuses on testing deployable AI tools across selected ports before broader rollouts. Council members noted that while AI offers powerful methods to minimize transaction costs, it must serve as an enabling layer that respects domestic legal frameworks, data sovereignty, and human judgment. Moreover, the Council approved BOBP-IGO's role as the regional hub for coordinating AI-enabled fisheries governance within the BOBLME-II project framework.

This convergence underscores a strengthening partnership between Southeast Asia and South Asia. By consolidating scientific tools and aligning enforcement protocols, SEAFDEC and BOBP-IGO continue to build meaningful public goods for sustainable ocean governance across adjacent large marine ecosystems.

EAFM High-level Consultation for leaders, executives, and decision-makers

SEAFDEC/TD organized the EAFM High-level Consultation for Leaders, Executives, and Decision-makers (LEAD-EAFM) on 9–10 June 2026 in Satun Province, Thailand. The one-day high-level consultation brought together leaders, executives, and decision-makers. These included *Dr. Wantana Chenkitkosol*, Fisheries Biologist, Senior Professional Level, and Project Steering Committee (PSC), representatives from government agencies, Heads of Provincial Fisheries Offices from Phang Nga and Satun Provinces, Provincial Administrative Organizations, Sub-district Administrative Organizations, as well as partners from the Thai Sea Watch Association and the ECCA Family Foundation.

The Consultation aimed to empower participants to appreciate and endorse the ecosystem approach to fisheries management (EAFM) approach, while strengthening capacity for planning and implementation. The two-day event brought together 33 participants from diverse stakeholder groups.

On 9 June 2026, participants were introduced to EAFM principles and processes through learning materials and presentations. The planning and progress of the EAFM pilot sites in Thailand, namely Koh Panyee in Phang Nga Province and Rawai in Satun Province, were also presented and discussed. Moreover, the discussions focused on strengthening implementation mechanisms, enhancing collaboration among stakeholders, and identifying challenges and opportunities for future support, including technical cooperation and funding.

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EAFM High-level Consultation for leaders, executives, and decision-makers

(Continued from page 19)

On 10 June 2026, a field visit was conducted to the blue swimming crab bank learning center, the mangrove conservation area, and the Tale of the Backyard Kitchen Model (Rueang-Lao-Khrua-Lang-Ban) in the Rawai community. This activity aimed to provide participants with practical experience in the application of EAFM in community-based fisheries and coastal resource management initiatives. The visit also served as an opportunity to exchange knowledge with local stakeholders, learn from existing management practices, and explore ways to further strengthen the integration of EAFM principles into future fisheries management planning and implementation.

These activities were conducted under the Bay of Bengal Large Marine Ecosystems Phase II (BOBLME II) project, which is implemented by FAO, executed jointly by IUCN, BOBP-IGO and SEAFDEC, and funded by GEF and Norad.

TD and DOF Thailand launch Inland EAFM Project

SEAFDEC/TD, in collaboration with the Department of Fisheries (DOF) Thailand, organized the Kick-off Workshop on Inland Ecosystem Approach to Fisheries Management (Inland EAFM) on 29–30 June 2026 at TD, Samut Prakan, Thailand.

The workshop brought together officials from the DOF and staff of TD with a total of 10 participants, to introduce the Inland EAFM project framework, objectives, implementation plan, and expected outputs. As the first initiative to develop and apply the ecosystem approach to fisheries management (EAFM) in inland fisheries, the project aims to establish a comprehensive Inland EAFM framework over the next five years. The workshop also sought to build a common understanding of Inland EAFM concepts and approaches, strengthen coordination among implementing partners, and discuss and refine training materials.

Throughout the two-day workshop, participants reviewed the current status, opportunities, and challenges of inland fisheries management in Thailand and exchanged views on the application of EAFM principles to inland fisheries. Group discussions were conducted to review and refine the Inland EAFM training toolkit and presentation materials, which will serve as key resources for future capacity-building activities and the pilot implementation of Inland EAFM in selected areas.

The workshop marked the official launch of the Inland EAFM project, establishing the foundation for continued collaboration between TD and DOF Thailand in advancing the development and implementation of the Inland EAFM framework. The outcome will contribute to strengthening sustainable inland fisheries management through the application of ecosystem-based approaches.

