



**REPORT OF THE FORTY-NINTH MEETING OF THE COUNCIL
OF THE SOUTHEAST ASIAN FISHERIES DEVELOPMENT CENTER**

3 - 7 April 2017, Bandar Seri Begawan, Brunei Darussalam

INTRODUCTION

1. The Forty-ninth Meeting of the Council of the Southeast Asian Fisheries Development Center (SEAFDEC) was convened in Bandar Seri Begawan, Brunei Darussalam from 3 to 7 April 2017 and hosted by the Department of Fisheries of the Ministry of Primary Resources and Tourism of Brunei Darussalam.
2. The Meeting was attended by the Council Directors for Brunei Darussalam, Cambodia, Indonesia, Japan, Lao PDR, Malaysia, Myanmar, Philippines, Singapore, Thailand, and Viet Nam together with their respective delegations, as well as the Secretary-General, Deputy Secretary-General and the senior officials of SEAFDEC. The Meeting was also attended by representatives from the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO); Network of Aquaculture Centres in Asia-Pacific (NACA); National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA); United Nations Environment Programme/Global Environment Facility (UNEP/GEF); United States Agency for International Development/Regional Development Mission for Asia (USAID/RDMA); and the USAID Oceans and Fisheries Partnership. The list of participants appears as **Annex 1**.

INAUGURAL CEREMONY

3. The Inaugural Ceremony of the Forty-ninth Meeting of the SEAFDEC Council was held on 3 April 2017, and was officiated by the Permanent Secretary of the Ministry of Primary Resources and Tourism of Brunei Darussalam, *Dr. Haji Abdul Manaf bin Haji Metussin*.
4. The Deputy Director-General of Directorate of Fisheries, Department of Science, Technology and International Cooperation of Viet Nam, *Dr. Tran Dinh Luan* in his capacity as the Chairperson of SEAFDEC Council for 2016-2017, welcomed the participants to the Meeting. He expressed the gratitude of the SEAFDEC Council to the Government of Brunei Darussalam for extending warm hospitality to the delegates and for the arrangements of the Forty-ninth Meeting of the SEAFDEC Council. Subsequently, he congratulated SEAFDEC for reaping great achievements especially in several aspects, including the endorsement of several regional policy frameworks, particularly the “*Joint ASEAN-SEAFDEC Declaration on Regional Cooperation for Combating IUU Fishing and Enhancing the Competitiveness of ASEAN Fish and Fishery Products*” during the High-level Consultation in August 2016. In this connection, he expressed the appreciation to SEAFDEC for its efforts in facilitating the development of the Joint Declaration which serves as guide for the development of important frameworks for the countries in addressing one of the very challenging issues in fisheries management which is combating IUU fishing in the Southeast Asian region. He also stressed that several policy frameworks developed by SEAFDEC had been acknowledged by high-level authorities of the ASEAN and endorsed through the 38th AMAF Meeting in Singapore, for example, the *ASEAN Regional Plan of Action for the Management of Fishing Capacity*, and the *Regional Guidelines on Traceability System for Aquaculture Products in the ASEAN Region*. He then encouraged SEAFDEC to continue this momentum of work, especially its technical activities that address the priorities and requirements of the Member Countries. He also expressed the appreciation to the other SEAFDEC Council Directors for extending their support during his chairmanship and to the international and regional organizations for strengthening their collaboration with SEAFDEC. His Remarks appears as **Annex 2**.

5. The Director of Department of Fisheries of Brunei Darussalam, *Mr. Abdul Halidi bin Mohd. Salleh* thanked the Permanent Secretary of the Ministry of Primary Resources and Tourism, *Dr. Haji Abdul Manaf bin Haji Metussin* for gracing the inaugural ceremony of the Forty-ninth Meeting of the SEAFDEC Council and the launching of the electronic ASEAN Catch Documentation Scheme for Brunei Darussalam. He expressed the appreciation to the participants for their presence considering that substantial issues would be discussed, especially the policy considerations on the tools and measures for combating IUU fishing in the region pursuant to the adoption of *Joint ASEAN-SEAFDEC Declaration on Regional Cooperation for Combating IUU Fishing and Enhancing the Competitiveness of ASEAN Fish and Fishery Products*. He added that an important aspect to be discussed during the Meeting is the development of Concept Proposal Towards the Development of the ASEAN Common Policy in response to the encouragement made during the 38th Meeting of ASEAN Ministers on Agriculture and Forestry (AMAF). He looked forward to having active deliberations on the issues and coming up with consensus on various issues that would help the countries in developing and managing their respective fishery resources in a sustainable manner. His Welcome Address appears as **Annex 3**.

6. The Permanent Secretary of the Ministry of Primary Resources and Tourism, *Dr. Haji Abdul Manaf bin Haji Metussin* on behalf of the Ministry of Primary Resources and Tourism and the Government of Brunei Darussalam, welcomed the SEAFDEC Council Directors and their delegations as well as the other honored guests to Brunei Darussalam. He recalled that this is the third time for Brunei Darussalam to host the SEAFDEC Council Meeting since it became a Member of SEAFDEC. While commending SEAFDEC for its efforts in strengthening regional cooperation for the promotion of sustainable fisheries in the region, he also recognized the significant achievements of SEAFDEC especially in facilitating the development of the *Joint ASEAN-SEAFDEC Declaration on Regional Cooperation for Combating IUU Fishing and Enhancing the Competitiveness of ASEAN Fish and Fishery Products* which was adopted during the ASEAN-SEAFDEC High-level Consultation in August 2016 in Bangkok, Thailand. He also mentioned that the Joint Declaration was addressed during the ASEAN Summit in September 2016 in Vientiane, Lao PDR, where the ASEAN Member States had been encouraged to implement the Joint Declaration and to indicate such intentions during the 38th Meeting of the AMAF in October 2016 in Singapore. He added that the 38th AMAF specifically encouraged the AMSs to also consider developing the “ASEAN Common Fisheries Policy” to strengthen collective efforts towards sustainable and responsible fisheries, and food security in ASEAN region.

7. The Permanent Secretary also emphasized that improving traceability of marine capture fisheries is one of the big challenges faced by many countries in the ASEAN region as it requires strengthening of effective fisheries management framework as well as Monitoring, Control and Surveillances (MCS). Nonetheless, he believed that improving traceability could be attained through the implementation of the electronic ASEAN Catch Documentation Scheme (eACDS) developed by SEAFDEC as it would enhance countries’ performance in fisheries management while preventing the entry of fish and fishery products from IUU fishing activities into the supply chain. He then expressed appreciation to SEAFDEC as well as the Government of Japan through its Japanese Trust Fund and the Government of Sweden for developing and supporting the training on eACDS in Brunei Darussalam as a pilot site.

8. While noting that SEAFDEC would be celebrating its 50th Anniversary in December 2017, the Permanent Secretary also commended SEAFDEC for its achievements through the years, specifically in carrying out its mandate to develop and manage the fisheries potentials of the region by rational utilization of the resources for food security and safety to the people and alleviating poverty through transfer of new technologies and resource information dissemination activities. After expressing the hope for the Meeting to have fruitful discussions and to come up with outputs for the benefit of the Member Countries, he also launched the eACDS and then declared the Forty-ninth Meeting of the SEAFDEC Council open. His Opening Speech appears as **Annex 4**.

I. PROCEDURAL MATTERS

1.1 Opening of the Meeting

9. The Council Director for Viet Nam and Chairperson of SEAFDEC Council for 2016-2017, *Dr. Tran Dinh Luan* welcomed the participants to the Meeting. He expressed his gratitude to SEAFDEC for the support extended to the Council Director for Viet Nam during the term of his chairmanship.

1.2 Election of the Chairperson for the Year 2017-2018

10. The SEAFDEC Council unanimously elected the Council Director for Brunei Darussalam, *Mr. Abdul Halidi Bin Mohd. Salleh* as the Chairperson of the SEAFDEC Council for the Year 2017-2018, in accordance with Article 5, Paragraph 4 of the Agreement Establishing SEAFDEC. While expressing his gratitude to the Council Directors for the confidence given him to serve as the Chairperson of the SEAFDEC Council for the Year 2017-2018, the Council Director for Brunei Darussalam sought the continued support of the other Council Directors as well as that from the collaborating organizations during his duty as the Chairperson of the Council.

1.3 Adoption of the Agenda and Arrangement for the Meeting

11. The Council adopted the Agenda of the Meeting, which appears as **Annex 5**.

II. REPORT OF THE SECRETARY-GENERAL

12. The Secretary-General of SEAFDEC congratulated the Council Director for Brunei Darussalam, *Mr. Abdul Halidi Bin Mohd. Salleh* for his election as the Chairperson of the SEAFDEC Council for the Year 2017-2018. He also congratulated *Dr. Tran Dinh Luan* on his appointment as the new SEAFDEC Council Director for Viet Nam. He expressed the appreciation of SEAFDEC to the Outgoing Chairperson of the Council of Directors for the guidance extended during the past year, which appropriately directed SEAFDEC towards addressing the priorities and requirements of the Member Countries.

13. Taking into consideration the request of the Secretary-General, the Council approved the appointment of *Dr. Kenji Taki* as Deputy Chief of MFRDMD succeeding *Dr. Osamu Abe* starting 1 April 2017 as proposed by the Government of Japan. The Council also recognized and acknowledged the appointment of *Mr. Rikfy Effendi Hardijanto* as the new Council Director for Indonesia.

14. In presenting the Draft SEAFDEC Annual Report for 2016, the SEAFDEC Secretary-General focused on the major achievements of the activities carried out in 2016 in accordance with the SEAFDEC mandate, which had been categorized by SEAFDEC Program Thrusts adopted in 2009, and taking into consideration the requirements and priorities of the Member Countries. After the discussion, the Council provided recommendations to improve the future activities of SEAFDEC as well as on the ways of reporting SEAFDEC activities in future Annual Reports.

15. During the discussion, the Council Director for Myanmar expressed his appreciation to SEAFDEC for the programs and activities it had undertaken in 2016, particularly those that are relevant to the promotion of sustainable fisheries development for food security in Southeast Asia and the technical support that SEAFDEC had extended to regional fisheries development in various aspects as well as in responding to the impacts of climate change. While commending AQD for establishing the the SEAFDEC/AQD Institutional Repository (SAIR) as it helps in the dissemination of fisheries information, especially those that emanate from SEAFDEC programs and activities, he sought clarification on the form of accessibility of SAIR. In this connection, he was informed that SAIR could be freely accessed by the public.

16. The Council Director for Thailand also commended SEAFDEC for its works and services rendered during the past year. While expressing the view that reporting of the Annual Report is rather made concise, he suggested that SEAFDEC should provide more detailed elaborations in presenting its Annual Report in the future. He also shared the same view as that of the Council Director for Myanmar that the establishment of SAIR is beneficial to the countries in the region as it facilitates sharing of aquaculture information. In this regard, he encouraged the other Departments to also make the results of their fisheries works more accessible through the homepage.

