

Sustainable Fisheries Development through Cooperative Strategies for Long-term Food Security: The ASEAN-SEAFDEC Conference on Sustainable Fisheries for Food Security Towards 2020

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Through the years, SEAFDEC has always sustained its support for the ASEAN countries by implementing programs that address various issues towards the development of sustainable fisheries in the ASEAN region.

The formal collaboration between SEAFDEC and the ASEAN could be traced back in 1998 when the ASEAN-SEAFDEC Fisheries Consultative Group (FCG) was established to pave the way for the implementation of multi-disciplinary fisheries programs for the sustainable development of fisheries in the ASEAN region. Three years later, the adoption of the ASEAN-SEAFDEC Resolution and Plan of Action on Sustainable Fisheries for Food Security for the ASEAN Region in 2001 had strengthened the support of SEAFDEC to the ASEAN countries through the implementation of projects and activities aimed at intensifying the contribution of fisheries to food security of the region. The collaborative mechanism between SEAFDEC and the ASEAN was later boosted when the ASEAN-SEAFDEC Strategic Partnership (ASSP) was formalized in 2007.

After more than a decade of intensified collaboration between SEAFDEC and the ASEAN, significant progress has been attained by the ASEAN countries in promoting sustainable fisheries and in improving the people's livelihood leading towards food security. The existing fisheries collaborative mechanism under the aforementioned cooperative strategies is therefore being advanced for long-term sustainability and food security. In order to sustain such momentum, SEAFDEC is planning to organize the ASEAN-SEAFDEC Conference on Sustainable Fisheries for Food Security Towards 2020 in June 2011.

The ASEAN-SEAFDEC Conference on Sustainable Fisheries for Food Security Towards 2020

The ASEAN-SEAFDEC Resolution and Plan of Action on Sustainable Fisheries for Food Security for the ASEAN Region which were adopted during the Millennium Conference in November 2001 have served as policy framework that steer the ASEAN member countries towards

sustainable development and enhanced contribution from fisheries to food security. The changing global economic scenario and the deteriorating state of the region's fishery resources during the past decade, however, have necessitated the need for SEAFDEC and the ASEAN to converge again in order to assess the progress and achievements in the implementation of programs under the 2001 Resolution and Plan of Action in the ASEAN region as well as to develop the next decade regional direction.

To be jointly organized by SEAFDEC and the ASEAN and hosted by Thailand, the Conference is planned to be held in June 2011 in Bangkok, Thailand. The Conference is intended to come up with the "Decade Resolution and Plan of Action on Sustainable Fisheries for Food Security in the ASEAN Region (Towards 2020)" to be used as policy principle in achieving sustainable fisheries for food security in the coming decades. The Conference also aims to create enhanced awareness on issues related to sustainable fisheries and food security through the participation of the ASEAN countries in the Conference.

About the Author

Dr. Chumnarn Pongsri, Ph.D., is the new Secretary-General of SEAFDEC succeeding Dr. Siri Ekmaharaj who completed his four-year term of office as Secretary-General on 30 September 2009. Dr. Chumnarn has a vast experience in the various disciplines of fisheries and aquaculture. Before joining SEAFDEC, he occupied the position of Expert in Ecology at the Department of Fisheries (DOF) of Thailand. Having been equipped with master's degrees in aquaculture and public administration in renowned universities in Thailand as well as a doctoral degree from the University of Wales in the U.K., Dr. Chumnarn has contributed in various ways, to the achievements of the DOF towards attaining sustainable development of the country's fisheries industry. Dr. Chumnarn had also for some years worked for the Mekong River Commission Secretariat as Director of its Environment Division and as a Member of the Board of Advisers for the Greater Mekong Sub-region Academic Research Network. Moreover, Dr. Chumnarn has also served as Secretary to the Permanent Secretary of the Ministry of Agriculture and Cooperatives of Thailand.