SEAFDEC and relevant regional projects support regional participation and knowledge exchange at the 5WSSFC

SEAFDEC actively participated in the 5th World Small-Scale Fisheries Congress (5WSSFC), held from 27 April to 1 May 2026 in Hua Hin, Prachuap Khiri Khan, Thailand. Co-hosted by TBTI Global in collaboration with its global network of hubs and partner organizations, the Congress convened approximately 300 participants from over 50 countries (representing civil society organizations, government agencies, and non-governmental organizations), to exchange knowledge, share experiences, and strengthen collaboration in advancing sustainable small-scale fisheries. The SEAFDEC representatives were led by the Secretary-General, *Ms. Sampan Panjarat*, and included senior officials and researchers from TD, together with staff involved in implementing the BOBLME II Project and the GoTFish Project. In her welcome remarks during the opening session, *Ms. Panjarat* emphasized the importance of partnerships and knowledge-sharing in enhancing the sustainability of small-scale fisheries at both regional and global levels.

Prior to the Congress, SEAFDEC, through the BOBLME II Project, supported representatives from Indonesia, Malaysia, and Thailand to participate in the preparatory meeting, "Seas of Change: Shared Insights for Supporting Small-Scale Fisheries in the Gulf of Thailand and Bay of Bengal," organized by the FAO on 26 April 2026 at the same venue. The meeting provided an opportunity to exchange

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SEAFDEC and relevant regional projects support regional participation and knowledge exchange at the 5WSSFC *(Continued from page 20)*

experiences and identify collaborative actions on transboundary governance, the ecosystem approach to fisheries management (EAFM), and combating illegal, unreported and unregulated (IUU) fishing.

Building on these discussions, the project-supported representatives from the participating countries served as speakers during a special panel session entitled "Advancing Small-Scale Fisheries Sustainability through Ecosystem Approaches and Governance Measures: Lessons from the Gulf of Thailand and Bay of Bengal." The session highlighted practical experiences demonstrating how ecosystem-based approaches, strengthened governance, and value chain incentives can collectively enhance the sustainability and resilience of small-scale fisheries through sub-regional cooperation.

The GoTFish Project also featured prominently during the Congress, The Project Steering Committee (PSC) Member for Thailand, *Dr. Pavarot Noranarttragoon*, and the GoTFish Chief Technical Advisor of the RCU, *Dr. Worawit Wanchana*, presented key regional issues and collaborative solutions advanced under the project. Their presentations focused on shared fish stock governance, ecosystem-based fisheries management, and the application of multispecies stock assessment frameworks to support science-based and evidence-informed fisheries management in the Gulf of Thailand.

Throughout the Congress, SEAFDEC experts actively contributed to a wide range of technical sessions as speakers and resource persons, sharing regional experiences and lessons learned from various initiatives. SEAFDEC also hosted an exhibition booth showcasing its regional programs and projects, highlighting ongoing efforts to promote sustainable fisheries management, improve fishers' livelihoods, strengthen co-management practices, and advance the implementation of EAFM across Southeast Asia.

Second Regional PSC Meeting of the GoTFish Project convened in Malaysia

The Second Regional Project Steering Committee (2RPSC) Meeting of the GoTFish Project was convened on 23–24 June 2026 in a hybrid format at the Moxy Hotel, Putrajaya in Malaysia, bringing together a total of 35 participants joining both in person and online.

Delegates included PSC Members and National Focal Persons from Cambodia, Thailand, Malaysia, and Viet Nam, alongside representatives from the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), SEAFDEC, Sustainable Fisheries Partnership (SFP), and the University of Queensland (UQ). SEAFDEC was represented at the meeting by Secretary-General *Ms. Sampan Panjarat* and two senior officials, *Ms. Pattaratjit Kaewnuratchadasorn* and *Ms. Panitnard Weerawat*.