17. In connection with the views expressed by the Council Directors for Myanmar and Thailand, the SEAFDEC Secretary-General explained that the SEAFDEC Secretariat and Departments are in the process of establishing their respective institutional repositories which could be linked together. Such system could help enhance wider dissemination of the results of the programs and activities of SEAFDEC to the target audience and the visibility of SEAFDEC.

18. While expressing the appreciation to SEAFDEC for the activities undertaken in 2016, the Council Director for Indonesia congratulated SEAFDEC for the successful conduct of the High-level Consultation in August 2016 that led to the adoption of the *Joint ASEAN-SEAFDEC Declaration on Regional Cooperation for Combating Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated (IUU) Fishing and Enhancing the Competitiveness of ASEAN Fish and Fishery Products*. He also recommended that there should be follow-up actions to the results of the High-level Consultation and to promote the implementation of the *Joint ASEAN-SEAFDEC Declaration*.

19. While noting the recommendation of the Council Director for Viet Nam on the possible translation of information produced by SEAFDEC into national languages of the region for wider usage, the Council however suggested that the respective Member Countries could consider translating the publications of SEAFDEC into their respective national languages as appropriate.

20. The Council Director for Malaysia congratulated SEAFDEC for the comprehensive report on its programs and activities in 2016. Nevertheless, he suggested that SEAFDEC should consider expanding the contents of the Annual Report with more details as well as that of the presentations made during Council Meetings in the future.

21. While congratulating SEAFDEC for conducting many activities during the year, the Council Director for Brunei Darussalam extended the apology for the inability of Brunei Darussalam to participate in some events of SEAFDEC due to its limited number of officials and staff. However, he assured SEAFDEC and the Council that Brunei Darussalam would continue to support the implementation of the programs and activities of SEAFDEC.

22. After providing their views and comments on the activities of SEAFDEC, the Council approved the Draft SEAFDEC Annual Report 2016 for publication and dissemination to the Member Countries, relevant organizations and the public. However, the Council also encouraged SEAFDEC to consider the comments and suggestions made at this Council Meeting during the planning and implementation of SEAFDEC programs and activities in the future.

III. NOTES OF THE CHAIRPERSON OF THE SEAFDEC PROGRAM COMMITTEE ON THE RESULTS OF THE THIRTY-NINTH MEETING

23. The Council took note of the results of the Thirty-ninth Meeting of the Program Committee (39PCM) of SEAFDEC (**Annex 6**) convened in Yogyakarta, Indonesia on 28-30 November 2016 as presented by the Secretary-General of SEAFDEC in his capacity as the Chairperson of the SEAFDEC Program Committee. The Council also provided comments and suggestions for the improvement of the programs and activities of SEAFDEC in the future.

24. The Council also took note of the agreement made during the Working Group Meeting for Follow-up Activities on Joint Program on Tuna Research in Sulu and Sulawesi Seas held in March 2017 in Bangkok, Thailand, where the participating countries, namely: Indonesia, Malaysia, and the Philippines, agreed to continue the current cooperative framework with Japan providing resource persons and technical assistance.

25. With regards to the project on the “*Application of Fish Passage Design Principles to Enhance Sustainability of Inland Fishery Resources in the Southeast Asian Region*” supported by the Australian Centre for International Agricultural Research (ACIAR), the Council Director for Thailand informed the Council that ACIAR agreed to extend its assistance to the project until the end of December 2017. In this connection, he requested that the fish passage facility constructed at the TD premises be maintained beyond December 2017 to enable the project to carry out more experimental trials on migration of

indigenous fish species with technical assistance and involvement of researchers from the Department of Fisheries of Thailand. While agreeing with the suggestion made by the Council Director for Thailand, the SEAFDEC Secretary-General suggested that researchers from IFRDMD should also be involved in the conduct of the experimental trials.

26. In expressing his support to the recommendations of the Council Director for Thailand, the Council Director for Myanmar also explained that the project is beneficial for many countries in the region as it could mitigate the impacts of various obstacles being installed in inland aquatic ecosystems and resources. He then suggested that the results of the project should be shared with the other countries in the region.

27. The Council Director for Viet Nam expressed the appreciation to the SEAFDEC Program Committee for the successful outputs of the 39PCM, particularly the considerations made by the PCM on the progress of works of SEAFDEC in 2016 and the activities proposed for 2017. In this connection and considering that some coastal provinces of Viet Nam have promulgated a policy to stop trawl fisheries and there is a need to rehabilitate the trawl fishing grounds, SEAFDEC was requested to provide technical support to Viet Nam through the project on “*Promotion of Sustainable Fisheries Resources Enhancement Measures in Critical Habitats/Fishing Grounds in Southeast Asia*”. While noting such request, the Secretary-General explained that this concern would be discussed further with the Council Director for Viet Nam.

28. The Council Director for Cambodia also congratulated SEAFDEC on the results of the 39PCM and informed the Meeting that due to certain circumstances beyond their control, Cambodia was unable to participate in the 39PCM. In this connection, SEAFDEC was requested to continue the project on “*Human Resources Development (HRD) for Sustainable Fisheries,*” particularly for Cambodia to continue serving as pilot site for implementation of the Ecosystem Approach to Fisheries Management (EAFM). In addition, SEAFDEC was requested to consider the participation of Cambodia in the training sessions organized under the project on “*Enhancing Coastal Community Resilience for Sustainable Livelihood and Coastal Resources Management.*” However, it was clarified that this latter project which is supported by the Islamic Development Bank (IDB) has its specific focus on the Muslim communities in target countries, namely: Brunei Darussalam, Indonesia and Malaysia.

29. The Council Director for Cambodia also requested that Cambodia be included in the training courses under the project on “*Chemical and Drug Residue in Fish and Fish Products in Southeast Asia – Biotoxins and HABs in the ASEAN Region,*” as well as on capacity building in aquaculture of shellfish and scallops, and the project on “*GIS and remote sensing technologies to facilitate monitoring of resources and supporting activities.*” In this connection, the Council was informed that Cambodia has already sent their official requests to SEAFDEC for consideration.

30. While endorsing the report of the 39PCM, the Council Director for Indonesia informed the Council that Indonesia has issued a regulation banning the catch and export of wild juvenile and berried crabs, as well as lobster seeds and glass eels. However, as illegal trading of these products is still occurring in the region, he suggested that a regional cooperation be established among the countries to address this important issue.

IV. NOTE OF THE CHAIRPERSON OF THE FISHERIES CONSULTATIVE GROUP (FCG) OF THE ASEAN-SEAFDEC STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIP (ASSP) ON THE RESULTS OF THE NINETEENTH MEETING

31. The Council noted and endorsed the results and recommendations of the Nineteenth Meeting of the Fisheries Consultative Group of the ASEAN-SEAFDEC Strategic Partnership (FCG/ASSP) which was held from 1 to 2 December 2016 in Yogyakarta, Indonesia (**Annex 7**) as presented by *Mr. Nestor Domenden*, on behalf of the ASEAN Co-chair for the FCG/ASSP Meeting (19FCG/ASSP). The Council also provided recommendations for the improvement of the projects under the FCG/ASSP mechanism.

32. During the discussion, the Council Director for Viet Nam sought clarification on the decision to drop in the Agenda of the FCG/ASSP Meetings, those policy documents that had already been endorsed

under the ASEAN mechanism. In this regard, it was clarified that since such policy documents had already been endorsed, the FCG/ASSP meetings could henceforth focus on issues that require immediate consideration. For example, the *Guidelines on Traceability System on Aquaculture Products in the ASEAN Region* which was already been endorsed by the SOM, should no longer be reported to the FCG/ASSP Meetings. Nevertheless, the SEAFDEC Secretariat would consider maintaining the Agenda if there are still issues that require discussion among the AMSs.

33. As it was noted that ASEAN Secretariat was not present at the 19FCG/ASSP, the Council requested SEAFDEC Secretariat to check the availability of the ASEAN Secretariat before fixing the date of FCG/ASSP Meetings, to ensure their participation in the discussions on the ASEAN-SEAFDEC collaborative activities during the FCG/ASSP Meetings.

V. POLICY CONSIDERATION ON IMPORTANT ISSUES

5.1 Issues on Combating IUU Fishing

5.1.1 ASEAN Guidelines for Preventing the Entry of Fish and Fishery Products from IUU Fishing Activities into the Supply Chain

34. The Council took note of the progress of the implementation of the *ASEAN Guidelines for Preventing the Entry of Fish and Fishery Products from IUU Fishing Activities into the Supply Chain (Annex 8)* in the region which was presented by the representative from MFRDMD. The Council was informed that after the endorsement of this Guidelines by the AMAF in 2015, MFRDMD has been undertaking activities to promote the implementation of the Guidelines by the AMSs. Through recent discussions with the AMSs, recommendations were made on the possible actions to support the implementation of the Guidelines. The Council was also informed that MFRDMD would organize a Regional Technical Consultation during the fourth quarter of 2017 to further discuss on the possible actions to support the implementation of the Guidelines and the progress of its implementation in the AMSs.

35. During the discussion, the Council Director for Indonesia expressed the view that since the Guidelines had already been adopted by the AMAF as ASEAN Guidelines, it is necessary that the AMSs implement the Guidelines. However, he suggested that SEAFDEC could consider supporting the AMSs through the establishment of pilot sites for testing the implementation of the Guidelines. While also noting that the Guidelines provides a broad framework and is supported by various tools for combating IUU fishing, *e.g.* RFVR, ACDS, PSMA, etc., he also suggested that SEAFDEC could organize a meeting to discuss the Guidelines together with the relevant tools to come up with a clear picture on the regional initiatives in combating IUU fishing.

36. The Council Director for Cambodia supported the suggestion of Indonesia to promote the implementation of the Guidelines through pilot sites. He added that there are several regional guidelines that need to be implemented and several activities should be undertaken to comply with the requirements for combating IUU fishing, and that each country needs to give clear message to its relevant stakeholders to make them aware of the issues. He then suggested that SEAFDEC could conduct further discussions with the AMSs to assess the status of implementation of the Guidelines, and identify the countries that are really in need of assistance to address problems on IUU fishing, *e.g.* Cambodia as the country received a “red card” from the EU.

37. In responding to the suggestions of Indonesia and Cambodia, the representative from MFRDMD informed the Council that the matter on identification of pilot sites for the implementation of the Guidelines would be discussed during the next Technical Consultation proposed to be organized in 2017. The Secretary-General also expressed the concern that the Guidelines are very broad in nature and could affect its implementation which may require regional cooperation rather than implementation using pilot sites.

38. The Council Director for Thailand recalled the discussion made during the 39PCM where the Program Committee Member for Indonesia expressed the view that the Guidelines might not be fully

implemented by the AMSs as it is voluntary, and suggested on possibility for this to be mandatory. As it was also suggested during the 39PCM that this matter should be raised for discussion during the next Meeting of the ASWGFi in 2017, the Council agreed that this matter would be proposed for discussion during the ASWGFi and suggested that SEAFDEC should coordinate with the ASEAN to ensure that this concern is addressed within the ASWGFi.

39. The Council Director for Viet Nam expressed the view that by the nature of the Guidelines, several tools for combating IUU fishing could be covered, most of which have already been implemented or are still in the process of implementation, such as RFVR, cooperation on PSM, and ACDS. In this regard, SEAFDEC was asked to take also into consideration the other issues within the value chain to prevent the entry of IUU products into the supply chain. In response, the SEAFDEC Secretary-General mentioned that this concern would also be initially discussed during the forthcoming Regional Technical Consultation.

5.1.2 Regional Fishing Vessels Record

40. The Council was informed by TD on the progress of implementation of the Regional Fishing Vessels Record (RFVR) for vessels 24 meters in length and over, and on the need to update the data from the AMSs in the RFVR Database (**Annex 9**). The Council also noted the plan of TD to organize the “mid-term evaluation of implementation of RFVR 24-meters” in 2017, where the possibility of compiling the RFVR for vessels below 24 meters would be explored.

41. During the ensuing discussion, the Secretary-General encouraged the AMSs who have not yet sent their updated data to the RFVR Database to provide such data soonest in order that the Database would be completed and could be shared with other organizations for the purpose of combating IUU fishing. Nonetheless, the latter would require thorough discussion which could also be made during the planned meeting for the mid-term evaluation of the RFVR.

42. The Council Director for Viet Nam also informed the Council that as the unit used in the registration and licensing of fishing vessels in Viet Nam is different from that of the RFVR, conversion has been applied to comply with the requirements of RFVR.

43. The Council Director for Indonesia informed the Council that during the past few years Indonesia has been very serious about combating IUU fishing. In this connection, the country has been taking rigorous actions on vessels that are engaged in IUU fishing, *e.g.* illegal and double flagged vessels. He therefore inquired whether the data in the RFVR Database could be considered as official data of the AMSs, and that vessels not listed in the Database should be considered as illegal fishing vessels. Some Member Countries confirmed that the submitted data is official, but may not cover all registered vessels in respective countries. After discussion, the Council agreed that vessels which are not listed in the existing RFVR Database may not necessarily be considered as illegal fishing vessels.

44. The Council Director for Thailand also informed the Council that Thailand has implemented a process of issuing licenses to its fishing vessels on biennial basis, and would be able to submit the updated data for the RFVR Database in April 2017. He also recalled the previous discussion on the establishment of the RFVR that the Database should be considered confidential among the AMSs. However, considering that the list of vessels in the Database is a “white list,” he urged the Council to provide clear directive to SEAFDEC so that the RFVR Database could be made accessible to the public. He also recalled the previous discussion on the possibility for the RFVR to also cover fishing vessels below 24 meters in length. In this regard, the Council decided that the data in the RFVR should be kept confidential and requested that the development of RFVR for vessels below 24 meters in length should be deferred until the RFVR for vessels 24 meters in length and over is considered complete.

5.1.3 ASEAN Catch Documentation Scheme

45. The Council took note of the progress made by SEAFDEC on the development of the Concept of ASEAN Catch Documentation Scheme (ACDS) for Marine Capture Fisheries (**Annex 10**), and the development of eACDS for pilot testing in Brunei Darussalam. The Council was informed that after the

launching of eACDS at this 49th Meeting of the SEAFDEC Council, SEAFDEC would organize a meeting and training for relevant stakeholders on the use of the eACDS. This would be followed by monitoring and evaluation, improvement of the eACDS, introduction of improved system to other AMSs upon request, and reporting of the progress of implementation to the 50th Meeting of the SEAFDEC Council in 2018.

46. While expressing the appreciation for the good progress made by SEAFDEC in implementing this initiative, the Council Director for Singapore asked whether the AMSs would maintain their own eACDS, and if so, whether the AMSs could make changes to their own eACDS and how would the eACDS of the respective countries be linked for electronic transfer of catch documents (*i.e.* how would the exporting countries catch documents be passed on to the importing countries electronically). The Council Director for Singapore also asked how the USAID-Oceans CDT system ties in relation with the eACDS. In response, SEAFDEC informed the Council that it would transfer the eACDS to individual countries so that this could be owned and maintained by the respective countries. However, on the use of the eACDS for trading of products across the AMSs, this process would still be explored during the development stage of the eACDS. In principle, the system would be electronic, except for fishing vessels that do not have any satellite or other means of communication systems on board. In this case, the fishers could go fishing with the initial Catch Declaration (CD) document and report back the weight of catch and species on paper-based CD. It was also clarified that SEAFDEC would conduct a baseline survey in requesting AMSs to check on the required link between the existing system in the AMSs and the eACDS before any modification of the SEAFDEC system is carried out. Moreover, it was also clarified that the USAID-Oceans CDT system covers traceability from sea to table, and the key data elements (KDEs) for the catch documentation and traceability (CDT) cover domestic logistics/transportation and consumers' information, while the eACDS only covers traceability from sea to processors before exportation, but the consumers could trace the fish products back through the QR Code.

47. The Council Director for Japan made an observation that several parts of the eACDS could be overlapping with the CDT developed by USAID-Oceans and those undertaken by the SEAFDEC-Sweden Project. He therefore requested SEAFDEC to provide, during the next Program Committee Meeting, the whole picture of the operation including the demarcations of the development by the Japanese Trust Fund (JTF), SEAFDEC-Sweden Project, and USAID, the final target of the operation including the timeframe. Nonetheless, it was clarified that there is no overlapping between the eACDS with other initiatives as they are rather supportive to each other. While the USAID-Oceans CDT focuses specifically at the tuna landing sites in Bitung (Indonesia) and General Santos (Philippines), the eACDS is a parallel initiative for the other Member Countries that need to improve their traceability systems.

48. In terms of funding, while the USAID-Oceans could extend support to non-pilot sites in the Member Countries in terms of capacity building and observation visits, the lessons learned from the pilot testing activities either from the USAID-Oceans CDT or SEAFDEC eACDS in Brunei Darussalam, SEAFDEC (through JTF and Sweden) could consider providing other required support to pilot test and/or implement the eACDS which requires modification from the Brunei Darussalam system to other AMSs, translation of the system in local languages (particularly the Catch Declaration and Movement Document), and training of concerned stakeholders. However, different funds could also be allocated to different countries in order to avoid duplication of efforts and ensure that benefits are gained by all Member Countries.

49. The Council Director for Viet Nam expressed the concern that there are several Catch Documentation Schemes required by EU or RFMOs, and CDS is only one of the tools for traceability. Thus, SEAFDEC was asked to consider looking into the whole scope of the traceability system. In response, SEAFDEC could introduce the eACDS to Viet Nam and other AMSs based on request, for the countries to better understand the scope of the traceability system (similar to the concept of eACDS introduced by SEAFDEC to Malaysia in March 2017.)

50. The Council Director for Myanmar raised the concern that eACDS is a port-based system, and that there should also be measures that would control transshipment at sea. In response, it was clarified that the document for transshipment at sea can be included in the catch declaration form of fishing vessels. However, since the eACDS focuses on the catch in EEZs of the AMSs, therefore transshipment document is not required at the moment.

51. While taking note of the progress in the implementation of eACDS, the Council Director for Malaysia requested SEAFDEC to work closely with the CDT development process under the USAID-Oceans. It is expected that both system would eventually complement and not overlap with each other. In this regard, it was reiterated that while the CDT system traces the products from catch to table, the eACDS traces the products until exportation only.

52. On the workplan of the eACDS proposed by the SEAFDEC Secretariat after launching of the eACDS, the Council Director for Indonesia viewed that the process of improving the eACDS and introduction of improved system to other AMSs should be done after completion of the pilot testing in Brunei Darussalam.

5.1.4 Regional Cooperation to Support the Implementation of the Port State Measures in ASEAN Region

53. The Council took note of the progress on the Regional Cooperation to Support the Implementation of the Port State Measures (PSM) through Harmonization and the Support for Implementation of the PSM in ASEAN Region (**Annex 11**) as presented by the representative from TD, including the recommendations raised during the Workshop on Regional Cooperation for Implementation of Port State Measures to Improve Fisheries Management and Reduce IUU Fishing in Southeast Asia in November 2016.

54. During the discussion, the Council Director for Malaysia suggested that SEAFDEC could consider conducting a follow-up Consultation to address the consolidated actions and needs for regional cooperation to support the implementation of port State measures (PSM) by the AMSs as identified during the Workshop. He also informed the Council that Malaysia has already established two tiered national-level committees to combat IUU fishing, *i.e.* steering committee and technical committee, with multi-agency involvement and with the main tasks of studying the gaps in the implementation of PSM.

55. In response to the query of the Council Director for Indonesia on whether Regional Guidelines for implementation of PSM would be developed, it was clarified that in the recommendations for cooperation during the Workshop, the intention is only to provide the AMSs with better cooperation through harmonization process to support the implementation of PSM for foreign vessels from among the AMSs but not meant to come up with Regional Guidelines. With regards to capacity building activities, the Council was informed that a number of training programs have been planned for 2017-2019 both at regional or national levels, and that SEAFDEC has agreed to seek cooperation from other agencies, particularly FAO, USAID and NOAA to support the conduct of such capacity building activities.

5.1.5 Regional Plan of Action for Management of Fishing Capacity

56. The Council took note of the endorsement of the Regional Plan of Action for Management of Fishing Capacity by the 38th AMAF in 2016, which also supported the implementation of the RPOA-Capacity by the AMSs (**Annex 12**).

57. While expressing full support to the RPOA-Capacity, the Council Director for Japan also agreed that fisheries subsidies that lead to overfishing and over-capacity should be managed. He informed the Meeting that during the WTO Doha Round Negotiation Group on Rules, discussion was made regarding fisheries subsidies that contribute to overfishing and over-capacity. Nevertheless, as there was divergent views among Members during the Doha Round, conclusion could not be reached on the kinds of subsidies that should be prohibited. He then informed the Council that since most delegates attending the WTO discussions are from diplomatic background with limited expertise on fisheries, policies that are discussed during such fora could possibly result in drastic impacts to the fisheries of the AMSs. He therefore encouraged the AMSs to send representatives with fisheries background to attend the WTO discussions or establish close and strong coordination with the delegates attending the said discussions.

5.2 Other Emerging Issues

5.2.1 CITES Issues: Regional Common/Coordinated Position

58. The Council was informed by the representative from SEAFDEC Secretariat on the Results of the CITES COP-17 and the discussions on future direction in addressing CITES issues (**Annex 13**).

59. On the request of the Council Director for Myanmar for information on the development of Non-Detriment Findings (NDF) document for species listed under the CITES Appendices, the Council suggested that since Malaysia and Indonesia have been implementing activities in 2016 for the development of NDF documents for sharks and rays, and Thailand for sea horses, these countries could consider sharing their experiences and the lessons learned in the development of NDF documents with the other AMSs in the near future.