During the event, the PSC Member from Cambodia was elected as Chairperson, and the Member from Thailand was elected as Vice-Chairperson. The Committee conducted a comprehensive review of the project's Year 1 implementation progress. The PSC officially endorsed the Year 1

Progress Report as well as the Year 2 Annual Work Plan and Budget for the July 2026–June 2027 reporting period. The PSC also actively discussed environmental and social safeguards, regional coordination mechanisms, and emerging strategic issues, continuing to build a solid foundation for sustainable transboundary fisheries management and the Blue Economy in the Gulf of Thailand.

Workshop on Finalization of the Small-scale Fisheries Supply Chain Study Report in Three Sites

SEAFDEC/TD organized the Workshop on Finalization of the Small-scale Fisheries Supply Chain Study Report in Three Sites from 9 to 11 June 2026 at TD, Samut Prakan, Thailand. The workshop was conducted as part of the small-scale fisheries (SSF) supply chain study component of the JTF7-supported project, "Improving Fishers' Livelihood and Fisheries Co-Management in Inland and Coastal Small-Scale Fisheries."

The workshop brought together national focal persons from the Department of Livestock and Fisheries (DLF), Lao PDR, the Philippine Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources (BFAR), and the Department of Fisheries (DOF) Thailand, as well as researchers and staff from TD. Three resource persons, namely *Dr. Kangwan Chatarchot*, *Dr. Suvaluck Sathumanusphan*, and *Dr. Suttinee Limthammahisorn*, were

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Workshop on Finalization of the Small-Scale Fisheries Supply Chain Study Report in Three Sites

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invited to provide technical inputs and recommendations.

The main objective of the workshop was to review, refine, and finalize the study report on SSF supply chains in three pilot sites: Nam Ngum Reservoir (Lao PDR), Thasala District, Nakhon Si Thammarat (Thailand), and Calauit Island, Palawan (Philippines). Participants also discussed possible interventions and development strategies to strengthen SSF supply chains and improve fishers' livelihoods.

The expected outputs include a final study report, practical recommendations for supply chain development, and potential management interventions to support sustainable small-scale fisheries and enhance the socioeconomic well-being of fishing communities across the three pilot sites.

Bang Saphan fishery community launches major shift toward clean energy and sustainable practices

SEAFDEC/TD, the Department of Fisheries (DOF) Thailand, and the Prachuap Khiri Khan Provincial Fisheries Office convened a high-level strategic meeting on 21 April 2026 to initiate a sustainability plan for the Bang Saphan fishery community. Supported by the Japanese Trust Fund VII and Departmental Programs, the meeting brought together senior fisheries officials of Prachuap Khiri Khan and TD experts to integrate participatory management with technological innovation. The primary goal is to strengthen the long-term social and economic resilience of local artisanal fisheries through collaborative strategic planning.

During the session, TD introduced a pilot initiative designed to balance environmental sustainability with economic viability through clean energy and operational efficiency. Key components of the project include the research and development of high-performance propellers to reduce fuel consumption and enhance maritime safety, alongside the introduction of a "Solar Bank" concept to power post-harvest handling. By adopting these "Blue Economy" solutions, the Bang Saphan community is establishing a national model for modernizing traditional fisheries into energy-efficient systems, ensuring the ecological integrity of coastal resources and a secure future for local fishers.

TD and partners assess energy and vessel efficiency in Bang Saphan

SEAFDEC/TD and the Faculty of International Maritime Studies, Kasetsart University, Sriracha Campus, recently carried out a field survey from 24 to 30 May 2026 in a fishing community of Bang Saphan District, Prachuap Khiri Khan Province, Thailand. The survey focused on collecting data related to energy use, fuel consumption, and operational conditions of small-scale fishing boats operating in the area, and included studying the feasibility of using renewable energy to preserve fish freshness for small-scale fisheries. This survey activity is under the Research and Dissemination of Sustainable Fishing Technology project, with financial support from the Japanese Trust Fund VII.

The field mission was jointly led by the Marine Engineering Section of the Training and Research Supporting Division, together with *Asst. Prof. Prachakon Kaewkhiaw*, D.Eng., Dean of the Faculty of International Maritime Studies, Kasetsart University, Sriracha Campus, and staff from the Chumphon Marine Fisheries Research and Development Center, Department of Fisheries, Thailand. The team worked closely with local fishers to gather technical information on fishing boat operations, engine performance, energy efficiency, preservation methods, and ways to apply renewable energy within the fishing community. The collected data will serve as an important foundation for future research.