60. On the proposal to establish the Technical Fisheries Working Group to work with the ASEAN Expert Group on CITES (AEG-CITES) on matters related to commercially-exploited aquatic species, the Council Director for Malaysia supported in principle the initiative, but emphasized that this should not create any financial implications to the Member Countries. Furthermore, he suggested that the working mechanism and the Terms of Reference of the Working Group should be clearly developed, and requested SEAFDEC to consult and collaborate with other regional/international organizations regarding this concern before the 18th Conference of the Parties to CITES to be held in Sri Lanka in 2019. The Council Director for Japan added that in setting up of such Working Group within SEAFDEC to deal with CITES matters, it should be assured that the Working Group would be recognized under the ASEAN mechanism and also for SEAFDEC to work in coordination with the AEG-CITES.

61. The Council Director for Viet Nam expressed the view that coordination between SEAFDEC and ASWGFi on CITES matters is not very well undertaken, considering that the AEG-CITES is under the agricultural mechanism and not concerned with fisheries. SEAFDEC was therefore encouraged to develop a direct mechanism that would allow SEAFDEC to work closely under the ASWGFi on CITES issues in the future.

62. On the query of the Council Director for Brunei Darussalam regarding the availability of animal committee under the AEG-CITES, the Council Director for Indonesia shared the information that there are two CITES authorities in some AMSs, which are the Management Authority and Scientific Authority. During the national discussions on CITES requirements, it is necessary that the countries should have data to support the relevant discussions, and the Scientific Authority of each AMS should be involved in developing the common position among the AMSs based on available scientific evidence.

63. After the discussion and deliberation, the Council requested SEAFDEC to consult with the ASEAN Secretariat on the possibility of setting-up the Technical Fisheries Working Group to work closely with the AEG-CITES in developing regional common/coordinated positions to be presented at CITES fora, as well as on the appropriate working mechanism and TOR of such Working Group.

5.2.2 Labor Aspects: ASEAN Guidelines on Implementation of Labor Standards for the Fisheries Sector

64. The Council was informed by the SEAFDEC Secretariat on the proposal to develop the ASEAN Guidelines on Implementation of Labor Standards for the Fisheries Sector (**Annex 14**), based on the presentation made by the representative from the SEAFDEC Secretariat.

65. During the discussion, the Council Director for Singapore reiterated that as explained during the Forty-eighth Meeting of the SEAFDEC Council in 2016, fisheries platforms such as SEAFDEC or the ASWGFi may not be the most appropriate platform to address labor issues. She explained that labor issues are better addressed at more appropriate platforms such as the ASEAN Committee on the Implementation of the ASEAN Declaration on the Protection and Promotion of the Rights of Migrant Workers (ACMW), a sub-sectoral group under the ASEAN Senior Labour Officials Meeting (SLOM) that has policy expertise and resource persons to address issues related to migrant workers. In this regard, SEAFDEC was again requested to discuss this issue thoroughly with the ASEAN Secretariat.

66. In this connection, the Council was informed that SEAFDEC will continue to consult with the ASEAN Secretariat to explore the appropriate platform that could deal with the issue on labor in fisheries. The Council was also informed that the SEAFDEC Secretariat plans to consult with FAO and ILO in

identifying the issues for future collaboration, and would consult the SEAFDEC Council on the progress of such consultations. The SEAFDEC Secretariat also proposed two possible options to deal with the issue on labor in fisheries, the first of which is to adopt a more comprehensive approach in developing the necessary Guidelines and Standards, and the second is through a more pragmatic approach by coming up with Good Labor Practices and would take these proposals into consideration during its future discussions with FAO and ILO.

67. In response to the request of the Council Director for Myanmar for clarification on the linkage between the issue on labor in the fishery sectors with the ASEAN Charter, it was clarified that beside the ASEAN Charter, this issue is also closely linked with the three ASEAN Blueprints, namely: the Economic Community Blueprint; Socio-Cultural Community Blueprint; and Political-Security Community Blueprint.

5.2.3 New US Seafood Traceability Programs

68. The representative from NOAA Fisheries, Office of International Affairs and Seafood Inspection provided information on the new US Seafood Traceability Programs, including the US Marine Mammal Protection Act (MMPA) and the US Seafood Import Monitoring Program (Annex 15). The Council was also informed that the MMPA, which bans the export to the US of fish and fish products caught in commercial fisheries that are involved in the accidental killing or serious injury of marine mammals in excess of US standards, has been put into effect starting 1 January 2017. However, the MMPA provides 5-year exemption period for exporting countries to give them time to fulfill the specific requirements. In supporting the countries to achieve comparability findings as required by the MMPA, the Council was informed that the US would be willing to provide technical advice to countries to enable them to comply with these import monitoring programs through dialogue and bilateral communications.

69. During the discussion, the Council Director for Viet Nam requested information on the appropriate timeline for the countries to submit the “List of Foreign Fisheries.” In response, the representative from NOAA Fisheries clarified that this should be provided the soonest possible starting 1 April 2017. Nevertheless, additional information could also be provided after the prescribed timeline.

70. The Council noted that with regards to the U.S. Seafood Import Monitoring Program which aims to ensure that seafood entering the US are not derived from IUU fishing or subjected to seafood fraud, seafood importers are required to submit information about the harvest of fish and to keep records from the point of harvest to the point of entry into the U.S. With respect to harvest information, provision for a simplified reporting system is indicated for small-scale fisheries operators. The US also announced that compliance to this new regulation would start on 1 January 2018 for the identified 13 priority species that are most at risk of IUU fishing and seafood fraud, except for shrimp and abalone which would be placed in the later phase of implementation.

71. The Council Director for Viet Nam inquired whether the current traceability system of Viet Nam without adding more items of information to fulfill the US requirement, could be used or this would have to be replaced with another system under these new US rules. In response, the representative from NOAA Fisheries explained that the existing traceability systems, either electronic or paper-based, for example the eACDS that is being piloted could be used to supply the information as long as the required data elements in the US rules are provided in such traceability systems.

72. With regard to the query of the Council Director for Indonesia on the type of aquaculture products that are subject to the MMPA import rules, the representative from NOAA Fisheries replied that the program applies to the aquaculture products that are shipped to the U.S. market, not the feed inputs to those products. If there is a concern about incidental mortality and serious injury to marine mammals to those fisheries that produce the aquaculture feeds, the program would apply to direct export of those aquaculture feeds to the U.S. market. Product that are derived from marine aquaculture activities that have interactions with marine mammals are subject to the import monitoring program, and regulations for such aquaculture activities cannot authorize direct killing of the mammals.

73. On the query made by the Council Director for Myanmar on how to monitor and control seafood fraud problems caused by the differences between the product and its label, the representative from NOAA

Fisheries explained that the Seafood Import Monitoring Program would not address the problem of misrepresentation of products being traded in the U.S. market after the import has occurred. Post-import issues of seafood fraud will be addressed by other consumer protection programs after the product enters the U.S. market.

5.2.4 CCAMLR NCP Engagement Strategy

74. The Council was informed by the SEAFDEC Secretariat on the Engagement Strategy of the Convention for the Conservation of Antarctic Marine Living Resources (CCAMLR) in seeking cooperation from Non-Contracting Party (NCP) to implement Catch Documentation Scheme (CDS) for *Dissostichus* spp. (Patagonian toothfish and Antarctic toothfish) as shown in **Annex 16**. This is meant to ensure that fish and fishery products subjected to management by CCAMLR that enter into the supply chain of the AMSs are appropriately monitored. This is also part of the efforts of CCAMLR to eliminate IUU fishing in the Southeast Asian region.

75. The Council Director for Singapore shared the view that as a non-contracting party with CCAMLR, Singapore is cooperating with CCAMLR by monitoring toothfish trade through limited access using the e-CDS. Singapore has found its engagement with CCAMLR beneficial to monitor and ensure the legality of toothfish trade in Singapore, and has also learnt from CCAMLR how they implement their Catch Documentation Scheme.

76. The Council took note of the emerging issues on CCAMLR NCP Engagement Strategy considering that some countries in the region such as Brunei Darussalam, Malaysia, Philippines, Thailand, and Viet Nam have been identified through the CDS as receiving imports of toothfish from CCAMLR Contracting Parties, and that ports in Indonesia, Thailand, Viet Nam, and Malaysia have been used by CCAMLR IUU-listed vessels. For such reason, CCAMLR encouraged the relevant AMSs to cooperate with CCAMLR by voluntarily implementing the CDS. In this connection, the Council Director for Brunei Darussalam informed the Council that the country will take note of the requirements of CCAMLR.

5.2.5 Support the Implementation of Sustainable Development Goal 14: Conserve and Sustainably Use the Oceans, Seas and Marine Resources for Sustainable Development

77. The representative from SEAFDEC-UNEP/GEF Project, *Mr. Christopher Paterson* informed the Council on the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), with particular focus on SDG 14: *conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources for sustainable development (Annex 17)*. He mentioned that although SDG 14 has direct linkages with fishery resources, there are also other Goals, particularly SDG 1, 2, 5, 8, 12, and 13 that are relevant to the fisheries sector. He also drew the attention of the Council on the close linkages of the current activities of SEAFDEC with the SDGs, and that there has been increasing expectations for organizations such as SEAFDEC to report its results in the context of the SDGs and their targets and related indicators.

78. Moreover, the representative from FAO informed the Council that FAO has been working with other regions on the indicators of the SDGs. He added that FAO is one of the custodians for SDG 14b, and is in the process of aligning this with the questionnaire on monitoring the implementation of the Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries (CCRF). He explained that FAO could provide support to SEAFDEC for monitoring its activities in relation to the SDG 14.

79. The representative from SEAFDEC Secretariat conveyed to the Council the information from the Swedish Embassy in Bangkok, Thailand regarding the Oceans Conference scheduled on 5-9 June 2017 in New York, and that Sweden would co-chair this Conference. In this connection, the SEAFDEC Member Countries are encouraged to share information to the Conference on their activities related to “*life below water.*”

80. An observation was made by the Council Director for Indonesia that although SEAFDEC could link various scopes of its work with each target in the SDG 14, the real contribution of SEAFDEC to SDG 14 could be achieved through the actual results of the implementation of projects and activities otherwise the contribution of SEAFDEC would appear only in papers.

81. While agreeing with the said observation, *Mr. Christopher Paterson* explained that alignment of SEAFDEC activities with SDG 14 could be the first step, while further activities would be developed and undertaken to enhance the contribution of SEAFDEC to the SDG 14. He also suggested that a “*results tracking framework*” could be developed to facilitate reporting of the activities of SEAFDEC and Member Countries aligned with the SDGs, which could be reflected in relevant international fora.

82. The Council Director for Indonesia suggested that checking the contribution of SEAFDEC and Member Countries to the SDGs should be done by monitoring the translation of its activities into national regulations, as this would signify the strong commitment of the countries toward achieving the SDGs. The Council Director for Brunei Darussalam however expressed the view that since each country has an agency responsible for reporting the implementation of SDGs to the UN, if the countries would report their activities to SEAFDEC for alignment this might result in duplication of the reporting of activities.

5.3 Regional Cooperation to Promote Sustainable Fisheries and Aquaculture in the ASEAN Region

5.3.1 Regional Plan of Action on Sustainable Utilization of Neritic Tunas in the ASEAN Region

83. The Council was informed of the progress made by SEAFDEC in the implementation of the *RPOA on Sustainable Utilization of Neritic Tunas* (RPOA-Neritic Tunas) in the ASEAN region (**Annex 18**) as reported by the representative from the SEAFDEC Secretariat, particularly on the results of the stock and risk assessment of kawakawa (*Euthynnus affinis*) and longtail tuna (*Thunnus tonggol*) in the Indian Ocean and the Pacific Ocean, and on the proposed Policy Recommendations and Management Measures based on scientific findings from such assessment. The Council was also informed on the future workplan of SEAFDEC to conduct stock assessment for seerfish, Spanish mackerels and king mackerel (in 2017-2018), and genetic study of longtail tuna and kawakawa to better understand their stock structure. In addition, the Council was informed that the software to support stock assessment was already developed in 2016, and the software for risk assessment will be developed in 2017, to support the AMSs in their national and regional activities, and that updating of the stock assessment for kawakawa and longtail tuna would be conducted in 2020.

84. The Council noted that the stock and risk assessment of longtail tuna and kawakawa was undertaken based on nominal catch data from concerned AMSs, and incorporating the long-term CPUE data that are available from Thailand and the Philippines. It was also clarified that this stock assessment technique is acceptable by RFMOs for poor data situation. The Chief of MFRDMD however expressed the view that updating the stock assessment for longtail tuna and kawakawa should not wait until 2020, and thus, should be undertaken the soonest possible especially if the necessary CPUEs data could be obtained from the other AMSs, *i.e.* Cambodia, Indonesia, Malaysia, Viet Nam, which would allow the analysis to be more precise and comprehensive.

85. In order to push forward the policy recommendations from the implementation of RPOA-Neritic Tunas under the ASEAN mechanism, the Council Director for Viet Nam requested Singapore as incoming Chair of the ASWGFi to coordinate with ASWGFi and SEAFDEC so that this issue could be put on the agenda of the next meeting of the ASWGFi, especially the mechanism for obtaining policy on management of neritic tunas for consideration at the ASWGFi and subsequently, advancing this to AMAF as appropriate. In addition, regarding the removal of tonggol tuna (*Thunnus tonggol*) from the Consumer Guide Red List as recommended by WWF of some countries, SEAFDEC was asked to develop a communication strategy and to work on behalf of the Member Countries, with WWF to enhance the understanding of WWF and other organizations on the plans and scientific findings of SEAFDEC regarding neritic tunas.

86. On the query of the Council Director for Viet Nam on whether the mechanism of the Scientific Working Group on Neritic Tunas (SWG-Neritic Tunas) is under the ASWGFi or not, it was clarified that the said mechanism is currently under SEAFDEC. In this connection, the Council Director for Viet Nam therefore suggested that since the ASEAN is in the process of establishing its new organization structure, it would be a challenge for the ASEAN Secretariat to consider structuring its organization and to take into

consideration the possibility of making the SWG-Neritic Tunas as a sub-working group under the ASWGFi.

87. While commending SEAFDEC for its efforts in conducting stock and risk assessment for some species of neritic tunas, the Council Director for Indonesia expressed the view that such scientific findings may not be presented to the Scientific Committee of relevant RFMOs as SEAFDEC is not a member of such RFMOs. Nevertheless, on the submission of the recommendations from the stock assessment for policy consideration by the ASEAN for subsequent implementation at national level, he also expressed the concern on the readiness of the AMSs to implement the management recommendations, particularly with regard to reduction of fishing efforts. He therefore suggested that SEAFDEC should also include in the study, such data as number of fishing vessels from each AMS that are targeting these species. Moreover, he suggested that in undertaking management measures for these tuna species, it would be necessary to know whether these are of the same stock, in which case further study should be carried out to demonstrate that tunas in Indian Ocean as well as those in Pacific Ocean are of the same stock, respectively.

5.3.2 Conservation and Management of Tropical Anguillid Eel Resources and Promotion of Sustainable Aquaculture

5.3.2.1 Regional Status of Tropical Anguillid Eels

88. The Council took note of the report made by IFRDMD on the Regional Status of Tropical Anguillid Eels (**Annex 19**). In particular, the Council noted the request of SEAFDEC for concerned AMSs (*i.e.* Indonesia, Myanmar and Viet Nam) to identify the appropriate contact persons from their respective countries for data collection on eels and also asked the Member Countries to complete the questionnaire on eel fisheries/farming. The Council also supported the activities carried out by SEAFDEC on anguillid eels, specifically the relevant surveys aimed at establishing the catch statistics on anguillid eels including eel seeds for aquaculture in each SEAFDEC Member Country.

89. The Council Director for Japan while expressing the appreciation to SEAFDEC for conducting activities on the sustainable utilization of eel resources, expressed the view that data on eels are very sensitive considering that this has close linkage to CITES issues. Therefore, SEAFDEC should establish a confidentiality policy for the accessibility of such data. In this regard, the Council was informed that this concern would be discussed with the Member Countries, especially for those countries that would provide the necessary data, and for them to suggest the contents of such confidentiality policy.

5.3.2.2 Enhancing Sustainable Utilization and Management Scheme of Tropical Anguillid Eels

90. The Council was informed by the representative from the SEAFDEC Secretariat on the new project of SEAFDEC on Enhancing Sustainable Utilization and Management Scheme of Tropical Anguillid Eels (**Annex 20**), which has been submitted for possible funding from the Japan-ASEAN Integrating Fund (JAIF), and planned to be implemented starting in 2017.

91. During the discussion, the Council Director for Viet Nam expressed strong support to this project, and recommended that in order to conserve the tropical anguillid eel species, the project should consider establishing policies to protect glass eels considering that technology for close-cycle spawning is not yet available. In addition, technical support should be provided in pursuing studies that would aim to improve the survival rate of eels in aquaculture. Nevertheless, it was clarified that the priority of this project would focus on data collection to support the assessment of eel stocks although later, the project on could also consider extending technical support as required by the Member Countries.

92. The Council Director for Thailand, while expressing support to this project, recalled that this project has already been approved by the 39PCM and 19FCG/ASSP, where it was agreed that once funding for this project from JAIF is secured, the project would be placed under the FCG/ASSP mechanism and should be implemented as soon as possible.

5.3.3 Regional Policy Recommendation for Development and Use of Alternative Dietary Ingredients in Aquaculture Feed Formulation: Establishment of a Regional Database on Alternative Feed Ingredients in Aquaculture

93. The Council took note of the *Regional Policy Recommendation for Development and Use of Alternative Dietary Ingredients in Aquaculture Feed Formulation: Establishment of a Regional Database on Alternative Feed Ingredients in Aquaculture* (**Annex 21**) as presented by the representative from AQD. While noting that the Regional Database aims to facilitate sharing of information among AMSs on locally-available alternative feed ingredients in aquaculture, the Council agreed that focal points would have to be nominated by the respective AMSs. In this regard, AQD was asked to communicate with the AMSs to seek for their cooperation and provide their respective focal point nominations.

5.3.4 Proposed ASEAN Regional Technical Consultation on Aquatic Emergency Preparedness and Response Systems for Effective Management of Transboundary Disease Outbreaks in Southeast Asia

94. The Council took note of the proposed conduct of the ASEAN Regional Technical Consultation (RTC) on Aquatic Emergency Preparedness and Response Systems for Effective Management of Transboundary Disease Outbreaks in Southeast Asia (**Annex 22**) as presented by the representative from AQD. In particular, it was also noted that two representatives from each AMS, which include the country focal person of ANAAHC, would be invited to attend the RTC. The Council was also informed that the proposal for the conduct of the RTC would be submitted by AQD through the DOF of Thailand to the ASEAN Secretariat for funding also from JAIF.

5.3.5 Supportive Program for Implementation of the Regional Approaches for Securing Sustainable Small-Scale Fisheries (SSF)

95. The Council took note of the presentation made by SEAFDEC Secretariat on the Regional Approaches for Securing Sustainable Small-Scale Fisheries and Way Forward for the Southeast Asian Region (**Annex 23**).

96. While noting that FAO has recently been placing much focus on the inclusion of issues on human rights-based and gender approaches in the implementation of the Voluntary Guidelines for Securing Sustainable Small-Scale Fisheries in the Context of Food Security and Poverty Eradication (SSF Guidelines), the Council Director for Viet Nam expressed the view that although Viet Nam has participated in the process of formulating the SSF Guidelines, the details on human rights-based and gender approaches still remain unclear, thus it is necessary that the region should also focus on the specific issues on human-rights.

97. Considering that there are several issues under the SSF Guidelines that remain unclear to the countries in the region, the Council was informed that SEAFDEC is planning to organize a consultation with the main objective of clarifying such basic elements in the SSF Guidelines.

98. The Council Director for Viet Nam sought the clarification from FAO on any possible funding support to the countries and regional mechanisms for the implementation of SSF Guidelines. Specifically, the regional nature of the activity would imply the need to prepare a regional project to support the implementation of the SSF Guidelines in the region. In this regard, the representative from FAO informed the Council that FAO has been integrating the implementation of the SSF Guidelines into regional and national projects in order that the approaches could be well understood, and that FAO would be willing to provide support to SEAFDEC in the development of a regional project that would support the implementation of the SSF Guidelines in the region based on the abovementioned approaches.

VI. OTHER MATTERS

6.1 Follow-up Action to ASEAN-SEAFDEC Joint Declaration on Combating IUU Fishing and Enhancing the Competitiveness of ASEAN Fish and Fishery Products

99. The Council was informed on the Follow-up Actions to the Joint ASEAN-SEAFDEC Declaration on Regional Cooperation for Combating Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated (IUU) Fishing and Enhancing the Competitiveness of ASEAN Fish and Fishery Products (**Annex 24**) as presented by the SEAFDEC Secretariat.

100. During the discussion, the Council Director for Viet Nam expressed the view that there is a need to assemble actions to regulate the quality and safety of ASEAN fish and fishery products in order to enhance the competitiveness of the products. Considering that under the ASEAN mechanism (not ASWGF) there are Working Groups on ASEAN Commodities, the AMSs can select some particular commodities for setting up of standards by communicating with the ASEAN to put certain commodities under the relevant Working Groups.

101. With regards to the regional initiatives that address key actions on combating IUU fishing, the Council Director for Viet Nam pointed out that some initiatives are cross-cutting and address more than one key action.

102. The Council Director for Indonesia expressed the view that this Joint Declaration was adopted in August 2016, and within less than one year SEAFDEC could already align its on-going initiatives with the 11 key actions in the Joint Declaration. However, in addition to the on-going initiatives, SEAFDEC should also come up with new regional activities that lead to stronger effort in combating IUU fishing and enhancing the competitiveness of fish and fishery products. He therefore requested SEAFDEC to list down some new ideas to follow-up on the Joint Declaration, and to seek the consideration of the SEAFDEC Council once such ideas are developed.

6.2 Directive on Development of the Common Fisheries Policy for ASEAN

103. The Council took note of the results of the Technical Consultation on the Development of ASEAN Common Fisheries Policy hosted by the Department of Fisheries (DOF) of Thailand on 27-28 March 2017 in Bangkok, Thailand, including the Possible Elements to be included in the Concept Note for the Proposed Development of ASEAN Common Fisheries Policy adopted by the Technical Consultation (**Annex 25**), as presented by the representative from Thailand.