The study is expected to contribute to the development of more efficient and energy-saving propeller systems suitable for small-scale fishing vessels, as well as the use of renewable energy to maintain the quality of fish. This collaborative initiative highlights the commitment of the participating institutions to advancing sustainable fisheries, promoting energy-efficient technologies, and supporting environmentally responsible fishing practices in coastal communities throughout the region.

TD hosts Regional Training on Estimating IUU Fishing Losses in Southeast Asia

SEAFDEC/TD, with support from the Japanese Trust Fund under the project "Enhancement of Regional Cooperation and Human Resource Development to Eliminate IUU Fishing," organized the Regional Training on Introduction and Methodology for Estimating IUU Fishing Losses in Southeast Asia from 16 to 18 June 2026 in Bangkok, Thailand. A total of 34 participants from SEAFDEC Member Countries, the SEAFDEC Secretariat, and TD attended the training.

The activity aimed to strengthen the capacity of SEAFDEC Member Countries in understanding the concepts, drivers, and impacts of illegal, unreported, and unregulated (IUU) fishing losses. It also introduced practical methodologies and approaches to estimate the economic and resource losses caused by IUU fishing.

Throughout the three-day Training, participants were introduced to key concepts and definitions of IUU fishing losses, the FAO guidelines on methodologies and indicators for estimating the magnitude and impact of IUU fishing, and regional experiences from the Pacific. The training also included technical sessions on statistical challenges, data gaps, and the use of the R program for estimating IUU fishing losses under different scenarios. Through lectures, practical exercises, and regional exchange, the training equipped participants with practical tools and knowledge to support evidence-based decision-making and strengthen collective efforts to combat IUU fishing in Southeast Asia.

TD participates in Regional Summer Academy on combating IUU fishing and sustainable fisheries management

Two staff members from SEAFDEC/TD, *Mr. Natthawat Chutiponglapat* and *Mr. Krittapat Meephol*, participated in the WMU–MOF–KMI CAPFISH Project Regional Summer Academy: Southeast Asia, held from 22 June to 3 July 2026 in Bangkok, Thailand. The Academy brought together representatives from government agencies, regional and international organizations, academia, and industry to enhance knowledge and practical understanding of international instruments and tools for combating illegal, unreported and unregulated (IUU) fishing, as well as fisheries management approaches.

In addition to participating as delegates, TD contributed technical expertise through two expert presentations. *Ms. Thanyalak Suasi* delivered a presentation on " Regional Efforts by SEAFDEC in Advancing Ecosystem-based Fisheries Management in Southeast Asia, " while *Mr. Kongpathai Saraphaivanich* discussed the Regional Perspective on Market and Trade-related Measures to Prevent IUU Fishing.

Throughout the Academy, TD representatives actively engaged in learning sessions, case studies, group discussions, and interactive exercises. Their participation reflected TD's continued commitment to supporting regional capacity building, strengthening fisheries governance, and promoting cooperation among Southeast Asian countries to address IUU fishing and advance sustainable fisheries management.

TD and DOF Thailand organize MCS Workshop to Combat IUU Fishing

SEAFDEC/TD together with the Department of Fisheries (DOF) Thailand, organized the Workshop on Needs for Monitoring, Control, and Surveillance (MCS) Implementation and Capacity Building to Combat IUU Fishing in Thailand on 9 June 2026 in Bangkok, Thailand.

The Workshop was attended by 49 participants, including staff from DOF Thailand from various divisions (Fish Inspection and Quality Control, Fisheries and Fleet Management, Fisheries Control and Surveillance, Fisheries Foreign Affairs, Fisheries Resources Management and Measures Determination, Information and Communication Technology Center, and Legal Affairs). Also present were

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TD and DOF Thailand organize MCS Workshop to Combat IUU Fishing

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representatives from the Labor Union in the Fishing Industry Thai Maritime Enforcement Command Center (Thai-MECC), Kasetsart University, and TD.