104. The Council Director for Viet Nam commended Thailand for conducting the Technical Consultation as the 38th AMAF had encouraged AMSs to consider developing the ASEAN Common Fisheries Policy, and expressed the view that its process of establishment should start from common agreement on the mechanism, and later on consider the agreement of the issues and measures to be undertaken.

105. While expressing the appreciation to the DOF of Thailand for its initiative in convening the Technical Consultation, the Council Director for Indonesia reiterated that although the directive to develop the Common Fisheries Policy appears in the report of the 38th AMAF but such development has not been tabled for discussion at the High-level Consultation, and not even during the 37th SSOM-AMAF, the Prep-SOM 38th AMAF, or in the Strategic Plan of Action on ASEAN Cooperation in Fisheries 2016-2020. The issue was however first tabled for discussion during the 39PCM and 19FCG/ASSP when the proposal of Thailand to conduct an initial discussion on this matter was agreed upon. Nevertheless, he expressed the view of Indonesia that the concept of “common-pool resources” as applied by EU should not be considered in the development of ASEAN Common Fisheries Policy. Furthermore, the AMSs have differences in terms of the level of capacity, while availability of scientific basis on the transboundary resources is also questionable. Nonetheless, he emphasized that as the directive on this matter came from the AMAF for the AMSs and ASEAN Secretariat to undertake, this process should be undertaken under the ASEAN mechanism and not by SEAFDEC.

106. In this regard, the Council Director for Thailand informed the Council that although the directive was made directly for ASEAN to take the necessary action, SEAFDEC should be able to extend appropriate support as the technical arm for the ASEAN, and considering that SEAFDEC is a regional organization it has acquired much better awareness on the nature of fisheries of the AMSs. He also reiterated that in the principle of developing the proposed ASEAN Common Fisheries Policy, it was

clearly specified that it should take into consideration the capacity and level of fisheries development of the AMSs as well as the specificity of fisheries in the region, and should not follow the common fisheries policy of another regions.

107. While taking note of the results of the Technical Consultation which had provided good opportunity for the AMSs to exchange views and enhance their awareness on the proposed development of the ASEAN Common Fisheries Policy, the Council Director for Malaysia echoed the concern expressed by Indonesia that the matter was not discussed at the Prep-SOM and Special SOM meetings in 2016. He also expressed the view that the outcome of the 38th AMAF on this matter was more in the form of encouragement rather than directive, thus it might not be an urgent matter for the region to develop the ASEAN Common Fisheries Policy as the results of the Technical Consultation should be sufficient at this stage. He also shared the same view with the Council Director for Indonesia that the ASEAN should take the leading role in addressing this concern and suggested that the ASEAN could consider establishing a taskforce to deal with this matter.

108. Noting that there was a call to consider the proposed ASEAN Common Fisheries Policy under the ASEAN mechanism, the Council Director for Singapore suggested that Thailand could table the results of the Technical Consultation for consideration during the 25th Meeting of ASWGFi. Subsequently, the ASWGFi could decide on the appropriate way of putting this matter forward to the SSOM and SOM for them to discuss whether the ASEAN needs to have common fisheries policy, as well as on whether SEAFDEC should be involved in the development process of such common fisheries policy.

109. The Council agreed that Thailand should report the Possible Elements agreed during the Technical Consultation and seek guidance from the 25th ASWGFi Meeting for the future actions to be undertaken.

6.3 Southeast Asian State of Fisheries and Aquaculture 2017 (SEASOFIA 2017)

110. The Council took note of the progress made by SEAFDEC in the preparation of the Southeast Asian State of Fisheries and Aquaculture 2017 (SEASOFIA 2017) including the draft SEASOFIA 2017 (**Annex 26**) as reported by the SEAFDEC Secretariat. The Council was also informed on some issues faced by the Secretariat in finalizing the publication, particularly the insufficient information on crocodile culture, lack of data on some species with prominent production, and explanation of the changes in fisheries production trends of some AMSs.

111. The Council Director for Singapore informed the Council that Singapore would like to provide additional information with regards to good quality seed stocks, and would communicate and provide the information to the SEAFDEC Secretariat accordingly.

112. With regards to the data on crocodile culture, its inclusion in the SEASOFIA of which was based on the recommendations made at the 48th Meeting of the SEAFDEC Council, the Council Director for Philippines informed the Council that although crocodile is not under the jurisdiction of BFAR, it is coordinating with responsible national agency to gather the required information for SEASOFIA. In this connection, the Council also urged the other AMSs that have not yet provided the necessary data on crocodile culture to provide the data to SEAFDEC Secretariat as soon as possible. The Council Director for Indonesia however suggested that if such data is not provided by the deadline, the SEAFDEC Secretariat may consider including only the available data on crocodile culture or exclude the section on crocodile in SEASOFIA.

113. With regards to the data on production from *Pangasius* catfish aquaculture in Viet Nam, the Council Director for Viet Nam explained that although efforts had been made to provide the data as requested, the database of Viet Nam has limited information on production at detailed species level. Nevertheless, Viet Nam would explore the possibility of providing the necessary data consistent with the requirements of the SEASOFIA.

114. The Council was also informed that the SEAFDEC Secretariat has recently sent official letters to the Council Directors for Indonesia, Philippines and Thailand, requesting them to provide descriptive explanations on changes in the trends of fisheries production of their respective countries.

115. While noting the suggestion made by the 39PCM that the SEASOFIA 2017 should be launched at the 50th Anniversary of SEAFDEC, the Council Director for Thailand expressed the view that if the publication is already available and only waiting for few additional information, SEAFDEC should consider publishing it sooner in order that the data would still be timely and could provide good reference on the status and trends of fisheries and aquaculture in the region.

116. The Council supported the suggestion made by the Council Director for Thailand and agreed that countries that would like to provide additional information should provide such information to SEAFDEC Secretariat by 5 May 2017. After that the Secretariat could proceed with publishing and disseminating the publication.

6.4 Considerations of Japanese Trust Fund VII

117. The Council took note of the proposed Concept Note for Japanese Trust Fund-VII (JTF-VII) for a period from 2020 to 2024 (**Annex 27**) as presented by the representative from the SEAFDEC Secretariat. In this connection, the Council Director for Japan informed the Council that although the budget could not be committed at present, he conveyed to the Council the information that Japan is willing to continue supporting the activities of SEAFDEC through the Japanese Trust Fund to ensure that SEAFDEC will be able to continue promoting the sustainable utilization of fishery resources in the Southeast Asian region.

6.5 Establishment of Regional Repository Center for Marine Fisheries

118. The Council was informed of the proposal on “Establishment of Regional Repository Center for Marine Capture Fisheries” as presented by the Chief of MFRDMD and shown in **Annex 28**, and the commitment of the AMSs to provide information as required for in the repository was sought. The Council was also informed that MFRDMD would seek the cooperation from relevant authorities of the AMSs, universities and institutions, as well as NGOs to provide the information and specimens to be stored in the repository center.

119. The Council Director for Thailand expressed the view that if the proposed Repository would be established, caution should be made on the need to recognize the ownership of particular publications as the Repository would be compiling information from sources that may require permission from authors and copyright holders. Therefore, proper acknowledgement to authors of the information should be provided, while permission from copyright holders should also be sought for publications that are restricted for dissemination.

120. The Council Director for Indonesia recommended that instead of collecting marine specimens for the Repository, MFRDMD should consider publishing a book on economically-important marine species of Southeast Asia, which would be more useful for the Member Countries. He further informed the Council that in collaboration with ACIAR, Indonesia has published a manuscript on Indonesian Economically Important Marine Fish Species.

6.6 Monitoring Methodologies for the Resources of Inland Fisheries and Freshwater Aquaculture in ASEAN Member States

121. The Council took note of the proposed Monitoring Methodologies for the Resources of Inland Fisheries and Freshwater Aquaculture in ASEAN Member States (**Annex 29**), as presented by the representative from the SEAFDEC Secretariat, and recalling that the proposal was developed in response to the request made during the 39th Meeting of the Program Committee which was subsequently endorsed by the 19FCG/ASSP.

122. The Council Director for Viet Nam while expressing the support to the proposal informed the Council that Viet Nam is developing a proposal for inland aquatic survey which would be completed in mid 2017, and is willing to cooperate with this project. The Council Directors for Cambodia, Myanmar and Lao PDR also supported this proposal considering that inland fisheries provide significant contribution to food security and livelihoods in their respective countries. The Council Director for Cambodia also

expressed the intention to be part of this project considering that this project aims to use new GIS technology for mapping the inland fisheries.

123. Considering the importance of inland fisheries in the region, the Council endorsed the proposal and requested the SEAFDEC Secretariat to seek funding support from JAIF for the said project.

VII. COOPERATION WITH INTERNATIONAL/REGIONAL ORGANIZATIONS AND NON-MEMBER GOVERNMENTS

124. The representative from the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, *Mr. David Brown* expressed his gratitude to SEAFDEC for the invitation extended to FAO to attend the Forty-ninth Meeting of the SEAFDEC Council. He commended SEAFDEC and the Member Countries for their efforts in promoting and implementing regional initiatives and activities, such as the regional fishing vessels record, support for the implementation of FAO Port State Measures as well as implementation of pilot study to test the applicability of the electronic ASEAN Catch Documentation Scheme (eACDS). While appreciating the strengthened regional cooperation established between SEAFDEC and its Member Countries in the implementation of the FAO-SEAFDEC collaborative projects, such as reduction of by-catch in trawl fisheries (REBYC CTI-II) and BOBLME Project II, developing standards for labor in the fishing sector, capacity building of the ASEAN Member States on EAFM, safety onboard fishing vessels, and food safety, he extended the invitation of FAO to SEAFDEC to participate in the 35th FAO-APFIC Meeting to be held on 13 March 2018 in General Santos City, Philippines. During this Meeting of APFIC, SEAFDEC could share its experiences on various regional programs implemented in collaboration with the AMSs. He also expressed the commitment of FAO to continue collaborating with SEAFDEC in the implementation of priority issues and challenges to support the AMSs to ensure the sustainable development of fisheries in Southeast Asia. His statement appears as **Annex 30**.

125. The Director General of the Network of Aquaculture Centres in Asia-Pacific (NACA), *Dr. Cherdak Virapat* expressed his appreciation for the invitation extended by SEAFDEC that enabled NACA to participate in the Forty-ninth Meeting of the SEAFDEC Council. He informed the Council that NACA commemorated its 25th Anniversary on 3 August 2016 in Bangkok, Thailand. He cited that the MoU between NACA and SEAFDEC Aquaculture Department was signed in May 2016 in the Philippines for collaboration on aquaculture development. The MoU would endeavor on a voluntary and binding basis, to nominate an official contact person responsible for exchanging information with NACA Secretariat. He also provided the information on the other activities in collaboration with SEAFDEC, namely: the *ASEAN Regional Technical Consultation on EMS/AHPND and Other Transboundary Diseases* which discussed the issues on Acute Hepatopancreatic Necrosis Disease (AHPND) of cultured shrimps, ASEAN Fisheries and Aquaculture Conference and Exposition 2016: ASEAN Seafood for the World and the 11th Asian Fisheries and Aquaculture Forum: Asian Food Security for the World from 4 to 6 August 2016, at the Bangkok International Trade and Exhibition Centre in Bangkok, Thailand, etc. He reiterated that NACA and SEAFDEC would find the opportunity for strengthening the collaboration and coordination in aquaculture development activities in the region and beyond. His statement appears as **Annex 31**.

126. The Representative from the United States Agency for International Development/Regional Development Mission for Asia (USAID/RDMA), *Ms. Aurelia Micko* on behalf of the U.S. Agency for International Development and the U.S. Government, expressed the appreciation for the invitation extended by SEAFDEC, and expressed USAID's immense gratitude and appreciation to the Government of Brunei Darussalam for hosting this Meeting. She informed the Council that the Ocean and Fisheries Partnership continues to pursue its main goal of increasing the ability of regional fishery organizations in conserving marine biodiversity by combating IUU fishing in the Asia Pacific region. She also appreciated the efforts of the ASEAN-SEAFDEC Strategic Partnership (ASSP) for endorsing the USAID Oceans and Fisheries Partnership as an official ASSP project. She cited the important collaborative work with SEAFDEC on catch documentation and traceability for sustainable fisheries management, which the Partnership has provided bilateral and regional support in the realm of fisheries, recognizing that support for regional institutions is critical for the implementation of fisheries development and conversation. She then reiterated that USAID/RDMA would continue to support and build on these partnerships in the years ahead. Her statement appears as **Annex 32**.

127. The Task Manager of the United Nations Environment Programme/Global Environment Facility (UNEP/GEF), *Ms. Isabelle Vanderbeck* briefly presented the status of the current collaboration and future programming directions between SEAFDEC and the UN Environment. She informed the Council that SEAFDEC is the executing agency of a USD 3 million GEF-funded project which looks at the establishment and operation of a regional system of fisheries *refugia* in the South China Sea and Gulf of Thailand with Cambodia, Indonesia, Malaysia, Philippines, Thailand, and Viet Nam as participating countries. The project which aims to facilitate the delivery of the fisheries component of the Strategic Action Programme (SAP) for the South China Sea, was launched in November 2016 and will be implemented for a period of 48 months. SEAFDEC and the UN Environment are exploring the options for SEAFDEC to act as the coordinator of the regional component of the GEF-funded umbrella project which would focus on implementing the habitat conservation and pollution components of the SAP for the South China. In addition, she also informed the Council that with the UN Environment having been accredited as a Green Climate Fund (GCF) agency for projects up to USD 50 million, SEAFDEC and UN Environment are discussing the design of a regional trawl fisheries programme for SEAFDEC Member Countries eligible under the GCF. This programme could potentially include components on IUU fishing and energy efficiency. Her statement appears as **Annex 33**.

VIII. FUTURE DIRECTION OF SEAFDEC

128. The Council took note of the report presented by the SEAFDEC Secretary-General on the results of the efforts of SEAFDEC to respond to the special requests made by the Member Countries during the closed session among the countries' head delegates attending the 48th Meeting of the SEAFDEC Council.

129. On the request of the Council to invite Timor Leste and Papua New Guinea to attend the important meetings of SEAFDEC as observers, and considering that there is a possibility for Timor Leste to become a member in the ASEAN soon, SEAFDEC should continue to invite Timor Leste to participate in events organized by SEAFDEC, except in the meetings of the SEAFDEC Council. In the case of Papua New Guinea, although the country is not situated in Southeast Asian region but considering the potential benefits for the region if the country is aware of the regional initiatives in Southeast Asia, the Council suggested that Papua New Guinea should be invited to attend the technical meetings of SEAFDEC.

130. The Council acknowledged the need to conduct a closed-session meeting among the Head Delegates to serve as an opportunity for Head Delegates of countries to discuss issues that need to be addressed with potential difficulties. In addition, this type of meeting would also facilitate discussion at the proper meeting of the Council, and allow SEAFDEC to be more responsive to the request of the Council. In this regard, the Council suggested that this type of meeting could be done through working dinner/breakfast prior to the Council Meeting. The Council therefore agreed that the closed-session during the forthcoming Council Meetings should be organized as dinner meeting, one-day prior to the Council Meeting. Issues for discussion at this closed-session should be raised by the respective countries, while SEAFDEC could also raise important new movements in fisheries that countries should be prepared for. In this connection, the SEAFDEC Secretariat was requested to communicate with the Council Directors prior to the Council Meeting and inquire if there were important issues that they would want to raise for discussion at this closed-session of the Council Meeting.

131. In sustaining the cooperation between the ASEAN and SEAFDEC, Philippines as the current Chair of the ASWGFi, was requested to write to the ASEAN Secretariat on the need for the ASEAN to be represented during important Meetings of SEAFDEC, especially the FCG/ASSP Meetings.

132. On the relationship between ASEAN and SEAFDEC, the Council expressed the view that at ASEAN meetings, such as AMAF and ASWGFi, SEAFDEC is not allowed to attend or allowed only in limited sessions. Nevertheless, it was made clear that the attendance of SEAFDEC in these fora would enable SEAFDEC to be well aware of the fisheries-related issues (including other related issues) raised under the ASEAN mechanism, and would also allow SEAFDEC to be better known at the AMAF level. The Council therefore suggested that each AMS should convey this matter to their respective Foreign Affairs Ministries for them to bring up this matter for consideration by the ASEAN. The AMSs could also strongly request the ASEAN Secretariat to make adjustments in the protocol of the ASWGFi Meetings

correspondingly. However, it was also understood that there will still be certain sessions at the ASEAN meetings that would remain closed.

133. The Council Director for Japan expressed the gratitude for the constructive and friendly relationship between Japan and the other Member Countries. He informed the Council that Japan is willing to continue providing contributions to enhance the sustainability of fisheries in the region. While reiterating the points he raised during the discussions in the previous agenda, he encouraged the fisheries sector to send representatives to participate in fishery-related international fora such as CITES and WTO Rules Negotiations where restrictions on fisheries subsidies to prevent overfishing and over-capacity are discussed. Although the WTO may have special and differential (S&D) treatment for developing countries, Japan noted that there is an argument in applying the S&D treatment unconditionally. Therefore, early participation of MCs in the rule negotiation processes is necessary.

134. The Council Director for Indonesia informed the Meeting that the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MOFA) of Indonesia has already agreed on the increased Minimum Regular Contribution (MRC) of Indonesia to SEAFDEC. However, since IFRDMD was established in 2014, he requested SEAFDEC to reduce its MRC for 2015-2016 from 58,000 to 52,000 USD. While agreeing in principle with this reduction, the Council viewed that this should not impact on the MRC provided by the other Member Countries during such period, although this would mean that SEAFDEC may receive less total contribution during 2015-2016. The Council therefore asked Indonesia and the SEAFDEC Secretariat to jointly settle this issue.

135. On the next Council Meeting which will be organized in Cambodia, the Council Director for Cambodia requested if it is possible to shift the schedule earlier, that is on the last week of March because Cambodia always organizes the Annual Meeting of Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development (MARD) during the first week of April. After the discussion, the Council agreed to organize the next Council Meetings during the last week of March to facilitate the attendance of the Council for Cambodia in future SEAFDEC Council Meetings.

136. The Council concurred to the request of the Council Director for Thailand that in cases where there are no bilateral agreements between countries in the region, SEAFDEC should consider exerting efforts to facilitate exchange of researchers/experts between and among the concerned countries.

137. The Council for Indonesia recalled that at the AMAF Meeting in 2016, the Philippines reiterated the call for AMSs to attend the UNFCCC CoP 22 in Marrakech, Morocco in November 2016, to discuss the issues on agriculture in ASEAN and climate change. Considering the need for countries in this region to collaborate on matters concerning fisheries and climate change, the Council therefore requested SEAFDEC to study the developments in these areas. It was also suggested that this concern be included as one of the agenda at the next PCM or CM in order that the situation could be reviewed, and decision on the direction that SEAFDEC should undertake to address the issues on climate change and fisheries could be put forward.

138. The Council Director for Malaysia informed the Council that Malaysia is in the process of restructuring its internal organization so that MFRDMD could mobilize expertise from other national institutions to enhance its capacity in the implementation of future activities.

IX. MANAGEMENT OF THE CENTER

9.1 Operation of SEAFDEC Training and Research Vessels

139. The Council was informed on the progress of the activities undertaken by TD with regards to the use of the Training and Research Vessels in 2016, and the proposed plans for the year 2017 and onwards (**Annex 34**).

140. During the discussion, the Council Director for the Philippines informed the Meeting that Philippines under its new development plan would continue to avail of the technical support of TD during

its activities onboard its research vessel. He then congratulated TD for sustaining its support to the Member Countries that utilize the research vessels.

141. On the proposed utilization of the M.V. SEAFDEC 2 by Viet Nam, the Council Director for Viet Nam confirmed that the country plans to utilize the M.V. SEAFDEC 2 for the conduct of research survey in the waters of Viet Nam from June to August 2017.

142. After the deliberations, the Council approved the operational plan of the M.V. SEAFDEC 2 in 2017.

9.2 Future Direction of SEAFDEC Beyond Its 50th Year

143. The Council was informed on the Proposed Future Direction of SEAFDEC beyond its 50th year in 2017 and on the draft Resolution on the Future of SEAFDEC: Functions, Vision, Mandate and Strategies Towards 2030 (**Annex 35**), as presented by the SEAFDEC Secretariat.

144. During the discussion, the Council noted that the document was developed in line with important documents particularly the 2011 ASEAN-SEAFDEC Resolution, the prioritized issues for formulation of future regional program, and Plans of Operation and Programs of Work of the SEAFDEC Departments and Secretariat. During the discussion, the Council provided comments for finalization of the document as follows:

Myanmar:

- Function 1 – “to come up with scientific findings and technologies...” should be changed to “to come up with scientific findings, innovative technologies and methodologies...”
- Strategy 7 – “impact from fisheries on environment” should be changed to “impacts from fisheries and aquaculture on environment

Singapore:

- Background – as development of the ASEAN Common Fisheries Policy was not discussed at the High-level Consultation, but stated during the Remarks of the Permanent Secretary of Thailand – it should be reflected more accurately.
- Mandate – should not only “promote concerted actions,” but “promote and facilitate concerted actions”
- There should be specific strategies on “food safety on fish and fishery products” s

Indonesia:

- Resolution on the Future of SEAFDEC should facilitate the implementation of the adopted Resolution and Plan of Action, and the use of such document for planning of SEAFDEC activities.
- Vision – should reflect the need to maintain sustainability of fisheries to contribute to food security and livelihoods
- Strategies – should start with general fisheries development, and move on to more specific issues Too specific issues, e.g. “preventing the entry of fish and fishery products” is too small to be put as a strategy.
- The structure could have five components, namely:
 - o Sustainability of fisheries (marine and inland), livelihood and food security
 - o Aquaculture development
 - o Quality and safety of fish and fishery products
 - o Marketing and trade
 - o Cross-cutting issues: labor, climate change, gender equality, etc.