The Workshop aimed to share the results of a study and review on the needs for monitoring, control, and surveillance (MCS) implementation and associated capacity building to combat IUU fishing in Thailand, strengthen understanding of national and international fisheries legal instruments and law enforcement frameworks that support efforts to combat IUU fishing, and enhance coordination and collaboration among relevant officers involved in MCS activities to combat IUU fishing within DOF Thailand.

The Workshop was conducted as one of the activities under the project "Sustainable Management of Fisheries, Marine Living Resources and Their Habitats in the Bay of Bengal Region for the Benefit of Coastal States and Communities (BOBLME II)."

JAIF-supported fishing capacity project enters terminal reporting phase

The participants for Workshop in Brasmana Hotel, Perlis, 9–10 April 2026

As the Fishing Capacity Project approached its conclusion, SEAFDEC/MFRDMD initiated the preparation of the Terminal Report, which constitutes the project's fifth output. The Report thus serves as a comprehensive record of achievements, challenges, and collaborative efforts, while providing guidance for strengthening regional cooperation in managing fishing capacity.

The Workshop on the Drafting of the Terminal Report for the Implementation and Assessment of the ASEAN Regional Plan of Action for the Management of Fishing Capacity (RPOA-Capacity) was convened on 9–10 April 2026 in Kuala Perlis, Perlis, Malaysia. The workshop was attended by 19 participants, including two resource persons from Universiti Malaysia Terengganu (UMT), representatives from the Department of Fisheries Malaysia (Headquarters), the Fisheries Research Institute (FRI) Kampung Acheh, FRI Batu Maung, and officials from MFRDMD. Guided by the resource persons, participants collaboratively developed the report outline.

One key recommendation was the inclusion of success stories from ASEAN Member States (AMSs) highlighting initiatives in the management of pelagic resources. Requests were sent to focal points in eight AMSs, and the success stories were subsequently submitted via email. Subsequently, the Terminal Report was further reviewed and refined during the Technical Workshop on the Analysis of AMS Success Stories for the Fishing Capacity Project, held in Kuching, Sarawak, from 29 June to 1 July 2026, with the participation of nine MFRDMD officials.

The Fishing Capacity Project (2024–2026) was generously supported by the Japan-ASEAN Integration Fund (JAIF).

AQD distributes tissue-cultured seaweed seedlings to Iloilo farmers

SEAFDEC/AQD distributed 2.16 tons of tissue-cultured *Kappaphycus alvarezii* seedlings to 247 seaweed growers in Northern Iloilo, Philippines, on 6 and 12 May 2026 to support seaweed farming and strengthen local livelihoods.

Beneficiaries in the municipalities of Concepcion, Ajuy, and San Dionisio received the seedlings grown for four months by AQD in Pandan, Antique, Philippines. The plantlets used in Pandan originated from tissue cultures at the Seaweed Laboratory of AQD in Tigbauan, Iloilo.

The distribution utilized harvests of tissue-cultured seaweeds produced in Pandan, which yielded about 1.05 tons on 6 May and another 1.11 tons on 12 May. Tissue-cultured seaweeds have been shown to be more robust and can grow faster compared with cuttings repeatedly propagated from older stocks.

Among the recipient municipalities, Concepcion received 850 kilograms of planting materials for 85 beneficiaries

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AQD distributes tissue-cultured seaweed seedlings to Iloilo farmers

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from five barangays. Ajuy received 200 kilograms of seaweed for 23 farmers from two barangays. San Dionisio received the largest allocation of 1.11 tons, shared among 139 members from five seaweed grower associations.

The Office of the Provincial Agriculturist of Iloilo requested plantlets for seaweed growers in the northern towns and assisted with the distribution activities.

AQD Chief *Dan Baliao* said the initiative reflects the Department's continuing commitment to helping coastal communities improve productivity and strengthen livelihood opportunities through science-based aquaculture technologies.

The activity is part of the project, "Seaweed Production Using Tissue-Cultured *Kappaphycus alvarezii* Plantlets in Pandan, Antique," being implemented by AQD in collaboration with the local government of Pandan and the Philippine Department of Agriculture–Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources Region 6 (DA–BFAR 6).

AQD completes 3 aquaculture training courses

For the second quarter of 2026, SEAFDEC/AQD concluded two international and one national aquaculture training courses on sandfish, fish health management, and giant freshwater prawn.

The 16-day international training course on "Sandfish (*Holothuria scabra*) Seed Production, Nursery, and Management" offered at AQD's main station in Tigbauan, Iloilo, concluded on 5 May 2026.

The training, which started on 20 April 2026, had seven participants, including one participant each from Cambodia and Thailand who were recipients of the Japanese Trust Fund (JTF) training fellowship grant. Meanwhile, two participants from Papua New Guinea and three from the Philippines were privately funded.

Throughout the course, trainees participated in lectures and hands-on practical sessions, including stocking of sandfish juveniles in hapa nets, sampling settlement plates to monitor growth, and packing early juveniles and broodstock for transport.

The trainees also visited Panobolon Island in Guimaras, Philippines for field sessions on sandfish secondary nursery and grow-out operations. There, they observed different culture environments and management practices required at various stages of sandfish growth.

Another international training course was conducted by AQD at its Tigbauan Main Station on 11–25 May 2026, with five participants: three from the Philippines, one from Malaysia, and one from Cambodia.

This training course titled "Fish Health Management," aimed to enhance participants' technical knowledge and practical skills in fish health management. Lectures focused on bacterial, viral, fungal, and parasitic diseases of fish and crustaceans, as well as disease development and prevention.

Hands-on sessions on aseptic techniques, sample collection and submission for disease diagnosis, and diagnostic case processing provided participants with practical experiences in disease detection and management.

Participants also visited the Dumangas Brackishwater Station, Igang Marine Station, and a private farm in Zarraga, Iloilo, for exposure to aquaculture facilities and technologies.

Three course participants from Cambodia, Malaysia, and the Philippines received the JTF training fellowship grant.

Lastly, 11 Filipino participants completed a five-day training course on giant freshwater prawn hatchery and grow-out operations conducted at AQD's Binangonan Freshwater Station in Rizal, held from 11 to 15 May 2026.

The course combined lectures and hands-on activities covering giant freshwater prawn biology and reproduction, site selection and water quality management, broodstock development, hatchery and nursery operations, feeding, health management, and the economics of freshwater prawn culture.

This training courses aimed to equip participants with practical skills and technologies that can be applied in aquaculture enterprises and development programs.