Philippines:

- Function 1 – should also specify “renewable and recycled energy for fisheries and aquaculture,” e.g. Enhancement of the utilization of renewable energy to improve the efficiency of operations in fisheries and aquaculture
- Strategy 3 – should also include “enhanced” so that the phrase is “maintained, managed and enhanced” (could be transferred to Strategy 7)

Brunei Darussalam:

- Resolution on the Future of SEAFDEC should be along the line with ASEAN-Strategic Plan of Action
- Strategy 3 – should not only “to maintain fishery resource, but also “to maintain and enhance fishery resource.” This could be reflected either under Strategy 3 or Strategy 7.

- MCS should also be included (*i.e.* under Strategy related to fisheries management and addressing IUU fishing)

Viet Nam:

- Resolution on the Future of SEAFDEC should take to consideration of the key component in the Resolution and Plan of Action 2011 and long-term visions with the new regional policy framework .

145. After the discussion, the Council requested the SEAFDEC Secretariat to accommodate the aforementioned comments of the Council, and circulate the revised document to the Council *ad referendum* by the end of May 2017 for final comments and confirmation, prior to its adoption at the Special Meeting of the SEAFDEC Council scheduled on 15 November 2017 in conjunction with the 50th Anniversary of SEAFDEC.

9.3 The 50th Anniversary of SEAFDEC

146. The Council took note of the proposed “Special Event to Commemorate the 50th Anniversary of SEAFDEC” (**Annex 36**) as presented by the SEAFDEC Secretariat. The Council was informed that the event is scheduled on 15 November 2017 in Bangkok, Thailand. Based on the recommendations of the 39PCM, the celebration would be arranged as a one-day event starting with the Special Meeting of the SEAFDEC Council in the morning to adopt the future direction of SEAFDEC, followed by the 50th Anniversary Celebration in the evening. The Council was also informed on the program, estimated expenditures using the MRC, proposed awardees for the outstanding staff, and tokens/certificates of appreciation to governments hosting the Departments and to major supporters of SEAFDEC, and the outline for 50th Anniversary Video and exhibition to be arranged during the celebration.

147. With regard to the award for the outstanding staff of SEAFDEC, the Chief of MFRD inquired whether other than staff, *i.e.* individuals who had provided significant contributions to the operations of MFRD could also be nominated for the award. In this regard, the discussion during the 39PCM was called to mind where it was suggested that the Council could consider identifying external individuals and organizations that have provided significant support to SEAFDEC to receive the award. The Council therefore agreed that the Departments could nominate staff or ex-staff of SEAFDEC and provide the name to the SEAFDEC Secretariat for inclusion in the list of awardees. For non-staff, the Council requested the Departments to submit the name to SEAFDEC Secretariat for circulation to the Council for approval *ad referendum*. The Council noted that the criteria in selecting the awardees for outstanding staff was not discussed at the 39PCM, broad criteria were subsequently agreed upon among the SEAFDEC Departments, that include those individuals who had provided significant contributions to the Departments. The detailed selection criteria were left for each Department to develop considering that each Department has different nature of work. Thus, the Council was of the view that selection of outstanding staff should be up to the respective Departments to decide.

148. The Council was also informed that SEAFDEC Secretariat is planning to publish the 50th Anniversary Book and memorial postage which would be launched during the event. For the video and exhibition, it was explained that these would be developed following the proposed outline that delineates the chronological events and achievements of SEAFDEC throughout the past 50 years.

149. As to the Guests of Honor to the event, the Council was informed that SEAFDEC has extended the invitation to *HIH Prince Akishino* of Japan, while Thailand as the host government also extended invitation to the Prime Minister of Thailand. However, the order of the remarks by the Guests of Honor could still be adjusted following the appropriate hierarchy after the list of Guests of Honor could be confirmed. On the query of the Council Director for Malaysia as to the number of Ministers from the other Member Countries who are expected to attend the event, the Council Director for Thailand informed the Council that Thailand would extend invitations to Ministers of the Member Countries responsible for fisheries, however the attendance of the Ministers could not be confirmed as this is up to the respective Ministers of the countries.

150. With regards to the Keynote Speaker, the Council Director for Indonesia proposed that the country's Minister for Marine Affairs and Fisheries, *Madam Susi Pudjiastuti* could be one of the Keynote Speakers. In addition, the Council Director for Thailand sought the approval of the Council for inviting the former Secretary-General of SEAFDEC, *Dr. Deb Menasveta* to be the Keynote Speaker considering his knowledge on SEAFDEC even before its establishment. The proposed topic of the Keynote Speech would aptly cover the past, present and future of SEAFDEC. After consideration, the Council expressed the concern that if the session is open for one Minister to deliver a statement, Ministers of all Member Countries may also wish to deliver statements notwithstanding the tight program within limited time. After discussion, the Council agreed that *Dr. Deb Menasveta* would be the Keynote Speaker during the anniversary celebration.

9.4 Collaborative Arrangements between SEAFDEC and Other Organizations

151. The Council took note of and endorsed the collaborative arrangements made by and between SEAFDEC and other organizations in 2016 until before its 49th Meeting (**Annex 37**).

X. FINANCIAL MATTERS

10.1 Adoption of Audited Financial Report for the Year 2015

152. In accordance with Article 6, Paragraph 2 (ii) of the Agreement Establishing the Center, the Council endorsed the audited consolidated financial statements of the Center for the year ended 31 December 2015 including that of the Secretariat and the four Departments for the Year 2015 (**Annex 38**) as audited by the official auditor of the Center, *Mr. Phongtorn Duangphanya* from P&A Audit Company Limited, Thailand.

10.2 Un-audited Financial Report for the Year 2016, and Status of the Financial Situation in the Year 2017

153. The Council took note of the Un-audited Consolidated Financial Report for the Year 2016 (**Annex 39**), which comprised the Un-audited Consolidated Statements of Net Assets as of 31 December 2016, the Un-audited Consolidated Statements of Contributions and Expenditures for the Year 2016, and the Un-audited Consolidated Statements of Fund Balance as of 31 December 2016.

154. With regards to the MRC contribution from the Member Countries to SEAFDEC in the year 2017, the Council recalled the discussion made during the 48th Meeting of the SEAFDEC Council where the Council took note of the changes of the amount of MRC, and agreed that each Member Country should undertake internal consultation and try to secure the amount of MRC as suggested by SEAFDEC possibly by 2017.

155. The Council Director for Lao PDR informed the Council of the changes in the internal arrangement of the country's budgetary system which resulted in the delayed transfer of contributions for international organizations from Lao PDR. The Council was specifically informed that the Department of Livestock and Fisheries is now coordinating with the concerned Ministry, in order that contributions to international organizations would be settled and released in due course.

156. The Council Director for Viet Nam informed the Council on the difficulties of obtaining the proposed increased MRC as any adjustment of the figure would entail a very long internal process involving several Ministries and need approval by the Prime Minister.

157. The Council Director for Myanmar also informed the Council that Myanmar already allocated new MRC by the budget year 2017-2018 so that the new amount of MRC would be transferred to SEAFDEC by May 2017.

158. The Council Director for the Philippines also informed the Council that the process in securing the new amount of MRC of the Philippines for 2017 is still on-going. While expressing the view that approval of any request for budgetary allocations from affected Member Countries would go through a long

process, the Council Director for the Philippines suggested that SEAFDEC may consider treating the proposed increased amount separately from the amount that has already been earlier applied. In this regard, the Council viewed that it would not be a problem for SEAFDEC to wait for the said approval considering that the remaining surplus of MRC should be sufficient to fund the operations of SEAFDEC during the period.

159. The Council was informed by the Council Director for Cambodia that the process of securing the new amount of MRC of Cambodia is ongoing. Considering the difficulties faced by several countries in securing the new amount of MRC for the year 2017, the Council encouraged the respective countries to undergo internal consultations and try to secure the new amount of MRC for 2017 as previously agreed by the Council.

160. The Council Director for Thailand made an observation that although the financial report on the use of MRC showed overall surplus, the details in some categories showed low utilization or unused funds, while the administration expenditures appear to be higher than the proposed budget. He therefore encouraged SEAFDEC to utilize the MRC in a more prudent and efficient manner to deliver the maximum benefits to the Member Countries. In this regard, it was clarified that the high amount of administration costs was due to the expenses incurred during the conduct of the High-level Consultation, as well as the conduct of the 48th Meeting of the SEAFDEC Council in Viet Nam.

10.3 Proposed Budgetary Requirements of the Center for the Year 2018

161. While expressing satisfaction with the manner of the budgetary utilization by SEAFDEC, the Council approved the proposed budgetary requirements of the Center for the Year 2018 as shown in **Annex 40**.

10.4 Other Financial Matters

162. Upon consultation of the Secretary-General and in accordance with SEAFDEC Financial Regulation No.7.2, the Council approved the disposal of the “Official Car Proton Wira” of MFRDMD considering that maintenance of this car is no longer economical.

XI. CONCLUDING MATTERS

11.1 Adoption of the Meeting Report and Press Statement

163. The Council adopted the Report of the Forty-ninth Meeting of the SEAFDEC Council and the Press Statement on the results of the Meeting on 7 April 2017 as shown in **Annex 41**.

11.2 Date and Venue of the Fiftieth Meeting of the SEAFDEC Council

164. In considering the date and venue of the Fiftieth Meeting of the Council, the Council Director for Cambodia informed the Council that the Government of Cambodia would accept the responsibility of hosting the next Council Meeting in Cambodia in 2018.

165. While expressing its appreciation of the offer made by Cambodia to host the next Council Meeting in Cambodia, the Council requested the Secretary-General to discuss with the Council Director for the Cambodia and finalize the exact date and venue of the next meeting of the SEAFDEC Council.

11.3 Vote of Thanks to the Host Government

166. On behalf of the Council Directors, the Council Director for Thailand expressed the Council’s appreciation to the Government of the Brunei Darussalam for hosting and for the arrangements of the Forty-ninth Meeting of the Council. He also congratulated the Chairperson of the Meeting for the successful conduct of the Meeting, and looked forward to the enhancement of SEAFDEC to enable it to continue performing its role in the sustainable development of fisheries in our region. He expressed his gratitude to the Secretariat of the Meeting especially the staff of the Department of Fisheries of Brunei

Darussalam for the smooth arrangements of the Meeting and for making the stay of the delegates in Brunei Darussalam a memorable one. His Remarks appears as **Annex 42**.

XII. CLOSING OF THE MEETING

167. The Chairperson expressed his appreciation to the Council Directors and the representatives from regional and international organizations as well as the Secretary-General, Deputy Secretary-General, and Chiefs of Departments for the support accorded him during the Meeting. He also expressed his sincere gratitude to the Secretariat of the Meeting for their hard work which led to the success of the Meeting. With that note, he declared the Forty-ninth Meeting of the Council closed.