FUTURE ACTIVITIES

Date	Venue	Title	Organizer(s)
		2026	
6–9 July	Samut Prakan, Thailand	Subregional Training Course on Data Analysis of Fisheries Resources and Biological Data in Relation to the Indian Ocean Dipole (IOD)	TD
10 July	Samut Prakan, Thailand	Consultation Workshop on Collaborative Study of Indian Ocean Dipole (IOD) Impacts on Fisheries Resources	TD
10 July	Iloilo, Philippines	53rd Anniversary of SEAFDEC/AQD	AQD
10 July	Pathum Thani, Thailand	Asia–Africa Aquaculture Partnership Forum	AIT
14–16 July	Bangkok, Thailand	Regional Training on Traceability and Effective Management Tools for Fish and Fishery Products in Southeast Asia	TD
14–22 July	Samut Prakan, Thailand	Regional Training Course on the Basics of Fisheries Acoustics and Practical Survey by Quantitative Echosounder (EK80)	TD
29–30 July	Manila, Philippines	ASEAN Blue Economy Regional Socialisation Workshop	ASEAN
3–21 August	Iloilo, Philippines	Training Course on Mangrove Crab Hatchery Operations	AQD
4–7 August	Bangkok, Thailand	Regional Workshop on Introduction from the Sea	SEAFDEC and CITES
7 August	Bangkok, Thailand	ASEAN Regional Workshop: Mitigation of Microplastic Pollution and Implications for Fisheries and Human Health	CSEAS & NIVA
10–14 August	Rizal, Philippines	Training Course on Tilapia Hatchery & Grow-out Operations	AQD
10–14 August	Lao PDR	On-Site Training Course on Good Aquaculture Practices in Lao PDR	AQD (ASEAN-JICA FVC Project)
10–19 August	Iloilo, Philippines	Training Course on Propagation & Farming of Tissue-cultured Seaweeds	AQD
17–18 August	Vientiane, Lao PDR	Workshop on Finalization and Handover of the EAFM Plan and Capacity Building in EAFM and Gender Equality and Social Inclusion (GESI) for Trapaing Sangke Community Leaders, Cambodia	TD
17–21 August	Singapore	Workshop for Technical Input on Laboratory Testing Methods to the Inspection Guidelines for Imported Aquaculture Fish and Fishery Products	MFRD (ASEAN-JICA FVC Project)
17–26 August	Iloilo, Philippines	Training Course on Micropropagation and Farming of Seaweeds	AQD
18–20 August	Bangkok, Thailand	Practical Workshop on Strengthening Fisheries Observer Programs for Effective Combating of IUU Fishing in Southeast Asia	TD
18–27 August	Bangkok and Chon Buri, Thailand	Training Course on Responsible Fishing Technologies/Practices to Combat IUU Fishing in Southeast Asia	TD
19–21 August	Vientiane, Lao PDR	The Stakeholder Consultation Workshop on Fisher's Livelihood Improvement through Thai River Sprat Supply Chain in Nam Ngum Reservoir Study Results	TD
24 August–2 September	Iloilo, Philippines	Training Course on Mangrove Crab Nursery and Grow-out Operations	AQD
25–27 August	Samut Prakan, Thailand	Training on Gender Equality and Social Inclusion (GESI) in Fisheries Management	TD
1–4 September	Nakhon Si Thammarat, Thailand	Stakeholder Consultation Workshop on Fisher's Livelihood Improvement through Indo-Pacific Mackerel from Gillnet Supply Chain Study Results in Thasala District	TD
4–6 September	Rome, Italy	3rd Small-Scale Fisheries Summit (SSF Summit 2026)	FAO
4–5 and 11 September	Rome, Italy	11th Meeting of the Regional Secretariat Network (RSN)	FAO
7–11 September	Rome, Italy	37th Session of FAO Committee on Fisheries (COFI)	FAO
8–10 September	Cebu, Philippines	SAFET Conference '26	SAFET
16 September	Philippines	18th Meeting of the ASEAN Fisheries Consultative Forum (AFCF)	ASEAN & Philippines
17–18 September	Philippines	34th Meeting of the ASEAN Sectoral Working Group on Fisheries (ASWGFi)	ASEAN & Philippines
14–19 September	Bangkok, Thailand	International Fisheries Negotiations Workshop	ANCORS
22–23 September	Bangkok, Thailand	Inter-Departmental Workshop on SEASOFIA 2027	SEC

TUMSAT delegation visits AQD under e-ASIA research partnership

A research delegation from the Tokyo University of Marine Science and Technology (TUMSAT) visited SEAFDEC/AQD on 20 May 2026 as part of an ongoing collaborative research initiative under the e-ASIA Joint Research Program.

The visit to the AQD main station in Tigbauan, Iloilo, Philippines aimed to strengthen research collaboration, gather biological data for the joint project, and discuss the progress and future directions of the partnership.

The TUMSAT delegation was led by Professor *Dr. Ikuo Hirono* and Associate Professor *Dr. Keiichiro Koiwai*, along with two researchers. They were joined by *Dr. Mary Beth Maningas*, a professor from the University of Santo Tomas in Manila.

During the visit, the delegation met with the AQD Executive Committee to align research goals and discuss ongoing initiatives. The delegation also toured several AQD facilities, including the Crab Hatchery, the Laboratory Facilities for Advanced Aquaculture Technologies, and the FishWorld Museum.

TD convenes hybrid workshop on Market Margin Analysis for Small-scale Fisheries Supply Chain

SEAFDEC/TD organized a hybrid workshop on Market Margin Analysis for Small-Scale Fisheries Supply Chains on 15 May 2026 at the SEAFDEC Secretariat in Bangkok, Thailand. The event brought together resource persons from Kasetsart University, focal persons (officers from Lao PDR, the Philippines, and Thailand), RFPN representatives, and SEAFDEC to present and discuss the findings of small-scale fisheries supply chain studies and conduct marketing margin analysis. The activity aimed to enhance understanding of cost, value, and profit distribution along the fisheries supply chain while identifying opportunities to improve fishers' livelihoods, market access, and value addition.

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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IFRDMD welcomes new Chief

Dr. Maulana Firdaus has been appointed as the new Chief of SEAFDEC/IFRDMD, succeeding *Mr. Andi Soesmono*, who served as Chief from December 2023 to May 2026.

Dr. Maulana brings extensive academic, research, and policy experience in fisheries socioeconomics, natural resource and environmental economics, fisheries bio-economics, economic valuation, and sustainable fisheries development. He obtained his Ph.D. in Agribusiness Management from Tokyo University of Agriculture, Japan, and previously served as Associate Planner at the Research Center for Marine and Fisheries Socio-Economics, Ministry of Marine Affairs and Fisheries, Indonesia.

He has also contributed to various national and international programs, including JICA-supported SATREPS projects, fisheries policy impact analysis, natural resource damage assessment, and government program evaluation. In addition, he has maintained an active presence in academic and scientific networks, serving as a journal editor, reviewer, researcher, and author of numerous scientific publications.

IFRDMD extends its sincere appreciation to *Mr. Andi Soesmono* for his leadership, dedication, and valuable contributions during his tenure as Chief. The appointment of *Dr. Maulana Firdaus* marks a new chapter for IFRDMD in strengthening sustainable inland fisheries management, research collaboration, capacity building, and regional cooperation in Southeast Asia.

SEAFDEC Secretary-General pays a courtesy call to the SEAFDEC Council Director for Malaysia

On 22 June 2026, the Secretary-General of SEAFDEC, *Ms. Sampan Panjarat*, paid a courtesy call on the SEAFDEC Council Director for Malaysia and the Director-General of the Department of Fisheries (DOF) Malaysia, *Dato' Adnan bin Hussain*, at the DOF Malaysia Headquarters in Putrajaya, Malaysia.

In his warm welcome remarks, *Dato' Adnan* expressed appreciation to SEAFDEC and SEAFDEC Departments for their continued role in supporting Malaysia and the region in various areas of fisheries and aquaculture, including research and development, capacity building, regional cooperation on international fisheries-related issues, and implementation of collaborative projects. In response, *Ms. Sampan* expressed appreciation to the Government of Malaysia for its continued support to SEAFDEC. She also briefly highlighted SEAFDEC's regional initiatives in support of its Member Countries across various aspects of fisheries and aquaculture development. Taking the opportunity, she also informed the Director-General of the upcoming 60th Anniversary of SEAFDEC, to be celebrated on 19 August 2027 in Bangkok, Thailand.

Furthermore, *Ms. Sampan* expressed her appreciation for the strong support and collaboration between SEAFDEC and DOF Malaysia, particularly through the contributions of SEAFDEC/MFRDMD in strengthening fisheries resources management and implementing capacity-building activities for the Member Countries. In Closing, both the SEAFDEC Secretary-General and the Director-General of DOF Malaysia reaffirmed their commitment to strengthening future cooperation in fisheries and aquaculture development for the sustainable growth of the sector in the region.

SEAFDEC launches the New "Database on Fishery Statistics of Southeast Asia"

SEAFDEC is pleased to announce the launch of the "SEAFDEC Database on Fishery Statistics of Southeast Asia," developed in line with the Regional Framework for Fishery Statistics of Southeast Asia (2024 Edition). The Database is now publicly accessible and compiles fisheries statistics from ten ASEAN Member States, namely: Brunei Darussalam, Cambodia, Indonesia, Lao PDR, Malaysia, Myanmar, Philippines, Singapore, Thailand, and Viet Nam, to support data-driven management, policy planning, and sustainable fisheries development in the Southeast Asia region.

Currently, fishery statistics data (for Southeast Asia) are available from 2008 onwards via the main platform at https://fisherystatistics.seafdec.org/.